Additional support for learning: a guide for parents and carers

ENQUIRE

Helping you understand additional support for learning in Scotland

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As the Scottish advice service for additional support for learning, Enquire's vision is that all children in Scotland are supported, included and listened to throughout their education. Our role in making this a reality is to offer advice and information — to children, young people, parents, carers and professionals — about children's rights to additional support for learning.

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

We offer advice and information through our:

- Helpline: **0345 123 2303**, **info@enquire.org.uk**, or webchat on our website
- Website for parents, carers and professionals: **www.enquire.org.uk**
- Reach, our website for children and young people: **www.reach.scot**
- Information sessions and webinars: **www.youtube.com/user/Enquireinfo**
- Publications: **www.enquire.org.uk/publications**
- Social media: Facebook and Twitter **@EnquireScotASL**
  Twitter **@Reach_scot**

The information on our websites is available in over 100 languages and with a range of accessibility tools, such as text-to-speech. This includes the online version of this guide and all our factsheets. We can also arrange interpreters on our helpline for speakers of other languages and for British Sign Language (BSL) users.

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. It is independent, confidential, easy to use, and supports children to speak up about what they need to help them learn.

For more information or to get in touch, visit:
www.myrightsmysay.scot

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How can this guide help me?

Additional support for learning is not just a good idea — it is the law. This guide takes you through the key things you need to know about your and your child's rights to get them the help they need to benefit from their education and reach their full potential.

The guide describes the law and good practice relating to additional support for learning, and explains what they might mean for you and your child. It covers:

- the **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, as amended** (usually known as 'the ASL Act')
- the **Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice 2017**, which explains how the law should work in practice
- other laws and guidance that relate to supporting children at school and in nursery.

The guide is divided into four sections:

1: Understanding additional support for learning

2: Getting the right support

3: Attendance and exclusion

4: Working with the school and solving problems

Throughout the guide you will find case studies[1] and practical advice to help you work with your child's school or nursery to get the right support for your child. Each section ends with a **The law at a glance...** page setting out the key legal rights and responsibilities the section has covered.

[1]The case studies in this guide are fictional and based on the types of situations parents and carers contact the Enquire helpline for advice about.

Who is this guide for?

If you are a parent or carer of a child or young person in Scotland and a local authority is responsible for their education, this guide is for you.

Parents and carers

When we say 'you' or 'parents' we mean anyone caring for a child or young person. This includes kinship carers and foster carers.

In Scotland

Education laws in Scotland are different to the rest of the UK. This guide only applies to children and young people educated in Scotland.

A local authority is responsible for the education of your child

The local authority is responsible if your child goes to:

- a school or nursery run by a local authority
- a nursery contracted by a local authority to provide your child's free hours of early learning and childcare, or
- an independent or grant-aided special school, where a local authority has arranged your child's placement.

If you have arranged for your child to attend an independent school or nursery, or to be educated at home, the duties in the ASL Act do not apply in the same way and the local authority is not responsible for their education. This means that local authorities can **choose** to do the things in this guide for your child, like providing them with additional support, but they **do not have to**.

Find out more in our guides to **Independent schools and additional support for learning** and **Home education and additional support for learning**.

Understanding the terminology

This guide uses words in a particular way to explain your and your child's rights and local authorities' duties under the law.

'must'

means there is a legal duty to do something. For example, the local authority must give 'adequate and efficient' support to pupils with additional support needs.

'should'

means something ought to happen because the Scottish Government has provided guidance about it but there is no clear legal duty to do it. For example, the school should only exclude a pupil as a last resort.

'can'

means there is discretion for something to happen (but no guidance or policy that suggests it should happen, or law that says it must happen). For example, if you choose to home educate your child the local authority **can** offer them additional support for learning.

'a right to'

means the rights that you or your child have under Scottish law. For example, your child aged 5-15 has a **right to** an education. We also use 'a right to' when there is a legal duty to do something for someone. For example, if the local authority has a duty to provide support for your child's learning, we may say your child has **a right to** receive support for learning.

Getting through the jargon

There can be a lot of new and confusing terms and abbreviations used when talking about additional support for learning:

'Got a TAC meeting with SaLT and CAMHS to consider an assessment for a CSP?'

See the **Common abbreviations** section at the back of this guide to help make sense of it all.

Need more help?

You can contact our helpline on **0345 123 2303** or **info@enquire.org.uk** for advice about your child's individual circumstances or to ask us any questions about additional support for learning.

