

Enquire factsheet

Planning children's and young people's learning

This factsheet explains:

- the ways schools can plan your child's learning, and
- how you and your child can be involved in this planning.

It has information about personal learning planning (PLP), individualised educational programmes (IEPs), co-ordinated support plans (CSPs) and Child's Plans.

What is personal learning planning?

Personal learning planning is a way of thinking about, talking about and planning what and how your child learns. It is also a way of assessing their progress and acting on the results of that assessment.

Your child's school is responsible for designing a practical way of recording your child's personal learning planning.

All children should be involved in personal learning planning (PLP). PLP sets out aims and goals for your child to achieve that relate to their own circumstances. They must be manageable and realistic and reflect your child's strengths as well as their development needs. Monitoring your child's progress in achieving these aims and goals will determine whether additional support is working.

If a particular type of support is not helping them achieve their aims and goals, an alternative approach should be explored. Both you and your child should be fully involved in PLP, including setting aims and goals and monitoring progress.

For many children, PLP will be enough to arrange and monitor their learning development. However, if required, their PLP can be supported by an individualised educational programme.

For more information on what happens in your area ask your child's school or visit your local authority's website.

If your child has additional support needs

Personal learning planning can help identify any additional support needs your child may have. The regular, planned discussion involved in personal learning planning can also help support these needs.

The code of practice about additional support for learning says children with additional support needs should be involved in their personal learning planning. It also says that, for many, this will be enough to meet their needs.

Personal learning planning may also help your child's school realise that your child's learning requires a more detailed plan, such as an individualised educational programme.

Following the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, some children will have a Child's Plan. Child's Plans are created if a child or young person needs some extra support to meet their wellbeing needs such as access to mental health services or respite care, or help from a range of different agencies. We say more about this on page 3.

How will the school decide on the plan my child needs?

Most schools will try to deal with your child's difficulties as early as they can and with the least possible interruption to your child's learning. This means your child has carefully planned support as and when they need it.

Different local authorities may use different sorts of education plans to meet your child's needs. Some local authorities use a 'staged intervention process' and will open certain types of plan when a child is at a specific stage of intervention. You can ask your local authority for their policy on this.

All children should be involved in personal learning planning (PLP). PLP sets out aims and goals for your child to achieve that relate to their own circumstances. They must be manageable and realistic and reflect your child's strengths as well as their development needs. The school will monitor your child's progress in achieving these aims and goals. This will show whether additional support is working.

If a particular type of support is not helping them achieve their aims and goals, the school should try a different approach. Both you and your child should be fully involved in PLP. This includes setting aims and goals and monitoring progress.

For many children, PLP will be enough to arrange and monitor their learning development. However, if required, their PLP can be supported by an individualised educational programme.

What's an individualised educational programme (IEP)?

An IEP is a detailed plan for your child's learning. It will probably contain some specific, short-term learning targets for your child and will set out how those targets will be reached. It may also contain longer-term targets or aims for your child.

IEP targets should be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timed.

The IEP will describe in detail your child's additional support needs, how these will be met and what learning outcomes are expected. It will also specify any extra support your child may need from agencies outwith education.¹

Your education authority may have a policy for when IEPs should be used, which you can ask to see.

In some areas these plans are called additional support plans or individual support plans rather than IEPs.

¹Supporting children's learning code of practice

What is the legal status of an IEP?

Schools and local authorities are not legally required to prepare an IEP for your child, and IEPs are not legal documents.

Who should have an IEP?

Your child may benefit from an IEP if their learning needs more detailed planning. This may be because several members of school staff or other professionals support them in school, or they need to learn in a way that is significantly different from what the school's curriculum provides. If you think your child needs an IEP, you can ask the school to consider preparing one.

If you are not sure if your child has an IEP, ask the class teacher or head teacher.

How are IEPs recorded?

A copy of the IEP will go in your child's school records. Many local authorities have their own forms for recording IEPs. These may be in electronic format or paper copies.

How often is the IEP reviewed?

An IEP should be reviewed at least once each school term. During the review, your child's learning targets will be assessed. If needed, these targets and the learning methods may then be changed to better meet your child's needs.

What is a co-ordinated support plan (CSP)?

A CSP is a detailed plan of how your child's support will be provided. It is a legal document and aims to ensure all the professionals who are helping your child work together. It also helps ensure that everyone, including you and your child, is fully involved in that support.

When may my child need a CSP?

Your child may need a CSP to organise their support if:

- they need extra support with their learning because there are many things that have a significant negative effect on their education, such as their health, or their family circumstances
- they need significant additional support from the local authority (either education, or social work services requested by the education department)
- they need the support of other agencies, such as colleges of further education, institutions of higher education, a health board or other local authorities
- they will need extra support for more than one year.

If your child has a co-ordinated support plan, the school should still carry out personal learning planning. If appropriate, it should also set up a learning plan such as an IEP to set smaller, short-term learning targets.

The plans should complement each other. For example, information from the co-ordinated support plan should be used to draw up the IEP, and progress with the IEP can be used to measure the success of the support outlined in the CSP.

For more information, please see the section on co-ordinated support plans in **The parents' guide to additional support for learning** and **Enquire factsheet: Co-ordinated support plans**.

How do education plans fit with other plans for my child?

In line with the 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) approach, many children will now have a Child's Plan. This is part of the Children and Young People Act that is anticipated to apply from Autumn 2018. Child's Plans are created if a child or young person needs some extra support to meet their wellbeing needs such as access to mental health services or respite care, or help from a range of different agencies.

The Child's Plan will contain information about:

- why a child or young person needs support
- the type of support they will need
- how long they will need support and who should provide it.

All professionals working with the child would use the plan, which may include an IEP or a CSP.

The help children receive should also be properly linked and co-ordinated among all agencies.

So, for example, if your child has an IEP and a care plan, these can be drawn up and reviewed together, to ensure they are both relevant and to avoid repeated information or wasting time.

Where to find out more

Publications

The parents' guide to additional support for learning, Enquire (2018)

Supporting children's learning code of practice, Scottish Government (2010)
www.gov.scot/resource/doc/348208/0116022.pdf

You can find more information in the Scottish Government leaflet **Getting it right for every child**
www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00500761.pdf

This factsheet is mainly based on the **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004**, as amended (**the ASL Act**) and **Supporting children's learning code of practice** that accompanies this act.

ENQUIRE

Helping you understand additional support for learning

Enquire is the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning. We provide independent and impartial advice to parents and carers, to practitioners in education, social work and health services, and to children and young people themselves.

www.reach.scot offers advice to young people struggling at school. With practical tips on what can help and young people sharing their views and experiences on all sorts of life issues, Reach offers the 'go-to' source of advice to help pupils make the most out of their education.

This factsheet has been awarded the Clear English Standard.



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