Support for Learning: All our Children and All their Potential

Thank you and acknowledgements

With many thanks to the children, young people, parents, carers and practitioners who have shared their experiences and offered their views to this Review.

Thanks also to the members of the Review Steering Group and colleagues who have supported the Review process and to Professor Melissa Van Dyke and to The Carnegie Trust.

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Introduction from the Independent Chair, Angela Morgan

At some time in our lives, most of us have had the experience of being outside – or despite being inside- a public service or system and feeling vulnerable and ill equipped to navigate it. A family member health crisis for example.

Those recollections from my own life have been strongly in my mind throughout this Review process. I believe strongly that the question "What would I want for the children and young people I love and care about?" should be considered by all of us involved in providing public services and making decisions for fellow citizens of our communities. It must be a benchmark for testing those decisions.

One of the striking aspects of this Review process has been how many people I have heard from who, having spoken to me from the perspective of their work roles with children and young people, have then told me about their experience as parents, or indeed vice versa. Similarly, many professionals concluded a conversation with the comment:

"I have a personal interest in this as my nephew/friend's son/neighbour's daughter…needs support and I know their experience has been…"

There is great potential in this shared level of emotional investment in children and young people who have additional support needs. It suggests we can strengthen communication and relationships, which are the fuel for making progress in complex areas of public service delivery.

Conversely, the challenge in addressing this issue lies in respecting this high emotional investment while applying the necessary rigor of analysis. Drawing valid conclusions and proposing potentially uncomfortable recommendations must be done with respect and sensitivity.

Scotland has ground breaking, rights widening legislation[1] for children who face additional barriers to learning and to fulfilling their potential. The most recent statistics tell us that these children comprise 30.9% of our school age population.[2]

However, this issue is of vital importance to all of us, not only those 30.9%.

How all our children and young people experience their schools and communities matters. Showing that people who are different to them are valued,

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[1] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/4/contents
[2] https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-schools-scotland-no-10-2019-edition/

respected and included, shapes the beliefs and attitudes, which will underpin their own contribution as adults to our communities and wider Scottish society.

Most importantly, a promise has been made to children and young people who, due to a range of barriers, need help to flourish and fulfil their potential. They are also the children and young people who are most likely to struggle to have their voices heard.

In the actions that follow this Review, and for the range of stakeholders involved in their delivery, the focus must remain on the children and young people who are at the heart of this legislation.

Scotland's commitment to incorporation of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child[3] in 2021 means that is a central requirement, not an option.

This report refers throughout to children and young people. This should be understood as those who have additional support needs as set out under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004.[4]

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[3] https://www.gov.scot/news/strengthening-childrens-rights/
[4] The language to describe professionals or the workforce throughout the report is interchangeable, and reflects the different ways in which those professionals describe themselves.

Background

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) places duties on local authorities to identify, meet and review the needs of children and young people. It gives children[5] and young people[6], parents and carers a number of rights, including rights to ask for additional support needs to be identified and planned for; to receive advice and information about their or their child's additional support needs; be part of discussions about the support that they or their child will receive; and access dispute resolution procedures to resolve concerns.

Since the Act was implemented, there has been concern from schools and families about the availability and effectiveness of support for all children and young people. There are currently 30.9% of children and young people in schools in Scotland with additional support needs.

These needs are diverse; vary considerably in longevity, stability and complexity. Consequently, different types and levels of support are required from education providers and other public services.

The conditions are not mutually exclusive. This Review heard about increasing numbers of children and young people where issues due to Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are compounded by social, emotional, behavioural problems linked to poverty and inequality.

The statistics on young people entering the Secure Care and Youth Justice systems affirm this, highlighting that "51% of young people in secure care accommodation had at least one disability, (defined as "a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities").[7]

The legislation clearly states that an additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors.

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[5] Aged between 12-15, subject to assessments of capacity and consideration of impact on wellbeing.
[6] As defined at section 29(1) of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004 (as amended)
[7] https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-2017-2018/

The supporting guidance[8] unhelpfully complicates people's understanding of what an additional support need may be by listing a selection of conditions, which may require additional support:

- have motor or sensory impairments;
- have low birth weight;
- are being bullied;
- are children of parents in the Armed Forces;
- are particularly able or talented;
- have experienced a bereavement;
- are affected by imprisonment of a family member;
- are interrupted learners;
- have a learning disability;
- have barriers to learning as a result of a health need, such as fetal alcohol spectrum disorder;
- are looked after by a local authority or who have been adopted;
- have a learning difficulty, such as dyslexia;
- are living with parents who are abusing substances;
- are living with parents who have mental health problems;
- have English as an additional language;
- are not attending school regularly;
- have emotional or social difficulties;
- are on the child protection register;

- are refugees; or
- are young carers.

In September 2019, John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, commissioned this Review and appointed Angela Morgan as the Independent Chair. The remit for the Review was agreed between the Scottish Government, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and representatives of each formed a Steering Group. The remit of the Review made clear that: the principle of presumption of mainstreaming for children and young people was not under review; and the relevant issues would be considered within existing resources.

The remit of the Review was to consider the implementation of the legislation:

- how additional support for learning (ASL) works in practice, across early learning and childcare centres, primary, secondary and special schools (including enhanced provision, services and units);
- where children and young people learn within the balance of the provision set out above, recognising that not all local

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[8] https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/

authority areas have all of those provisions;

- the quality of learning and support, including overall achievement and positive destinations achieved post-school;
- the different approaches to planning and assessment to meet the needs of children and young people;
- the roles and responsibilities of support staff, teaching staff, leadership role, education authorities and national agencies; and
- the areas of practice that could be further enhanced through better use of current resources to support practice, staffing or other aspects of provision.

The Review began in September 2019 and concluded in February 2020 with the submission of this report and recommendations to Scottish Ministers and COSLA.[9]

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[9] Due to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic and the need for the Scottish Government and Local Government to focus on an overriding priority of responding to it, publication of this report was slightly delayed.

Approach taken by the Review

The Review has undergone three phases.

Phase 1: Desk Review
August 2019 – September 2019

Analysis of evidence[10] published between 2017-2019, which highlighted key themes and concerns and contributed to shaping Phase 2.

Summary of Conclusions (taken directly from the Desk Review)

The desk review of current evidence has identified a number of common themes about what the strengths and challenges of implementation of additional support for learning are.

The qualitative evidence overwhelmingly suggests that there is a positive perception of the principle of inclusion.

There are a number of themes that have emerged from the evidence considered which focus on the challenges of implementation of additional support for learning. The most common of these are:

- Resources;
- Training;
- Exclusions;
- Parental involvement – accessibility and visibility of information;
- Type and access to provision;
- Access to specialist services and support from other agencies;
- The importance of partnership working in accessing Co-ordinated Support Plans, and in identification and assessment; and
- Variation in approach across local authorities.

Other reviews or policy developments, which are significant for the implementation of the ASL legislation, were noted[11]. This was in order to ensure that this Review did not duplicate work already completed or in progress. Where possible, there has been information sharing and collaboration to ensure this Review took into account current and planned developments.

Phase 2: Engagement and Listening
October 2019 - January 2020

The Review Chair took an early decision with the agreement of the Steering Group, to prioritise the time and resource of the Review to hear directly from those most involved and affected by the

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[10] Annex A
[11] For Example, the Independent Care Review, review of the GTCS Professional Standards, etc.

implementation of the ASL legislation in practice. Considerable efforts were made to engage with children and young people; parents and carers with direct and lived experience; and practitioners, in and beyond education, who are directly involved in the delivery of services. The Review has taken an open and listening approach in order to learn about how children and young people's needs are currently being met. It started with the open question of what is most important from the contributors' perspective.

The focus of the Review within the remit and parameters has been shaped by those responses. Consequently, the main focus is on the experience of children and young people during primary and secondary school years.

Many different people and groups have shared their experiences, perspectives and views through the Chair's email address, in telephone calls and face to face meetings, individually and in groups. Representational, membership and specialist bodies and networks submitted documented comment and

analysis. This included summaries following sessions with their members.

The perspective of the agencies and leaders who hold responsibility at a strategic level within the statutory agencies has also been sought and considered within the process.

All contributors were given an assurance of confidentiality and anonymity to enable them to share information confidently and honestly.

Annex B provides an overview of engagement.

Phase 3: Report and Recommendations
February 2020

Taken together, these phases have enabled the Chair to gather evidence, complete analytical work, and reach conclusions to support recommendations for change.

The evidence analysis has additionally been quality assured by an independent associate in order to affirm the validity of the conclusions presented.

Evidence heard by the Review: balancing perspectives

The Review was initiated due to the widespread acceptance that not all children and young people are flourishing, and that the legislation and implementation have not achieved all aims. Therefore it was anticipated, that the broad engagement process of the Review would be dominated by concerns and negative experiences. This proved to be the case.

There were also examples of excellent practice, dedicated professionals, loving families and thriving children and young people. However, there were too many stories of struggle and shortfalls; frustration, anxiety and stress for children and young people and their families. Frontline practitioners, and those directly supporting them, told similar stories.

Poor experiences do motivate people to speak out. However, the responses received affirm that the very complex challenges of meaningful inclusion and meeting additional support needs are a work in progress in Scotland.

Many across the contributor groups have welcomed the Review as an opportunity to be listened to. However, some stakeholders have expressed scepticism about the value of the Review and have chosen not to participate. This highlights a strong theme expressed from all perspectives about the need for trust, confidence and being heard.

The Review has, in the light of this, focused on considering, understanding and respecting how the perspectives of children and young people, parents, carers and professionals either differ or coincide and why.

Themes that have been dominant and consistent across all the perspectives (children and young people, parents and carers and professionals) have been noted and analysed. There were different views on origins and solutions. Where there are fundamental differences, these have been clarified.

Against this background, the report does not highlight or showcase either poor or excellent practice. Instead, the report seeks to draw out themes from this evidence and make recommendations that will drive changes in implementation in practice.

The themes of the narrative are interlinked and interconnected. There were significant underpinning issues, which have become so embedded and assumed that they are difficult to see. These were identified, highlighted and analysed.

Three broader frameworks of thinking about public services have also been referenced where relevant:

- Implementation and Improvement Methodology;[12]

- Early Intervention and Prevention;[13] and
- Kindness in Public Services.[14]

Firstly, however, it is essential to ground what follows in this report in the experiences of children and young people.

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[12] https://pureportal.strath.ac.uk/en/publications/implementation-science-international-encyclopedia-of-the-social-a

[13] https://www.gov.scot/publications/commission-future-delivery-public-services/

[14] https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/kindness-emotions-and-human-relationships-the-blind-spot-in-public-policy/

What did children and young people tell the Review[15]

Children and young people want to be included in their schools and communities. They feel it is important that those working in schools are aware of additional support needs and sensitive to their individual needs. Schools should have a whole school approach to inclusion, respect children and young people's rights and support individuals to achieve their potential. This will be of benefit to all children and young people and can be achieved by talking with and listening to them. Children and young people told the Review that these things are important:

- **Meaningful relationships between children and young people and staff are important for learning;**
- **A willingness to adapt** teaching methods to children and young people's learning styles, needs, and varying pace and challenge, helps them to learn. Using technology can be really helpful here;
- **School needs to be a safe place.** Having a choice of calm, quiet or sensory areas' in all schools would help facilitate this. Children and young people should be able to choose when they want or need to access these spaces;
- **All school staff need to have more knowledge and understanding** of additional support needs so they can meet everyone's needs;
- **Children and young people with additional support needs don't want to be underestimated for their ability and capability.** Their additional support need should not define them;
- **More understanding and empathy from peers** would improve their learning experience;
- **Timely responses to bullying** were important for children and young people;
- **Support for children and young people with additional support needs must be consistent.** It should be available whenever people need it and all staff should make sure they support a child or young person in the same way. At present there are multiple examples of neither happening;
- **Communication needs to improve.** Primary and secondary schools need to talk to each other. There also needs to be more communication between schools, other organisations that provide support, and children and young people;
- **Children and young people need to feel they have involvement in information sharing** as part of decision making. Children and young

people have their own views on what works for them and what kind of support they need; and

- **Additional Support for Learning needs to be adequately funded** to ensure everyone gets the support they need, when they need it.

Parental testimony and specialist organisations provided many examples of children and young people's views and experiences that reiterate and affirm these key points. A smaller number of contributions than hoped for were made directly by children and young people themselves with the support of their schools or other organisations. This highlights the need to strengthen support and structures for listening to their views and also reflects the conclusions on visibility and awareness noted under Theme 1: Vision and Visibility.

For this reason, my first recommendation is:

Overarching Recommendation: Children and Young People Participation

Children and young people must be listened to and involved in all decision making relating to additional support for learning. Co-creation and collaboration with children, young people and their families will support more coherent, inclusive and all-encompassing policy making, which improves implementation, impact and experience.

Review findings and how to read this report

Introduction

The sections which follow, are divided into themes.

One of the main challenges of this Review process has been to excavate and disentangle these themes. They are at the root of why not all children and young people are flourishing as the legislation intended.

These themes have become embedded, assumed and are often hidden. The headline conclusions under these themes are shaped directly by the Review's priority focus on those involved in direct implementation: children and young people, parents and carers, school and other professionals at the frontline of delivery. The intention is to maintain focus on the impact of each of these themes in practice.

The overarching experience they shared with the Review is characterised by:

1. A significant disconnect between experience and the stated aspirations of the legislation and policy.

2. Challenges in being able to respond to the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. It is dominating the focus and the time of many school leadership teams and specialist service managers, but this is not consistently or sufficiently recognised and understood at senior management and planning levels.

3. Not all children, young people and the professionals who are committed to supporting them to flourish, are valued at an equal level within the education system. This is strongly reinforced by the pressures of the focus on Attainment.

4. Children and young people and the parents, carers and professionals working closest to them all express frustration at not being listened to by people within the system who they perceive to have the power to act or make changes.

5. A range of other strategic and operational factors are influencing, and are symptomatic of, the disconnect between the aspiration and objectives of the legislation and the reality of implementation.

Shaping this report into themes is an endeavour to unpick and examine these factors, but it must be emphasised that they are interlinked and enmeshed.

It is understandable that readers of this report will focus on the themes that appear to be of most relevance to their involvement and experience. However, the Chair would urge all who have an interest in this issue to read all the themes, as they are so interconnected.

The landscape is complex and will continue to be so. The unique opportunity this Review presents is to make that complexity visible, to establish an agreed baseline for positive action and to prioritise and energise a critical area of public life.

Theme 1: Vision and visibility

A Comprehensive Picture?

There is a lack of understanding, or recognition, of the range of issues and conditions which entitle children and young people to support. This is amongst even those closest to the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning legislation.

The Review considered reasons for that. This report also focuses on common and shared themes and processes rather than on differences or comparisons. This is in line with the key principles of the legislation, which do not distinguish or prioritise between children and young people.

However, the Review has received significant contributions on behalf of the children and young people affected by some of the issues and conditions listed above. It has actively sought to engage with the groups of children and young people who do not have the same profile or strength of group advocacy within additional support for learning.

It is important to incorporate and highlight the key issues of concern for all groups the Review heard from. It is equally important to acknowledge that some voices are weaker or may still be missing.

Annex C presents this information.

This report is the base for a live working document, which should be developed and become part of a continuing communication and awareness raising strategy, noted in the recommendations.

On this theme, it has been reported that there are variations in reporting of needs. While there are broad consistent trends over time in the pupil census data[16], there are factors that contribute to this variation across the country. These include local authorities and schools responding differently to thresholds and moderation issues as the national definition of 'Additional Support Need' allows for wide interpretation.

There are also variations in administrative and technical recording processes for SEEMiS[17][18] (who does what will vary across schools), and in how SEEMiS data is used at a local level, i.e. its purpose beyond the census of needs.

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[16] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Summarystatsforschools
[17] The Education Management Information System
[18] Local Authorities have different approaches to provision of support provided at each stage.

What is Success?

Scotland does not have a national vision of success for children and young people within the overarching concept of "Learning for Life"; the language of the legislation.

Underpinned by the rights conferred by this legislation the term "Learning for Life" resonates with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Articles 28 and 29, which defines learning as:

"The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential" [19]

Article 28 (b) notes:

"Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational…"

This is a broad and holistic definition of education, which encompasses a broad and holistic vision of learning.

However, the additional support for learning legislation primarily designates responsibility for its implementation to Education Authorities, limiting the focus of attention and understanding of additional support for learning on education and academic achievement and on the education system.

Under the legislation, Education Authorities can draw on support from other agencies identified in the Act: Health, Social Work and Skills Development Scotland. In that regard the Getting it Right for Every Child[20] (GIRFEC) framework should underpin a holistic vision of children and young people as pupils, as learners in the broader sense and also as individual young citizens, part of their wider community.

The evidence from professionals, parents and carers is that GIRFEC is not consistently driving implementation of the additional support for learning legislation. GIRFEC too often becomes focused on the **process** of planning, due to restrictions on the capacity to deliver support.

Yet evidence to the Review, particularly on transitions, consistently affirms that a wider view, rooted in the concept of learning for life beyond the educational and academic, is crucial.

That wider view needs to encompass the child or young person's lived experience, 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Their whole life outside the edges of school life into home, family (however, family is

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[19] https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/
[20] https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/

constituted or is defined by a child or young person[21]) and community.

The wider view on learning is vital both during the journey **through** the education system from nursery to college and **after** that into adulthood. Everyone's childhood experiences affect their lifelong wellbeing and life chances. However, a comprehensive perspective on learning has particular significance for children and young people with lifelong conditions.

Recognising and Measuring Achievement

The most powerful and visible measure of success for Scotland's education system and for the progress of individual children and young people is currently attainment in the form of qualifications. Within the system, some qualifications are valued significantly more highly than others.

All review contributors have affirmed that there must be no reduction in aspiration or ambition for children and young people to flourish and achieve to the best of their abilities, not least in formal qualifications.

However, not all children and young people can make progress and achieve through qualifications.

Collated performance indicators for the education system currently overlook other forms of progress made by many children and young people.

This devalues and demoralises children and young people who learn and achieve in other ways and devalues and demoralises the skilled and committed staff who work with them.

Children and young people for whom exam based qualifications are not aligned to their learning needs and potential are not failures. The Review evidence is consistent that there must be recognition of individual achievement in Learning for Life. This means creating **equally valued** alternative pathways and ways of measuring individual progress. These must measure the child or young person's achievements and success from their own starting point. At the same time, the skills of professionals supporting those achievements must be made visible and recognised as valuable.

At system level, this picture is reflected in the focus of political dialogue and media attention on exam results and the absence of public celebration of other pathways and achievements.

The limited needs focused language of additional support for

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[21] The term "family "will be used throughout the rest of the report encompassing this definition.

learning legislation reinforces the focus on a child or young person's additional support needs as deficits. The embedded implication is of (continuing) cost and burden rather than potential contribution. It overlooks individual interests, ambitions, aspirations and talents as well as love and connection in relationships with family and friends.

The language of deficit reinforces the experience children and young people have of being seen and reacted to as the embodiment of their condition or their problem. Appreciation of how that condition or problem affects them, and feels for them as individuals, is lacking in this approach. This is further stigmatising and excluding. It causes hurt and loneliness for children and young people.

In this context, it is welcome therefore that the First Minister has recently stated:[22]

"Scotland is redefining what it means to be a successful nation by focusing on the broader wellbeing of the population as well as the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the country…

…Putting wellbeing at the heart of our approach means we can focus on a wider set of measures which reflect on things like the health and happiness of citizens as well as economic wealth to create a world that considers the quality of a person's life to be as precious an asset as financial success."

Additionally, in relation to another area of policy, the First Minister has said:

"…the system of help, decision-making, support and accountability - must be more supportive and responsive."[23]

These are helpful and timely statements of commitment that resonate with the case for a new approach to recognising, understanding, appreciating and celebrating progress for all children and young people.

The narrow view of learning, the dominant focus on qualifications and the embedded perspective on deficits all underpin the lack of visibility of children and young people in public and political debate on education and more broadly as equal members of our communities and society.

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[22] https://www.gov.scot/news/health-and-wellbeing-as-fundamental-as-gdp/

[23] https://www.gov.scot/publications/statement-report-independent-care-review/

Recommendation 1.1 Vision statement

- A national, overarching Vision Statement for success for children and young people who have additional support needs must be developed by the end of 2020, with the full involvement of children and young people.

- This vision statement must be developed alongside a positive public communication plan that highlights the range of conditions and issues identified in the additional support for learning legislation. This will be one of the ways in which the profile of additional support for learning is raised to ensure equity for all children and young people.

- The achievements and successes of children and young people with additional support needs must be celebrated publicly, in equivalence to attainment and exam results.

- The language used to describe children and young people with additional support needs, and the services that support them, must be changed. It should move away from describing children and young people as their condition and should not be solely focused on deficits[24].

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[24] For example, Keys to Life is a positive reference point for consideration.

Recommendation 1.2 Measurement

- A national measurement framework for additional support for learning must be developed to ensure that there is no reduction in aspiration and ambition for all children and young people to achieve to the maximum of their learning potential. The National Improvement Framework must be revised to ensure parity for additional support for learning.

- This framework must be rooted in improvement methodology and assist in reinforcing a culture of improvement rather than compliance. The main objective of measurement and recording will be to support local improvement rather than comparisons between Authorities.

- The test measures must recognise that qualifications are not relevant learning objectives for all children and young people and those children and young people are not failures because of that. The Milestones to Support Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs[25], introduced in 2018, along with the Curriculum review are positive reference points and should be taken into account.

- The measures must value and ensure visibility of the diverse range of achievements, including in vocational learning, that are possible for all children and young people with additional support needs and reflect what they and their families feel are important for their (future) quality of life.

- The investment in Pupil Support Assistants must be measured for impact and improvement on children and young people's experiences and achievements. Local authority and school managers must plan a strategy to review the deployment of Pupil Support Assistants, which takes account of recommendations from the current national research Education Endowment Fund (2018)[26].

- A plan must be developed and implemented to test how the National Performance Framework can be expanded to include achievement measures that go beyond the current narrow parameters of attainment and qualifications (based on the National Performance Framework values).

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[25] https://education.gov.scot/media/pcvpeaeg/milestones-supporting-learners-with-complex-asn.pdf

[26] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistants/?utm_source=site&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=support%20assistants

Theme 2: Mainstreaming and inclusion

At political, policy and strategic levels the principles of Inclusion and of the Presumption of Mainstreaming[27] in education are widely and strongly supported.[28]

Inclusion – what does it mean in practice?

The Review has strongly and consistently affirmed that the physical presence of a child or young person who has additional support needs in a mainstream school does not constitute inclusion.

The four principles of the inclusion framework[29] state that for children and young people to be included at school, they must be **present, participating, supported and achieving**:

"Together, these four features support the delivery of inclusive learning environments for all children and young people that enable them to reach their full potential."[30]

Inclusion means the fullest involvement possible in the life of the school including outwith the classroom; in the playground, on school trips; at sporting and social events; visible as part of the community.

Inclusion encompasses the experience of a pattern of small and large informal and formal interactions and relationships, which combine to create the school community and culture. These things are hard to describe, but are felt by the children, young people and adults who are part of that community. Professionals, parents and carers all consistently commented on the "feel" of a school and the impact of a first visit on their ongoing perception of that school.

In that context, the true measure of inclusion is not through external and objective criteria, it is in the child or young person's own experience and how they feel. Currently, far too many children and young people report feeling isolated, lonely, rejected, sometimes actively disliked or uncared for.