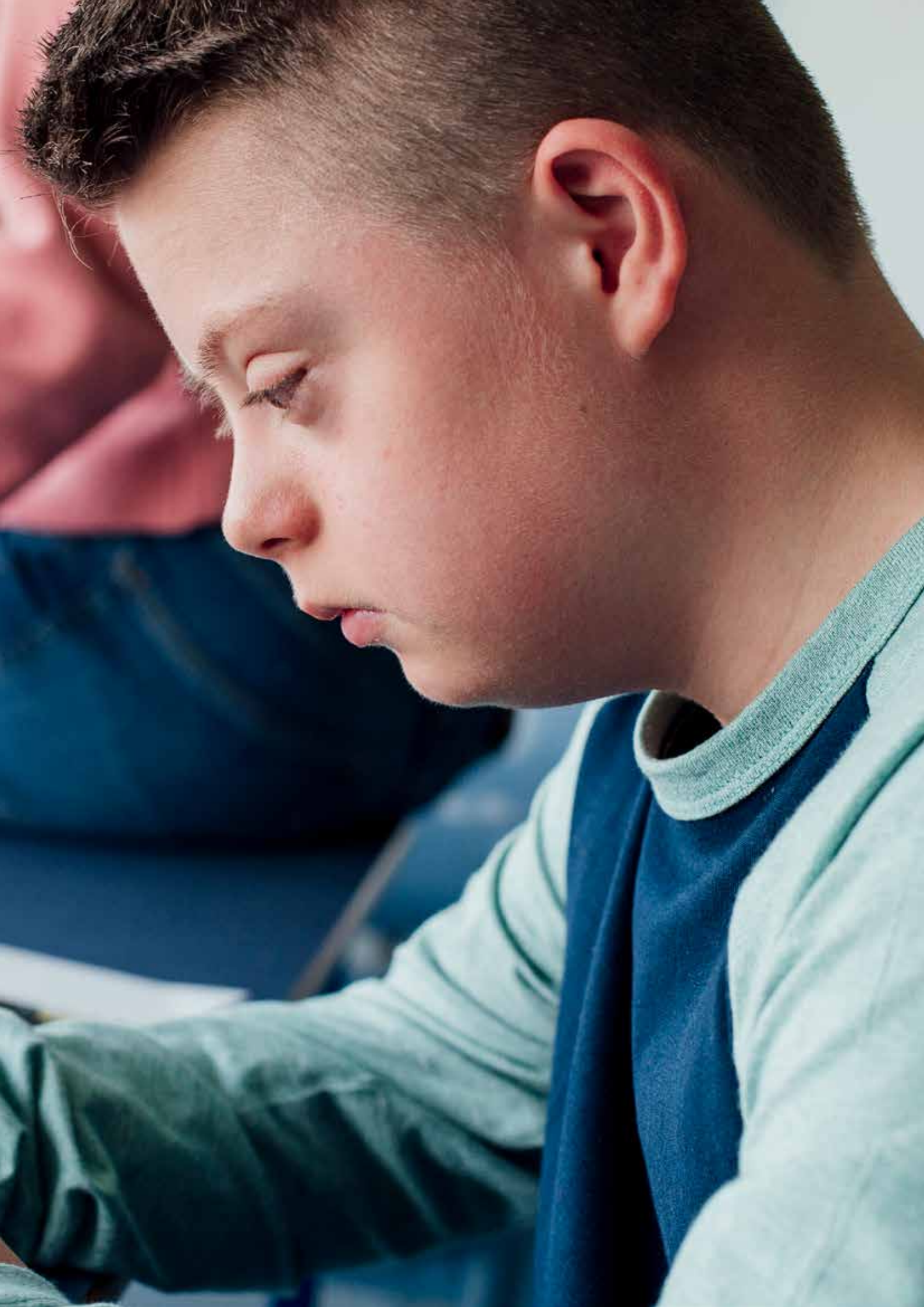
You can also find lots more information on our website **www.enquire.org.uk** and in our other publications. We have a range of factsheets that go into detail on specific topics related to additional support for learning, such as school placements, co-ordinated support plans and exclusion from school. This includes practical advice about how to do things like request an assessment of your child's needs, or how to make an appeal to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

You can find a full list of our current range of factsheets at the very back of this guide. You can also find them all on our website at **www.enquire.org.uk/publications**, where you can download them for free.

Our website has a range of accessibility tools that allow you to access this guide in different ways, including:

- translated into over 100 languages
- with text-to-speech software (including in many other languages)
- in different fonts and font sizes
- with different text and background colour combinations
- with a range of other reading tools.

Understanding additional support for learning



Understanding additional support for learning

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Introduction

In this section we will summarise the key information you need to know about your child's right to support with their learning. We will explain what terms like 'additional support needs' and 'additional support for learning' mean, who is responsible for providing your child's support, and when and where they can get support. We will also explain some related laws and guidance that help make sure your child is included and treated fairly at school or nursery, and how professionals should look after your child's wellbeing.

Does my child have 'additional support needs'?

Some children and young people need extra help to get the most from their learning and achieve their potential. Pupils who need extra or different help than other pupils their age, for any reason, are said to have 'additional support needs'.

They may only need support for a short time, or they may need support the whole time they are in education. Their needs may also change over time, in small or big ways.

Your child may need additional support at any time during their education. They may also need additional support to help them prepare for nursery or school.

Your child does not need to have a diagnosed condition to have additional support needs. If your child is struggling at school or nursery and needing extra help **for any reason**, they have a right to receive the help they need.

Whatever your child's needs and whenever they arise, everyone involved should try to identify them as early as possible and provide them with the support they need.

Reasons why support can be needed

Children and young people may need extra help with their education for a wide variety of reasons. Many circumstances may affect a child or young person's ability to learn. Whilst it is not possible to list all the reasons why a pupil might need additional support, here are four broad categories that they may fall into:

Their learning environment is not suitable for them

It may be that what is being taught, or the way it is being taught, is not suitable for a pupil. The materials being used might not be accessible for them. Or perhaps the physical environment, such as the way the classroom or school is laid out, is not giving them the best chance of success.

If a pupil is more able they might need a more challenging curriculum in order to make progress and reach their potential. If a pupil's first language is not English they may also need extra help to access the curriculum.

Family circumstances are affecting their ability to learn

A pupil's progress at school or nursery might be influenced by what is happening at home. If their home life is disrupted in some way, this may affect their ability to benefit from their education. This might include pupils who are affected by family breakdown, care experienced, homeless or move home often, help to care for parents or siblings with health problems, or have become parents themselves.

They are disabled or have a health condition

If a pupil is disabled or has healthcare needs, it is likely that they will need additional support at school or nursery. For example, they may have a motor or sensory impairment (e.g. difficulty with movement or sight), a specific language impairment, a learning disability, autism, attention difficulties, or a long-term health condition. Mental health problems such as depression, anxiety or eating disorders can also affect a pupil's ability to learn.

They are experiencing social or emotional problems

A pupil might also need additional support if they have missed a lot of school, have been bereaved, are being bullied, are experiencing racial discrimination or are displaying behavioural difficulties. Children and young people who misuse drugs or alcohol are also likely to need support to access education.

