



*“There’s nothing like seeing a young person’s happy face and seeing they’re learning.”  
– Carolyn Crum (Educational Psychologist, Arrowtown)*

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Helping Jenny feel more included at school is having a positive impact on her behaviour.

Jenny has Down’s syndrome and, until recently, didn’t like school much at all, which resulted in acting out at times. But, according to her parents, that’s changed.

The eight year old is keen to get out the door in the morning, attend school assemblies (a former pet hate) and has joined a sports team.

Jenny’s teacher is pleased with the change and thanks the educational psychologist (and a team of specialists) who taught her new ways to include Jenny in the day-to-day running of the classroom.

Today, all activities involve Jenny – from taking part in creative writing lessons, stopping and paying attention to the teacher’s instructions, coming together as a group on the mat and promptly returning to class from the playground.

She may have special education needs, says her teacher, but it’s clear she thrives on being included just like everyone else.

#### **Nature of Work**

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Psychologists work closely with parents, caregivers, teachers and other specialists to help children and young people with special education needs learn and develop.

Psychologists observe and assess children and young people who are referred to the Ministry of Education by teachers, parents or health specialists for learning and behaviour needs.

They talk to adults in a child or young person’s life and observe a child or young person’s overall development and behaviour to find out what that individual’s needs are.

The process can occur at a child or young person’s home or in an early childhood education service or school setting, wherever is most appropriate.

*“Every student is different and requires a different response – that’s why working as a team is so important. Mums, dads, teachers, and teacher aides – we all have an important role to play and a lot of knowledge and experience to contribute.” – Carolyn Crum (Educational Psychologist, Arrowtown)*

As a psychologist, you’ll adapt the way you work to suit the individual needs of a child or young person and tailor your approaches to suit the context in which a child or young person lives and learns.

Psychologists work with other specialists and agencies for extra support with behaviour, communication, hearing and other special education needs. As a result, they develop close working relationships with a range of education, health and community professionals.

*“The key is to look at what’s behind a student’s behaviour. Sometimes lessons are too difficult. Sometimes they’re too easy. Other times a child’s social skills or specific learning needs may be the barrier.” – Carolyn Crum (Educational Psychologist, Arrowtown)*

Preparing programmes and providing them to a child or young person’s support team for feedback and ideas are central to a psychologist’s role. Programmes become part of a child or young person’s individual education plan (a plan can be made up of several programmes each tailored to meet a child or young person’s different needs). Over time, programme strategies are implemented, monitored, reviewed and adapted.

*“Good people skills are really important because the way we work is collaborative. You’re constantly making assessments about leadership – do I need to take the lead in this situation or should someone else take control?” – Gary McClintock (Educational Psychologist, Motueka)*

Psychologists may also have the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience by developing programmes and providing training to early childhood education services, schools and community groups.

### **Who are we?**

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The Ministry of Education is a significant employer of educational psychologists and we’re looking for more. The Ministry has offices throughout New Zealand where we aim to provide access to education and learning to all New Zealand children and young people.



*“I’ve got a great job and I’m surrounded by inspirational people. What more could anyone ask for?”*

– Carolyn Crum (Educational Psychologist)

Working for us, you’ll help people see that children and young people with special education needs are more than their disability and with the right support can participate, learn, achieve and contribute.

*“There’s nothing like seeing a young person’s happy face and seeing they’re learning.” – Carolyn Crum (Educational Psychologist, Arrowtown)*

Still at school or studying at university? In a related career but feel like a change? Regardless of your situation, now is a good time to think about psychology opportunities with the Ministry of Education.

Education psychology is not just a job – it’s a profession with possibilities. Why not join us?

### **Where can I go in my career?**

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Becoming an education psychologist with the Ministry of Education gives you the rewards and challenges of the job itself, as well as opportunities to develop your career.

You’ll be supported and supervised by experienced professionals within the Ministry. Keeping up to date with the latest research evidence, taking part in ongoing training and mixing with a wide range of highly skilled and talented professionals will keep you challenged and stimulated.

*“We strive to build positive working relationships with schools and families, sometimes in very isolated rural communities. I’m continually inspired by the people I work with.” – Carolyn Crum (Educational Psychologist, Arrowtown)*

# Meet Gary McClintock, a *Psychologist* in Motueka



9AM TUESDAY MORNING: Gary starts the day checking in with a teacher on their student's progress.

*“The rewards of this career are plenty... the variety of the job, the potential to make a difference in a child’s life and the satisfaction of bringing together and developing an effective team of people.”*

**HIS BACKGROUND:** Gary McClintock is a full-time Educational Psychologist with the Ministry of Education in Motueka, temporarily working as a Service Manager in Christchurch.

Starting out as a primary teacher, he became a registered psychologist in 1992 leaving teaching to work for (what was then) Specialist Education Services (SES).

Five years later, he took up a head of department role with a local high school, overseeing learners’ support. In 2005, he joined the Ministry of Education.