Due to the predominant focus on attainment through qualification, the current emphasis across the Inclusion quadrants is unbalanced with the focus on achieving. A rebalancing across all four quadrants of the Inclusion

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[27] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2000/6/section/15

[28] Annex A

[29] https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-presumption-provide-education-mainstream-setting/

[30] https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-presumption-provide-education-mainstream-setting/

Framework is required to support implementation of the additional support for learning legislation and is necessary to develop valued and alternative pathways that support the child or young person's experience of inclusion.

The Presumption of Mainstreaming – what does it mean in practice?

The Presumption of Mainstreaming was not part of the Review remit. However, the following perspectives emerged in the open listening process and have been included as part of the Chair's commitment to present a Review report which is credible to the contributors.

With 30.9% of children and young people now identified as having an additional support need, the key question that has emerged is:

What range of educational provision is required and how does it need to be shaped to ensure inclusion of all children and young people?

The concept of "mainstream" needs to be redefined and repositioned for the profile of children and young people as they are now and are projected to be in the future, not as they were in the past.

Nationally there are outstanding examples of mainstream education settings that have stretched and adapted their culture and environments to the benefit of all children and young people. Providing responsive personalised adjustments for individual children and young people matters for all, but is obviously vital to including those with additional support needs

There has also been the welcome development of nurture approaches across schools and local authorities[31]. Nurture is focussed on "wellbeing and relationships and a drive to support the growth and development of children and young people". This approach will be of particular benefit to some children and young people.

Where this approach can work particularly well is when it is used within enhanced provision within mainstream. In such settings, mainstream children and young people are supported on a needs led basis. Children and young people who attend the enhanced provision are all integrated within their mainstream setting. This also allows for relevant discussions to take place with other practitioners to inform planning and support. It encourages flexibility of the curriculum to develop core skills in Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Wellbeing.

Rural areas with dispersed populations and geographical distance challenges have always needed to stretch and develop that

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[31] An example of a nurture approach: https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/18943/Nurture

approach. Not having capacity to create separate mainstream and specialist provision has advantages when looked at through the lens of inclusion.

However, there are increasing levels of need. This is evident in how children and young people demonstrate their needs though communication and behaviour as well as in levels of diagnosis. There is also increasing complexity of need. Mainstream and, where relevant, special schools units and hubs, report being stretched and under intense pressure as the thresholds between Mainstream and Specialist are now significantly different.

This is particularly so where, not just the numbers, but the range of additional support needs in a classroom require very different responses.

There have been strong concerns expressed that decisions to place in specialist or independent provision too often require a child or young person to fail (sometimes repeatedly) rather than being driven by prevention and early intervention. This causes stress and distress for them, their families, school staff and others involved in direct delivery.

At the beginning of the Review process, the Chair heard the assumption expressed that primary schools are more able to be inclusive and responsive to additional support needs. Whilst

the stability of one teacher for a class has been confirmed as often having significant benefits, the Review finding is that primary education is now experiencing the same pressures as secondary.

One consequence of that is how effective the systems and processes are for transition between primary and secondary, a crucial point in any child's education. There are very well considered examples of excellent practice. However, the Review found significant variation with consequent impacts on children and young people and also on staff who were unprepared for the needs of children and young people.

Overall, the Review evidence on the presumption of mainstreaming raises questions for all aspects of design and delivery in education, including for Scotland's curriculum. Whilst the curriculum is designed to enable differentiation in order to most effectively support children and young people to learn, in practice many teachers expressed a range of concerns about how this is operating in practice and their skills and capacity to effectively provide curriculum differentiation.

As children and young people progress through the mainstream system, the consequences of that become particularly significant for children and young people with additional support needs. The intensity and funnelling of focus

on qualification achievement in secondary and senior phase reduces the flexibility and capacity for response to support additional needs and support for learning through alternative pathways.

The Review heard a strong view in favour of responsive child centred provision. This requires a system that has flexible and permeable edges. It must be rooted in the ethos of inclusion, rather than constraining and defining children and young people by building locations and a hard edge separation between "mainstream" and "specialist". A minority, but notable opinion was that whilst specialist provision is in place, inclusion would never be achieved because that structure reinforces the view held by those professionals in mainstream provision that additional support for learning is not, or should not, be part of their responsibility.

Another argument made for flexible provision is based on the view that individual and group needs continuously change and develop through childhood and adolescence. Flexibility of edges would therefore (where decision making processes are aligned) enable professionals at, and closest to, the frontline of delivery, to exercise judgement on the complexities of group dynamics and interactions of children and young people with differing barriers or conditions.

This links to a clear and emphatic message heard consistently from many practitioners and professionals. This message is about the key organisational conditions that they need to fulfil their professional ambitions to support all children and young people to learn to the best of their ability. Conditions that also allow for replication of good and best practice – regardless of whether the setting is designated mainstream or specialist.

Supported by implementation methodology[32] those key conditions consistently identified and evidenced in the good practice seen by the Review are:

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[32] E.g. https://implementationscience.uconn.edu/ Implementation science is the study of methods to promote the integration of research findings and evidence into the practice and policy of education and research. The goal of implementation science research is to understand professionals' behaviour related to the uptake, adoption, and implementation of evidence-based interventions.

> **Key conditions for delivery**
>
> - Values driven leadership;
> - An open and robust culture of communication, support <u>and</u> challenge - underpinned by trust, respect and positive relationships;
> - Resource alignment, including time for communication and planning processes; and
> - Methodology for delivery of knowledge learning and practice development, which incorporates time for coaching, mentoring, reflection and embedding into practice.

Key processes for implementation of Additional Support for Learning – how are they working to support inclusion and the presumption of mainstreaming?

The purpose of the legislation and subsequent amendments[33] was to widen access and ensure all eligible children and young people had their rights to learn upheld.

The Additional support for learning: statutory guidance 2017[34] identifies the Core processes required to achieve that including:

- Noticing/Identifying;
- Responding; and
- Coordinating/Monitoring.

The underpinning ethos is early identification to enable early intervention and prevention.

However, the evidence from respondents is that these key processes have become distorted to manage levels of need and demand.

The legislation makes no distinction between or prioritisation of the barriers faced by children and young people.

However, the guidance on the presumption to provide education in a mainstream setting[35] requires decisions on placing for each eligible child to be taken within two parameters:

- The requirement to consider the child's needs in balance with the needs of the group of children; and
- The requirement to consider Best Value for the Local Authority.

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[33] Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004 (as amended)
[34] https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/
[35] https://www.gov.scot/publications/guidance-presumption-provide-education-mainstream-setting/

These parameters will never be static and the context for individual decisions will always vary.

However, increasing levels of need, their complexity, severity, the nature of expression of needs and resource constraints are intensifying the processes that prioritise children and young people in order to ration limited resources. The consequences of the extended period and impact of austerity on public services are of serious concern.

Processes include the introduction of, or increase in, thresholds for the requirement for a diagnosis before a response is considered, although the needs for support are clearly evident.

Once a threshold has been reached, there is variation in transparency and visibility of resource allocation processes; to professionals and leadership teams, as well as to parents and carers.

For example, in how directly involved school leaders are in decisions on Pupil Support Assistant time allocation and placement decisions or whether these decisions are the sole responsibility of a senior level of management.

A very significant level of energy is being devoted to child planning processes. This complies with process targets[36], but does not necessarily result in active delivery of support. This causes disappointment, frustration and anger for children, young people, and their families and a sense of failure and helplessness for staff.

For committed staff, endeavouring to maintain their professional integrity, the key delivery conditions already noted, are essential. Where openness and transparency are not in place, the risks are of a culture of blame and/or a culture that lacks robust accountability for practice with vulnerable children and young people.

These are significant issues, which are extremely uncomfortable to raise. They must be aired and considered. Not to ascribe fault or blame, but to assist in understanding the fundamental problems that this Review has been established to consider.

One of the consequences of prioritisation and rationing of resources, is that inevitably it results in competition between individual children and young people. It does the same in terms of advocacy bodies for groups of children and young people who fit eligible categories and conditions under the legislation.

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[36] Timescales as set out under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004 (as amended)

There is open agreement across all perspectives that the children and young people who are most likely to be prioritised for resource are those whose parents and carers are able and willing to strongly and persistently advocate on their behalf. These parents and carers often expressed concern for the children and young people whose parents are not in a position to advocate for them.

It was clear that those children and young people whose parents and carers are less able or unable to advocate for them, are clustered in particular groups which are recognised under the Additional Support for Learning Act. Even so, as a result of lacking that individual advocacy, they are routinely overlooked.

In reflecting on these points, it has been notable that professionals, when asked what they would do if they had a child with additional support needs, have consistently responded in the same language as parents and carers: "I would fight for my child"

Despite this, the range of comments from professionals about parents and carers included a strong view – and expectation - that parents and carers are "unreasonable and demanding". This fuels the difficulties in communication and relationships highlighted under a later Theme.

This Review provides an opportunity to propose a reframing of the issue.

Children and young people who are most likely to get the wider support needed to flourish, have the support of strong advocacy of their families. This is a symptom, not the cause of the problem that not all children and young people are flourishing.

Scotland's overall policy on families[37] affirms that the aspiration should be for all parents and carers to be the best advocates for their children. This is, however, not a prerequisite for needs to be met. Public services are expected to be and should be proactive and responsive.
The other factors highlighted in this report clearly mean that is currently not the case.

Alongside the strength of parent and carer advocacy, the other significant factor, which prioritises identification and response in providing support, is in how the child or young person communicates through their behaviour. This is an equally sensitive, uncomfortable, but essential area which needs airing.

As noted, the legislation requires consideration of the child or young person's needs within the group of children's needs. Evidence heard by the Review is that the personal

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[37] https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvementparental-engagement/pages/5/

and professional values of professionals are significant factors influencing that judgement and that there is a diversity of views on inclusion as a principle.

It is essential to stress that the resource constraints already referred to are the context for these comments.

Where children and young people communicate distress through behaviour, which impacts on them, on other children and young people, and on adults, there must be support to alleviate that distress. However, the principle of early intervention points to the need for support in creating a culture of anticipation and prevention. Evidence from children and young people provided to this Review, and consistently through similar listening exercises, focuses on relationships and trust as crucial in achieving that – the development of those need time.

Where professionals differ, is on whether that support and response should be within or outwith the classroom setting. Different perspectives will support inclusion or reinforce exclusion – including through informal or formal exclusion from school. These points link closely to those made under the theme on relationships and behaviour.

Respondents have highlighted that children who have an additional support need which does not impact on others are overlooked. Focusing resource on the children and young people who are most visible is often attributed to resource constraints.

Again, it must be emphasised that this is a symptom of the current difficulties, not an underpinning cause.

Recommendation 2.1 Integration of additional support for learning into the Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence

- The Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence must fully integrate the findings of this Review and focus on all children and young people, affording equity to those with additional support needs.

- To fully achieve this, the Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence must maintain a strong and central focus on the experience of all children, young people, parents and carers and the professionals in closest connection with them.

Recommendation 2.2.

- The work of the Scottish Education Council must be informed by the findings of this Review.

Theme 3: Maintaining focus, but overcoming fragmentation

Significant breadth of knowledge and experience is needed to effectively deliver the key processes of additional support for learning implementation, including identifying, responding, and coordinating/monitoring. This is due to the wide range of issues and conditions identified in the legislation and already referred to here.

There has been a strength of concern expressed to the Review about the loss of specialist expertise and practice experience through reductions and changes in career pathways as well as due to resource pressures. This loss of expertise, and of respected champions and advocates for additional support for learning within the system, has further reinforced diminishing visibility and value at strategic levels.

Equally, the risk of focusing on additional support for learning as a specialism has been evident in reinforcing views where non-additional support for learning professionals believe additional support for learning is for others to deal with – not them.

This has been one of the areas in which evidence to the Review from practitioners has been striking in consistency of language.

The strength of this reinforces that an increased pace of movement to an overall universal baseline of

inclusive practice, in terms of values, culture and mind-set as well as delivery models, is essential.

This trajectory brings benefit and improvement in the learning experience of all children and young people and to building confidence in all professionals.

However, over-reliance on inclusion without specialism in a climate of overall low visibility of additional support for learning at all levels has risks. For example, young people have expressed concern that some schools now view their focus on LGBTI young people (which they fully support) as constituting their inclusion agenda. This reinforced the experience some children and young people have of being overlooked and low priority.

Another strong theme emerging is that generalised concepts of inclusion and the broader GIRFEC framework have not driven inclusive practice for children and young people. Instead, they have led to a diluting of focus and understanding of significant barriers to learning and obscured the need for focused expertise.

This reinforces the case made for flexible child and young person centred provision. There needs to be the earliest possible access to any tailored and specialist support needed. This must be underpinned

by an inclusive culture of values and principles in which children and young people feel safe, happy and accepted as the grounding for their learning.

Evidence to the Review confirms that both perspectives are required and do not need to be in conflict. Universal inclusion and specialist focus are both essential features in order to ensure Additional Support for Learning has priority and parity of visibility. That needs to be evident at policy development as well as delivery levels, so that Additional Support for Learning is an embedded, proactive consideration in any developments in education or children, young people and families' policy rather than an afterthought.

In practice, any review and repositioning of the edges and relationships between inclusion and specialism, requires a strategic approach to practitioner knowledge and skill development, as considerable caution was expressed by practitioners about the risks of focusing on some conditions to the exclusion of others.

Recommendation 3.1 Leadership and Strategic Planning

- There must be clear values-driven leadership, shared communication, support and challenge at all levels of the system to ensure that the experiences and achievements of children and young people with additional support needs are visible and continue to be improved.

- In order to drive a holistic approach and support the visibility of children and young people with additional support needs, local authority planning must incorporate the implications of additional support for learning for all local authority and partner services.

Recommendation 3.2 Fully integrated policy making

- Children and young people with additional support needs must be proactively and fully considered in policy making and appropriate cross-Government links made at the earliest stage.

- Children and young people, parents and carers must be partners in the development of key policies and guidance across the system.

Theme 4: Resources

The remit of this Review specifies that the process should be confined to consideration of implementation within existing resources.

The location of those resources is not specified. However, as noted under [Theme 1](), whilst education authorities have responsibilities for Additional Support for Learning implementation, appropriate agencies[38] are also included as partners in delivery.

Therefore, this section includes limited comment on resources as justified within the parameters, timescale and capacity of the Review. The opportunity and the expertise required for legitimate analysis of the resource and financial dimension of Additional Support for Learning implementation lies with the Audit Scotland thematic review of Additional Support for Learning, planned to start by the end of 2020.

The impact of austerity and consequent poverty and inequality for families has necessarily been commented on throughout this report, as has the impact on public services and their capacity.

This is unavoidable in a context in which 30.9% of children and young people are identified as having an additional support need. The

points which have already been made in Theme 2 on Mainstreaming and Inclusion about prioritisation of need must be acknowledged.

The Additional Support for Learning Act came into force in 2005 - before the world financial crash. It could not have been possible at that time to forecast the current challenges of increased need and identification of need and reducing resources.

The current situation highlights the relevance and alignment of the principle and policy of early intervention and prevention. Preventing distress, supporting positive childhood experiences and enabling all children and young people to flourish and achieve their potential, is key. The principle and policy is also relevant to the concept of investing in public funds at the earliest point for best impact and to save expenditure later.

The challenge of shifting investment to prevent acute need and crisis and across the boundaries of public sector services is common to the whole public sector reform agenda beyond the focus on Additional Support for Learning.

However, consistent with earlier comments on visibility, this

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[38] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/4/section/23

Review found that the financial perspective is not sufficiently visible and recognised as a driver for change.

Expenditure on Additional Support for Learning comprises one of the areas of most unpredictable local authority spend associated with legal entitlements. However, senior figures in public sector finance confirmed that it tends to be overlooked at corporate level in local authorities due to the focus on the other very real challenges of providing adult and older people services.

This report has been deliberately titled "Support for Learning: All Our Children and All Their Potential" to reinforce that the right values, mind-set and culture are crucial to ensuring that whatever the level of resource, it must be invested in supporting inclusion, not reinforcing exclusion. That theme is repeated throughout the Review, for example in [Theme 7, on Relationships and Behaviour](#).

A holistic approach to children and young people, which fully enables delivery of Learning for Life, has implications for all parts of local authority services. For example, in specialist health services, not just education. Early intervention, at its most effective, needs a framework of non-stigmatising easy access family support services – pre-school age and throughout.

These support services are distinct from and complementary to parenting programmes. They are often able to more successfully engage with families facing the most complex and embedded personal, social and family problems underpinned by poverty and inequality. Hence the value of support services at pre-school stage in addressing the problems described by many schools of children not being "school ready" in behaviours of eating, toileting and communicating.

These services are often provided by the Third Sector and the continuity and sustainability of these early intervention support services is essential.

The Review heard from many parents and carers whose children and young people need support outwith school hours. Restricted or withdrawn support, not just at school, but in the evening, at weekends and in school holidays, impacts on the child or young person's capacity to learn. It also has stressful knock on consequences for the whole family including other children and young people.

Many schools in areas of high deprivation have stretched their role and focus across the edges of public services in response to the impact of poverty and inequality on their children and young people. This can include practical help around food, clothing and family support.

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School staff perceived that access to other public services, especially in health and social work, was requiring significantly higher thresholds. They saw this as preventing access to the services children and young people need. There is a variation in professional views about this stretch beyond the edge of school, with the majority leaning to a view that it is not appropriate to schools and their professional role.

This perspective emphasises the necessity and value of the broad discussion proposed under Theme 2, Mainstreaming and Inclusion. Concepts around enhanced provision and nurture have the potential to join the edges of services in order to support the continuity and quality of relationships for children and young people.

There is currently a divide in perception and perspective between education and the other statutory agencies about edges of responsibilities and thresholds for involvement and action. There was an encouraging general agreement that communication could and should be better. These challenges in communication are not unique to the focus of this review. Good communication requires time, which is a resource under pressure.

There are multiple variations in how health and social care delivery structures incorporate or connect with children's' services, including education.

The Review found that those structures are not automatically driving significant differences in key working relationships between professionals and coordination of services. The differing organisational cultures between education, social work and health are more influential in this than organisational structures

Strong, values driven leadership at service management levels are significant in overcoming this. People need the skills and willingness to forge individual professional relationships, and the drive to "get things done" regardless of, or despite, the structures.

Values driven leadership has been consistently identified as a key condition for effective implementation throughout this Review. That includes when that leadership is exercised, visible and recognised at corporate levels as well as by those within the service.

Overdependence on strong individual leaders, if other key conditions are not robustly in place, will always create a risk when those leaders move on. That highlights the concern expressed by those who have a longer term involvement with Additional Support for Learning that experienced champions and

ambassadors have been lost over the past 5 years.

For many children and young people with health or disability conditions, support from health professionals and others, such as Educational Psychologists, is crucial. In order to optimise a shrinking resource, a common pattern has been to refocus professional time into capacity building and consultancy.

However, other factors must be taken into account for professionals who deliver their service largely through consultation. While recognising the principle of building capacity in those closest to supporting a child, the impact of this is limited when there is inadequate time and resource for school staff to fully participate and reflect on the benefits of consultation.

This has been consistently highlighted as problematic for the potential for early diagnosis and/or intervention and prevention, including in transition planning between primary and secondary education and for children and young people growing into adulthood.

There is, therefore, a continuing role for targeted assessment, intervention and analysis, which adds value to that which school-based staff are already doing, and further strengthens the impact of consultation.

The example of a refocus of expert capacity into consultation highlights the challenge of strategic and service review and improvement activity as a response to decreasing resources.

There is evidence of very positive continuous improvement and review processes supporting creative and innovative change and development. Headed up by respected leaders, clearly aligned to the key purpose of supporting all children and young people to learn and achieve, and implemented and embedded with their involvement, these processes are valued and supported by frontline staff.

Frontline staff report that where those factors are not evident, the impact of these processes can be stressful and demoralising. The processes are time consuming. If they are perceived to be without benefits to the experience of children and young people, or the professionals involved, they can exacerbate cultures of blame. This again reinforces comments already made about the context of implementation methodology and the key conditions identified as essential.

These same considerations apply to associated activities. For example, sharing and replicating good practice and ensuring impact of high quality and, in principle, well received theoretical and knowledge materials and frameworks. This is especially

important where these are primarily available through online learning.

As "inputs" to practice development and learning, their full potential will not be realised without the conditions in place to support that. [39]

Grant Aided Special (GAS) Schools

The GAS schools are independent of local authorities and are funded by the Scottish Government. There are 7 GAS schools in Scotland that provide support to children and young people with complex or multiple additional support needs.

The Review heard that relationships between local authority and the GASS are variable and are affected by the tensions that arise when decisions to place a child or young person in a GASS have become subject to formal adversarial legal processes.

Resource constraints are the evident underpinning issue, but there are other perceptions and concerns, which affect working relationships.

Local authorities vary in their position on the principle of outsourcing and in their views on the quality of GASS provision and the value and additionality of their specialist focus.

There are also strong views on the validity of the central government grant, in principle and in practice.

The GASS have concerns that these perceptions are not based on an informed perspective. This is because they feel contact is mostly in regard to legal processes with little apparent interest or opportunity to develop mutual understanding and positive communication outwith those pressures.

There is also concern that GASS provision is only considered when a child or young person has experienced repeated failure in mainstream or specialist provision. This reduces the impact their specialist expertise can achieve in prevention.

These tensions are not easy to overcome, but the GASS are a resource within the current system, and that resource should be optimised for the benefit of children and young people. That requires a constructive dialogue focused on the needs of children and young people and a willingness by the GASS and the statutory sector to listen and understand the concerns and constraints of each in order to make improvements in process and in practice.

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[39] Fixsen, D.L., Naoom, S.F., Blase, K., Friedman, R.M., & Wallace, F. (2005). Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature. National Implementation Research Network, University of South Florida.

There are similar themes and issues for the National Centres (Scottish Sensory Centre, CALL Scotland and Enquire), which should also be involved in similar processes to support benefits to children and young people.

Recommendation 4.1 Audit Scotland

- Audit Scotland must use the key themes in this report and the associated findings from Audit Scotland's audit of educational outcomes to inform the scope of their national performance audit on outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs.

- This must include assessing spend on additional support for learning across services, its impact on attainment and outcomes for children and young people at all stages; highlighting good practice and gaps.

Recommendation 4.2 Role of Grant Aided Special Schools

- The Grant Aided Special Schools and three national centres must use the opportunities that arise from the commissioning strand of the Doran Review[40] to consider how their specialist expertise (including in prevention and de-escalation) can be developed to be complementary to statutory mainstream and specialist provision, in order to support improvement in the experiences and outcome of children and young people with additional support needs.

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[40] https://www.gov.scot/groups/nscg/

Theme 5: Workforce development and support

emphasised the need to retain the perspective that all the themes interact with and reinforce each other. That is particularly important in this section. The recommendations attached to this Theme **cannot, in isolation, drive the changes needed.**

Firstly, there is substantial evidence that where implementation of Additional Support for Learning works well, it is primarily due to the commitment and determination of individuals among teachers and school staff, senior school leadership teams and service managers. They drive delivery despite the barriers highlighted by the other themes and despite not all of the key conditions for implementation and delivery, already referred to under other themes, being in place.

Secondly, as emphasised under Theme 2 : Mainstreaming and Inclusion, the system must be fit for the profile of children and young people as they are now and are projected for the future, not as they were in the past.