Care experienced children and young people

A child or young person is care experienced if they have been, or are currently, in care or from a looked after background at any stage in their life. This includes children and young people who have experienced living in residential care, foster care, kinship care, or at home with a supervision order. Adopted children who were previously looked after are also care experienced. Many care experienced children and young people have additional support needs related to their lived experiences.

If your child is currently 'looked after' by a local authority, they are automatically assumed to have additional support needs, unless they are assessed as not needing extra help to learn.

What is 'additional support for learning'?

'Additional support for learning' means the extra help that pupils with additional support needs get.

The aim of additional support for learning is to help your child benefit from their education and work towards their full potential.

Depending on your child's individual needs and circumstances, different kinds of support are available. While support should be tailored to your child's individual needs, where possible it should be given in a way that does not make them feel singled out. Support should be integrated into their everyday life at nursery or school.

Types of support

Every child is different and will need different types of support to help them to do their best. This means there is no definitive list of every kind of support that your child might receive. Here are some of the different ways a school, nursery or local authority might support pupils, depending on their needs:

- adapting the curriculum
- providing support from a classroom or pupil support assistant
- giving pupils' access to additional resources and materials
- individual or small group teaching
- making adjustments to the physical environment
- giving access to a quiet space or support base
- a therapist or other specialist working individually with a pupil
- placing a child in a support unit or special school.

There is much more information about getting the right support for your child and working together with the school or nursery throughout the rest of this guide.

Who is responsible for educating and supporting my child?

You have a duty to make sure your child receives an education from the age of five until they turn 16. Most parents and carers do this by sending their child to school. Before school age, you can also choose for your child to access early learning and childcare — see the next section for more about this.

If your child attends:

- a school or nursery run by a local authority
- a nursery contracted by a local authority to provide your child's free hours of early learning and childcare, or
- a grant-aided or independent special school, where a local authority has arranged your child's placement,

then the local authority is responsible for your child's education. They must provide your child with an education that helps them develop their personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

The local authority that is responsible for your child's education will usually be the local authority where you live, known as the 'home authority'.

Local authorities have a number of duties under the ASL Act. We will explain these duties throughout this guide. Some of their key responsibilities are to:

- identify whether your child has additional support needs
- give additional support for learning to your child if they need it
- keep your child's needs and supports under review.

Most of the day-to-day responsibility for arranging and providing your child's support will be with your child's school or nursery. If your child needs more or different support than the school or nursery can provide, your local authority is responsible for making sure they get the help they need. The local authority can also ask other services, like health or social work, for help.

For example, if your child has autism, the school may seek advice from a health professional like a speech and language therapist. A speech and language therapist can advise the school on strategies they can use to help your child develop their communication skills.

Can the local authority refuse to provide the support my child needs?

The local authority might not have to provide support if it is not in their powers to offer it or if they think the cost of the support is unreasonably high. This might be the case if:

- the cost of providing the support completely outweighs the benefits to your child
- suitable alternative support is available at a much lower cost
- the cost of providing the support, such as building new facilities, would completely outweigh the benefits to the wider community.

Local authorities should always consider whether the cost of providing your child with a certain kind of support would benefit other children in the future.

Cost should not be the primary consideration when a local authority is deciding what support your child should get.

What if my child is being educated outside our local authority area?

There are several circumstances when this might happen. The responsibility for your child's education and support might lie with different people depending on those circumstances.

If your child attends a local authority school in a different area **because you made a placing request** to that school, the authority where your child attends school (the 'host authority') is responsible for providing your child's education and support.

If the local authority where you and your child live (the 'home' authority) has **arranged for your child to attend a school in a different area**, your home authority is still responsible for your child's education.

They will make arrangements with the host authority to provide the additional support your child needs. This might happen if there is a special school in a different area that can meet their needs.

If your child **attends an independent or grant-aided special school** in a different area, either as a result of a placing request or because the local authority has arranged for your child to go there, your home local authority is responsible for making sure the education and support your child receives helps them do the best they can at school.

If a local authority has **placed a child or young person with carers** or in a **residential care home in a different area**, the child's home local authority will still be responsible for their education and will make arrangements with the host authority for them to receive education and additional support for learning.

When can my child receive additional support?

From the age of three (and sometimes earlier) until your child leaves school, your child has a right to additional support for learning if they need it.

Children under five

Your local authority has a duty to provide additional support for learning to your child, if they need it, when your child becomes eligible for their funded hours of early learning and childcare.

Every child aged three and four is entitled to 1,140 funded hours of early learning and childcare a year.

Children aged three and four can receive their funded hours from the start of the school term following their relevant birthday. They can receive these in a local authority nursery, or in a placement that works in partnership with the local authority to offer early learning and childcare, like certain private nurseries, community groups or playgroups.

Some children become eligible for their funded hours of early learning and childcare at age two, if they are (or have been) looked after, have a kinship care order, have a parent-appointed guardian or if their parents receive certain benefits.

Children younger than three who need support because they are disabled may also be able to receive additional support for their learning. The local authority should assess their needs to see what kind of help they might benefit from.

The local authority can provide additional support for other children under three who may benefit from getting additional support early, but they do not have to.

School age 5-15

Your child has a right to a school education from the age of five until they turn 16. Your child has a right to additional support for learning throughout their school years if they need it.

Young people aged 16 and older

Although there is no explicit right to school education after the age of 16, young people do have the right to remain in school if they are already in a school that is either:

- run by a local authority, or
- a grant-aided or independent special school, and their place is funded by a local authority.

If your child stays on at school after the age of 16, the local authority continues to have the same legal duties to support their learning as they had for the rest of your child's time in school. This continues up until they leave school, whatever age they leave at.

Under the law, there is no upper age limit to school education or set number of years of education that a pupil is entitled to. In exceptional circumstances a young person may stay on at school when they are 19 or older.

Where can my child receive additional support?

All pupils with additional support needs who attend nurseries or schools run by local authorities (or who have been placed in another type of early learning and childcare setting or school by a local authority) have a right to the extra help they need to learn.

