Additional support for learning in the early years

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Additional Support for Learning in the Early Years

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By end of session, we aim to have:

• Increased awareness of current policy and legislation around early years provision for children with additional support for learning needs

• Understanding of where we can make improvements within existing frameworks

• Improved knowledge of how different practitioners are making it work
Policy and Legislative context – busy!

• Scottish Government Early Years Framework
• Scottish Government Parenting Strategy
• Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
• Curriculum for Excellence
• Additional Support for Learning Acts 2004 & 2009
• ASL Code of Practice
...and fluid....

- Introduction of 27-30 month child health review in April 2013

- **Children and Young People Bill** – extending entitlement to early years childcare; named person for pre 3s; impact on workforce? Due to be introduced before Summer 2013.

- **Early Years Collaborative** – current network which aims to link the EY framework and GIRFEC into positive action and outcomes through local practice
Additional Support for Learning Advisory Group (AGASL)

- Advisory Group to Scottish Government
- Set up in 2010 at the request of Scottish Ministers to inform the successful implementation of Additional Support for Learning legislation and highlight any challenges
- Sub groups consider themes and bring recommendations back to wider group
- Early Years is a current theme
Early Years Sub Group:

• ASL Code of Practice is weak on early years
• Role of parents as key early educators needs to be strengthened
• Challenges around early assessment and workforce
• Challenges around data collection and sharing across agencies
Revision of Code of Practice

• Introduce narrative of early interventions throughout
• New approach of considering potential barriers to learning
• Link to CfE – the breadth of support required by very young children which has ‘educational’ impact
• State the rights of children 0-3 to start formal education with the skills to fully access and benefit from it.
Role of Parents

- Parents are key early educators
- They need support in this role too when a child has additional support for learning needs
- Parents need to know more about their rights to request an assessment of their child’s emerging ASL needs in the early years
- Role for CYP Bill to introduce rights for parents of children with ASL needs to access support?
Assessment and Workforce

• “Some children in pre-school provision will previously have been identified under the age of 3 as having additional support for learning needs and this can include those who are highly able, or looked after, for example. Early years staff, in partnership with parents, have a key role to play in identifying children who may require additional support” (Chapter 3, ASL Code of Practice, 2010)
Challenges

• Parents not requesting assessments of ASL needs
• Access to Early Years staff who have the skills and networks, and confidence in those skills and networks, to assess and/or refer
• Particular challenge in the independent preschool sector
Data Collection and Sharing

• “Although not required to do so under the Act, the education authority should monitor the number of children under 3 years of age receiving support and the nature of the support in order that plans can be made to ensure their needs and met on transitions to pre-school provision” (Chapter 3, ASL Code of Practice 2010)

• Good enough?

• Barriers to sharing information across agencies

• CYP Bill opportunities to strengthen?
Discussions

• **GROUP 1:**
  Revising the Code of Practice to encourage narrative of early interventions and potential barriers to learning

**GROUP 2:**
Supporting and strengthening the role of parents

• **GROUP 3:**
  Skilled and confident early years workforce

• **GROUP 4:**
  Overcoming barriers to data sharing
Family X moved from one authority to another over the summer holidays. They have two children – one entering primary 1 in August, and one who is 18 months old. To facilitate the transition into the primary school for the older child, which does not have a nursery provision on-site, meetings have been sought with the parents of the child, who are both profoundly deaf. The children are both hearing.
Child A is not communicating as he should, but there is no record of any concerns from his independent pre school provider. At the instigation of the receiving primary school, he has now been referred to audiology for an assessment of his hearing, and speech and language therapy assessment has now been sought to support his communication development. SLT input has also now been put in place in the home environment to support the younger child. The parents are delighted, and have now revealed that they were anxious about their children developing communication, and are relieved to get some help
Discussion Point

What does this case study tell us?
How could the delay in assessment have been avoided?
What we set out to do:

• Increased awareness of current policy and legislation around early years provision for children with additional support for learning needs

• Understanding of where we can make improvements within existing frameworks

• Improved knowledge of how different practitioners are making it work