Therefore, workforce planning must anticipate the values, skills and knowledge needed for the 30.9% children and young people in Scotland's schools with an additional support need. We need the whole workforce to expect to

be part of a system that supports the learning of all children and young people. The distribution of the 30.9% will be variable; - especially where factors associated with poverty and inequality provision underpin or exacerbate other conditions, but the whole system must have the capacity and the will to be fully inclusive.

Unfortunately, we cannot assume and take for granted that all individual professionals are signed up to the principles of inclusion and the presumption of mainstreaming. Evidence emerged in the course of this work, which raises the deeply uncomfortable fact that not all professionals are. Values and beliefs, culture and mind-set are fundamental and there is more work to do in this regard.

It is also true that some professionals who believe in the principles are disillusioned by not having seen those principles translate into practice in terms of the key conditions for implementation.

Others have shared their core belief that their role should only be to teach children and young people capable of learning within traditional academic standards.

The increased and increasing impact of poverty and inequality on children and young people with

social, emotional and behavioural needs and other barriers appears to be reinforcing these views, dividing children and young people with additional support needs into "deserving" and "undeserving". This is not compatible with the legislation, which entitles all eligible children and young people equally.

Children and young people, their families and peer professionals have all shared their experience or provided their perspective confirming that these attitudes are an aspect of the environment. It is uncomfortable and difficult. Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged and addressed.

Again the combination of key conditions for implementation are the relevant framework for action around this, ensuring there is a sound basis and confidence for support and challenge when values are not evident in practice.

Teachers

The Review has heard from leaders of schools in affluent areas and in geographically isolated areas where the number of children and young people with an additional support need is small. However, the increased likelihood and increased complexity of conditions since the legislation was passed requires a school workforce everywhere who have the mind-set and practice skill base to respond confidently and positively. That is inclusive of teachers who may work intermittently with children and young people with additional support needs as well as those who spend their career with groups with differing conditions and needs.

Currently there is minimal requirement for focus on Additional Support for Learning as part of Initial Teacher Education (ITE). That is of particular concern for student teachers on the 9 month Post Graduate course. The Review heard from Probationary teachers in their first year of teaching whose only awareness of Additional Support for Learning had been a short input on legislation and who felt ill prepared in terms of knowledge, understanding and practice skills. This was particularly difficult if their mentor during their probationary year did not role model a commitment to the values of inclusion in practice.

That is not the only disconnect. This Review heard testimony that the challenges associated with Additional Support for Learning are dominating the time of many school leadership teams and service managers at the next level above. The loss of focused career progression pathways in Additional Support for Learning practice development and leadership have been highlighted as reinforcing the lack of parity for children and young people and practitioners within education.

The Review has met with or received testimony about many teachers who are inspirational. Common characteristics are inclusive personal and professional values, which are evident in good communication, relationship and trust building skills.

Their leaders, peers, families and children and young people all recognise this as an essential grounding and underpinning critical success factor for children and young people to learn and flourish. Relationships and trust are consistently highlighted as the most essential grounding for practitioners working in all services that work with people, especially people who are vulnerable.

Yet currently in teacher education and ongoing development, these personal aptitudes are overlooked and assumed. Acknowledgement of the value of human connection in education, especially for children and young people who are frightened or distressed, equally requires acknowledgement of how being humane within the boundaries of a professional role impacts on practitioners.

Students, probationary and qualified teachers need safe and respectful opportunities to reflect on and understand how developing relationships of trust and genuine connection impacts on them personally and on professional identity.

Pupil Support Assistants

Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) are highly regarded for the key role they play in supporting children and young people. Contributors to the Review have expressed this very strongly.

However, the overall view from PSAs themselves is that they don't feel recognised or respected within the system for the role that they play. This was described, for example, both in terms of involvement in communications and remuneration. Also the evidence overall confirms that they appear to be the least supported and invested in, in relation to learning and development.

That investment is essential to ensure that their knowledge and skills equip them for the role that they play. However, the investment also needs to be in understanding and ensuring that their focus is best deployed for the child or young person.

The investment of £15 million in Pupil Support Assistants announced in 2019 establishes a vital opportunity to identify these factors, drawing on emerging research[41] and the practice experience of PSAs and Teachers.

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[41] SHARPLES, J., WEBSTER, R. AND BLATCHFORD, P. 2018. Maximising the impact of Teaching Assistants. Education Endowment Fund. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/maximising-the-impact-of-teaching-assistants/

Two areas require a particular focus. Firstly, in regard to integration of the PSA role into communication and child planning structures. PSA staff often offer experience and understanding of a child or young person's experiences and triggers. This vital insight should be included in all required information policies and protocols in order to enhance early intervention and a consistent response. Secondly, to consider how and where one to one time can best help to support and integrate children and young people within the class and to provide individual support outwith the class including for safety of the child or young person or others.

In clarifying these areas of focus, there is also an opportunity to articulate the complementarity of the PSA role, and remit, and clear differences in responsibility to professional teaching and teachers. This can support confidence for all individuals across the school workforce and ensure there are no barriers to good working relationships.

Recommendation 5.1 Teacher Education and Development

Teacher recruitment, selection, education and professional development and learning processes must align with the changed and changing profile of children and young people in Scotland, ensuring:

- All teachers hold and enact professional values of inclusion and inclusive practice and see this as a core part of their role[42]. (Codes of Conduct/Standards)

- All teachers understand what additional support needs are. They are clear about their role in supporting the identification of additional support needs and the need to adapt their teaching to ensure a meaningful learning experience for all their learners.

- All teacher education and development includes nationally specified practice and skills development in supporting learners with additional support needs, as a core element.

- Practice learning and development at local level must include where and how to access specialists' expertise and support.

- Communication, relationship building and positive mediation skills development are incorporated and embedded into teacher education and development, supported by coaching and mentoring opportunities.

- Parity of career progression, pathway structures and opportunities for specialist teachers of Additional Support for Learning:
    a) There should be a first teaching qualification in additional support needs available during Initial Teacher Education; and
    b) The career path proposal under consideration by the SNCT[43] to develop new career pathways[44] should have an additional strand for Additional Support for Learning.

- The focus and methods for teacher education and practice learning are directly informed and developed by the feedback of teachers.

- Innovative and partnership approaches to practice learning should be developed including delivery and participation of children, young people, parents and carers.

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[42] https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/standards-for-registration.aspx
[43] Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (https://www.snct.org.uk/)
[44] https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-panel-career-pathways-teachers-final-report/

Recommendation 5.2 Pupil Support Assistants

- The Classroom Support Staff working group must, as part of their work, undertake a review of roles and remit of Pupil Support Assistants. This must include the development of clear specifications for how classroom teacher and pupil support assistant roles interact and complement each other. It must also consider standards of practice, learning pathways, career progression routes and remuneration.

Theme 6: Relationships between Schools and Parents and Carers

Current policy and guidance affirms the importance of effective working relationships between parents, carers and schools.[45]

There are outstanding examples of exceptional leadership at school and local authority level. These are enabling development of honest and trusting relationships between schools and parents characterised by mutual listening and respect. This provides a solid base for sharing views and airing disagreement without conflict. This offers reassurance that ongoing support is focused on change and improvement, which is focused on the child or young person.

There is also some exceptionally skilful work being done by parents groups to develop and implement supportive approaches to improving relationships with schools.

However, the Review has heard from many parents and carers about their negative experiences of being disregarded, not listened to or blamed for their child's behaviour[46]. They express particular upset at feeling their child is not understood or cared about and is only seen as a problem.

Parents and carers have often emphasised feelings of initial frustration and increasing anger when they are not given information about school or education authority processes or about their or their child's rights.[47]

Overall, the themes raised by parents and carers and the language of fight and battle, summarised from many of the reports noted in the Desk Review, were reiterated in this Review process. Equally, the Review heard the language of parents' and carers' hopes and fears, anxiety and guilt when they felt they were not able to ensure their children were flourishing. Emerging strongly from behind the anger are parents and carers who love their children and want them to be safe, cared for and thrive, to the best of their ability. This is what all parents and carers want.

The most powerful question the Review asked parents and carers to consider was "If you have had a

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[45] https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/pages/5/

[46] In connection with this, many parents described mixed or negative experiences of parenting classes. Whilst many spoke of feeling it was a "price to be paid" for getting support for their child or young person, there was also acknowledgement by many of (some) value although not as a substitute for support for **their child or young person**

[47] Annex B

difficult time and then it got better what has made the difference".

The consistent response was that an individual professional has become involved – Pupil Support Assistant, Teacher, Deputy Headteacher, Headteacher, Speech and Language Therapist, someone who demonstrates they care about the child and is non-punitive about their condition and its consequences for learning. This is captured in the phrase: "They just get it". Parents and carers valued that these individuals listened to them and took them seriously, enabling trust to be developed. This allows for far more constructive conversations, even when there is no avoiding the difficulty of those conversations.

Not only that, it also made it less likely that matters would develop into adversarial, formal, stressful and costly processes. The agencies involved in delivery of information and advice, mediation and legal processes all emphasised that through positive communication many situations could have been resolved at a much earlier stage.

The Review also heard from many parents and carers who have had to leave employment because of a lack of support in school for their child's needs, resulting in repeated exclusion – whether formal or informal. Many of these parents expressed the view that if there was investment in supporting children and young people with additional support needs at school, this would be better for Scotland's public finances, both in terms of their own earning potential and the potential for their children to become more independent and less costly for public services in their adulthood. In that regard, there were many examples provided of small, inexpensive, reasonable adjustments that would have made a significant difference to how the child felt and was able to learn at school. Parents and carers were disappointed and frustrated that these were not put in place. They felt this was further evidence that schools do not see them as partners.

The Review heard from many teachers and school staff about the impact of being unable to respond due to resource constraints or of fundamental disagreements about the needs of a child. Parents and carers who feel powerless in the system, might be surprised to hear how powerless teachers and school staff often feel. There were many examples of practitioners feeling upset and stressed at being unable to source expertise and support. That sense of powerlessness included the significant number of parents and carers who contributed to the Review, who are themselves school staff or other public service professionals, with an insight into systems and processes. Despite those insights, these parents and carers reported having no greater success in

developing positive communication and involvement in decisions about their children than those without that knowledge.

In the absence of proactively provided, accessible information, in a world of social media, parents and carers at the start of the process are often relying on support from more experienced parents and carers.

The peer support of parents and carers to each other and their information exchange is important and hugely valued. However, comparisons between individual children and young people are not always relevant and this can lead to misunderstandings about rights. Peer support is a valuable complement, but cannot be a substitute for an effective engagement strategy between schools, authorities, parents and carers

Once trust and communications breakdown, they are difficult to regain. There is evidence that beyond the level of individual relationships, a culture of negative expectation about parents and carers has developed as the norm in many schools. This fuels an expectation that all parents will be difficult or unreasonable, their views are not valid and that the best strategy is to restrict information to avoid unreasonable demands.

Improvements can be made despite the impact of austerity and the problematic resource pressures already referenced. At the heart of these improvements must be a willingness to listen and communicate.

In practice, this would mean schools and local authorities recognising the value of the knowledge parents and carers have of their child, at home as well as at school. Parents and carers are as expert in their own lives as children and young people are in theirs, and that should be valued and respected.

However, being listened to and taken seriously does not, and cannot mean, always having proposed solutions and responses agreed with and supported. As well as differences of view between parents, carers and professionals; parents, carers and children and young people will also disagree. For example, one to one support at school tends to be highly valued as a support by parents and carers. Meanwhile, it can be felt by children and young people as further marking them out and separating them from their peers, which may make them vulnerable to bullying.

Therefore, it is essential that all involved are fully informed about rights and responsibilities in order to develop and strengthen partnership approaches, focused on the best decisions and actions for the child or young person.

Teachers and school staff are the experts in school life and that should be valued and respected.

However, school staff expertise, and teachers' professional identity, is not undermined by a willingness to be open, to listen and to acknowledge that a shared approach with parents and carers is best for the child or young person. This is of significant benefit where the best approach and response to a child or young person is not immediately evident.

Submissions to the Review have demonstrated the value of establishing open and trusting communication, of professionals enabling a vital continuing dialogue with parents, carers, children and young people about what's working and what's not. This is also important for constructive discussions about how to respond to a diagnosis or identification of a condition or barrier. It is not helpful for additional support need categorisations to lead to standardised responses, or interventions, or to reinforce an unhelpful perception that there is an intervention that will "fix" a problem. Rather, the approach requires a dialogue about personalised interpretation, understanding and considered judgements for the child or young person, as an individual.

Where there is trust and mutual respect, disagreement is possible and, at times, necessary. It does not automatically lead to the breakdown of trust and confidence and can, in fact, strengthen the relationship.

However, pressured the environment is, rude, dismissive or abusive behaviour is not acceptable from professionals or parents and carers. The Review heard examples of both.

There is considerable scope for the principles of mediation to be developed as a positive early process to support parent/carer/school partnerships, rather than as a belated crisis response, in the form of one of the mediation services funded as a requirement of the legislation. [48]

The Review heard from school staff that involvement of mediation is often seen as a sign of their individual failure. This view contradicts the evidence base for using mediation processes in public and private sectors alike.

This theme, and final point, highlight again how essential it is to have the key conditions in place for implementation.

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[48] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/4/contents

Recommendation 6.1 Relationships between schools and parents

- Schools and local authorities must work in partnership with parents and carers to develop, and deliver, ways of working together that support and promote positive relationships, communication and co-operation.

- This must include clear pathways on transitions for children and young people with additional support needs, in the context of learning for life, allowing parents, carers, children, young people and professionals to be informed and supported at key transition points.

- Parents and carers must be involved, as equal partners, in the development of key guidance, to contribute their knowledge and lived experience.

- Further investment is needed to strengthen support services for families; allowing these services, and the support that they provide, to become embedded.

- The benefits of the use of mediation must be widely promoted at a national, regional and local level and consideration should be given to how mediation can be developed, through professional learning, to support the workforce.

Theme 7: Relationships and behaviour

Unmet needs and an inability to express intense, difficult feelings can result in a child or young person expressing these through verbal or physical aggression. This behaviour can be the consequence of a range of issues including, for example, tolerance levels for external stimulation or past or continuing traumatic experiences. The impact and reverberation of this on practitioners and professionals as well as children, young people, and their families must be acknowledged.

There must be support for staff to enable them to alleviate that distress by identifying, as early as possible, what the triggers are that lead to a child or young person communicating in this way, or what has happened in the child's circumstances that they are upset about. That support must enable anticipation, prevention and responses informed by an understanding of the child or young person in the context of a trusting relationship.[49]

The Review has heard from most perspectives that children and young people who communicate through distressed behaviour must be carefully and sensitively considered in the context of the whole span of the Review.

The overall evidence and analysis support the conclusion that the issues that have emerged around relationships and behaviour are the symptoms and consequence of all the intermeshed barriers to successful implementation of the Additional Support for Learning legislation outlined under each theme, for example:

- That the focus on relationships and behaviour is considered in the context of the child or young person's whole life and journey through education: learning for life.

Also, good relationships and communication with parents and carers, who will understand the finer nuances of their child's behaviour and are able to share their knowledge of situations that their child might find difficult, are invaluable.

This reinforces the conclusion that the theme of relationships and behaviour must be fully integrated into the actions that follow this Review – not separated into a separate policy or practice silo.

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[49] The key point of principle included in Included Engaged and Involved Part 2: A positive approach to preventing and managing school exclusion states " All behaviour is communication"

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The theme of resources has been commented on within the parameters of this Review, but resources are not a standalone issue. Previous comments under, the theme of [Mainstreaming and Inclusion](), propose that resource must be directed to actions that increase inclusion, not actions that further exclude and stigmatise children and young people.

This is essential, as the Review has evidenced that not all professionals hold the belief that behaviour should be understood as communication.

One aspect of that is where children and young people, who express their distress through their behaviour, are viewed as either more or less "deserving" of attention and support. This is most evident in children and young people who have social, emotional or behavioural needs related to their childhood experiences and family circumstances, and associated with poverty and inequality. As referred to previously, this group of children and young people is one whose parents are least able to advocate for them.

Therefore, a school's culture, ethos, values and team mind-set, evidenced in practice by the school's leadership, is critical in establishing the positive environment in which all children and young people feel included and can flourish. This underpinning is essential for a culture where children and young people are respected. Rights are a prominent reference point for promoting and encouraging positive communications, trust and relationships between staff, children and young people.

It is equally important that there is a culture of trust, positive relationships and respect between staff, across management hierarchies and between peers. This is the basis for providing support, both for skills development **and** for the impact of working with distressed children and young people.

Positive relationships have emerged as the underpinning factor for supporting children and young people. Professionals must exercise their own personal qualities alongside their professional skills, within a culture and structure of support.

A culture of trust also enables challenge, which is essential where values are not evident in practice.

Positive school cultures develop where the [key conditions for implementation]() are in place:

These are the conditions that enable early intervention and prevention and are underpinned by relationships.

Evidence provided to this Review and consistently through similar

listening exercises and research[50] focuses on relationships and trust as a crucial underpinning. Trust is essential to ensure that a 'behaviour management' approach isn't taken as the first response or approach to distressed behaviour. As much of the interaction as possible with children and young people should be preventative. Where adults have to respond to behaviour, this should be grounded in relationships and based on respect for the child and their rights.

This strongly resonates with the findings that early intervention and preventative approaches reduce the need to consider exclusion, physical intervention and seclusion as responses to distressed behaviour. Accepting, respectful approaches are more effective than those that are experienced as punishing and shaming by children and young people.

Separate reviews and initiatives[51] have and are considering the areas of seclusion, exclusion, restraint. For this Review, the evidence from those initiatives has been considered as well as the direct individual and representative contributions.[52]

The evidence heard by this Review has affirmed the themes, concerns and actions already highlighted by these other, more focused, initiatives. Most significantly:

- Physical Intervention;
- Seclusion;
- Restraint; and
- Exclusions.

Actions from this Review must inform the focus on these themes and concerns by the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) and the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group (ASLIG).

Lastly, whilst it has not been a key focus for this Review, it should be noted that, the physical environments of many schools create significant difficulties for children and young people with particular conditions and increase the likelihood of distressed behaviour. Many of the improvements and solutions in physical environments would appear to be of benefit to all children and young people.

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[50]For example, the Independent Care Review

[51] https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20200219InLTrfromDFMtoConvenerre_PetitionPE1548.pdf

[52] In a small number of situations, testimony provided to the Review resulted in the Chair activating a safeguarding process.

Recommendation 7.1 Relationships and Behaviour

- The remit of SAGRABIS must be reviewed, and widened, to bring it up to date and in line with emerging knowledge and recommended practices, including the findings of this Review.   The membership of the group must be reviewed in line with the refreshed remit.

- SAGRABIS should have a primary focus on relationships and behaviour, but also the ability to focus on wider additional support for learning issues, developing improvement priorities and ensuring those priorities are reflected at a national, local and regional level. In doing so, SAGRABIS must ensure they work closely with the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group.

Theme 8: Understanding Rights

Children and young people, parents and carers and practitioners all need to be fully informed and supported to understand the implications of relevant rights based legislation, especially as the Scottish Government has committed to the legal incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)[53].

The UNCRC is one of the core United Nations human rights treaties. It sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

The UNCRC was a landmark treaty, recognising the importance of childhood and the unique needs of children and young people across the globe. It is unique in setting out how adults and Governments must work together to make sure that all children and young people can enjoy all their rights.

The UK ratified the UNCRC in 1991, but it has still not been incorporated into domestic law, meaning that many of the protections contained within it are not accessible to children and young people in the UK. Currently, schools can choose how they approach recognising and taking action on children's rights. This means that practice can vary widely and young people can have very different experiences. The Review heard that the rights of children and young people were not always well-understood or consistently applied in practice in schools. Parents and carers often independently research rights and act on behalf of their children on the basis of their understanding, which may not be completely accurate.

Incorporating the rights of children and young people, as enshrined in the UNCRC, is fundamental to making children's rights real. The value to children, young people and families in Scotland is that children's rights will be built into law, policy and practice; so all children and young people can benefit from and exercise these rights in their daily lives, which will improve their outcomes and experiences.

Incorporating the UNCRC into domestic law in Scotland will also enable children and young people, and those acting on their behalf, to advance their rights in the Scottish courts. The Scottish Government has committed to incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law before the end of the current Parliamentary session of 2021.

The themes of inclusion, participation and understanding of rights have emerged very strongly

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[53] https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/

as areas that need strengthening to provide a robust rights based framework for implementation of Additional Support for Learning. The preparation for incorporation should direct and enable planning and action on this for children, young people, their families and professionals as soon as possible, without waiting for the incorporation process itself. Proactive engagement and communication is essential; awareness and understanding of rights must not rely, as at present, on individuals often needing to seek out sources of guidance.

That assumes a degree of awareness to start with, which must not be assumed. The Review heard that many children, young people and their families shared the experience of struggling to find the information they needed, including on children's rights.

Also, it is essential that rights and associated processes for the Additional Support Needs Jurisdiction of the Health and Education Chamber of the First Tier Tribunal (the Tribunal)[54] should be clear and understood and barriers to access removed. This will allow equality of access for all children and young people, not only those whose parents and carers are strong advocates for them (as commented on under the

theme on mainstreaming and inclusion).

It should be noted that, through active consultation, the needs and preferences of the small number of children and young people who engage with the Tribunal, are evident in the detail of the architectural and interior design of the Tribunal offices[55], and the operational processes developed to reduce stress and distress.

However, whilst it must be an objective to ensure all children and young people access their rights, there must be caution in regarding an increase in numbers accessing the Tribunal as a sign of success.

The focus must remain on recognition of need and delivery of support at the earliest possible point, underpinned by positive relationships and communication between schools, local authorities, children and young people and their families. The breakdown of those relationships is the common feature of the trajectory into adversarial processes, which are distressing for all involved and draw on resources, which may be better applied to direct support to benefit children and young people.

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[54] https://www.healthandeducationchamber.scot/additional-support-needs/12
[55]
https://www.healthandeducationchamber.scot/sites/default/files/publications/add/What%20Happens%20on%20the%206th%20floor.pdf

Planning and planning entitlements

Good planning processes are crucially important to ensure that all children and young people receive the support and interventions they need at the right time, from the right people, with that support coordinated, rather than fragmented.

However, the Review has highlighted that good planning requires skills in engagement and communication, which cannot just be assumed of staff who have not had practice development support. As noted earlier in this report, a significant amount of time and effort is currently focused on producing plans, rather than on practice and real change.

The preparation of a plan must be understood for what it is. Not an outcome, but a useful record of discussion and decisions to provide the basis for reviewing the specific support necessary for a child or young person to thrive in their learning. It allows progress to be monitored and individuals or institutions to be held accountable.

Even where excellent processes have underpinned the completion of a plan, that is only the first step. It is in the subsequent cycle of actions, focused on the delivery of support, kept under continuous review and adaptation, that forms the purpose.

Planning and plans should be proportionate to complexity and purpose. Where children and young people can be supported, with minor adaptation and within normal classroom practice, the mind-set of plan implementation and review is important, but a plan will not add value.

For other children and young people, a detailed plan may be necessary. Currently, there are a range of planning formats and frameworks, including Child's Plan and Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSP). The range of plans available is in itself a source of confusion among parents, carers and professionals.