For information about the different settings where your child can receive their funded hours of early learning and childcare, see our factsheet on Additional support for learning in the early years.

Most pupils with additional support needs will attend their local mainstream school and receive the support they need there. Some pupils with additional support needs will attend a special school, a specialist support base or unit attached to a mainstream school, or a combination of these. Some pupils will attend different types of school at different stages of their education.

Mainstream schools

Mainstream schools run by a local authority are the schools that most pupils will attend. Mainstream schools can cater for pupils with a wide range of additional support needs. They have a duty to provide extra help for pupils with additional support needs and should make sure all pupils can be included in all aspects of school life.

Support units or bases

Some mainstream schools have support units or bases. These offer some of the services that would be provided at a special school, but on a smaller scale.

The way that support units and bases are run can differ between different local authority areas, and between different schools. For example, pupils might:

- be taught full time in a support base
- have some of their lessons in the support base, and some in mainstream classes
- not receive any teaching in the support base, but instead have it as somewhere they can go if they are struggling in their mainstream classes

- receive support in mainstream classes, provided by staff from a support base
- have some combination of the above.

Special schools

Special schools offer a range of services that are usually not available in mainstream schools. They provide specific help for pupils with particular additional support needs, such as learning disabilities, behavioural problems, or physical or sensory impairments.

They are often staffed by specialist teachers and can offer a range of services, facilities and therapies. Class sizes tend to be smaller than in mainstream schools.

Special schools are either run by local authorities, grant-aided, or independent. Grant-aided special schools are funded directly by the Scottish Government. Independent special schools are all funded differently, for example by charities, donors, or other organisations. Local authorities can place pupils with additional support needs at any of these types of special school.

Residential special schools

Some special schools have a residential option, where pupils may spend all or part of their week staying at the school. This will usually be for pupils with complex educational needs and extensive care needs.

Other options

Split placements

Some pupils benefit from having a split placement, where they attend a mainstream school for some of the time, and a special school the rest of the time, so that they can access some of the specialist services there. This kind of arrangement is sometimes called ‘flexible’ or ‘shared’ provision.

Whether this may be an option for a pupil can depend on things like how geographically close the two schools are, and how the pupil adjusts to change and meeting new people.

Some older pupils attend school some of the time and fill the rest of their timetable with a college placement, or vocational opportunity.

Hospital- or home-based education

If a pupil is unable to attend their usual school due to ill health, the local authority must make alternative arrangements so that they can continue learning. This may mean being educated out of school, for example at home, or in a hospital or hospice if they have been admitted for a period of time. Find out more about this in the **Attendance and exclusion** section of this guide.

The 'presumption of mainstream'

Local authorities must educate pupils in their area in mainstream schools, unless certain exceptions apply. This is known as the 'presumption of mainstream'. The exceptional circumstances where education can be provided in schools other than mainstream schools are:

- where a mainstream school would not suit your child's ability or aptitude
- where your child being in a mainstream school would negatively affect the learning of other pupils in the school
- where the cost of placing your child in a mainstream school would be unreasonably high.

If one or more of the exceptions apply, the local authority can still provide education in a mainstream school, but not without considering your and your child's views.

Some parents worry that their child will not get the support they need in a mainstream school. All local authority schools have legal duties to support and include pupils with additional support needs. They can offer a wide range of supports and adjustments for pupils with different needs.

What are my and my child's rights?

You have a range of rights under the ASL Act to be involved in decisions about your child's support and to make certain requests to the local authority. Throughout this guide, we explain what your rights are in each specific situation.

Your child should also be involved in decisions about their support. How involved they will be and what rights they have will depend on their age, maturity, and whether they are able to understand how to do or ask for certain things.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child says that all children have the right to share their views and opinions about anything that affects their lives.

Under Scottish law, the local authority must give 'due regard' to children's views in decisions about their education that will significantly affect them. This means that their views should be listened to and taken seriously, with more weight given to their views as they grow up and become more mature.

Pupils with additional support needs also have the right to have their voice heard at specific times. For example, the local authority must seek their views when they are finding out about their needs and deciding what support they should get.

Children aged 12-15

If your child is aged 12-15, they have extra rights to help them become more actively involved in decisions about the support they receive. These rights are similar to the rights you have as a parent. We will mention throughout this guide when your child may have the same right as you to do or ask for something — for example, to ask for assessments of their additional support needs.

You can find out more about how your child can use these rights in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

Young people aged 16 or over

If your child is aged 16 or over, under education law they are no longer a 'child' — they are now a 'young person'. Young people are assumed to be able to act on their own behalf and to be fully involved in decisions about their education and additional support for learning. This means that they have all the same rights that you had on their behalf before they turned 16.

This does not mean that you will no longer be involved — in most cases parents and carers will continue to attend meetings about their child's education until they leave school. If your child is not able to understand how to make requests or decisions for themselves, you can still do these things for them.

Inclusion, equality and wellbeing

As well as their duties under the ASL Act to make sure that all pupils get the support they need with their learning, local authorities also have other responsibilities to help pupils at school and nursery. This includes making sure they are included, treated fairly and with respect, and have their wellbeing protected.

Inclusion

Your child's school or nursery should do their best to make sure that all pupils can be involved in all aspects of their education. The Scottish Government says inclusion means that all pupils should be **present**, **participating**, **achieving** and **supported**.

Present

Your child's school or nursery should provide a learning environment that helps them attend in person or engage with learning in other ways (such as by using technology) if they need to.

Your child should:

- learn in an environment which best meets their needs
- be fully engaged in the life of their school or nursery
- receive a full-time school education with flexible approaches to meet their needs.

Participating

Participation is about pupils being involved in the wider school or nursery community, as well as doing schoolwork and homework. This includes taking part in trips, events and other extra-curricular activities.

Your child should:

- have their voice heard in decisions about their education, including on where they learn
- be able to take part and engage as fully as possible in all aspects of school or nursery life
- have the support they need to take part in their learning.

