



DR SIMON BIRD BSC (HONS), D CLIN PSY

CONSULTANT CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Specialising in Expert Witness Work, Assessments of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), and Related Neurodiversities

Summary

Dr Bird is a highly skilled and experienced Consultant Clinical Psychologist with expertise in expert witness work, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessments, and various additional clinical areas. He provides accurate assessments and targeted support strategies for individuals and families affected by ASD and related developmental disorders. He has developed a range of specialisms in the medico-legal field and undertakes assessments in the context of both public and private law. Since 2008, Dr Bird has completed over 500 assessments for the Family Court and given in-person and remote testimony on many occasions.

Values and Approach

Dr Bird prioritises the core values of empathy, openness, authenticity, and relationship-building in his work as a Clinical Psychologist. He believes that fostering genuine, trusting connections with clients is crucial for delivering effective and meaningful outcomes in both clinical and legal fields. By creating a positive rapport, and focussing on the perspectives of the client, he enables individuals and families to openly discuss their experiences and challenges in ways that enhance the validity of his clinical opinion.

In addition to his emphasis on the therapeutic/working relationship, Dr Bird brings academic and clinical rigour to his work. He stays up-to-date with the latest research and developments in his areas of expertise, ensuring that his practice is informed by evidence-based approaches where relevant. This allows him to provide a high quality of input, tailored to each client's unique needs.

Expert Witness Assessment

Dr Bird has been providing expert witness assessments to the Family Courts since 2008 and offers in-depth psychological assessments of adults and children in public and private law proceedings. More recently, he has developed specific expertise in assessing the dynamics underpinning Child Arrangements disputes following parental separation. Dr Bird has developed a strong understanding of how children present within these complex and conflictual situations, and the ways in which the dynamics within the parental relationship continue into legal proceedings. His assessments consider how parents' own experiences across their lifespans, particularly in childhood, might be relevant to the issues before the Court. He synthesises complex information from multiple sources, considering a) parental mental health and personality profiles, b) the cognitive and emotional styles of multiple



parties, c) the impact of developmental trauma on children and adults, and d) the relevance of inter-generational patterns in shaping parental attitudes and behaviours.

Dr Bird has now completed over 500 expert witness reports and received consistently positive feedback about the quality of his work, his engagement with families, and the usefulness of his reports to the Court in resolving complex and intractable issues. He has maintained and developed strong relationships with local clinicians and professionals in partner agencies. He always aims to provide practical rather than 'ideal world' recommendations for therapy and additional support that are not either available or suitable for the individuals involved. He provides clear testimony in legal hearings and has received consistently positive feedback from senior Judges regarding clarity and balance.

Autism Spectrum Disorders and related Neurodiversities

Dr Bird has provided independent assessments of Autism Spectrum Disorders and other forms of neurodiversity since 2010, most recently under the banner of Bird & Jones Autism Assessments alongside Dr Jonathan Jones (Consultant Clinical Psychologist). He uses a range of standardised and bespoke clinical assessments to generate developmental profiles for children and adults, which can then be used to access support systems and identify further resources. Dr Bird has increasingly been instructed to assess the role of ASD within public and private law proceedings and has completed diagnostic assessments of ASD in those contexts.

General Areas of Expertise

- ✦ Childhood attachment
- ✦ Domestic abuse
- ✦ Sexual abuse
- ✦ Deliberate self-harm
- ✦ Leadership
- ✦ Adult Mental Health issues
- ✦ Parenting
- ✦ Children in Care
- ✦ Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR)
- ✦ Complex family cases
- ✦ Child arrangements issues
- ✦ Personality profiles and their impact on parenting
- ✦ Developmental trauma
- ✦ Parental mental health
- ✦ Substance and alcohol misuse
- ✦ Domestic abuse
- ✦ Teaching and training

Additional Skills

- ✦ Detailed clinical interviews
- ✦ Clinical assessments of attachment
- ✦ Assessment of Autism Spectrum Conditions
- ✦ Mental Capacity assessments
- ✦ Cognitive assessments
- ✦ Executive functioning and ADHD assessments
- ✦ Comprehensive child assessments
- ✦ Assessing capacity for change
- ✦ Effective multi-agency and multi-professional liaison



Education History

Diploma in Leadership Studies. University of Exeter, United Kingdom Year of Completion: 2015.

Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (DClinPsy). University of Plymouth, United Kingdom. Year of Completion: 1999.

Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Psychology with Sociology, University of Bath, United Kingdom. Year of Completion: 1994.

Bond Solon Courses:

- ✦ Report Writing (2020)
- ✦ Basic Courtroom Skills (2020)
- ✦ General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (2020)

Relevant Employment History - NHS

Clinical Posts

Senior Clinical Psychologist, North Bristol Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), Bristol, UK 2001-2016

- ✦ Provided a wide range of clinical and consultation services to young people and their families
- ✦ Coordinated CAMHS services for adopted children and Children Looked After by the Local Authority in North Bristol
- ✦ Lead Clinical Psychologist for Autism Spectrum Disorders across North Bristol

Lead Clinical Psychologist for children and young people with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) in Bristol and South Gloucestershire (April 2016 - March 2018).

- ✦ Based within Community Paediatrics but liaising with CAMHS and management around service provision and development.
- ✦ Contributing psychological opinion to complex assessments where comorbid conditions and children's life experience were potentially relevant to their presentations.
- ✦ Responsible for liaising between disparate services to co-develop joined-up assessment and intervention processes.
- ✦ Key contributor to early service development around a unified ASD assessment pathway in Bristol and South Gloucestershire
- ✦ Provision of consultation and supervision to health professionals working with children with ASD



Service Development

- ✦ Partially seconded from CAMHS between 2013 and 2016 to lead on the local implementation of the Children and Young People's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (CYP-IAPT) programme. This NHS England initiative was designed to increase expertise and experience of evidence-based therapies in local services.

Independent Practice

Independent Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Formulate Psychology LLP

Expert Witness Assessment

2008-Present

Key activities

- ✦ Undertaking detailed assessments of children, young people, and adults in public law proceedings
- ✦ Specific expertise on relation to complex, intractable disputes about child arrangements
- ✦ Extensive experience and expertise of assessing families where there are concerns about a child being alienated from their non-resident parent, and / or coercive control through the legal process

Independent Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Bird & Jones

Assessment Services - neurodiversity

2010-Present

Key Activities

- ✦ Diagnostic and non-diagnostic assessment of children, young people and adults with suspected ASD and other forms of neurodiversity, including ADHD and executive functioning issue
- ✦ Cognitive assessments of children and adults
- ✦ Delivery of advice and support regarding personal and parenting strategies to address the more challenging aspects of a person's neurodiversity

Dr Simon Bird

Formulate Psychology LLP

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