The Review has seen examples of how effective planning and communication, with clear expectations, can lead to positive and sustained outcomes for children and young people. However, the evidence that emerges from the Review is that planning processes, and the language around, them can be overly complicated, time consuming and bureaucratic. This increases the feeling that children, young people and their families have of being disassociated and excluded from the process, rather than being partners in it.

Some professionals have told the Review of the frustration and burden of time of navigating complicated and overlapping planning processes.

Reiterating the theme of early intervention and prevention, the Review has heard strong testimony from parents and professionals that planning to meet the needs of children and young people should be done at the earliest possible opportunity, with clear guidance and expectations set.

Equally, for it to be meaningful and effective there must be regular and proactive review – when needed, not just when required by legislation. The process must include all those who are involved and play a role in supporting children and young people.   Most importantly, children, young people and their families should be at the centre of these discussions and given the support they need to be fully involved and engaged in the process.

Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSPs)

A CSP is a plan that has rights and obligations associated with it, identified by the Additional Support for Learning legislation. Broadly, a CSP is intended to provide the framework for the co-ordination of support, between education and at least one other agency, for children and young people with multiple and complex needs.

The intent of the legislation is not for all children and young people with additional support needs to have a CSP. In fact, the criteria are very narrow. A key issue to consider is that the legislation sets out the conditions that must be met for a CSP to be put in place including that: the child or young person requires 'significant additional support' from the education authority and social work or another appropriate agency[56]. The impact of austerity on this support has already been noted in the section on resources so there is a risk of need being defined by support provided.

However, the Review evidence is that there is widespread misunderstanding by parents, carers and professionals too, about the purpose, relationship to other planning mechanisms, (usually the Childs Plan), eligibility, or legal entitlement /requirement for a CSP.

For many parents or carers, a CSP is viewed as a gateway to access support, when the support identified within a Childs Plan has not been delivered. Their original frustration and anxiety is then increased when hopes for a CSP are not met. This is fuelled by hope based on conflicting information and misunderstanding.

This issue has been widely raised publicly outwith this process and the Review heard the same

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[56] As per Section 23(2) of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Act 2004 (as amended)

themes in many stories: of details of parents' and carers' battles (as commonly described) to access CSPs.

There is guidance available that seeks to provide clarity on the entitlement to CSPs and provide parents and carers with information on their rights to request such a plan.[57] The evidence heard by the Review confirms that information must be proactively made available and be accessible and visible to all those who need it. Doing so ensures there is a shared understanding about the entitlements and benefits to children and young people of a CSP. It also averts some of the unnecessary friction, stress and damage to relationships that occur when parents and carers believe their child is having an entitlement withheld.

The CSP is a statutory plan; the Child's Plan is not. Parents and carers, understandably, often take the view that a CSP is more effective and provides them more protection, as there is a definitive right of appeal attached.[58]

Children, young people and their families have the right to appeal decisions about entitlement or content of the CSP to the Tribunal. This appeal process can itself be lengthy and demanding.

Again, a CSP must be viewed as a tool for effective planning, rather than an outcome. The Review has heard the frustration of many families and professionals that the support and interventions agreed as part of the CSP have not been fully implemented or reviewed robustly. This again can lead to disappointment and weariness with the system, although there can be further appeal to the Tribunal.

In May 2019, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and announced that the Scottish Government will review the use of co-ordinated support plans. This is welcome and must be seen as a valuable opportunity to explore these complex issues in greater detail, informed by the broader context for CSPs presented in the themes and conclusions of this Review.

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[57] https://enquire.org.uk/3175/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/csps.pdf
[58] https://www.healthandeducationchamber.scot/additional-support-needs/53

Recommendation 8.1 Rights

- The incorporation of UNCRC and its impacts on Additional Support for Learning legislation and processes, must be fully anticipated and planned for to ensure children's rights are embedded and effectively underpin the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning legislation.

Recommendation 8.2 Coordinated Support Plan Review

- The planned review of Coordinated Support Plans (CPSs) must take the findings of this Review into account.
- Also, it must consider:
  a) planning mechanisms within a whole life perspective for children and young people with lifelong conditions, including transitions between and beyond education settings.
  b) clarifying the interaction between CSPs, child's plans and GIRFEC.
  c) the relationship between education and partners in health, social work and other agencies to identify where re-alignment is needed in the preparation and delivery of support.
  d) where improvements are needed in the availability and accessibility of information and guidance about planning and its processes for all parents, carers, children and young people.

Theme 9: Assurance mechanism and inspection

The perspective of children, young people and their families has been emphasised throughout this report. Their input indicated that their views and feelings are not sufficiently listened to and taken into account at any level, from their own support planning to service changes.

Many frontline practitioners and service managers expressed similar frustrations in terms of being unable to influence service changes, which have significant impact on how they practice.

Also, the current limitations of measurement and tracking have been highlighted and noted with the recommendations.

The fundamental challenge that this Review was set up to examine, of closing the gap between policy intention and practice, requires assurance and scrutiny mechanisms to develop. They need to be the drivers of the visibility of, and improvement in, the learning achievements of all children and young people.

The recommendations on the areas highlighted below, will assist in the review and strengthening of education authority assurance processes and mechanisms in

support of an improvement mind-set, including a non-punitive culture of learning from mistakes and failures.

Similarly, there is an opportunity to develop inspection and scrutiny processes as strengthened drivers of the improvements in Additional Support for Learning, which this Review has highlighted as necessary.

In terms of inspection, the Review has received consistent feedback that How Good is Our School[59] (HGIOS) is a strong overall framework for understanding the key issues around Additional Support for Learning in the context of the four quadrants of the Inclusion Framework. However, in practice, the focus of HGIOS was felt too strongly to be on aspects of attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy.

The recently launched Milestones framework[60] has been positively referred to (with the provisos around limited impact unless implementation and embedding processes are in place). The framework is seen as having the potential to support the rebalancing of focus and understanding of success across all

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[59] https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4
[60] https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/milestones-to-support-learners-with-complex-additional-support-needs-literacy-and-english

four quadrants of the Inclusion Framework.

Practitioners also expressed a strong view about the importance of having inspectors who had experience and understanding of the ethos and practice of inclusion and Additional Support for Learning. This was seen to be a key issue in ensuring a balance of perspective across the four quadrants of the Inclusion Framework.

Education Scotland's wider practice development role is relevant, given the overlap between closing the attainment gap and needs and barriers to achievement due to additional support needs. It has been suggested that there is a need and opportunity for the Regional Improvement Collaboratives[61] (RICs) to incorporate additional support for learning into their agenda and that Education Scotland could strengthen, and support, impact and improvement through that mechanism.

Recommendation 9.1 Assurance mechanism

- Following this Review, there must be a mechanism put in place to allow progress against these recommendations to be reported and scrutinised. This should be developed in partnership with the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group. A progress report should be produced for Scottish Ministers and COSLA one year after the publication of this report and its recommendations.

- Local authorities must take account of the findings of this report to review and align their quality assurance processes. This must drive improvements in process, practice and outcomes at all levels in the system.

Recommendation 9.2 Education Scotland

- Education Scotland must take account of the findings of this report and take action to ensure that their scrutiny frameworks and inspection activities are in line with it.

- Education Scotland must use the findings of this Review and the conditions identified for good practice, to support and develop improvement in local authorities, regional improvement collaboratives and schools.

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[61] https://connect.scot/news/regional-improvement-collaboratives-what-are-they

Summary and Recommendations

Overview

There are many dedicated, skilled and inspiring professionals who care deeply about children and young people with additional support needs. They are doing everything they can to support them to flourish and fulfil their potential in a delivery environment which makes that extremely difficult. Their commitment, in the face of that, deserves recognition and appreciation.

However, the evidence that emerges from this Review affirms that Additional Support for Learning is not visible or equally valued within Scotland's Education system. Consequently, the implementation of Additional Support for Learning legislation is over-dependent on committed individuals, is fragmented, inconsistent and is not ensuring that all children and young people who need additional support are being supported to flourish and fulfil their potential.

There is no fundamental deficit in the principle and policy intention of the Additional Support for Learning legislation and the substantial guidance accompanying it. The challenge is in translating that intention into thousands of individual responses for individual children and young people facing different learning barriers in different family, home, community, nursery, school and college situations.

There has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people identified as having additional support needs, initially caused by a change in recording in 2010[62] and continuing to increase year on year to 2018.) The complexity of needs has also increased due to a range of factors that create barriers to learning[63].

These factors affect children and young people in **all** parts of their lives, not just during the time they are in education.

In that regard, there has been a significant increase in children and young people identified as having an additional support need due to social, emotional and behavioural issues coinciding with an increase in poverty and inequality.[64]

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[62] https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-schools-scotland-no-10-2019-edition/pages/10/
[63] https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20190326In_report_on_Implementation_pf_ASL.pdf
[64] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18

At the same time, austerity has put significant pressure on resources in all parts of the public sector.

That combination, of significantly increased need and static or reduced resources, is clearly the most powerful driver in shaping the current reality of implementation.

At the time of writing this report, the most recent figures (2018) show that 30.9%[65] of children and young people in schools in Scotland have an additional support need. That statistic highlights that this cannot continue to be viewed as a minority area of interest, to be considered in a separate silo within the framework of Scottish Education.

Education authorities have lead implementation responsibility and yet the language of the legislation is Learning for Life. This encompasses a much wider perspective than education alone. However, that breadth of vision is not yet realised. Other agencies are not playing as full a role as intended by the legislation, not least due to increased thresholds for service access, due to austerity.

The negative impact of increased need and static or reduced resources is compounded in how Additional Support for Learning

works in practice by other strongly influential factors:

1. The dominance of attainment and qualification results as the measure for success in Scotland's Education system, and the focus on that in political discourse. This devalues and demoralises children and young people who learn and achieve in other ways, and it devalues and demoralises the staff who work with them.

2. There is evidence of very positive continuous improvement and review processes supporting creative and innovative change and development. Headed up by respected leaders, clearly aligned to the key purpose of supporting all children and young people to learn and achieve, and implemented and embedded with their involvement, these processes are valued and supported by frontline staff. However, frontline staff report that where those factors are not evident, the impact of these processes is stressful, demoralising, time consuming and without benefit to the experience of children and young people or the professionals involved.

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[65] https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-schools-scotland-no-10-2019-edition/pages/1/

To again reiterate, the key conditions identified by frontline staff, which enable them to effectively fulfil their role in implementing the legislation, are:

- Values driven leadership
- An open and robust culture of communication, support <u>and</u> challenge underpinned by trust, respect and positive relationships
- Resource alignment, including time for communication and planning processes
- Methodology for delivery of knowledge learning and practice development, which incorporates time for coaching, mentoring, reflection and embedding into practice.

The evidence does not support the assumption that all individual professionals are signed up to the principles of inclusion and the presumption of mainstreaming. Some professionals, who believe in the principles, are disillusioned by not seeing delivery in practice. Others express a core belief that their role should only be to teach children and young people capable of learning within traditional academic standards.

The Review was consistently told by committed professionals at operational and senior leadership levels that Additional Support for Learning is viewed by many of their colleagues as "Somebody else's problem" and "not their responsibility".

Where this mind-set is dominant, children, young people and their families are not always treated with the respect and values that underpin the principles of inclusion and the presumption of mainstreaming.

These points reinforce the critical need for an underpinning leadership ethos, and delivery culture, of support and challenge. The crucial conditions for that are accountability, visibility, monitoring and measurement, which enable a mature and clear understanding of the challenges, however considerable these may be.

Visibility

At school and education authority levels, the challenges, in relation to additional support needs and provision, are consuming significant amounts of time and energy; too often as a result of intensive informal or formal adversarial processes. At a national, strategic policy level, the issue has not been visible in the way it needs to be, which reinforces the persistent lack of value we place on children and young people who have an additional support need.

At broader policy and political level, competition for recognition, due to resource constraints, is driving a focus on specific conditions or needs groups within Additional Support for Learning.

Focus on individual children and young people, and on specific conditions, obscures the more fundamental question of what a child focused education (and other public service) system, with 30.9% of children and young people with an additional support need, looks like and the absolutely critical issue of the workforce needed for that landscape.

One review contributor notes (and this language was frequently heard): Inclusion is not a Department. Schools need to be ready for children and young people as they are, not as we think they should be…And there is a fantasy that someone out there can fix things….Sprinkle magic dust and make the challenges go away"

Currently, the visibility of individual children and young people, and their conditions, relies on the determined advocacy of parents and carers or representational groups. This reinforces the competition between children and young people, and conditions, for attention and resources.

Consequently, whole groupings[66] identified in the additional support for learning legislation are invisible and have been completely overlooked. Also, it is important to be aware that those children and young people who do not express their needs and feelings openly, suffer the same

distress as those who are unable to contain them.

It is essential to stress that these comments are not criticisms. Children, young people, their families and committed members of the workforce already feel devalued. There is no value in increasing these feelings. The landscape described is symptomatic of the challenges to implementation – not the cause of the problems

The pressures in the system and the lack of visibility is also increasing stigma, exclusion and inequality within Additional Support for Learning. There is evidence of developing perceptions around children and young people who are viewed as either more or less "deserving" of attention and support. This is particularly noticeable in language around many of the children and young people with social, emotional or behavioural needs whose parents are perceived and described as "inadequate" or just "bad".

Key Processes

At operational level, these underpinning factors, which are combining to constrain or prevent effective implementation of the Additional Support for Learning legislation, are evident in the distortion of the very processes intended to widen access, through

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[66] See Annex C and Theme 2

early and increased identification, planning and decision making.

These processes are too often being deployed as mechanisms for prioritising need in order to ration scarce resources. A very common example is where a diagnosis is required in order to access support services. Another is where individual planning processes result in a plan – but not the support actions the plan identifies as necessary.

In regard to those planning processes, there is considerable disappointment and scepticism about how GIRFEC[67] is operating for children and young people with additional support needs. This adds to significant confusion and frustration amongst professionals and families about when Coordinated Support Plans should be initiated as part of legal entitlement.

That confusion and misunderstanding is exacerbated by a widespread lack of understanding of relevant rights.

Parents and Carers

Hundreds of parents and carers told their individual, but common story to the Review. The key features were:

- Hope and belief that a request for help to a public service would be responded to;

- frustration with lack of information and restricted communication;
- hurt and anger at being ignored or dismissed; and
- loss of confidence and trust.

This was as true of parents who are also professionals within education or other public services.

Hence, the language heard from hundreds of parents and carers by the Review of "fighting and battles."

Meanwhile, school staff feel under enormous pressure, often feeling unable to do the job they want. Some described feeling under siege and further devalued. At the same time, staff whose attitudes are not aligned to the principles and values of inclusion have their attitudes reinforced and justified.

Hence, the system level tensions become channelled into the reality of implementation for individual children and young people, their families and the staff closest to them.

It is not surprising that relationships become fraught and trust is lost on both sides – subsequently it is often hard to regain.

In summary, the key conditions for effective implementation of the legislation including resource alignment, active measurement for

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[67] https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/

visibility and improvement, and aligned workforce development are not currently in place. These are the crucial processes identified by Implementation Methodology for developing and improving complex services in complex environments.

Equally relevant are the crucial elements of learning from the developing influence of the "Kindness Agenda" on Scotland's national public service policy development.

That work confirms that the barriers to successful implementation are organisational cultures of risk aversion, blame and a drive to hit targets, which are not meaningful for those with additional support needs.

Most significantly, the Kindness Agenda emphasises the importance of recognising and supporting positive relationships "Relational rather than Transactional"; meaning relationships first and processes second.

That is confirmed by so much of what the Review has heard and in the answers to the question "If things were difficult then got better what was it that changed?

Without exception responses were framed in the language of : "she/he listened" "she/he cared" " she/ he just gets it" That applies to professionals commenting on management and leadership as

well as children, young people, their families and staff who they have contact with.

Overall, the Review has found that there are disconnects and contradictions between what is stated as intention and expectation, the (mis)alignment of key processes at all levels of the system and the actual experience of children and young people, their families and those working most closely with them.

Recommendations

The following package of interlinked and co-dependent recommendations are not a quick fix. They need to challenge and cause discomfort but if the will is there, they are the starting point for creating a real grounding for the environment needed for all our children and young people to learn and flourish whatever their needs are.

Visible leadership to drive momentum for change and to maintain the visibility of children and young people who have additional support needs in public life is essential.

Equally important is the imperative that at all levels, those that lead the change stay grounded by continually testing the gap between intention and reality through listening to the people who are at the heart of implementation: Children and

young people, parents and carers, school staff and professionals.

That feedback loop must be embedded to close the current gap between intention and reality in the implementation of the additional support for learning legislation, thus fully enabling the inclusion of all children and young people who face barriers to achieving their potential.

Where possible these recommendations have been developed in partnership with key stakeholders. In support of that, the Chair has engaged with the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group throughout this process.

Should these recommendations be accepted then the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group will support and oversee the progress made against them.

Children and young people participation

> **Overarching Recommendation: Children and Young People Participation**
>
> Children and young people must be listened to and involved in all decision making relating to additional support for learning. Co-creation and collaboration with children, young people and their families will support more coherent, inclusive and all-encompassing policy making, which improves implementation, impact and experience.

Theme 1: Vision and visibility

> **Recommendation 1.1 Vision statement**
>
> - A national, overarching Vision Statement for success for children and young people who have additional support needs must be developed by the end of 2020, with the full involvement of children and young people.
>
> - This vision statement must be developed alongside a positive public communication plan that highlights the range of conditions and issues identified in the additional support for learning legislation. This will be one of the ways in which the profile of additional support for learning is raised to ensure equity for all children and young people.
>
> - The achievements and successes of children and young people with additional support needs must be celebrated publicly, in equivalence to attainment and exam results.
>
> - The language used to describe children and young people with additional support needs, and the services that support them, must be changed. It should move away from describing children and young people as their condition and should not be solely focused on deficits[68].

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[68] For example, Keys to Life is a positive reference point for consideration.

Recommendation 1.2 Measurement

- A national measurement framework for additional support for learning must be developed to ensure that there is no reduction in aspiration and ambition for all children and young people to achieve to the maximum of their learning potential. The National Improvement Framework must be revised to ensure parity for additional support for learning.

- This framework must be rooted in improvement methodology and assist in reinforcing a culture of improvement rather than compliance. The main objective of measurement and recording will be to support local improvement rather than comparisons between Authorities.

- The test measures must recognise that qualifications are not relevant learning objectives for all children and young people and those children and young people are not failures because of that. The Milestones to Support Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs[69], introduced in 2018, along with the Curriculum review are positive reference points and should be taken into account.

- The measures must value and ensure visibility of the diverse range of achievements, including in vocational learning, that are possible for all children and young people with additional support needs and reflect what they and their families feel are important for their (future) quality of life.

- The investment in Pupil Support Assistants must be measured for impact and improvement on children and young people's experiences and achievements. Local authority and school managers must plan a strategy to review the deployment of Pupil Support Assistants, which takes account of recommendations from the current national research Education Endowment Fund (2018)[70].

- A plan must be developed and implemented to test how the National Performance Framework can be expanded to include achievement measures that go beyond the current narrow parameters of attainment and qualifications (based on the National Performance Framework values).

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[69] https://education.gov.scot/media/pcvpeaeg/milestones-supporting-learners-with-complex-asn.pdf

[70] https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/teaching-assistants/?utm_source=site&utm_medium=search&utm_campaign=site_search&search_term=support%20assistants

Theme 2: Mainstreaming and inclusion

Recommendation 2.1 Integration of additional support for learning into the Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence

- The Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence must fully integrate the findings of this Review and focus on all children, affording equity to those with additional support needs.

- To fully achieve this, the Independent Review of Curriculum for Excellence must maintain a strong and central focus on the experience of all children, young people, parents and carers and the professionals in closest connection with them.

Recommendation 2.2. The Scottish Education Council

- The work of the Scottish Education Council must be informed by the findings of this Review.

Theme 3: Maintaining focus, but overcoming fragmentation

Recommendation 3.1 Leadership and Strategic Planning

- There must be clear values-driven leadership, shared communication, support and challenge at all levels of the system to ensure that the experiences and achievements of children and young people with additional support needs are visible and continue to be improved.

- In order to drive a holistic approach and support the visibility of children and young people with additional support needs, local authority planning must incorporate the implications of additional support for learning for all local authority and partner services.

Recommendation 3.2 Fully integrated policy making

- Children and young people with additional support needs must be proactively and fully considered in policy making and appropriate cross-Government links made at the earliest stage.

- Children and young people, parents and carers must be partners in the development of key policies and guidance across the system.

Theme 4: Resources

Recommendation 4.1 Audit Scotland

- Audit Scotland must use the key themes in this report, and the associated findings from Audit Scotland's audit of educational outcomes, to inform the scope of their national performance audit on outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs.

- This must include assessing spend on additional support for learning across services, its impact on attainment and outcomes for children and young people at all stages; highlighting good practice and gaps.

Recommendation 4.2 Role of Grant Aided Special Schools

- The Grant Aided Special Schools and three national centres must use the opportunities that arise from the commissioning strand of the Doran Review[71] to consider how their specialist expertise (including in prevention and de-escalation) can be developed to be complementary to statutory mainstream and specialist provision, in order to support improvement in the experiences and outcome of children and young people with additional support needs.

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[71] https://www.gov.scot/groups/nscg/

Theme 5: Workforce Development and support

Recommendation 5.1 Teacher Education and Development

Teacher recruitment, selection, education and professional development and learning processes must align with the changed and changing profile of children and young people in Scotland, ensuring:

- All teachers hold and enact professional values of inclusion and inclusive practice and see this as a core part of their role[72]. (Codes of Conduct/Standards)

- All teachers understand what additional support needs are. They are clear about their role in supporting the identification of additional support needs and the need to adapt their teaching to ensure a meaningful learning experience for all their learners.

- All teacher education and development includes nationally specified practice and skills development in supporting learners with additional support needs, as a core element.

- Practice learning and development at local level must include where and how to access specialists' expertise and support.

- Communication, relationship building and positive mediation skills development are incorporated and embedded into teacher education and development, supported by coaching and mentoring opportunities.

- Parity of career progression, pathway structures and opportunities for specialist teachers of Additional Support for Learning:
  - c) There should be a first teaching qualification in additional support needs available during Initial Teacher Education; and
  - d) The career path proposal under consideration by the SNCT[73] to develop new career pathways[74] should have an additional strand for Additional Support for Learning.

- The focus and methods for teacher education and practice learning are directly informed and developed by the feedback of teachers.

- Innovative and partnership approaches to practice learning should be developed including delivery and participation of children, young people, parents and carers.

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[72] https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/standards-for-registration.aspx
[73] Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (https://www.snct.org.uk/)
[74] https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-panel-career-pathways-teachers-final-report/

Recommendation 5.2 Pupil Support Assistants

- The Classroom Support Staff working group must, as part of their work, undertake a review of roles and remit of Pupil Support Assistants. This must include the development of clear specifications for how classroom teacher and pupil support assistant roles interact and complement each other. It must also consider standards of practice, learning pathways, career progression routes and remuneration.

Theme 6: Relationships between schools and parents

Recommendation 6.1 Relationships between schools and parents

- Schools and local authorities must work in partnership with parents and carers to develop, and deliver, ways of working together that support and promote positive relationships, communication and co-operation.

- This must include clear pathways on transitions for children and young people with additional support needs, in the context of learning for life, allowing parents, carers, children, young people and professionals to be informed and supported at key transition points.

- Parents and carers must be involved as equal partners in the development of key guidance, to contribute their knowledge and lived experience.

