

### **An Initial Assessment:**

Initial assessments are approximately 90 minutes long. We will seek to gain a better understanding of your current difficulties and how we can best support you moving forwards. We will talk to you and those you have brought with you to the appointment (usually parents or carers for young people). We collect information about the difficulties you are having, the history of the problem and conclude with some recommendations for interventions, self help and/or further diagnostic assessments where appropriate.

### **If you are bringing a child along here is some guidance about what to talk to them about or tell them about the appointment:**

This will involve talking to a psychologist – this is someone who is going to help you understand yourself and the things you do. It is made up of lots of talking and being asked questions, but it is not a test or an exam, so there are no wrong answers – the aim is to help you. If there is anything you don't want to talk about, you don't have to, but the more you discuss with the psychologist the more they can help you. You can take someone with you into the assessment, like a parent or guardian if you want to, or do it by yourself.

### **What sort of things could you talk about?**

Anything you want to. The psychologist will ask you questions about you – your home, school and your life.

### **How long will it take?**

You can talk about whatever you want and especially if something is worrying you. Your first appointment may vary in length depending on your needs, but it is usually about an hour and a half – so that you have time to get to know the psychologist and get over any nerves. What happens after the assessment? After an initial assessment the psychologist will talk to you about the next steps, if they think this will help. This might include some different types of treatments or recommending some books you can read and work through with the people you care about. You will also get a report, so you and your parent/guardian can talk about it and how best to support you. This report will help to decide what happens next which might include treatments or alternative services to help you in the best way possible. If you are given things to try by the psychologist after the assessment it's really important that you try them out, this is to help you and to see if they work or if they don't, they may have more suggestions which may help.

### **Do I need to bring anything?**

Only yourself, a parent/guardian and a drink and snack. You could also bring a sensory toy if you usually find them helpful.