Gary has a Teaching Diploma, a Master’s Degree in Education and a Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Psychology.

**HIS STORY:** Teaching is an excellent basis for a career in educational psychology, according to Gary McClintock.

“It gives you an appreciation for what it’s like to front up to a class of 30 kids who’re not all lined up and ready to do what you want them to do!” he says with a laugh.

Gary knows teachers can make a huge difference to the success of children with special education needs.

Often it’s about changing what’s happening in class and doing things differently, he says. For example, if a teacher takes the time to become more engaged and communicative with a child it can improve their sense of wellbeing and belonging and help turn around severe behaviour.

“The indirect message from the teacher is: ‘You’re in my class, you’re part of my class,’” says Gary.

**THE REWARDS AND CHALLENGES:** The rewards of being an Educational Psychologist are plenty, says Gary. There’s the variety of the job, the potential to make a difference in a child’s life and the satisfaction of bringing together and developing an effective team of people.

“As a career, it’s more than I thought it would be. I thought it was about working in classrooms. But we’re involved in the whole life of the child – all aspects from in school to out-of-school,” says Gary.

Education Psychologists can specialise in areas of interest – like parenting, behaviour and Autism. They can develop project management and organisational skills and get into management roles.

Gary’s done just that. Today, he facilitates parenting courses, helps early childhood education services and schools manage traumatic incidents and advises the police and courts on the education background of youth offenders.

Yet, there are challenges, too, he says. Making finite resources stretch as far as they can is stressful sometimes and managing people in highly emotional situations is often both challenging and rewarding.

**HIS FUTURE ASPIRATIONS:** For now, Gary’s enjoying his foray into management and is happy to see where that takes him.

Want to speak to someone like Gary about a career as an Educational Psychologist? Give us a call or drop us an email.

Moving into one of our fixed term, practice focused leadership roles will give you the chance to lead change and improve services from within the organisation.

*“As a career, it’s much, much more than I ever thought it would be. There’s so much scope to learn.”* – Gary McClintock (Psychologist, Motueka)

Other career opportunities include management, getting involved in special projects and offering supervision.

### What skills and knowledge do educational psychologists have?

- ▶ knowledge of normal and delayed child development
- ▶ skill in managing special education needs, particularly learning and behaviour, in a variety of settings
- ▶ knowledge of the human physiology and neurology
- ▶ knowledge of psychology, education theory and child development
- ▶ knowledge of community and family support services
- ▶ excellent communication, teaching, research, planning, assessment and administration skills.

### What qualifications and experience do I need?

You will need a master’s degree in psychology, a postgraduate diploma of education psychology (or an equivalent) and registration as a psychologist with the [New Zealand Psychology Board](#) (a requirement under the Health Practitioners’ Competency Assurance Act).

Research and plan for your career by checking out the Career Services website. If you’re still at school useful subjects include biology, science, maths and English.

Teaching, education and/or psychology are all relevant undergraduate degrees. [Massey University](#) and [Canterbury University](#) offer qualifications that lead to postgraduate diplomas and internships in educational psychology and child and family psychology and to registration with the New Zealand Psychology Board.

The Ministry of Education offers [study awards](#) to help students in their final intern year.

### What about my personal qualities?

You’ll spend lots of time with people from a range of ages, cultures, backgrounds and lifestyles. So, you will need to listen, build trust and inspire confidence.

Being understanding, patient, supportive, creative and practical are all great personal qualities for an educational psychologist.

Having a strong interest in team work and collaborating with other professionals is important.

### What salary and other benefits can I expect?

Salaries for educational psychologists vary between \$40,000 and \$81,000 per year, depending on skill, experience and the sector in which you work.

The Ministry offers five weeks’ annual leave and flexible working conditions, giving you the opportunity to balance work with child care, travel and training commitments.

### Where can I find out more?

Speak to an educational psychologist or contact the ministry at:

- ▶ 0800 622 222
- ▶ [special.education@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:special.education@minedu.govt.nz)

Check out the websites listed below:

New Zealand Psychologist Board

- ▶ [www.psychologistsboard.org.nz](http://www.psychologistsboard.org.nz)

New Zealand Psychology Society

- ▶ [www.psychology.org.nz](http://www.psychology.org.nz)

Ministry of Education, Special education

- ▶ [www.minedu.govt.nz/educationsectors/specialeducation.aspx](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/educationsectors/specialeducation.aspx)

- ▶ [www.minedu.govt.nz/sestudyawards](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/sestudyawards)

Universities

- ▶ [www.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.auckland.ac.nz)
- ▶ [www.canterbury.ac.nz](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz)
- ▶ [www.massey.ac.nz](http://www.massey.ac.nz)
- ▶ [www.otago.ac.nz](http://www.otago.ac.nz)
- ▶ [www.waikato.ac.nz](http://www.waikato.ac.nz)
- ▶ [www.vuw.ac.nz](http://www.vuw.ac.nz)

Careers information

- ▶ [www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)