- Further investment is needed to strengthen support services for families; allowing these services, and the support that they provide, to be embedded.

- The benefits of the use of mediation must be widely promoted at a national, regional and local level and consideration should be given to how mediation can be developed through professional learning, to support the workforce.

Theme 7: Relationships and behaviour

Recommendation 7.1 Relationships and Behaviour

- The remit of the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) must be reviewed and widened to bring it up to date and in line with emerging knowledge and recommended practices, including the findings of this Review. The membership of the group must be reviewed in line with the refreshed remit.

- SAGRABIS should have a primary focus on relationships and behaviour, but also the ability to focus on wider additional support for learning issues, developing improvement priorities and ensuring those priorities are reflected at a national, local and regional level. In doing so, SAGRABIS must ensure they work closely with the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group.

Theme 8: Understanding Rights

Recommendation 8.1 Rights

- The incorporation of UNCRC, and its impact on Additional Support for Learning legislation and processes, must be fully anticipated and planned for to ensure children's rights are embedded and effectively underpin the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning legislation.

Recommendation 8.2 Coordinated Support Plan Review

- The planned review of Coordinated Support Plans (CSPs) must take the findings of this Review into account.
- Also, it must consider:
  a) planning mechanisms within a whole life perspective for children and young people with lifelong conditions, including transitions between and beyond education settings;
  b) clarifying the interaction between CSPs, child's plan and GIRFEC;
  c) the relationship between education and partners in health, social work and other agencies to identify where re-alignment is needed in the preparation and delivery of support; and
  d) Where improvements are needed in the availability and accessibility of information and guidance about planning, and its processes, for all parents, carers, children and young people.

Theme 9: Assurance mechanism

Recommendation 9.1 Assurance mechanism

- Following this Review, there must be a mechanism put in place to allow progress against these recommendations to be reported and scrutinised. This should be developed in partnership with the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group. A progress report should be produced for Scottish Ministers and COSLA one year after the publication of this report and its recommendations.

- Local authorities must take account of the findings of this report to review and align their quality assurance processes. This must drive improvements in processes, practice and outcomes at all levels in the system.

Recommendation 9.2 Education Scotland

- Education Scotland must take account of the findings of this report and take action to ensure that their scrutiny frameworks, and inspection activities, are in line with it.

- Education Scotland must use the findings of this Review, and the conditions identified for good practice, to support and develop improvement in local authorities, regional improvement collaboratives and schools.

Desk review – phase one

Introduction

This desk review was completed in August 2019. Its purpose is to summarise the wide-ranging statistical and other currently available evidence to support the independently chaired review of implementation of additional support for learning, including where children learn. Based on the evidence available, the desk review seeks to identify both the strengths and barriers to implementation to inform potential next steps of the review.

Methodology

This desk review was produced by using qualitative and quantitative data on additional support for learning, from a variety of sources. This includes Scottish Government statistical publications and research reports, Scottish Parliament Committee papers, and reports published by third sector or other organisations. A full list of the evidence considered as part of this desk review is set out at Annex A.

The desk review has been structured in three sections, using both quantitative and qualitative information. The quantitative evidence is drawn from statistical sources and considers a range of evidence under four broad headings – pupil information, staffing, outcomes for learning and funding. The qualitative evidence considers broader evidence around the experiences of pupils with additional support needs.

The three sections are:

- Section 1, which sets out the quantitative information[75] on the number of children and young people with additional support needs recorded across Scotland, the type of support they receive, data on attendance and exclusions among children and young people with additional support needs, and their achievements, attainment and destinations. Information is also set out on the type of provision that is available for children and young people across Scotland and the time spent in mainstream classes. Information is also provided about those who support children and young people with additional support needs, including teacher and support staff. Finally, data on funding has also been included.

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[75] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/Summarystatsforschools

- Section 2 then considers the qualitative evidence, which has been drawn from a range of sources. This includes consultations and research reports commissioned by or carried out by the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament. Evidence gathered by Education Scotland on how well schools have performed against Quality Indicator 3.1 (Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion) as set out in the tool How Good is Our School? Evidence has also been considered from a number of reports that have been published by third sector organisations.

- Section 3 presents a summary of the conclusions

Background

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 ("the Act") provides the legal framework for identifying and addressing the additional support needs of children and young people who face a barrier, or barriers, to learning. The framework is based on the idea of additional support needs.

This broad and inclusive term applies to children or young people who, for whatever reason, require additional support, in the long or short term, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning. Children or young people may require additional support for a variety of reasons and may include those who:

- have motor or sensory impairments;
- have low birth weight;
- are being bullied;
- are children of parents in the Armed Forces;
- are particularly able or talented;
- have experienced a bereavement;
- are affected by imprisonment of a family member;
- are interrupted learners;
- have a learning disability;
- have barriers to learning as a result of a health need, such as foetal alcohol spectrum disorder;
- are looked after by a local authority or who have been adopted;
- have a learning difficulty, such as dyslexia;
- are living with parents who are abusing substances;
- are living with parents who have mental health problems;
- have English as an additional language;
- are not attending school regularly;
- have emotional or social difficulties;
- are on the child protection register;
- are refugees; or
- are young carers.

- The above list is not exhaustive nor should it be assumed that inclusion in the list inevitably implies that additional support will be necessary. However, the Act automatically deems that all looked after children and young people have additional support needs unless the education authority determine that they do not require additional support in order to benefit from school education.[76]

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[76] https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/

Section 1: Information relating to ASN pupils in Scotland

The main quantitative findings at National level are:

Pupil Information

- In 2018, there were 693,251 pupils in Scotland's local authority primary, secondary and special schools and grant-aided schools.
- In 2018, there were 199,065 pupils reported as having additional support needs, representing 28.7 per cent of all school pupils (a 2.1 percentage point increase on last year). This proportion has increased in every year since 2007 when just 5.3 per cent of pupils were reported as having an additional support need). As a consequence, this increase is reflected in all analysis of data using this data set.
- A substantial proportion of these pupils are not on a formal support plan (co-ordinated support plan, Individualised Educational Programme, or Child's Plan) nor have a disability. Instead, they receive support under the 'other' category, a new type of need introduced in 2012. Support in this category is likely to be of short-term duration and not require learning targets.
- In 2018, there were 71,900 school pupils that who had a disability[77] or had a formal support plan (i.e. excluding those in the 'other' category). This represents 10.4 per cent of all school pupils, an increase of 0.9 percentage points on 2017.

Where children and young people learn

- In 2018, 190,027 pupils learned in **mainstream settings** for some or all of their time. This equates to 94.5% of pupils with additional support needs and 27.4% of all pupils. 6,823 pupils learned in **special schools**. This equates to 3.42% of pupils with additional support needs and 0.98% of all pupils. For some pupils a shared placement is in place, this means that they learn in more than one setting. The table below sets out information on the time children and young people spend learning within and outwith mainstream settings. Some children and young people learn within a unit which is attached to a mainstream school, or an enhanced standalone provision.

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[77] A pupil having a disability may not necessarily have an additional support need. The two terms are not interchangeable. An additional Support Need arises where there is a barrier to learning as a result of the circumstances of the pupil. A pupil may have a disability, which as a result of other measures may not cause a barrier to their learning. In 2018, 17,447 pupils were recorded as having a disability. Table 1.9
https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18

Total number of pupils with Additional Support Needs in 2018	199,065
Time spent by pupils in mainstream classes	
All the time in mainstream classes	185,791
¾ or more, but less than all time in mainstream classes	1,918
½ or more, but less than ¾ of the time in mainstream classes	1,114
¼ or more but less than ½ of the time in mainstream classes	436
Some time, but less than ¼ of the time in mainstream classes	768
No time in mainstream classes	9,038

- The number of pupils who learn in mainstream all or some of their time has increased by 55% between 2012 and 2018. At the same time, the number of pupils who learn in special schools has remained broadly static, with small fluctuations in numbers both increasing and decreasing over the same period.
- Table 1, Annex A provides the information to support this. However, it should be noted that it is not possible from the data to determine whether this increase represents a change in the needs of the population or a change in the way in which definitions are interpreted and applied in the context of local practice.
- Table 2, Annex A shows that the school estate in Scotland has contracted in size across primary, secondary and special schools across the period 2012-2018, whilst at the same time the pupil population is increasing. In the period 2017-2018, there has been a rise in the number of pupils with additional support needs attending special school provision.

Additional Support Needs – trends

- Table 3, Annex A shows that in the period 2012-2018 additional support needs arising from social and emotional behavioural difficulties has consistently been the largest group of children and young people receiving support in each year. In 2018, 44,680 pupils received additional support arising from social and emotional behavioural difficulties, representing almost 22% of the total number of pupils receiving additional support. Pupils receiving support for English as an Additional Language has been the fastest growing category of support rising by 129% from 15,148 to 34, 816 and representing 17% of the total pupils receiving support.

- In percentage terms there have been significant increases in pupils receiving additional support as a result of; communication support needs (293% increase), young carers (636% increase), bereavement (300% increase), family issues (353% increase). These increases are welcome as they reflect a wider recognition of additional support needs within the framework of the legislation and recognise needs arising from circumstances beyond health and disability, which would have traditionally been the case.
- Whilst the young carers figures have increased significantly, the number of pupils identified as young carers is likely to be a underreporting of those who are young carers, due to the stigma and reluctance of young carers to identify themselves, or to be identified as a young carer.
- Similarly, the number of pupils receiving additional support needs as a result of being a care experienced pupil is significantly below the number of pupils who are recorded in national statistics on care experienced pupils. In 2018, 8,677 pupils received additional support. At the same time national statistics recorded that at 31 July 2018, there were an estimated 14,738 looked after children in Scotland[78] There is significant evidence on the attainment and achievements of looked after children and young people[79], and whilst this is improving, there is room for further improvement.
- There are a number of categories of support that have risen over the period 2012-2018 but do not reflect increases like those above. These include the number of pupils with additional support needs arising from dyslexia, autism, hearing and visual impairments, language or speech disorder, physical or motor impairment, more able pupils, substance misuse and pupils at risk of exclusion. Only one category of additional support need has decreased over the 2012-2018 time period, learning disability. It is expected that this reflects an attempt to be more specific in the recording of the factors giving rise to the additional support need.

Staffing

- All school staff have a role to play in supporting pupils with additional support needs, as aligned to the standards for teacher registration. The number of teachers employed has increased over the period 2012-2018 with 51,138 teachers employed in 2018.
- Table 5 of Annex A shows that in 2018 there were 2864 teachers with a specific role related to the provision of additional support. These staff have reduced from 3390 in 2012, but the figure increased between 2017 and 2018. In addition, there were 14,547 staff with a role that supported pupils with additional support needs. This has increased from

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[78] https://www.gov.scot/publications/childrens-social-work-statistics-2017-2018/pages/3/
[79] https://www.gov.scot/publications/education-outcomes-scotlands-looked-children-2016-17/pages/8/

12,992 in 2012, but there have been fluctuations within that time period.

Outcomes for Learners

- The percentage of school leavers with an ASN from mainstream secondary schools in an initial positive destination is consistently lower than for pupils without an ASN in the years 2012/13 to 2017/18. Table 7, Annex A shows that in 2017/18 89.3% school leavers, including Special School pupils, with additional support needs had a positive initial destination. A 4.9 percentage point increase since 2011/12.
- Pupils with an ASN arising from Dyslexia, Other Specific Learning Difficulty, Hearing Impairment, English as An Additional Language and More Able Pupils' all achieve beyond the national average of positive destinations for pupils with ASN[80].
- The percentage of ASN school leavers, by SCQF level attained is lower at all levels for non-ASN leavers. However, there have been improvements over time. 67.2% of 2017/18 school leavers, including Special School pupils, with additional support needs attained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 5 or better. An increase of 12.0 percentage point increase since 2011/12.
- 88.0% of 2017/18 school leavers, including Special School pupils, with additional support needs attained 1 or more qualifications at SCQF Level 4 or better. An increase of 2.5 percentage point increase since 2011/12.
- Pupils who have additional support needs or English as an additional language tend to perform lower than other pupils, at all stages and in all organisers.[81] This is confirmed by Table 9, Annex A.
- In terms of attendance and absence, national attendance for all pupils is 94.1% whilst for pupils with additional support needs the national figure is 91.2%. Further detail on the breakdown of percentage attendance across settings is set out at Table 10, Annex A.
- In 2016/17, there were 18,381 exclusions from school of which 18,376 exclusions were temporary and 5 were removal from the register (sometimes called expulsion)[82]. The vast majority of exclusions were for 1-3 days duration. Further detail on exclusion for pupils with additional support needs is available at Table 11, Annex A,

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[80] Destination categories are broken down by Additional Support Need and presented within Table L3.1 of https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/leavedestla

[81] https://www.gov.scot/publications/achievement-curriculum-excellence-cfe-levels-2017-18/

[82] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/exclusiondatasets/exclusionsdataset2017

- Local Government Financial Statistics for 2017-18 showed that local authorities spent £5.22 billion on education in Scotland. This has gone up from £5.07 billion in 2016-17, a 1.0% increase in real terms (3.0% in cash terms).
- Of that, £628 million was on additional support for learning, increasing from £610 million in 2016-17, a 0.9% increase in real terms (2.9% in cash terms).

Section 2: Summary of evidence

Included in the Main, Enable Scotland, March 2017:

https://www.enable.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/our-campaigns/included-in-the-main/

Background

In March 2017, Enable Scotland published the report – #IncludED in the Main?! This report followed their 'national conversation' about the experiences for young people in Scotland who have learning disabilities. The report presents findings from engagement with children and young people with a learning disability, parents and those who work in schools, in addition to a wider survey of young people across Scotland. The report includes 22 recommendations on how to achieve inclusion for children and young people with learning disabilities.

The evidence within the report was taken from three online surveys. 116 responses were received from children and young people aged from 5-26; 503 responses were received from parents of children aged between 2 – 28, from across 28 different local authority areas; and 204 responses were received from education staff working with children and young people with additional support needs. In addition, the report drew on findings from a survey of 1550 young people from secondary schools across Scotland.

Context

It should be noted at the outset that the survey does not, nor was it intended to provide, a representative reflection of all children and young people with learning disabilities in Scotland. The evidence base is relatively small. The responses from children and young people and parents combined equates to 4.5% of the total number of children and young people who are recorded as having a learning disability (ref) and represents 0.3% of the total number of children and young people with an additional support need.[83] The responses received from the education workforce represent around 0.3% of the total education workforce in Scotland.[84]   The age range of respondents should also be noted with some of those who responded falling outside the scope of additional support for learning implementation. It should be noted that the research could only base its findings on the experiences of those who chose to respond to the survey and while these experiences are very valuable, the conclusions presented within this report must be viewed within this context.

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[83] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18
[84] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata

The timing of the report should also be considered when drawing conclusions. The report was published in March 2017, and a range of actions have been undertaken since then to address some of the recommendations made in the report – the most significant of which is the publication of the revised guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming.

The key findings from the survey were:

- Over 80% of the education workforce said we are not getting it right for every child through the presumption that all children should be taught in a mainstream setting
- 60% of young people who have learning disabilities told ENABLE Scotland they feel lonely at school, and 62.5% said: "people don't understand me at school."
- More than a quarter of young people who have learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorders told us they can't take part in games and sports with other people in their school. 23% told us they don't get to go on school trips. Nearly half (46%) said they don't get the same chances to take part in games in the playground as everyone else in their school.
- More than half (51%) of young people who have learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorders do not feel they are achieving their full potential at school.
- Nearly half (41%) of young people who have learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorders told us they did not get support to think about and plan their future when they finish school. 65% are worried about it
- 22% of parents and carers described their experience of the education system as positive; 50% described it as negative.
- When asked which words/phrases they would use to describe their experience of the school system so far the most commonly used words/phrases by parents and carers were: Stressful (77%), Battle (67%), lack of information (57%) and alone (44%).
- 98% of the education workforce feels that initial teacher training education does not adequately prepare teachers for teaching young people who have additional support for learning needs, including learning disability. 55% said it does not prepare teachers, while 43% said it could be better.
- Most education staff (78%), in particular class/subject teachers (86%), said: there are not enough additional support for learning staff in my school to support children and young people who have learning disabilities.
- More than half (52%) of children and young people who have learning disabilities and/or autism spectrum disorders feel that they are not getting the right support at school.

- 40% of (410) parents/carers said their child had been informally excluded from school, 19% said this was happening on a weekly basis.

The report made a number of recommendations to improve the experiences of children and young people accessing mainstream education. Some of these recommendations are broader than the scope of implementation of additional support for learning. In addition, some of the recommendations made have since been delivered on, particularly through the publication of the guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming.

The report recognises the legislative framework as "strong". However, notes that the "the evidence suggests that there is an urgent need for robust guidance, training, and systemic accountability". A key concern in the report is instances of children and young people not being fully included in their school community, whether that is not being allowed to participate fully in the wider life of the school or experiences of informal or unlawful exclusions. Given the strong inclusion focus of the guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming, it could be concluded that some of these concerns have been addressed in the period since this report was published. However, the experiences of reported informal exclusions are a separate issue. Difficulties arise in trying to quantify this information, as there is no statistical evidence available to support or challenge the evidence in the report. However, there is commonality between the evidence presented here and evidence from a range of other sources, most notably 'Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved'.

Another key concern within the report is the preparedness of the workforce to support the needs of children and young people in schools and particularly if those supporting children and young people feel they receive adequate training, both during ITE and as part of CLPD to allow them to fully support the needs of children and young people. Again, this evidence is difficult to quantify as the sample size is small. However, the evidence presented as part of a number of other reports including, 'Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved' report and the EIS' report 'Exploring the Gap' raises similar concerns.

Another key area is the availability and visibility of information for families on sources of support or advice. Again, this evidence is difficult to quantify as the sample size is small. However, there is obvious correlation between the evidence presented here and those views expressed as part of other evidence considered, including the views within 'Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved' and the NPFS' survey on additional support for learning. The report notes "Families have identified 'having access to relevant information' (95%) and 'knowing where to go for support' (90%) as key coping strategies. However, many parents report that they do not have

access to this." This is despite the availability and visibility of a dedicated national advice and information service – Enquire – which is funded by the SG and the legal requirement of education authorities to provide information on this service and other relevant services.

Conclusion

While the evidence within this report is qualitative, it is very valuable. There are a number of common themes between the evidence presented here and that which is available elsewhere within the scope of this review. The evidence within the report would indicate that there is a gap between policy and practice, particularly in relation to informal exclusions. The SG guidance on exclusions 'Included, Involved and Engaged part 2 was published following this publication of this report (June 2017). However, conclusions drawn from evidence which is dated after June 2017, could indicate that this guidance has not dissipated the concerns which were initially raised in this report about informal exclusions and that there remains a gap between policy and practice.

It is difficult to quantify the evidence presented within this report about parental experience of the system. However, there are commonalities between the experiences within this report and the experiences outlined as part of the evidence given by parents to Committee (ref) and in parental responses to the consultation on the guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming. It may be helpful to draw in data from Enquire about the number and type of enquires they have received to help quantify the evidence here. However, it may be that while there are suitable vehicles in place to provide information to parents, there needs to be consideration of how information and advice on additional support for learning is embedded within the system.

The small sample size makes it difficult to draw conclusions from the evidence about teacher training from this report alone. However, this theme is one that has also emerged from across a number of sources of evidence that may indicate that these concerns are felt across the system.

Background

In March 2017, the Scottish Parliament's Education and Skills Committee undertook a short inquiry into Additional Support for Learning in Scotland's schools. The committee held a roundtable evidence session with the aim of hearing a range of views and opinions on this issue. The committee also spoke with the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills. As part of their inquiry, the Committee ran focus groups with teaching staff and university lecturers and members of the Committee visited a school to speak to teachers from two mainstream secondary schools about their experiences. The Committee also asked for written views to be submitted and it received responses from academics, organisations and parents and school staff.

Context

The Committee is made up of MSPs from across all political parties. During its consideration of school education, it decided to focus in on additional support for learning. The committee's inquiry and subsequent report is based on the views of those who responded to its call for evidence, those who were invited to participate in the evidence session, and those who were selected to be part of the focus groups. Of the 261 written submissions (ref) received, 143 were from parents and 64 were from teachers and support staff. The Committee's evidence session (ref) heard from 8 individuals or representatives, including parents, Enquire, school and local authority staff, an academic and the Scottish Children's Services Coalition. It is not clear from the report how many people altogether participated in the focus groups.   As the committee notes in its report, "it only heard from those who wanted to respond to its call for views, and so naturally comments centre around what needs to improve."   The evidence should be considered in this context and should not be taken as the collective view of those groups.

Key findings and recommendations

- A lack of resources on the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning policy means that the additional support needs of a large number of children are not being fully met, impacting on their education. In addition, this impacts on other pupils studying in mainstream education and on teaching and support staff, in the context of other work pressures.
- Nevertheless, the Committee is encouraged by the figures provided by the Cabinet Secretary on positive outcomes for those with additional

support needs and to hear from a number of parents who wanted to tell us what a massive difference effective support from a particular person, school or education authority, in mainstream education, has made to the lives of their children.

- The process for establishing the need for support and the process of then receiving support, means parents have to fight for their child to receive support.
- Accessing appropriate support – the Committee welcomes the Scottish Governments review of the guidance on mainstreaming and recommends that the review includes a systematic assessment of each element of the process: recognition of an additional support need for a child, availability of support and receiving the correct placement. This should include assessing how resources are impacting on this – resource limitations that are impacting on these processes include:
  o The number of trained ASN teachers and ASN assistants
  o The availability of specialists including mental health specialists and educational psychologists
  o The level of resources supporting the ASN tribunal process and other appeal processes, and
  o The availability of spaces in special needs schools
- As supporting children with ASN is an important part of closing the attainment gap, the Committee recommends that the Scottish Government analyses the extent to which a process that relies largely on parental involvement to have their child's ASN recognised and supported, could potentially widen the gap.
- The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government increases the provision of advocacy services and looks at how these could be best targeted at raising awareness and supporting parents from areas of deprivation.
- Due to the variation in education authority approach, the Committee is concerned that additional support needs are going unrecognised in some education authorities more than others and that the culture of the education authority, and some particular schools within education authorities, is also a factor. The Committee recommends that the findings of the Scottish Government working group, and information from the quality assurance review recommended above, should be used as a basis to explore with individual authorities any inexplicably low percentages of ASN in their area. The Committee asks that, when the Scottish Government has established which education authorities are a cause for concern, that the Government shares this information with the Committee so that the Committee can also seek to hold these authorities to account.
- The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government should undertake a financial review to find out the extent to which education authorities are spending in line with the level of need in their area. The

Committee recommends that the Scottish Government undertakes this review in collaboration with education authorities and that it should be the basis of discussions with education authorities on future funding allocations.

- The Committee would welcome further investigation from the Scottish Government on how the education and ultimately the attainment of pupils in general is being impacted upon by insufficient resources being provided to support children with additional support needs.
- The Committee recommends that education authorities seek to collaborate more, including in designing and delivering training in order to avoid duplication of effort.
- In relation to teacher training, the Committee welcomes the undertaking from the Cabinet Secretary to highlight to the General Teaching Council for Scotland the Committee's concerns that combining post-graduate training with the probationary year will limit further the time available for new teachers to train in additional support needs.