Achieving

Your child's school or nursery must make sure that your child's education helps them reach their full potential.

Your child should:

- have help to do the best they can at school or nursery
- have access to a varied curriculum that meets their individual needs.

Supported

If your child needs extra help with their learning, they have a right to receive the support they need to do their best at school or nursery.

Your child should:

- receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people, to support their wellbeing in the right place
- get help, if they need it, to take part in all aspects of school or nursery life
- get help to overcome barriers to learning.

Equality

Schools and nurseries must treat all pupils fairly and with respect. Treating pupils fairly may not mean treating everyone in exactly the same way. Schools and nurseries may need to change the way they do things to help each pupil get the best from their education.

Some pupils receive extra protection under the law. The Equality Act 2010 says that schools, nurseries and local authorities must not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- disability
- gender reassignment (no changes, medical treatments or assessments need to have taken place for a transgender pupil to be included in this category)
- pregnancy and maternity
- race (skin colour, ethnic origin, cultural background, or nationality)
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

These are called 'protected characteristics'. Discrimination can include things like treating a pupil less favourably than other pupils because of their protected characteristic. It can also include things like having a policy that applies to all pupils in the same way, but that puts pupils with a particular protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

It is also against the law to discriminate against a pupil due to the protected characteristics of someone they are associated with, like a family member or friend. For example, if a school refused to admit a child because their parents are a lesbian couple. The law also protects pupils who people might think have a protected characteristic, whether or not they do.

The Equality Act puts a duty on local authorities to work towards:

- getting rid of unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic, and people who do not
- promoting good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and people who do not.

This means that schools and nurseries should be actively promoting inclusion of all pupils in all aspects of school or nursery life.

Disabled pupils

If your child is disabled, they have extra protection under the Equality Act.

Schools, nurseries and local authorities have a duty to do what they can to avoid putting disabled pupils at a disadvantage. This is called making 'reasonable adjustments'. Reasonable adjustments can include changes to the way the school or nursery is run on a day-to-day basis or providing aids or services that help disabled pupils.

For example:

- a school may make an adjustment to a 'blanket policy' such as their school uniform policy if it causes difficulty for a disabled pupil
- a school may take an additional staff member on a school trip to support a disabled pupil if the pupil could not go on the trip without that support.

The Equality Act does not cover changes to the physical accessibility of schools and nurseries for individual pupils. Instead, local authorities have a duty to plan to improve disabled access in general by having an Accessibility Strategy. This must set out what they are doing to improve access to the curriculum, the physical environment, and information for and communication with disabled pupils.

You can find out more about the Equality Act from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) **www.equalityhumanrights.com**

If you are worried that your child might have been discriminated against at school or nursery, you can contact the Equality Advisory and Support Service on **0808 800 0082** or via their website **www.equalityadvisoryservice.com**

Wellbeing

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

GIRFEC is a national programme in Scotland that aims to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people by giving them the right help, at the right time, from the right people and in the right place.

All services working with children and young people should play their part in promoting, supporting, and safeguarding their wellbeing.

The wellbeing wheel on the next page shows the eight 'wellbeing indicators' (sometimes also called 'SHANARRI indicators) that help explain what wellbeing means: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.

The aim of the Scottish curriculum (known as the 'Curriculum for Excellence') is to enable **all** pupils to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society. To achieve this aim, each child and young person must be helped to do the best they can on the eight wellbeing indicators.

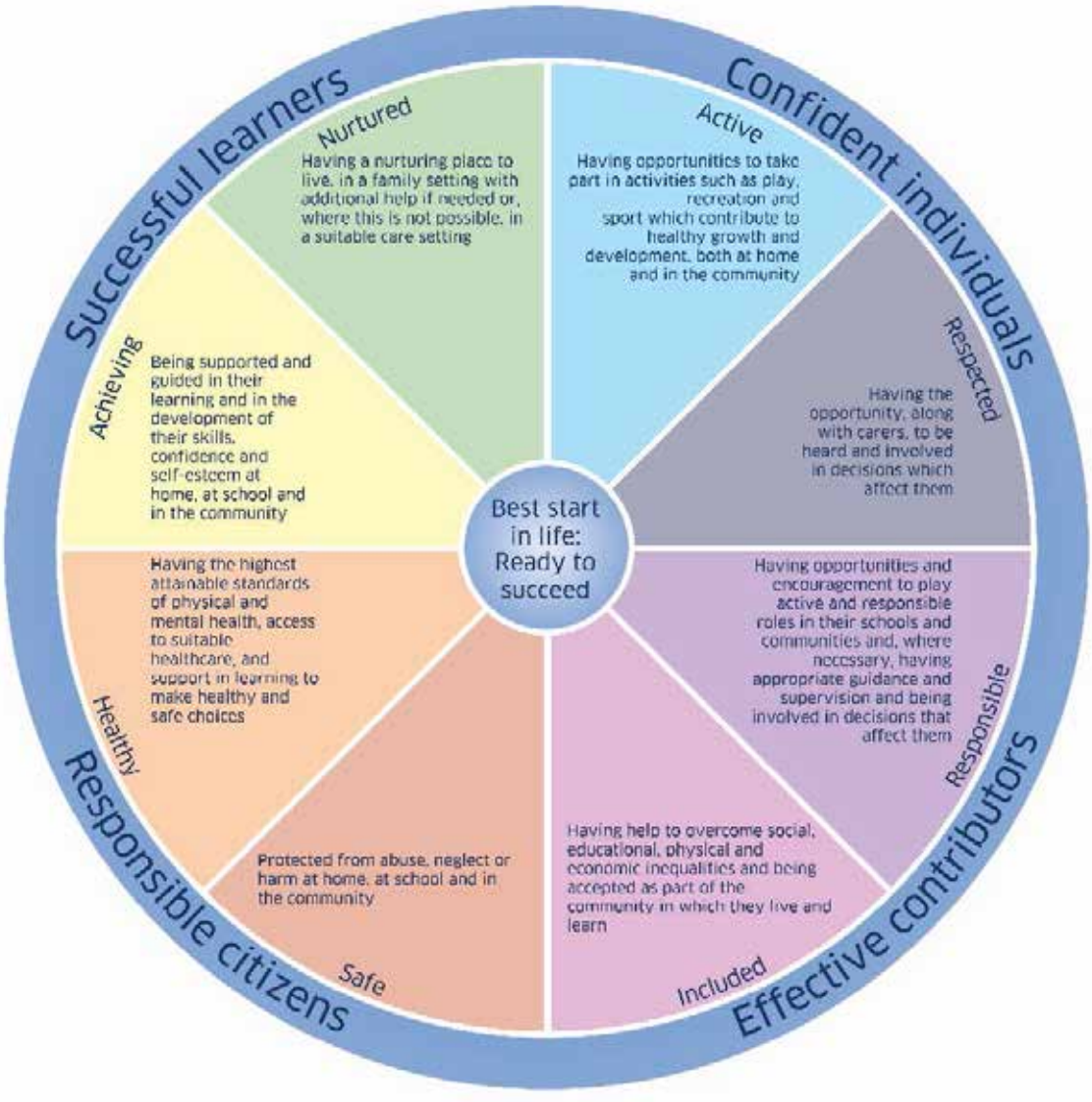
These indicators help everyone working with a child or young person to be consistent in measuring the quality of their life. They can use the indicators to help find out what help a child or young person needs so that they can access the right support or advice.

