

Supporting refugee and asylum-seeking families in school

If you have moved to Scotland and your child is finding nursery or school difficult for **any** reason, they have a right to support to help them. This support is known as 'additional support for learning' in Scotland.

This factsheet explains:

- what additional support for learning is
- what you can do if you think your child needs extra help at school or nursery after arriving in Scotland.

What is additional support for learning (ASL)?

In Scotland, if a child needs extra or different help compared to other children their age, the law says they have 'additional support needs'. Additional support needs can be anything that impacts their learning and can come from a range of circumstances such as:

- Not speaking English as well as their classmates
- A condition like autism or dyslexia
- A physical disability
- A hearing or speech impairment
- Anxiety or mental health difficulties, for example following a traumatic experience
- Experiencing bullying

In Scotland, your local authority (the council in the area where you live) must identify any child with additional support needs, and provide the support they need to fully benefit from their education. They are also required to keep this support under review. This is a legal requirement.

The law does not say how much or what type of support your child should get, but it should meet your child's individual needs. Some examples of what support can look like are:

- Adapting the school environment by putting up signs to help your child find their way.
- Making changes to the school day like letting your child leave class early to avoid busy periods in the corridors.
- One to one or group time with an English language teacher or speech and language therapist
- Providing access to a support base (or similar) if they are finding parts of the school day difficult.
- Adapting the curriculum by teaching them at their own learning level or breaking down work into smaller chunks.
- Using technology like tablets or laptops to help translate language.

Is my child entitled to additional support for learning if I'm a refugee or seeking asylum?

Yes. All children living in Scotland have a right to an education, and with that, they have a right to additional support for learning if they need it. This is set out in Scottish Law .

The rights of asylum seeker or refugee children are also protected under the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (Article 28).

<https://cypcs.org.uk/rights/uncrc/articles/>

What if my child has existing support needs?

The support your child will get may not be exactly the same as the support at nursery or school they went to before you moved to Scotland. But, the school or nursery should listen to you and take into account the information you provide about their needs and previous support. Any information you can pass on to your child's school is valuable. This can be things like results of previous assessments, but also talking to the school about what has helped your child in past, what they struggle with now and what your concerns are.

The school or nursery can then use this information to help them build a fuller picture of who your child is and get the right support in place. If needed, the school can carry out an assessment of your child's needs, this is also something you can request if you feel it would be helpful.

What should I do if I think my child needs support?

Firstly, you can email or phone your child's school. You can ask for a meeting to talk about your child's needs, your concerns and what support can be put in place.

As your child's parent or carer, you have a right to be involved in their education and support. You can do this by sharing your views, or any information that may be helpful in building your child's support at school. The school should take this into account and keep you up to date with details of their support in school.

You also have the right to take a support person or advocate along to meetings about your child's support in school. They can help by taking notes, writing letters and preparing for meetings. You can find out more about advocacy support through **The Scottish Refugee Council's Family Rights Service**.

Where can I find out more?

The **Enquire website** explains your child's rights, how support can work and how to work together with the school. All of our information can be translated into over 100 languages. www.enquire.org.uk

Our webpage **Moving to Scotland** provides more information on how education and support works in Scotland, along with steps you can take with the school to get support in place.

<https://enquire.org.uk/parents/choosing-school/moving-to-scotland/>

The Scottish Refugee Council provide lots of helpful information and a range of different support services for refugees and asylum seekers.

<https://scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/>

On our **Useful Organisations** page you can search for services in your area, including condition-specific support organisations as well as organisations who specialise in supporting refugees, asylum seekers and black or ethnic minority families. <https://enquire.org.uk/service/>



How Enquire can help

Enquire can help you understand your child's rights to additional support for learning and how to work in partnership with their school or nursery to make sure your child gets the support they need.

Enquire can:

- explain your child's rights to additional support for learning
- listen to any questions and concerns
- advise you on the way forward
- help you find local education and support services.

You can contact our helpline on **0345 123 2303** or info@enquire.org.uk
Access to interpreters is available.

You can also find lots more information about additional support for learning, including our full range of publications, at www.enquire.org.uk

The information on our website is available in over 100 languages and with a range of accessibility tools, such as text-to-speech.

Reach is our website for children and young people. Reach helps pupils to understand their rights to feel supported, included, listened to and involved in decisions at school: www.reach.scot

Enquire is also a partner in the My Rights, My Say service. My Rights, My Say supports children aged 12-15 with additional support needs to exercise their rights to be involved in decisions about their support in school:
www.myrightsmysay.scot

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