The Committee's report is wide ranging and covers a variety of topics, which is perhaps reflective of the broad scope set out in its call for evidence. The report is supportive of the "inclusive ethos behind" the policy of the presumption of mainstreaming and notes that this was the view of the majority of those who provided their views. However, the report raises concerns about its implementation. Common with other evidence, it cites a reduction in resources as key barrier to successful implementation of inclusion and additional support for learning. The report comments that the "most notable factors are the reduction in the number of specialist staff in classrooms, the reduction in specialist support services and the reduction in special school places." Data available from the Scottish Government in discussed in section 1 above.

The Committee's report recognises that many children and young people with additional support needs are receiving the support that they need to achieve their potential and points to the statistical data available (ref) which shows that children and young people with additional support needs continue to go on to a positive destination following their school years. It also highlights some of the views expressed by parents about the positive impact effective support has made to their children. However, the report is concerned with the experiences of some parents who have described the challenges they have had to overcome to secure appropriate support and provision for their children. This is a common theme across other sources of evidence and some of the language used, for example "fight", "battle", "struggle" is shared. The Committee is concerned that the current position creates a situation whereby "children with informed parents, who press for recognition and support" are "receiving more support than other children".

The report notes that some parents are unaware of their rights under the legislation and have to actively seek to find this information out.

The report also comments on the impact that a policy of inclusion has on the workload of teachers and the resulting impact on the learning of all children and young people at school. There are concerns presented in the report about the impact on pupils who do not have additional support needs, both in terms of their experience and their attainment. While it is not possible to draw any conclusions from the anecdotal evidence presented here about the experiences of all children and young people in Scotland, it is worth highlighting that the Scottish Government statistics show that the number of children and young people who have gone onto a positive destination has increased year-on-year from 2009-10[85]. This trend is similarly reflected for children with additional support needs.

The report notes concerns about training for teachers to allow them to appropriately support children and young people with additional support needs. Due to the nature of some of the evidence received, the report focuses on the training arrangements for a particular local authority. There was concern noted in the report about the arrangements for both ITE and CLPD with the report concluding that "issues undoubtedly exist with a reduction in specialist staff available in school to provide specialist training and the ability of school staff to take time out from other work pressures to train".

Conclusion

The Committee's report is wide-ranging and it makes a number of recommendations for improvement across the system. The inquiry heard evidence in early 2017, and it should be noted that there have been a range of developments since that time, including amendments to the legislation to extend rights to children; publication of a number of guidance documents, including guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming, a refreshed Code of Practice and guidance on school attendance and exclusions; and the development of enhanced resources for teachers and school staff.

It should also be noted that the Committee's findings are based on the experiences of those who responded to its request for their views and cannot be interpreted as representative of the experiences of all those in the system. However, there are a number of themes that emerge from this report that are common across a number of other sources of evidence. This includes general support for the principle of inclusion with a caveat that to

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[85] https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/statistics/2019/02/summary-statistics-attainment-initial-leaver-destinations-1-2019-edition/documents/tables-charts/tables-charts/govscot%3Adocument

succeed this must be properly resourced; concerns from parents about their experiences of securing appropriate support and provision for their children; and concerns about the increase in the number of children and young people with additional support needs in parallel to a reduction in specialist staff, support and services.

Further scrutiny by Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee:

https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/103397.aspx

Background

The Committee looked again at additional support for learning in 2019. It initiated a call for evidence, held two evidence sessions and convened a focus group with parents, young people, school staff and others to "establish how their experiences and perspectives on the issues they raised with committee in 2017 had evolved." Evidence was collected during February and March 2019. Following this, the Committee wrote to the Cabinet Secretary in April 2019. A response was provided by the Cabinet Secretary in May 2019.

Context

As with the previous evidence gathered by the Committee, it should be noted that its conclusions are based on those who offered their views to the Committee and is therefore not necessary representative of the views of all those with experiences of additional support for learning.

Key findings/recommendations

The main themes of the Committee's re-examination of its 2017 inquiry are set out in their letter to the Cabinet Secretary of 9 April 2019.[86] These, taken directly from this letter, are noted below.

1. Mainstreaming and inclusion - policy intentions and policy in practice
   Sufficient resources are fundamental to the effective operation in practice of both the presumption to mainstream and additional support for learning policies. Indeed resources are fundamental to the educational experiences of children with additional support needs wherever they are educate. The Committee continues to be supportive of the intentions of these policies but continues to have real concerns about how they function with current resource levels.

2. Experiences of children and young people
   In light of the evidence received on seclusion and restraint, part time timetabling, unlawful exclusions and home schooling as a last resort, the Committee considers that the Scottish Government should consider ways of improving data gathering on these approaches be it through random sampling of schools or a wider approach.

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[86] https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20190408Out_ltr_from_Conv_to_DFM_re_ASN.pdf

3. Experiences of parents
   The Committee reiterates its analysis from 2017 on the need for increased awareness raising amongst and support for parents, including the recommendation that the Scottish Government should increase the provision of advocacy services and look at how these could be best targeted at raising awareness and supporting parents from area of deprivation.

4. Experiences of school staff
   As previously raised with you, in order to allow for a meaningful assessment of trends in staffing levels it is vital to have statistics that reflect the number of support staff with a specialism in supporting those with additional support needs. Work to standardise the nomenclature used by local authorities is a starting point for making progress in this area.

5. The role of local authorities
   The need for a financial review undertaken by the Scottish Government to ascertain the extent to which education authorities are spending in line with the level of need in their area, and identify any authorities that have spends lower than their recognition rates might require; and the need for improvements in the accuracy if data on the recording of incidence of ASN across local authorities including a breakdown by particular ASN, and an analysis of local authorities figures that reflect 'inexplicably low percentages.

6. Co-ordinated support plans
   The Committee considers that the depth of evidence received about issues with the implementation of CSPs and the associated impact, including to access the Tribunal, should become a stand-alone piece of work by the Scottish Government

7. Definition of additional support needs
   The Committee would welcome the Scottish Government's perspective on the suggestion from Professor Riddell that the definition of what constitutes an additional support need under existing legislation could be reviewed.

The themes presented as part of this evidence are consistent with those which formed part of its report in 2017, and the Committee continue to express concern in a number of areas as noted in the section above. The Committee also drew out from its evidence two new themes - CSPs and definition of additional support needs.

The Committee's report notes that the use of the statutory co-ordinated support plan has declined and it expresses its concern as "access to many of the new rights depend on statutory support being in place." The statistics available on CSPs confirm that the number of children and young people who have a co-ordinated support plan has declined.[87] However, CSPs are one of a number of plans that can be used to support children in their learning. The purpose of a CSP is to enable support to be planned in co-ordinated way to meet the needs of children and young people who have complex or multiple needs that require significant support from education and another agency or agencies.[88]

Historically, the statistics show that the number of children and young people with a CSP have been small.[89] Under the legislation[90], there is a duty on education authorities to consider whether a children or young person who is care experienced, requires a CSP and there have been concerns raised previously about this issue.[91] In the response from the Cabinet Secretary[92], Mr Swinney stated that the SG would take forward a piece of work to review the use of co-ordinated support plans and will consider how to strengthen the guidance and other support available to education authorities on co-ordinated support plans. This could be informed by some of the work that is undertaken by this review.

It may be important to distinguish between the rights of children, which were extended in January 2018, and the CSP and the access that this provides to the Tribunal. As noted in the Cabinet Secretary's response to the Committee:

> "I note that the Committee has drawn a correlation between the number of co-ordinated support plans and the ability of parents, carers, young people and children being able to access Tribunals. I am aware that this may have arisen as a result of evidence provided. It may be helpful therefore, for me to set out the wide range of matters which can come before the Additional Support Needs Tribunal, to make clear that these include matters which are not related to a co-ordinated support plan. In addition to considering references relating to co-ordinated support plans the Additional Support Needs Tribunal also hears appeals about certain placing requests, disputes relating to transition planning, and matters of capacity."

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[87] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus
[88] https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20190515In_ltr_froim_DFM_re_asn.pdf
[89] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus
[90] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/4/contents
[91] https://govanlc.blogspot.com/2015/05/glc-research-reveals-systemic-failure.html
[92] https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20190515In_ltr_froim_DFM_re_asn.pdf

Further, the majority of rights of parents, carers, children and young people are not related to the co-ordinated support plan. This includes asking for their own or their child's additional support needs to be identified and planned for, receiving advice and information about their or their child's additional support needs; being part of discussions about the support that they or their child receive at school and accessing dispute resolution procedures to resolve concerns. The Scottish Government provides funding to 'Let's Talk ASN Scotland' and 'My Rights, My Say' to support families to exercise these rights under the Act."

In relation to the definition of additional support needs, the committee has set out that it has heard evidence to indicate that this definition has become too broad which has led to pressure on resources. There is little other evidence to support this position and it is not a theme that has emerged in other evidence. The response from the Cabinet Secretary indicates that the broad definition is "fundamental to the inclusive approach" and it would appear that there is no plans to make this change to the legislation.

Conclusion

The Committee's update to their 2017 inquiry is again wide-ranging and touches on a number of issues. Again, it must be noted that Committee's findings and recommendations are based on the evidence it received and gathered from a small sample of those with experiences of additional support for learning and the evidence it has drawn from other sources such as Not Included, Not Engaged Not Involved. However, a number of themes are again present in this evidence that can be seen in other evidence, particularly around resources and the experiences of children and young people and their parents of accessing appropriate provision and support.

The issue of CSPs is significant and has been recognised by both the Committee and the Scottish Government as requiring further work. While not expressly drawn out in other evidence, views of parents around their experience of the challenges their have faced in accessing appropriate support, and concerns about access to specialist support could be used to correlate this evidence and this link may be worth exploring in greater detail.

Excellence and equity for all - guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming: consultation analysis, Scottish Government June 2018

https://www.gov.scot/publications/excellence-equity-guidance-presumption-mainstreaming-analysis-consultation-responses/

Background

The Scottish Government ran a consultation on Excellence and Equity for all – guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming from 2 November 2017 to 9 February 2018. The consultation received 362 written responses - 87 from organisations and 275 from individuals.

Organisational responses came from the public, independent and third sectors and included local authorities, schools, national bodies, voluntary organisations, parent councils and unions amongst others. Individual respondents included parents, teachers, others working within the education sector and the public. However, identification of respondent type was only possible within a small proportion of responses, so an accurate breakdown of individuals' responses by respondent type is not possible.

Context

The consultation asked for views on the guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming. The guidance seeks "to ensure that local authorities have the guidance required to help their decision making in applying the presumption of mainstreaming and to improve inclusive practice in schools." The questions which made up the consultation were intended to draw out views related to the guidance document specifically and were therefore tailored for this purpose. However, the consultation attracted a wide range of views on inclusion and additional support for learning more broadly. This may have been influenced by the increased scrutiny on inclusion and additional support for learning, particularly in light of the Committee's inquiry and the publication of Included in the Main.

The sample size is relatively small and there is no information provided about the demographics of those who responded. In addition, as some of those who responded commented on the wider issues and some did not, it is not possible to conclude that the views expressed in the consultation are representative of the views and experiences across Scotland.

The key findings of the consultation were:
- The majority of those who responded agreed with the vision for inclusive education in Scotland
- A large majority of those that responded agreed with the principles that are set out in the guidance.
- The majority of those who responded agreed that the expectations set out under each of the principles were the right ones.
- The majority of those that responded found the entitlements and options for provisions as set out in the document to be clear.
- The majority of respondents found the commentary and reflective questions helpful.
- There was a wide range of comments and opinions provided about concerns about the system more generally.
- There was a mixed view on the helpfulness of the case studies
- The majority of respondents said that they found the guidance helpful.

The majority of those who responded to the consultation agreed with the principles of inclusion. There was a clear distinction made by some between inclusion and mainstreaming and that children and young people should be included, regardless of what setting they attend. Those who did not agree with the principles of inclusion were made up of those who disagreed with the policy and those who felt it was not being implemented properly. Concerns were raised that "the current practice did not meet those aspirations and that if the guidance was to be implemented effectively, practice would have to be strengthened and supports put in place to achieve this." The analysis report notes that "the most common concern reported was resources and this included having sufficient numbers of teachers and support staff, access to specialist supports, specialist provision within local areas and the physical environment of the school". The report also notes that training is key to support the "attitudes and ethos of practitioners".

The responses highlighted the importance of collaborative relationships with partners, including health, social work and third sector organisations. There were also responses that suggested that it was essential that children and young people receive appropriate planning support, particularly at times of transition.

There were concerns raised by respondents about the availability and accessibility of information about the different types of placements that were available and an inconsistency of provision across local authorities. There were comments from respondents about the exemptions that can be applied in the presumption of mainstreaming legislation (ability and aptitude, incompatible with the efficient education of for other children and unreasonable public expenditure) and how these are applied in practice.

Conclusion

The number of respondents to the consultation on the presumption of mainstreaming guidance is limited. In addition, the purpose of the consultation was to seek views on the suitability of the guidance document, rather than experiences of wider implementation issues and the consultation has been structured with this in mind. There are a number of organisations and individuals who responded only to the questions asked, while there are others who provided comments on additional support for learning and inclusion more broadly. It is therefore not possible to draw firm conclusions from this information.

However, there are a number of themes that are consistent with the picture presented elsewhere. As is evident elsewhere, there is broad consensus that the policy of inclusion is right. However, there are again concerns raised about its implementation. These focus on resources, training, parental involvement and relationships with other partners.

Research on the experiences of children and young people receiving support in mainstream and special schools, Research Scotland on behalf of Scottish Government, completed June 2018

https://www.gov.scot/publications/additional-support-learning-research-experience-children-young-people-those-support/

Background

In 2018, the Scottish Government commissioned research to explore the experiences of additional support for learning for children and young people, their families and those who support them. The research took place in 18 schools in six local authority areas across Scotland. The schools were a mix of both primary and secondary schools; mainstream (with and without additional support needs bases or enhanced support) and special schools; and with varied geographies and levels of deprivation. It involved 100 face to face interviews with pupils ranging from P2 to S6. It also involved 54 school staff members (leadership teams, class teachers and support workers) and 39 parents. This research was published in March 2019.

Context

As with other sources considered as part of this evidence review, the conclusions presented as part of this research are not intended to be representative of the experiences of all children and young people with additional support needs, their families or those who support them. It does, however, provide a valuable insight into their experiences and views on certain things. The research was focused on 6 out of 32 local authorities, which were a mix of urban and rural areas. The number of those interviewed as part of this research was relatively small and they were selected by their school to take part. Of the 100 children and young people who took part in the research, 27 of them attended mainstream schools, 52 attended mainstream schools with enhanced provision or bases and 21 attended a special school. It should also be noted that the majority of those interviewed who attended a special school were located within urban areas. The research spoke to children with a broad range of additional support needs. The majority of those interviewed were boys.

Key findings

Additional support for learning provision

- All local authority officers involved in the research said their authority had a clear ethos around meeting the needs of children with ASN, which was in line with the presumption of mainstreaming.

- Overall, most local authority officers felt that the balance of additional support for learning provision was improving in their area, becoming more flexible and individualised. However, most felt that there was still more to do to improve the balance of provision, including developing the resources available in mainstream schools, and being able to recruit skilled teachers and support staff. In some areas, there was a clear feeling from local authority officers and school staff that there were not enough resources to meet needs – particularly in mainstream schools.

School experiences of children and young people

- Many pupils at mainstream primary schools liked their friends and teachers. A few said they liked everything and would not change anything.
- Many secondary school pupils said that they liked the range of subjects and the support they received at school. However, some secondary school pupils said they did not like anything about their school at all. Some said they hated school and did not want to be there, and some said they did not like their teachers.
- Pupils at special schools said they liked playing outside, learning life skills, and topics such as sport, music and art. Many said that there was nothing they did not like, and their dislikes were very diverse and included noise, school work, friends, safety and not being allowed to be independent.
- Pupils at mainstream and special schools, generally felt positive about their experience, and were positive across SHANARRI indicators. However:
  - o In terms of safety, some mainstream school pupils said that they felt – or had previously felt – very unsafe due to bullying. Half of all secondary school girls had experienced bullying, with two having moved schools due to bullying. A few pupils at special schools said that pupils were violent or aggressive towards them and wanted more help with feeling safe.
  - o In terms of achieving, a few pupils at mainstream schools felt they could achieve better in small group or ASN base activity, rather than in the whole class. A few pupils at special schools said they were covering work they had already done and were ready to be more challenged.
  - o In terms of inclusion, most pupils at mainstream schools felt they had lots of friends and that it was easy to make friends, and they were included in the life of the school. However, a few pupils in ASN bases in mainstream schools said they did not always feel involved in the life of the school beyond the base. Around half of pupils at special schools said they had lots of friends, but some (at two schools in particular) found it quite hard to make friends.

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- Overall, almost all pupils at mainstream schools and special schools felt their needs were well met.
- A few primary pupils said that they wanted more help, and a few didn't like going out of the class to get support as they felt they missed things. Secondary pupils often enjoyed going to a targeted support session and enjoyed the quiet space. However, two secondary pupils felt they did not get the help they needed.

Parental views on school experiences

- Parents and carers were broadly positive about their child's experience of school across all of the SHANARRI indicators. Overall, most parents felt that their child's school was doing well in terms of meeting the needs of their child. Parents and carers valued when communication with the school was good; enhanced support was available; and their children were comfortable at the school.
- Most parents of children at mainstream schools had something they would like to improve about the school – including some concerns about resources, staff and buildings and high staff turnover. A few secondary school parents had concerns about the busy school environment, the challenges ensuring all teachers had the information they needed about their child, and ongoing concerns about bullying.
- Parents with children at special schools liked the small size of the school and classes, the good ratio of adults to children and the access to physical space both indoors and outdoors. While a few felt their child was achieving more than at mainstream school, a few had concerns about academic challenge. A few on split placements felt that their child's needs were better met in the special school than the mainstream school.
- Almost all parents were very positive about the relationship and level of communication with teachers and support staff at their child's school. However, a few felt that they had to push to improve communication.
- For many parents it had taken a long time to get their child to the right environment. The challenges included a lack of understanding from staff in mainstream schools; experiences of bullying; long assessment and diagnosis periods; having to push for extra support or spaces at special schools or ASN units; and being moved between schools with little notice.

Involving young people and families in decision making

- Pupils at primary mainstream schools and special schools generally felt well listened to by teachers, and gave examples of being able to learn in a way that suited them.

- While most pupils at mainstream secondary school did feel listened to, a few did not. A few felt that teachers didn't make the adjustments they needed.
- Almost all parents felt that they were involved in decision making relating to their child's education. However, some did not feel involved in choices about which school their child went to, or what support their child received at school.
- Almost all school staff felt that children were able to express their views and have these heard at school. Involvement was felt to work best if it was ongoing and genuine, with flexibility in engaging young people and parents, and meeting their needs.

Conclusion

While many of the children and young people who took part in the research had a number of positives things to say about their experiences, the research highlights that the experience of children and young people within their school communities is absolutely individual to them and positive or negative experiences can hinge on a range of factors and circumstances. This makes it difficult to quantify the views expressed by children and young people as part of this research.

The sample size is relatively small, however, there are a number of themes that emerge from this research which are common across a number of other sources of evidence. This includes a positive perception of the principle of the presumption of mainstreaming, but equally a recognition that appropriate resources are necessary to ensure successful implementation. There are some concerns expressed in the report by both parents and staff about there being a need for additional resource, particularly in mainstream settings, a view which frequently appears across a number of other sources of evidence.

Parents who took part in this research were broadly positive about the relationship and communication they had with their child's school although some parents expressed that they had had to "push" to improve communication. In addition, parents spoke about the challenges that they had experienced in securing the appropriate support and provision for their children and the length of time that this took. These views appear to be consistent with some views expressed by parents across a number of other sources of evidence who have described their experiences using language such as "fight", "battle", etc.

Background

In September 2018, Children in Scotland, Scottish Autism and the National Autistic Society, published a report about the experiences of children with autism missing education. The organisations carried out research with parents of autistic children who had missed school within the last two years. A total of 1,417 responses to the survey commissioned as part of the report were received. Responses were received from every local authority in Scotland, with the majority of responses from Glasgow and the fewest from Western Isles. Based on the evidence gathered as part of the survey, the report makes nine calls to action and several recommendations for further work.

Context

It should be noted at the outset that the survey does not, nor was it intended to provide, a representative reflection of all children and young people with autism in Scotland. The 1,417 responses represents 8% of the total number of children and young people with autism in 2018, and 0.7% of the total number of all children and young people with additional support needs.[93] The survey intends to offer insight into the experiences of families of children and young people with autism, and the barriers that they may experience in accessing education. The report provides a very valuable insight into these families' experiences. However, it should be noted that the findings are based on the experiences of those who chose to respond to the survey. The survey was advertised online for a period of three weeks in early 2018 and was promoted by each individual organisation, through their contact with individual parents and support groups. While the experiences of these families are incredibly valuable, the conclusions presented within this report must be viewed within this context.

The key findings from the survey were:

- 185 parents (13%) reported that their children had been formally excluded from school in the last two years.
- 478 parents (34%) reported that their child had been unlawfully excluded (ref) in the previous two years.
- 394 parents (28%) reported that their child had been placed on a part-time timetable in the last two years.

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[93] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus/dspupcensus18

- 1,004 parents (71%) reported that their child had missed school for reasons other than common childhood illness in the last two years.
- 50% of parents reported that their child had experienced more than one of these types of absence. 7% of parents reported that their children had experienced all four of the kinds of absence described in this report.
- Regardless of the type of absence, it was reported that 85% of children did not receive support to catch up on work they had missed.
- 72% of respondents reported that staff having a better understanding of how their child's autism affects them, including their communication needs, would have made a difference to their child. Other popular responses were: adequate support for their child at school (68%); adjustments for a child's sensory needs (57%); and other pupils having a better understanding of autism (56%).

The report recognises the Scottish Government's vision for education in Scotland and acknowledges the significant programme of work that is being undertaken to achieve this. The report notes that "Scotland's approach to policy and legislation is one of inclusion and equality". This would indicate that the evidence gathered as part of the survey did not include concerns about the policy approach or principles of inclusion or additional support for learning. However, it also notes that "these laudable principles are not reflected in the educational experiences of many autistic children."

The primary concern presented in the report is the exclusion of children and young people with autism, either formally or informally. The calls for action made in the report are focused on how these instances of exclusion can be prevented through a range of action both in day to day practice and at a more strategic level.

Further consideration – Scottish Government statistical perspective on exclusion

There is a correlation between the experiences set out in the report and the statistics available on exclusion from school among children and young people with additional support needs. The statistics show that in 2016/17, there were 11,352 instances where children and young people with additional support needs were temporarily excluded from school.94 This represents 62% of all instances of exclusions recorded in that period. This indicates that children and young people with additional support needs are five times more likely to be excluded than their peers. Within this, there is a lower exclusion rate of primary school children who spent all of their time in in mainstream classes (3.2%), compared with those children who spend some (8.6%) or all (6.8%) of their time within a special provision. In

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94 https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/exclusiondatasets/exclusionsdataset2017

secondary, exclusions are highest amongst those children who spend some time in special classes and some time in mainstream classes (16%), compared to 10.4% in mainstream classes.[95]

Statistics indicate that the duration of the vast majority of all exclusions was between 1-2 days. [96] During the period of exclusion, the data indicates that for a significant majority, no educational provision was made. There are wide variations across local authorities in relation to the instances of children and young people being excluded.