People working to support children and young people should also ask themselves the following questions:

- What is getting in the way of this child or young person's wellbeing?
- Do I have all the information I need to help this child or young person?
- What can I now do to help this child or young person?
- What can my department do to help this young person?
- What additional help, if any, may be needed from others?

You can find out more about GIRFEC on the Scottish Government website **www.gov.scot/gettingitright**, and about the Curriculum for Excellence at **http://scotlandscurriculum.scot**

The wellbeing wheel



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The law at a glance

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

- A child or young person has 'additional support needs' where, for whatever reason, they need extra or different help to benefit from their education section 1(1)
- All children and young people who are currently considered to be a 'looked after child' are presumed to have additional support needs, unless they are assessed as not needing extra help to learn section 1(1A),(1B)
- The local authority must provide 'adequate and efficient' additional support to pupils with additional support needs section 4(1)(a)
- From the age of three (and sometimes earlier) until your child leaves school, they have a right to additional support for learning if they need it section 4(1)(a)
- The local authority must seek and take account of your and your child's views section 12(2)(b)

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000

- Every child of school age (5-15) has the right to school education provided by a local authority section 1
- The local authority must educate your child in a mainstream school unless certain 'exceptional circumstances' apply section 15(1)
- The education your child receives must help them to develop their personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential section 2(1)

Equality Act 2010

- The local authority must not discriminate against pupils due to their disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation section 85
- The local authority must make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled pupils to avoid putting them at a disadvantage section 85(6) and schedule 13

Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002

- The local authority must prepare an Accessibility Strategy that sets out how they will improve access for disabled pupils in their area section 1

Getting the right support

Getting the right support

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Introduction

This section will explain how your child's support needs will be identified and assessed, how their support in school or nursery will be planned and delivered, how decisions will be made about where they go to school, and how arrangements should be made for them leaving school. We will explain your rights to be involved in decisions about your child's support and to make requests to the local authority for things like assessments of your child's needs, or for them to attend a particular school or nursery.

Children under three

Before we tell you how your child's needs should be identified and assessed when they are at nursery or school, it important to note that these processes will start much earlier than this.

Your child's midwife and health visitor gather and record information about your child from the moment they are born. This information helps health professionals decide in the early months what level of support the health service will need to give your child. If they have any concerns about your child's development, they will speak to you and may refer your child to see another professional, like a community paediatrician, for further assessment.

You and the health staff involved in these early stages of your child's life will often be the first to see if your child may need some extra support when they go to nursery or school. The local authority can offer additional support for learning to children under three, but they do not have to unless your child is disabled.

If your child is disabled, you or a professional involved in your child's life (for example their health visitor) can refer them to your local authority to find out if they have additional support needs because of their disability. If they do, the local authority (with your permission) must offer them support.

This support may be offered at home, a child development centre or elsewhere, depending on your child's particular needs. For example, a specialist teacher may visit them at home, or a speech and language therapist may spend some time with staff at the child development centre to develop strategies to support your child's development.

Whatever it looks like, the support should help your child get the most from their early learning, and school education when the time comes for them to attend.

You may be worried about having your child's needs identified or assessed too young. For example, you may think they just need a bit more time to catch up with their peers, or you may be concerned about them getting a diagnosis or 'label' at such a young age. It can also be difficult for some parents to come to terms with accepting their child may face some extra challenges or barriers with their learning, or indeed with their wider lives. If you have any concerns, it is important that you discuss these with the people supporting your child so that you can weigh up together what is best for your child.

Identifying your child's needs

Your local authority must make arrangements to identify which children and young people have additional support needs. If your child appears to need extra or different help with their learning, the local authority must identify their specific individual needs. This helps them provide your child with the right support.

Whilst some children will be identified from a very early age as needing extra support with their learning and development, others may start to struggle when they get to nursery or school. Some may need support at specific times, for example if they have been bereaved. All children may need additional support at some point during their education.

Whatever age your child is when you and those working with your child identify that they might need extra support, the earlier your child's individual needs are recognised and understood, the earlier they can get targeted support to help them reach their full potential.

Often it will be staff at your child's school or nursery who will notice if your child may need some extra help. As part of daily learning and teaching, your child's school or nursery keeps track of their progress. This is an ongoing process of gathering information by observing them in the classroom and looking at the results of in-class tests.