One of the other main themes of the report is unlawful exclusion and the use of reduced timetables (ref). While the report recognises that the Scottish Government guidance[97] is clear on the law around exclusions and what constitutes an unlawful exclusion, its findings would indicate that there remain instances of "unlawful exclusions", including where parents are asked to collect children early from school, children are only attending for part days or exclusions are not formally recorded as such.

It is difficult to quantify the information presented in the report, as there is little statistical evidence available to either support or challenge it. The report notes that there is little guidance for schools and authorities on the use of part-time or reduced timetables. However, this conclusion appears to be at odds with the policy position and guidance on attendance and exclusions – Included, Engaged and Involved part one and part two, which makes clear the circumstances of appropriate use of part-time timetables.

The report narrates the impact that both these instances can have on children and young people themselves in addition to the wider impact on the family.   There is evidence elsewhere of the benefits of a flexible approach to supporting children and young people with additional support needs who face barriers, which could impact on their attendance. However, this report would indicate that these benefits must be carefully weighed against any potential barriers that such approaches may create.

The survey asked parents to indicate what they felt would make a difference for their child. The responses show a mixed picture of what measures parents felt could be taken to improve experiences for their children. This is not unexpected given the subjectiveness of the question and the clear premise that support should be tailored to the individual

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[95] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/exclusiondatasets/exclusionsdataset2017
[96] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/exclusiondatasets/exclusionsdataset2017
[97] https://www.gov.scot/publications/included-engaged-involved-part-2-positive-approach-preventing-managing-school/

needs of children and young people. However, the responses suggest that parents feel there is a need to change both day to day practice and also the strategic approach of the school or education authority, both when deciding the most appropriate provision and also the approach and individual support to the child or young person.

Conclusion

The available SG statistical data would appear to support the evidence outlined in the report about formal exclusions. There is other similarly anecdotal evidence to support the findings the report makes in relation to unlawful exclusions and the use of part-time timetables. The evidence provided in this report would indicate that there is a conflict between practice and the Scottish Government policy position set out in the guidance on attendance and exclusions. However, the limitations of this evidence, as set out under the context heading must also be considered. Given these limitations, it is not possible to conclude if the experiences set out within this report are a true representation of the current position for children and young people with autism or additional support needs. However, it must also be noted that these experiences are not limited to this report and are present in a number of other pieces of evidence.

The evidence presented in the report related to a requirement for school staff to have a greater understanding and awareness about how autism affects children and young people and identifying the support that they require, is also demonstrated in other sources of evidence related to additional support needs more broadly.

Education Scotland evidence from inspection

Background

Education Scotland is the national body in Scotland for supporting quality and improvement in learning and teaching. Part of their remit is to evaluate how well a school is performing in a range of key areas. To support this, inspectors use quality indicators from How good is our school? (4th edition). Inspectors use a six-point scale to evaluate how well a school is performing against these quality indicators.

Quality indicator 3.1 considers "the impact of the school's approach to wellbeing which underpins children and young people's ability to achieve success. It highlights the need for policies and practices to be well grounded in current legislation and a shared understanding of the value of every individual. A clear focus on ensuring wellbeing entitlements and protected characteristics supports all learners to maximise their successes and achievements".[98]

In April 2018, in Scotland, there were 2,016 primary schools, 358 secondary schools and 126 special schools.[99] In addition, there are 2,544 early learning and childcare centres.[100] Each year, Education Scotland undertake inspections across all settings in Scotland.

All inspection reports are published on Education Scotland's website. During academic session 2017/18, 259 inspection reports were published following inspections undertaken in primary, secondary and special schools and early learning and childcare settings. In academic session 2018/19, 190 inspection reports have been published following inspections undertaken in primary, secondary and special schools and early learning and childcare settings. It should be noted that this is based on the inspection reports available up until up to 23 August 2019 with some inspections undertaken in 2018/19 academic year yet to be published.

Key findings

- Of the 106 primary schools inspected in 2017/18, 95 schools (90%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 11 schools (10%) were evaluated as weak.

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[98] https://education.gov.scot/improvement/documents/frameworks_selfevaluation/frwk2_nihedithgios/frwk2_hgios4.pdf
[99] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/schoolestatestats/schestate2018
[100] https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Children/Pubs-Pre-SchoolEducation/ELCAdditionalTables2018

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- Of the 75 reports published relating to inspections in primary schools in 2018/19, 68 schools (91%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 7 schools (9%) were evaluated as weak.
- Of the 19 secondary schools inspected in 2017/18, 18 schools (95%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 1 school (5%) was evaluated as weak.
- Of the 19 reports published relating to inspections in secondary schools in 2018/19, 18 schools (95%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 1 school (5%) was evaluated as weak.
- Of the 11 special schools inspected in 2017/18, 10 schools (91%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 1 school (9%) was evaluated as weak.
- Of the 9 reports published relating to 2018/19, 7 schools (78%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 1 school (11%) was evaluated as weak and 1 school (11%) was evaluated as unsatisfactory.
- Of the 123 ELC settings inspected in 2017/18, 113 settings (92%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 10 settings (8%) were evaluated as weak.
- Of the 87 reports published relating to 2018/19, 80 settings (92%) were evaluated as excellent, very good, good or satisfactory against Q.I. 3.1; 6 settings (7%) were evaluated as weak and 1 setting (1%) was evaluated as unsatisfactory.

Conclusion

The evidence from inspections undertaken in 2017/18 and 2018/19 across primary, secondary and special schools and early years settings, shows that the vast majority of the schools and settings inspected performed well against Quality Indicator 3.1. The evidence shows a broadly consistent picture from 2017/18 to 2018-19. However, it is not possible to directly compare these findings. It should also be noted that the inspection evidence is a sample of all schools and early years settings in Scotland and this evidence is only drawn from those schools and settings which were inspected in that year.

https://www.eis.org.uk/Content/images/education/ASN/ExploringTheGap.pdf

Background

In May 2019, the Education Institute of Scotland (EIS) published a report on additional support for learning. The purpose of this report was to "restate EIS support in principle for inclusion education; highlight current EIS concerns about the implementation of existing additional support for learning policy; restate our recommendations for enhancing ASL in Scotland." The report partly draws on responses to a survey of 12,250 members. The report considers what is working well within additional support for learning, what is not working well, the impact of this on both staff and pupils, and makes recommendations on how to address the concerns.

Context

When considering the report as evidence, it is important to be mindful of the wider context, not least the impact of the pay negotiations between the SG, local authorities and the unions which were concluded in April 2019. The survey gathered responses from over 12,250 of its members between 3rd December and 17th December 2018. This represents around 24% of the teacher workforce. In addition to the survey of its members, the EIS also undertook a survey of local authorities seeking to explore the variation in provision across Scotland.[101]

Key Findings

The report is broadly supportive of the principles of inclusive education. However, it comments that there is a "substantial gap between policy and practice." This view is one which is presented within other sources of evidence, including the Scottish Parliament's Education and Skills' Committee report and it is evident in a proportion of responses to the consultation on the presumption of mainstreaming guidance and experiential research.

The report notes that "many children and young people are having their needs met in school" and recognises the range of strategies and approaches that are in place to support the "diversity of need in the classroom".   It also welcomes the developments around mental health which were announced in September 2018[102] and the investment in the training of educational

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[101] https://www.eis.org.uk/Content/images/education/ASN/ExecSummary.pdf
[102] https://www.gov.scot/news/delivering-for-today-investing-for-tomorrow-1/

psychologists.[103] However, the report raises concerns about whether this is enough to reverse the "damage caused by many years of austerity".

The report cites lack of resource as the key barrier to implementation of additional support for learning. It draws on the responses received as part of its survey which concluded that "under-resourcing of ASL implementation was the third most pressing concern of members". This is a concern which is present in a number of other sources of evidence considered as part of this review.

The report summarises the "problems in ASL provision" into four broad categories:

1. Undervaluing

The report raises concerns about the undervaluing of specialism within the system. It draws on anecdotal evidence which suggests that ASN teaching staff are often used as short term cover which it notes impacts not only on the support provided to children and young people but also on the ability of those staff to further develop their skills. In addition, the report is concerned about the reduction in specialist units and the impact this has on children and young people who are unable to manage in mainstream provision and cautions against undervaluing the role of specialist provision. The report refers to SG published statistics noting that the number of special schools has fallen from 193 in 2008 to 114 in 2018, while the number of pupils in special schools remained largely the same. The statistics do record this drop, however, it should be noted that the statistics now only record special schools with at least one pupil, whereas prior to 2018, all special schools were recorded, regardless of whether it was providing education to children and therefore these figures do not provide a direct year-on-year comparison.

Further, the report notes that the role of ASN teachers and assistants has been undervalued and concluded that this is linked to a "societal undervaluing of work which is predominately carried out by women".

2. Under-investing

The report raises concerns about an underinvestment in both the workforce and specialist services. It notes that there has been a decrease in the number of additional support for learning teachers (SG stats ref) and this has in turn lead to an increase in the workload of teachers who have to spend additional time supporting children and young people with additional

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[103] https://www.gov.scot/news/more-than-gbp-4-million-for-educational-psychologists/

support needs. The report comments that teachers have reported "moving to a crisis-led role", with less time for preparation and planning.

The report also raises concerns about a reduction in the number of support staff and the variation of these numbers across local authorities.

The report presents concerns about access to support, such as educational psychologists, mental health services or other specific support services. It notes that a delay in accessing these services can impact on the identification of need and lead to a delay in appropriate support being put in place. It also reports concerns about perceived changing criteria for accessing support and what it sees as those with complex needs being prioritised for specialist intervention with class teachers being required to meet the needs of other children and young people.

Another area the report is concerned with is access to professional learning for teachers. This theme is common among a number of sources of evidence with some requesting specific training related to specific additional support needs in both ITE and CLPD. The report recognises the resources that are available, such as the Autism Toolbox and the Dyslexia Toolkit, however, indicates that these are not a substitute for high quality professional learning. It is difficult to quantify these concerns without having access to further information about the type and frequency that teachers are able to access as part of their CLPD.

3. Rising need

The report notes there has been an increase in the number of children with additional support needs and the rise in instances of challenging behaviour. The issues presented here about the increase in the number of children and young people is consistent with the data that is available from the SG statistics. This is discussed as part of section one above.

4. Broader educational issues

The report notes concerns about the narrative around achievement and attainment and comments that the system should be set up to recognise the particular achievements of children and young people which goes beyond SQA qualifications. The report also notes concerns about difficulties in accessing alternative assessment arrangements for children and young people with additional support needs.

The report concludes that these factors are impacting negatively on the wellbeing of both teachers and young people and on the educational experience of young people. It makes a number of recommendations and urges all those who are involved in Scottish education to come together to

agree a response to address these concerns. Some of these recommendations are focused on how to attract and retain more teachers and support staff, address issues of workload and morale and support high quality training opportunities. In addition, it makes recommendations around supporting other agencies, addressing challenges within the school environment and broadening the dialogue around achievement and attainment.

Conclusion

The report provides a helpful insight into the views of some teachers about what works within the system and some of the challenges that exist. There is a focus in the report on issues around resource and many of the recommendations are made on this basis. There is supportive commentary of the principles of inclusion and the additional support for learning framework. However, the report notes that there is a gap between policy and practice. There are a number of themes within the report that are common across a number of other sources of evidence. This includes, in addition to resources, access to professional development and access to specialist teachers, provision and services.

National Parent Forum Scotland– Additional Support for Learning Survey Results 2018

https://www.npfs.org.uk/2018/11/survey-results-additional-support-needs-additional-support-for-learning/

Background

Between August and October 2018, the National Parent Forum Scotland (NPFS) conducted a survey of parents across Scotland on additional support needs and additional support for learning. The survey received responses from 594 parents from 31 of the 32 local authorities.

Context

It should be noted that the survey does not, nor was it intended to provide, a representative reflection of the experiences of all parents of children and young people with additional support needs in Scotland. While the evidence base is relatively small, responses have been received from almost all authorities in Scotland. Although no further information is provided on the demographics of respondents. The findings presented within the report are only based on the experiences of those who chose to respond to the survey and while these experiences are very valuable, the conclusions presented within this report must be viewed within this context.

Key Findings

The key findings from the survey are:

- 36% of respondents know what additional support their child is entitled to. Respondents often described difficulties in finding this information:
- 71% of respondents were involved in the discussions surrounding their child's ASL needs and some of these parents found this useful and beneficial to their child. However, a very common theme was that the parents did not feel their views were taken into account.
- Almost a third (31%) of respondents agreed (strongly or slightly) that the ASL resources and support in their child's school meet their individual child's needs - this is down 14% from the 45% in 2015. For the sample of respondents that agreed strongly, this is down 9% (34% compared to 25% in 2015).
- Over half respondents (54% compared to 38% in 2015) say their child has been directly or partly affected by changes to ASL provision in their school, with 29% unsure. Only 9% of the parents who responded were consulted about this change in provision and, of these, only 37% found this discussion useful.

- 85% of parents were not signposted to services, such as Enquire, by their school or local authority.
- 53% do not think their child's written report clearly explains the progress they have made and the level of learning they have achieved or are working towards.
- 51% do not think their child has the same opportunities as other pupils in the school.

Suggestions to promote good communication and schools in relation to ASL were plentiful and varied but included:

- more regular face to face meetings
- more information
- realistic expectations being laid out
- greater transparency
- more honesty and openness.

Other themes raised:

- Respondents feel more special schools are required; mainstreaming is not working for their child.
- The staff shortage in Scottish schools is negatively impacting on students with ASN.
- More consistency in support across the country is desired.
- Teachers need more training.
- There were also instances of children who are without a school placement at all or on part time timetables as there is no suitable school placement in the area.

Conclusion

Despite the small number of respondents, many of the issues raised in this survey are consistent with evidence available elsewhere. Again difficulties in accessing information and support was raised as an issue, a theme which has emerged from a number of sources including 'Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved', responses to Committee and to the consultation on the guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming. In addition, the survey notes concerns about how additional support for learning is resourced and the variance in this provision across the country. This is consistent with a range of other evidence that has been considered as part of this review. Another common issue is the availability of training and support for teachers and support staff, a theme raised in other evidence.

Summary of Conclusions

The desk review of current evidence has identified a number of common themes about what the strengths and challenges of implementation of additional support for learning are.

The qualitative evidence overwhelmingly suggests that there is a positive perception of the principle of inclusion.

There are a number of themes which have emerged from the evidence considered which focus on the challenges of implementation of additional support for learning. The most common of these are:

- Resources;
- Training;
- Exclusions;
- Parental involvement – accessibility and visibility of information;
- Type and access to provision;
- Access to specialist services and support from other agencies;
- The importance of partnership working in accessing CSPs, and in identification and assessment;
- Variation in approach across local authorities.

As has been noted throughout, the themes that are drawn from the qualitative evidence are only based on the views of those who contributed. It is important that the strengths and challenges noted above are viewed in this context.

Table 1: Number of pupils with additional support needs learning some or all of their time in mainstream schools, and no of pupils learning in special schools 2012-2018

Year	No of Pupils with some or all time in mainstream	No of pupils in Special Schools
2018	185,791	6,823
2017	183491	6,654
2016	170,329	6,668
2015	153,192	6,871
2014	140,542	6,940
2013	131,621	6,956
2012	118,034	6,953

Source: Supplementary statistics Pupil Census 2012-2018
Notes: The legislative definition has remained unchanged since the Act was established in 2004 and came into force in 2005. Prior to 2010, only pupils with Co-ordinated Support Plans, Individualised Educational Programmes or who were attending a special school were recorded as having additional support needs within the national statistical collection. In 2010, the collection was extended to include anyone receiving additional support, in any setting. This has led to a large increase in the number of pupils recorded with additional support needs since 2010, and therefore accounts for some of the rise in pupils recorded as having additional support needs.

Table 2: School Estate 2012-2018

Schools	Primary	Secondary	Special	Total	Total Pupil Population
2012[1]	2,064	365	155	2,584	671,195

2013[1]	2,056	364	149	2,569	673,502
2014[1]	2,048	362	145	2,555	676,914
2015[1]	2,039	361	144	2,544	679,958
2016[1]	2,031	359	141	2,531	684,348
2017	2,019	360	135	2,514	688,959
2018[2]	2,012	357	114	2,483	693,251

Source

Table 3: Additional Support Needs Over time

	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
Pupils for whom reason for support is reported	198,935	183,257	170,372	153,106	140,472	131,527	117,755
Learning disability	13,665	14,200	14,608	15,324	15,600	15,859	15,979
Dyslexia	21,663	19,877	18,471	17,034	15,877	15,368	13,497
Other specific learning difficulty (e.g. numeric)	23,058	21,868	19,672	17,552	15,328	13,689	10,858
Other moderate learning difficulty	29,272	27,922	25,635	23,228	21,268	19,864	17,834
Visual impairment	4,574	4,331	4,177	3,839	3,544	3,373	3,028
Hearing impairment	3,332	3,097	2,965	2,738	2,534	2,441	2,253
Deafblind	59	56	51	47	42	45	47
Physical or motor impairment	8,222	8,058	7,847	7,528	7,289	7,029	6,530
Language or speech disorder	17,272	16,654	15,848	14,704	13,697	12,708	11,367
Autistic spectrum disorder	17,393	14,973	13,434	11,722	10,805	9,946	8,650
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulty	43,680	39,642	36,041	31,684	28,354	26,715	23,485

Physical health problem	13,045	11,627	10,508	9,059	7,942	7,398	6,562
Mental health problem	4,419	3,330	2,842	2,338	1,870	1,553	1,254
Interrupted learning	4,236	3,509	3,106	2,669	2,342	2,068	1,731
English as an additional language	34,816	30,135	26,921	21,997	19,475	17,547	15,148
Looked after	8,677	8,335	8,108	7,530	7,215	6,578	5,630
More able pupil	3,189	3,274	3,270	3,123	2,706	2,244	2,408
Communication support needs	7,464	6,701	5,959	4,894	4,184	3,380	1,896
Young carer	3,248	2,500	2,044	1,653	1,188	842	441
Bereavement	2,603	2,045	1,728	1,304	1,082	898	650
Substance misuse	423	360	319	221	228	194	170
Family issues	16,486	13,973	11,968	9,700	7,770	6,038	3,636
Risk of exclusion	1,336	1,139	1,065	925	904	833	692
Other	17,844	15,959	15,225	14,156	12,836	12,442	11,838

Table 4: Teacher numbers, pupil numbers and pupil- teacher ratio

		total excluding ELC		pupils		pupil teacher ratio
2012[1]		49,867		671,218		13.5
2013		49,790		673,530		13.5
2014[2]		49,521		676,955		13.7
2015[3]		49,679		680,007		13.7
2016		49,985		684,415		13.7
2017		50,592		688,959		13.6
2018		51,138		693,251		13.6

Source https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/teachcenssuppdata/teasup2018

Table 5 – Additional Support Needs Teaching and Support Staff 2018

Teachers employed in schools by main subject					
Main subject	Primary	Secondary	Special	Central	Total per need
			2018		
Learning support	363	836	40	211	1,449
Additional support needs general	63	132	147	22	364
Additional support needs : behavioural support	19	74	60	57	208
Additional support needs : learning difficulties	76	168	300	54	598
Additional support needs : physical disabilities	0	7	11	17	34
Hearing impairment	2	27	7	25	60
Visual impairment	1	8	3	32	44
ESOL	2	6	1	97	106
Individual total per school sector	**525**	**1,256**	**569**	**514**	**2,864**
Total per year			**2,864**		
Support Staff in schools					
Pupil support assistant	8,643	2,985	1,997		13,626
Additional support needs auxiliary or care assistant	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Behaviour Support	18	55	50		122
Classroom assistant	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Home-school link worker	73	84	15	184	356
School nurse or other medical	11	37	8	19	75
Educational Psychologist				368	368
Individual total per school sector					
Total per year			**14,547**		
TOTAL			**17,412**		

Table 6: Percentage of school leavers in a positive initial destination, by pupil characteristic, 2012/13 to 2017/18

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
ASN leavers	82.5	84.3	85.7	84.7	87.1	87.9
Non-ASN leavers	92.0	93.3	93.6	93.4	94.9	95.3
All leavers	90.4	91.7	92.0	91.4	92.9	93.2

Source: Summary Statistics for attainment, leaver destinations and healthy living – June 2018

Table 7: Percentage of school leavers in mainstream and special schools initial destination 2018

Reason for Support	Positive Destinations	Higher Education	Further Education	Training	Employment	Voluntary Work	Activity Agreement[2]	Unemployed Seeking	Unemployed Not Seeking	Unknown	Number of Leavers
No Additional Support need	**96.0**	48.1	21.9	1.5	23.3	0.7	0.6	2.9	0.8	0.4	35,414
Any Additional Support need	**89.3**	22.8	38.6	3.9	20.4	0.7	2.9	6.4	3.7	0.7	15,070

Source: https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/leavedestla

Table 8: Percentage of secondary and special school leavers from publicly funded schools by total qualifications achieved and Additional Support Need in 2017/18

Reason for Support	1+ at SCQF Level 2 or better	1+ at SCQF Level 3 or better	1+ at SCQF Level 4 or better	1+ at SCQF Level 5 or better	1+ at SCQF Level 6 or better	1+ at SCQF Level 7	Number of Leavers[1]
No Additional Support need	*	*	98.2	92.2	71.3	24.0	35,414
Any Additional Support need	*	*	88.0	67.2	37.6	10.1	15,070

Source: https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/leavedestla

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Table 9: Percentage of P1, P4, P7 and S3 achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence levels in literacy and numeracy, by ASN status

Stage	ASN pupil status	Reading	Writing	Listening and talking	Literacy	Numeracy
Early level	ASN	60	54	64	49	66
	Non-ASN	84	82	90	79	87
	Unknown	58	56	65	54	65
	All	**81**	**78**	**87**	**75**	**85**
first level	ASN	53	46	65	42	53
	Non-ASN	86	81	91	78	84
	Unknown	58	51	61	49	58
	All	77	72	85	69	76
second level	ASN	55	47	65	43	51
	Non-ASN	89	84	92	82	85
	Unknown	58	53	59	52	63
	All	79	73	84	70	75
third level	ASN	79	77	81	74	76
	Non-ASN	95	95	96	93	95
	Unknown	72	71	73	69	81
	All	90	89	91	87	89

Included in the Main, Enable Scotland, March 2017:

https://www.enable.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/our-campaigns/included-in-the-main/

How is Additional Support for Learning working in practice? Scottish Parliament Education Committee, May 2017:

https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Reports/ASN_6th_Report_2017.pdf

Further scrutiny by Scottish Parliament Education and Skills Committee:

https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/103397.aspx

Excellence and equity for all - guidance on the presumption of mainstreaming: consultation analysis, Scottish Government June 2018:

https://www.gov.scot/publications/excellence-equity-guidance-presumption-mainstreaming-analysis-consultation-responses/

Research on the experiences of children and young people receiving support in mainstream and special schools, Research Scotland on behalf of Scottish Government, completed June 2018 not yet published:

https://www.gov.scot/publications/additional-support-learning-research-experience-children-young-people-those-support/

Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved, Children In Scotland, National Autistic Society and Scottish Autism, September 2018:

https://childreninscotland.org.uk/not-included-not-engaged-not-involved-survey-finds-autistic-children-are-missing-out-on-education/

Education Scotland evidence from inspection and other engagement. This will include an analysis of the strengths and areas for improvement gathered through inspection, focusing on HGIOS4 quality indicator 3.1 on *Ensuring Wellbeing, Equality and Inclusion*. This indicator is evaluated in all inspections and is part of the evidence base for the National Improvement Framework.

National Parent Forum – Additional Support for Learning Survey Results
https://www.npfs.org.uk/2018/11/survey-results-additional-support-needs-additional-support-for-learning/

EIS – Additional Support for Learning in Scottish school education: Exploring the gap between promise and practice:

https://www.eis.org.uk/Content/images/education/ASN/ExploringTheGap.pdf

Summary of inspection findings of Quality Indicator 3.1 – ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Academic years   2017/18
                         2018/19 (reports published to 23 August 2019)

Primary Inspections Summary

2017/18

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	6	26	40	23	11	0	0
Percentage	6%	25%	38%	22%	10%	0%	N/A

Total   106

2018/19

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	2	20	28	18	7	0	0
Percentage	3%	27%	37%	24%	9%	0%	N/A

Total   75

Secondary Inspections Summary

2017/18

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	0	5	7	6	1	0	0
Percentage	0%	26%	37%	32%	5%	0%	N/A

Total   19

2018/19

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	0	6	8	4	1	0	0
Percentage	0%	32%	42%	21%	5%	0%	N/A

Total   19

Special Inspections Summary

2017/18

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	0	4	2	4	1	0	0
Percentage	0%	36%	18%	36%	9%	0%	N/A

Total   11

2018/19

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	0	0	5	2	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	0%	56%	22%	11%	11%	N/A

Total   9

ELC Inspections Summary

2017/18

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	1	34	55	23	10	0	0
Percentage	1%	28%	45%	19%	8%	0%	N/A

Total   123

2018/19

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Weak	Unsatisfactory	No Response
Number	0	15	45	20	6	1	0
Percentage	0%	17%	52%	23%	7%	1%	N/A

Total   87

Summary of engagement

ASL Review - Summary of engagement

During phase 2, considerable efforts were made to engage with children and young people; parents and carers with direct and lived experience and; practitioners, in and beyond education, who are directly involved in the delivery of services. The Chair sought to ensure breadth and balance by engaging across Scotland and with representatives from across sectors. The Chair was supported during phase 2 by Joanna McCreadie[104].

Great care was taken by the Chair to consider each contribution fully and follow up as appropriate. All contributors were given an assurance of confidentiality and anonymity to enable them to share information confidently and honestly.

Written submissions

Over 200 emails were received by the Chair's dedicated mailbox. The vast majority of these were from parents and carers in which they shared their unique experience of how additional support for learning was working in practice for their family.

Teachers, pupil support assistants, other school staff and other professionals who provide support to children and young people, also shared through the mailbox their experiences and perspectives.

With the support of organisations such as Children in Scotland and My Rights, My Say, children and young people were supported to share their own experiences of what works well for them at school and the things they would like to be improved.

A survey was issued to all 32 local authorities and questions were circulated to Social Work Scotland. All the responses received were considered in detail by the Chair.

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[104] Some of the engagement noted below was carried out by Joanna McCreadie on behalf of the Chair

A session was held at the Additional Support for Learning Summit in October 2019[105]. Attendees were asked to consider a range of questions set by the Chair on the implementation of additional support for learning. The Chair carefully considered all the responses.

The Chair also considered correspondence from a wide range of organisations and groups. A number of these organisations provided the Chair with background, information and examples of their work and experiences. Some organisations provided a written response to the review on behalf of their organisation or group. These included:

- CELCIS
- Association of Heads and Deputes Scotland (AHDS)
- See Me
- Includem
- Dundee Young Ambassadors
- My Rights My Say
- Downs Syndrome Scotland
- Enquire
- Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
- National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)
- Royal Caledonian Education Trust
- Salvesen Mindroom Centre
- Families Outside
- Children in Scotland
- National Autism Implementation Team (NAIT)
- Edinburgh Secondary Headteachers
- A joint response from the authors of *Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved*
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
- Scottish Commission of Learning Disability
- Royal Blind School
- Children's Health Scotland
- English as an Additional Language service - Edinburgh
- NASUWT
- National Parent Forum of Scotland's January 2020 feedback report from their 6 Additional Support for Learning focus groups

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[105] The ASL summit brought together a range of stakeholders with the main aim of sharing good practice across additional support for learning.

Direct engagement

The Chair undertook to meet with as many groups and organisations as possible during phase 2, through phone or video calls, meetings, focus groups and attendance at events. Due to timing constraints, it was not possible for the Chair to meet with every person or group who is involved in, or had an experience or perspective to share. However, where this was the case, the Chair encouraged those individuals or groups to share their experience and perspective through written correspondence to the mailbox.

The Chair undertook the following:

- A meeting with the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills
- A meeting with Councillor McCabe, COSLA Spokesperson for Children and Young People
- A meeting of the Additional support for Learning Implementation Group (ASLIG)[106]
- A meeting with the Chief Executive/ Registrar of the General Teaching Council Scotland (GTCS)
- A meeting with the Chair of Doran National Commissioning Group
- A meeting with the Chair of ADES
- A meeting with the President of the Health and Education Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland
- Meetings with representatives from Education Scotland
- Meetings with representatives from the Scottish Government's Learning Directorate
- A meeting with a representative from local authority finance directors
- A meeting with the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP)
- A meeting with the ADES ASN Network
- A meeting with a representative from Skills Development Scotland
- Attendance at the COSLA CYP Board meeting
- A meeting with the Association of Support for Learning Officers (ASLO)
- A meeting with representatives from CELCIS
- Attendance at Social Work Scotland Standing Committee
- A meeting with a representative from CAMHS
- Attendance at the ADES Early Learning and Childcare network meeting
- A meeting with a representative of the Scottish Council of Deans
- Attendance at the Keys to Life Leadership group

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[106] ASLIG is chaired by Jan Savage and comprises of representatives from Scottish Government, Education Scotland, COSLA, ADES, Children in Scotland, NPFS, EIS, ASPEP and Unison

- A meeting with representatives from the Scottish Network of Highly Able Pupils (SNAP)
- A meeting with representatives from the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP)
- Attendance at Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) Committee
- Attendance at a focus group with varied representatives[107]
- A meeting with representatives from the Independent Care Review
- Attendance at a focus group with representatives from the Grant Aided Special Schools, National Centres, Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)
- A meeting with representatives of the Scottish Community Development Centre and Community Health Exchange
- A meeting with Audit Scotland
- A meeting with representatives of organisations who support Armed Forces Children in Scotland
- A meeting with representatives from the Carnegie Trust
- A meeting with representatives from Carers Trust Scotland
- Attendance at the Allied Health Professionals CYP Board meeting
- A meeting with the Assistant Secretary of the EiS
- Attendance at the EiS ASN network meeting
- Attendance at a Making a difference: a day of learning for pupil support assistants[108]
- Attendance at a focus group with Unison members
- Attendance at a focus group with Association of Heads and Deputes Scotland members
- A meeting with representatives from NASUWT
- A meeting with NAIT
- Attendance at meeting of BOCSH – a network of secondary Headteachers
- A meeting with representatives from Achievement Bute
- Phone calls with individual parents
- A meeting with staff at Enquire
- A visit and engagement with the Family Led Information Point, East Lothian
- A meeting with staff from ASL Resolve
- A meeting with staff from Let's Talk ASN
- A meeting with staff from Common Ground mediation
- Attendance at a focus group for parents - Aberdeen
- Attendance at a focus group for parents - Aberdeenshire
- A visit and engagement with Columba 1400 – Clackmannanshire
- A meeting with a representative from Connect

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[107] A range of stakeholders were invited to this focus group. Those who attended included representatives of Education Scotland, NPFS, Let's Talk ASN ,My Rights, My Say , AHP CYP Lead, National Autistic Society, Scottish Autism, For Scotland's Disabled Children (fSDC), Scottish Sensory Centre, CYPCS and A24 Scotland
[108] A conference for pupil support assistants organised by Children in Scotland

- Attendance at focus group for parents in Edinburgh and Glasgow organised by the National Parent Forum of Scotland.[109]
- Attendance at a focus group with PDA Awareness & Support Group – North Lanarkshire
- Attendance at a focus group for parents – Stirling
- Attendance at a focus group for parents - REACH Lanarkshire Autism
- Attendance at a focus group for parents - Differabled Scotland
- A meeting with Children and Young People Commissioner Scotland
- A focus group for children and young people[110]
- A meeting with members of the Scottish Youth Parliament
- A meeting with representatives from the Children's Parliament
- A meeting with the Young Ambassadors for Inclusion
- Attendance at the Children in Scotland Conference, including a session on the ASL Review and with the Young Ambassadors for Inclusion
- A meeting with the Lead for North Regional Improvement Collaborative
- A visit and discussion with staff at a school in Moray Council
- A visit and discussion with staff at a school in Edinburgh City Council
- A meeting with former teachers
- A series of discussions with teachers

Engagement was[111] undertaken with the following local authorities: [112]
- Aberdeenshire Council
- Clackmannanshire Council
- Dundee City Council
- East Renfrewshire Council
- Edinburgh City Council
- Fife Council
- Glasgow City Council
- Moray Council
- North Ayrshire Council
- Renfrewshire Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- South Lanarkshire Council
- Stirling Council

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[109] A further 4 focus groups were held by NPFS in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Inverness and Dumfries. A summary of the key points raised during these focus groups was shared with the Chair. The report from these focus groups is available on NPFS's website: https://www.npfs.org.uk/2020/06/19/additional-support-for-learning-review/

[110] This session was organised and supported by My Rights, My Say

[111] Each local authority designed their own programme for this engagement. Many included engagement across a range of individuals, including local authority staff, school and early years staff, parents, children and young people and others involved in supporting children and young people.

[112] Planned visits to Highland Council and Scottish Borders Council were unfortunately postponed and could not be rescheduled in time for the completion of phase 2.

Additional support needs and associated issues, which act as barriers to learning

Children and young people with additional support needs have many common and shared experiences. They are often conscious that they are 'different' from their peers and are keenly aware about how teachers and schools treat them.

Having an additional support need can mean that children and young people become separated from their peers; feel socially isolated; experience stigma and discrimination; struggle to have their voices and views heard and; may not have their human rights fulfilled. The experience of the child in school is often reflected in families and on parents. The shame and stigma experienced by children can be seen in the 'blame' parents feel from others and experiences where they are not respected and listened to. Taken together, this creates significant, unnecessary pressure for families.

The range of issues which create barriers for children and young people in learning and education .include both diagnosed and undiagnosed conditions and life experiences. Markedly different conditions, such as autism or being a young carer, have a strikingly similar impact on children's lives. For example, a looked after child may feel embarrassed and unsure when they arrive in a new school because of a care placement move. They might not have the proper school uniform, understand the rules of the school or know anyone. A newly arrived asylum seeker might have a very similar experience, with the additional challenge of learning English. Both have similar challenges – but very different circumstances. Both will be deeply affected by **how** teachers and the school work to meet their needs.

An identified additional support need assists in assessment, planning and delivery of support in school. However, all children and young people are individuals and their need and the response required must respond to the whole child or young person not to the "condition" or "issue" as a discrete problem.

This is a very brief overview of the key issues highlighted to the review with links to sources of understanding and expertise.

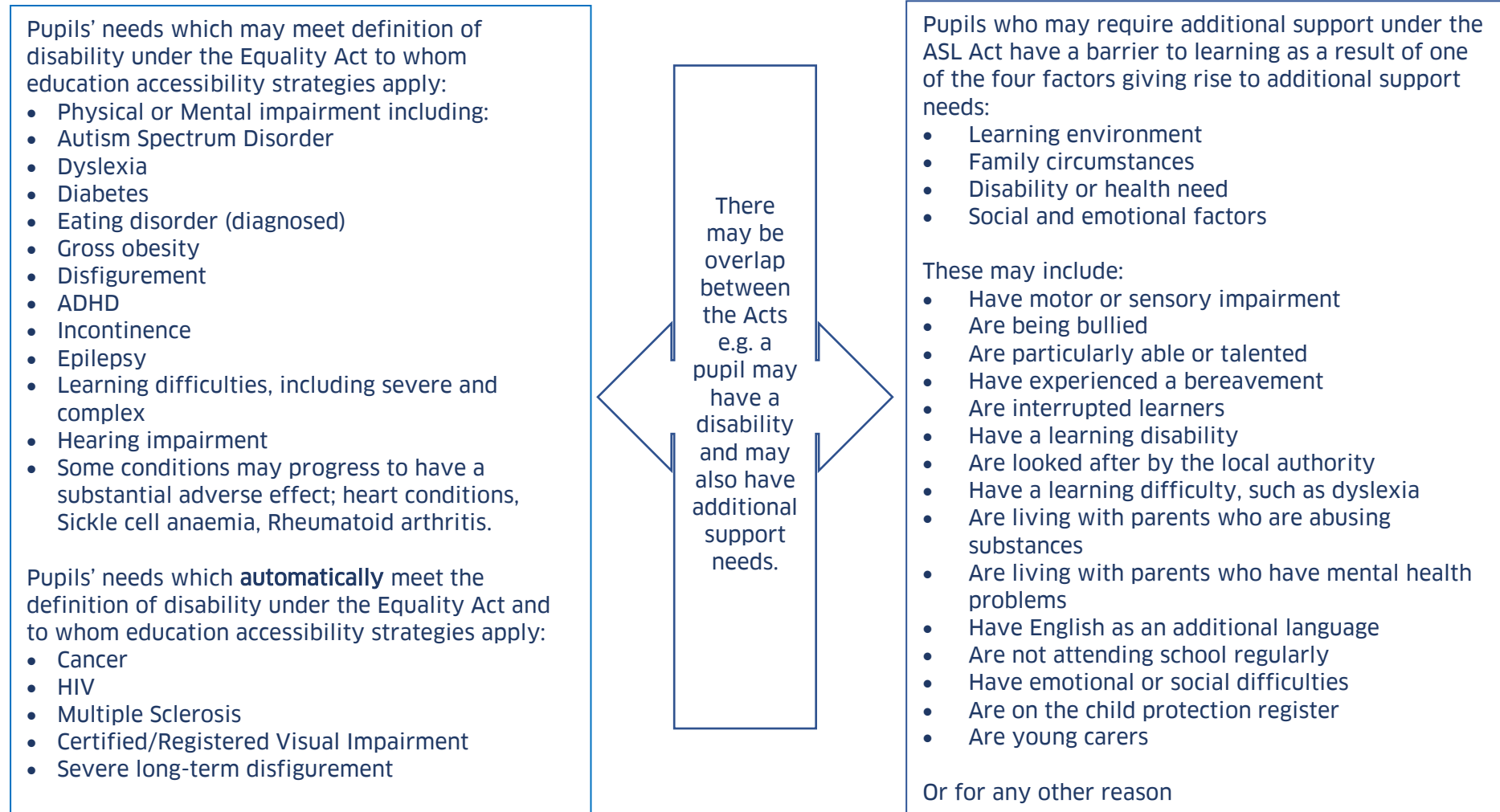| Additional support need	Associated issues which act as barriers to learning	Further information and relevant organisations
Adoption	Impacted by trauma and loss; struggle with attachment and relationships; need support to recover from trauma; readiness to learn affected; experiences a range of behavioural issues.	Scottish Adoption https://www.scottishadoption.org/
Armed forces families	Frequent moves of school and community; disrupted learning; separation from parents; living with the worry of a parent on active service; direct experience of loss.	Royal Caledonian Education Trust https://www.rcet.org.uk/
Asylum seekers and refugees	Challenged by living in new culture; learning new language; uncertainty about future; living with trauma and loss.	Scottish Refugee Council https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	Difficulties in paying attention with lack of focus and concentration; impulsive and unpredictable; hyperactive and unable to sit still; can't plan ahead; struggles to finish tasks.	ADHD Information Services (ADDiss) http://www.addiss.co.uk/
Autistic spectrum	Difficulty understanding and participating in social communication; struggles with social interaction; problems with developing and sustaining positive relationships; difficulties in social imagination; may think very rigidly.	National Autistic Society https://www.autism.org.uk/ Scottish Autism https://www.scottishautism.org/ Not Included, Not Engaged, Not Involved https://www.notengaged.com/ Reach Lanarkshire Autism https://reachautism.org.uk/ Salvesen Mindroom http://www.mindroom.org/

Bullying	Feeling frightened and hurt; worried about what will happen next; experiences social isolation.	Respect Me https://respectme.org.uk/
Children in hospital for long stays	Feel excluded from school; social isolation; missing key learning experiences; impact on physical and mental health.	NHS Health Scotland http://www.healthscotland.scot/ Children's Health Scotland https://www.childrenshealthscotland.org/
Children in and affected by the Criminal Justice system	Experience of stress and worry; feel excluded and different from peers; risk taking behaviour; impact on physical and mental health.	Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ) https://www.cycj.org.uk/ Includem https://www.includem.org/
Children whose parents or family members are imprisoned	Feeling ashamed and stigmatised; worrying about imprisoned parent; experience of loss; impact on physical and mental health.	Families Outside https://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/
Children and young people affected by chronic illness	Conditions, symptoms and impact can vary widely; education disrupted by medical appointments and hospital admissions; cannot fully participate in school life; struggle with focus and concentration; social isolation; disrupted peer relationships.	NHS Health Scotland http://www.healthscotland.scot/ Children's Health Scotland https://www.childrenshealthscotland.org/
Deaf and hearing impaired	Extent of hearing impairment varies widely; wide range of adaptations, adjustments and support needs; hearing impairment can be a barrier to learning; social and peer isolation; mental health impact.	National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) https://www.ndcs.org.uk/ Scottish Sensory Centre http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/

Developmental delay for example barriers to learning as a result of a health need, associated with e.g. foetal alcohol spectrum disorder or premature birth	Social, emotional and physical functioning different to chronological age; difficulty with peer relationships; readiness to learn impacted.	
Down's Syndrome	Health difficulties; learning difficulties; different interests to other children; wide variation in children's difficulties and needs; social, emotional and physical functioning different to chronological age.	Down's Syndrome Scotland https://www.dsscotland.org.uk/
Dyslexia	Struggle with reading and writing; difficulty in spelling; struggle with sequencing; feel embarrassed and self-conscious; experiences stress in learning experiences; cover up difficulties through behaviour; social isolation; impact on mental health.	Dyslexia Scotland (DS) https://www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/
Development Coordination difficulties (dyspraxia)	Delays in early developmental milestones; appears clumsy and poorly co-ordinated; difficulties with ordinary childhood activities; adaptations, adjustments and support vary widely.	Dyspraxia Foundation https://dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/dyspraxia-children/
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	Struggle to understand and be understood; difficulties in peer relationships; barriers to learning; may have responsibilities in family for translation; left behind educationally.	Scottish Refugee Council https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/
Highly able learners	Intellectual ability may not be matched by emotional maturity and social skills; assumptions made that	Scottish Network for Able Pupils (SNAP)

	high intellectual ability does not need any additional support and encouragement; difficulties in peer relationships; emotional and mental health issues.	https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/az/ablepupils/
Learning difficulties	Social, emotional and intellectual abilities may not match chronological age; can feel different to and isolated from peers; may mask learning difficulties; wide range of learning difficulties need understood in context of individual child.	Enable Scotland https://www.enable.org.uk/ The Scottish Commission for Learning Disability https://www.scld.org.uk/
Looked after	Impacted by trauma and loss; difficulties in peer relationships; social isolation; developmental delay; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; physical health; mental health.	Who Cares Scotland https://www.whocaresscotland.org/ CELCIS https://www.celcis.org/
Mental Health	Wide range of mental health issues; ability to focus on learning; social isolation; experience of trauma and loss.	See Me Scotland https://www.seemescotland.org/
Physical and motor impairment	Impact of impairments varies widely and may change over time; social isolation; feels excluded; difficulties in peer relationships; adjustments, adaptations and equipment vary.	Capability Scotland https://capability-scotland.org.uk/
Selective mutism	Speaks to a small number of people and unwilling to speak to others; does not speak at all; experiencing difficulties due to loss or trauma; social isolation; difficulties in relationships; impact on mental health.	Call Scotland https://www.callscotland.org.uk/Blog/selective-mutism-and-technology/

Speech disorder	Difficulty in making sounds in speech; stuttering; problems pronouncing sounds; struggling to communicate with others; difficult with self confidence and self esteem; impact on relationships with others; impact on emotional wellbeing.	Call Scotland https://www.callscotland.org.uk/about/
Language disorder	Difficulty understanding others; struggles to express thoughts, ideas and feelings; feels frustrated; masks language difficulties; behavioural issues; social isolation.	Call Scotland https://www.callscotland.org.uk/about/
Gypsy/Traveller families	Frequent moves in education; disrupted learning experience; experience of prejudice/discrimination; socially isolated. Family fears of negative impact of school on Gypsy/Traveller culture	STEP http://www.step.education.ed.ac.uk/
Visually impaired	Exclusion from practical subjects, social times and school trips; experience social isolation; impact on emotional wellbeing; barriers to learning impact on attainment and achievement.	RNIB Scotland www.rnib.org.uk/scotland Scottish Sensory Centre http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/
Young carers	Missing school; difficulties completing homework; impact of caring responsibilities on social activities; feeling isolated and different; impact on physical and mental health.	Carers Scotland https://www.carersuk.org/scotland

Overlap between Equality Act and the Additional Support for Learning Act (taken from Accessibility Strategies guidance - Annex A)

Pupils' needs which may meet definition of disability under the Equality Act to whom education accessibility strategies apply:
- Physical or Mental impairment including:
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Dyslexia
- Diabetes
- Eating disorder (diagnosed)
- Gross obesity
- Disfigurement
- ADHD
- Incontinence
- Epilepsy
- Learning difficulties, including severe and complex
- Hearing impairment
- Some conditions may progress to have a substantial adverse effect; heart conditions, Sickle cell anaemia, Rheumatoid arthritis.

Pupils' needs which **automatically** meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act and to whom education accessibility strategies apply:
- Cancer
- HIV
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Certified/Registered Visual Impairment
- Severe long-term disfigurement

There may be overlap between the Acts e.g. a pupil may have a disability and may also have additional support needs.

Pupils who may require additional support under the ASL Act have a barrier to learning as a result of one of the four factors giving rise to additional support needs:
- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Disability or health need
- Social and emotional factors

These may include:
- Have motor or sensory impairment
- Are being bullied
- Are particularly able or talented
- Have experienced a bereavement
- Are interrupted learners
- Have a learning disability
- Are looked after by the local authority
- Have a learning difficulty, such as dyslexia
- Are living with parents who are abusing substances
- Are living with parents who have mental health problems
- Have English as an additional language
- Are not attending school regularly
- Have emotional or social difficulties
- Are on the child protection register
- Are young carers

Or for any other reason

Information and support for parents

National Parent Forum for Scotland https://www.npfs.org.uk/	ENQUIRE national helpline and advice https://enquire.org.uk/	Parents Advocacy and Rights (PAR) https://parparentsadvocacyrights.com/
Connect https://connect.scot/parent		

Children's rights

Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland (CYPCS) https://www.cypcs.org.uk/	Children's Parliament https://www.childrensparliament.org.uk/	Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) https://syp.org.uk/
My Rights My Say https://myrightsmysay.scot/	Children in Scotland https://childreninscotland.org.uk/	Who Cares Scotland https://www.whocaresscotland.org/