Gathering this information helps teachers and other staff to:

- get a picture of your child's progress, achievements, and any areas where they struggle
- work out the next steps your child should take in their learning as they move through the curriculum
- identify whether your child has additional support needs.

If the school or nursery picks up that your child has (or may have) additional support needs, they should speak to you about this and discuss with you how they can best support your child. They should also involve your child in these discussions whilst bearing in mind their age and level of understanding.

The priority should always be to identify your child's needs as early as possible, and with as little disruption to their education as possible.

Assessing your child's needs

Once the school or nursery has realised that your child may need additional support with their learning, they must keep their needs under review. Most of the time they can do this by continuously assessing your child's development and progress in class.

However, if school or nursery staff feel that more information would help them to support your child better, they can arrange specific assessments to work out:

- the reasons why your child needs support
- what kind of support will help your child do their best.

Depending on the nature of your child's needs, staff at your child's school or nursery may be able to carry out an assessment. For example, a school might arrange for their support for learning teacher to assess whether a pupil has dyslexia.

The school or nursery may also make referrals to other professionals, who might include:

- education professionals from the local authority, like an educational psychologist or visual impairment teacher
- health professionals from the NHS, like a speech and language therapist or a psychologist from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- social workers.

If the staff supporting your child think your child needs a specific assessment of their needs, they should discuss this with you before making any referrals.

The people assessing your child may observe them in class, speak to their teachers and review their work. They may also ask your child to attend appointments in places such as child development centres, hospitals or other medical centres. In some cases, they may ask to observe your child at home to get a full picture of their development and needs.

When they are assessing your child's needs, the school, nursery or local authority must ask for your and your child's views. They must take your views and any information you provide about your child into account when they are deciding what your child's needs are. You have knowledge about your child that is valuable to the professionals who work with them. You know your child's strengths, and you will also be aware of areas where they need extra support.

Your right to request assessments

If you think your child may have additional support needs, discuss your concerns first with their school or nursery. They may already be aware of your child's needs and be providing suitable support. If not, you should discuss with them the options available for supporting and assessing your child.

You also have the right to ask your local authority, at any time, to:

- assess whether your child has additional support needs
- carry out a specific assessment of your child's needs, such as an educational, psychological or health assessment.

You should include the reasons why you think the assessment is needed in your request.

You cannot insist upon a particular kind of assessment (for example, the type of assessment test used) or ask for a particular person to carry it out.

If your child is aged 12-15, they may also be able to ask for an assessment of their needs. Find out more about how your child can use this right in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

If your child is over 16, they can make the request themselves. If they are not able to understand how to do this, you can make the request on their behalf.

Our factsheet on Identifying and assessing your child's needs explains how to request an assessment, what happens after you have made the request, the timescales involved and what you can do if you disagree with a decision about whether to assess your child's needs.

Making direct referrals for health and social work assessments

You can ask your GP to make a referral for health assessments and for some services you can refer your child yourself. For example, many speech and language therapy and occupational therapy services take referrals from parents and carers. GPs and health visitors can refer to mental health services.

You can also ask social work services to assess your child's or your family's needs. Social work teams can help you find out what support services may be available, such as befriending services, breaks for you from your caring role, special equipment or adaptations, suitable housing, help at home with personal or domestic care, and welfare benefits advice.

You should keep your child's school or nursery informed of any referrals you make.

The assessment process

How long an assessment will take can vary a lot depending on what type of assessment your child needs and who is carrying it out. If the local authority agrees to assess your child, they should tell you when the assessment will happen and who will carry it out.

Some assessments can be done in a one-off appointment and other types of assessment will often need to be carried out over a series of appointments or a longer period of observation and monitoring.

While there can be long waiting lists for some specialist services, your child does not need a formal assessment or diagnosis to get additional support for learning. If your child is struggling and needs extra help, then even if the underlying reasons for this are still uncertain, they should get the help they need.

Your child's support can be adapted as new information comes to light. For example, following an assessment or diagnosis your child's teachers may try new strategies recommended by the specialist involved in the assessment.

Case study

Mia's story

Mia is three years old and the staff at her nursery have noticed her language development is delayed and she is finding it difficult to understand and follow some basic verbal instructions. The nursery raises these concerns with Mia's parents, who had also noticed this but wondered if it was just her young age.

After chatting things through, everyone agrees the nursery will ask the local authority to assess Mia's additional support needs. They want to explore any underlying reasons why Mia is struggling to communicate so they can then better support her. In the meantime, the nursery agrees to try some techniques, like using hand gestures alongside verbal instructions, that Mia's parents use at home.

After a few months on a waiting list the speech and language therapist observes Mia at nursery, speaks with the nursery staff, parents, and consults with a colleague. The therapist diagnoses Mia with global developmental delay. A meeting is held where the therapist suggests some targeted strategies to use both at home and in the nursery to help Mia's language develop. For example, her parents and teachers will use visual aid cards when they are speaking to her. Mia will also have some supported smaller group play at nursery helping her start to communicate with her friends. A review meeting will be held in three months to see how Mia is getting on.

Planning your child's support

The local authority has a duty to provide your child with the support they need and to keep their support under review. This means they need to plan your child's support.

Planning is an ongoing process that helps make sure your child's needs are being met. Planning helps everyone working with your child agree what their role will be in supporting them to reach their potential.

You and your child should be fully involved in any planning and reviews of their support.

Depending on your child's needs, different levels of planning will be required to make sure their learning and wellbeing needs are met, and to arrange the support they receive:

Personal learning planning

Schools and nurseries should plan and keep under review all pupils' learning and development. This is called 'personal learning planning'. Personal learning planning helps staff to set goals for your child to achieve based on their strengths and development needs. You, your child and their teachers can then review your child's progress — for example at parents' evenings.

Planning support for learning

Once the school, nursery or local authority has found that your child needs additional support for learning, they should consider how they will deliver that support. They should work with you, your child and, where necessary, other professionals to plan how to give your child the support they need to do the best they can. Sometimes they will suggest a particular type of plan, and at other times it might be a more informal agreement.

Verbal or informal agreements

If your child needs just one or two minor changes to the support they receive, they may not need a written plan. You can just agree verbally with the nursery or school what those changes will be and a date for reviewing the changes. This could be at a parents' evening or in a meeting. It can be helpful to send an email afterwards to confirm what you have agreed, to avoid any misunderstandings.

Written agreements

It can be helpful to have a written agreement about the support your child should be getting if:

- your child needs several changes to the support they receive
- your child needs support from at least one other staff member as well as their class teacher(s)
- you feel the school or nursery are not doing what they have agreed to do.

Written agreements could be an email conversation between you and the school or nursery confirming what has been agreed, minutes of meetings, or a separate document that sets out what has been agreed.

More formal learning support plans

When your child needs more significant support, or support from several staff in the school or nursery and/or from other professionals, they might need a learning support plan.

Learning support plans are standard documents that all schools and nurseries in the same area will use to plan the support of pupils who need a higher level of support. The local authority will have a system in place for deciding which pupils should have this more formal plan, but they do not have a duty under law to put in place this kind of plan.

Learning support plans are called different things in different local authorities, for example:

- Individualised education programmes (IEPs)
- Additional support plans (ASPs)
- Individual support plans (ISPs)
- Addressing Barriers to Learning (ABLe) plans.

Some local authorities do not have separate learning support plans. Instead, they use wellbeing plans to plan a pupil's support for learning. See below for more information about wellbeing plans.

To find out what learning support plans are called in your area and how they are used, ask your child's school or nursery.

Co-ordinated support plans (CSPs)

CSPs are the only type of plan that a local authority must put in place if a pupil meets the criteria. There is more detailed information about CSPs later in this section.

Healthcare plans

If your child has healthcare needs that affect them at school or nursery (for example if they need to take medication or need specialist treatment during the day), the school or nursery and your child's healthcare team should draw up a healthcare plan for them. Find out more in our factsheet on Supporting pupils with healthcare needs.

Wellbeing (child's) plans

Children and young people who need specialist support with their wellbeing may have a wellbeing plan. A wellbeing plan is a standard document used within an area by all professionals working to support a child or young person's wellbeing. It helps them understand what their role is and what others are doing to support the child or young person. Wellbeing plans do not just apply to education, but to all aspects of a child or young person's life.

Wellbeing plans are often called 'child's plans' but they might also be called, for example:

- Wellbeing and Assessment Plans
- Getting it Right for Me (GIRFMe) Plans
- Young person's plans.

Your child's school or nursery should be able to tell you the name of the wellbeing plan used in your area.

Sometimes wellbeing plans include education plans, such as learning support plans or co-ordinated support plans, and sometimes these are separate documents. Even if your child's education plan is not included in the wellbeing plan, it should be mentioned so that everyone working with them knows they have an additional, education-specific plan.

Care plans

Local authorities must prepare a plan for every child or young person currently in their care (considered to be a 'looked after child'). This plan sets out who will support the care, health and education needs of the child or

young person. It covers where the child will live and contact arrangements with their family.

Staged intervention

All local authorities must have a policy for providing additional support for learning and keeping pupils' needs under review. This means that they need to put in place a system for deciding which pupils need what level of support. Many local authorities call this 'staged intervention', but it might be called something different in your area.

Staged intervention gives all staff working with pupils with additional support needs a standard framework to use for deciding what level of support and what type of plan each pupil might need.

A staged intervention framework will have several stages (usually three or four), describing what level of support a pupil might need at each stage.

For example, at Stage 1, there might be some adjustments needed to the curriculum or environment and most support will come from class teachers, perhaps with some help from a support for learning or guidance teacher. At Stage 4 a pupil might need input from several different professionals outside of school and might attend a specialist support base or special school and have a co-ordinated support plan.

Requesting a plan for your child

If your child does not currently have a written support plan and you think they might need one, start by speaking to your child's school or nursery. Before you ask for a plan, it would be helpful to think about and write down the reasons why you feel a plan might help. These might include helping everyone involved to:

- agree what your child's needs are
- set out goals for your child to achieve and the support your child needs to achieve them
- understand what actions have been agreed and who will do them
- keep track of your child's progress
- agree when your child's progress will be reviewed
- agree how to keep each other informed about any difficulties that arise.

Co-ordinated support plans (CSPs)

A co-ordinated support plan (CSP):

- is an action plan used for some pupils who need significant additional support with their education
- sets broad and long-term goals for a pupil
- supports professionals from different agencies to work together to help the pupil achieve those goals.

CSPs are legal documents. Local authorities are responsible for deciding which pupils meet the criteria for a CSP, and then for preparing the plans and keeping them under review. Local authorities must provide the support that is written into a pupil's CSP.

Every local authority should have arrangements in place to help them identify which pupils may need a CSP. The local authority must let you know if they decide to assess your child to find out if they need a CSP. The professionals who work closely with your child, such as teachers, social workers, or health professionals, can also tell the local authority if they think your child needs a CSP.

Local authorities must decide whether pupils who are currently considered a 'looked after child' require a CSP.

Criteria for a CSP

To be eligible for a CSP, a pupil must meet all the following criteria:

- a local authority must be responsible for their education
- they must need support due to 'complex or multiple factors' that negatively and significantly affect their education
- they have needs that will, or are likely to, last for more than a year
- they must need 'significant additional support' from education **and** from another department of the local authority (such as social work) or another agency or agencies[2] to reach their educational goals.

[2] This must be one or more of: an NHS board, another local authority, Skills Development Scotland, or a further or higher education institution.

Our factsheet on Co-ordinated support plans explains in detail what these criteria mean in practice.

Because a CSP is a legal document, there are legal deadlines that local authorities must meet for things like assessing whether your child needs a CSP, putting one in place, and then keeping it under review. You also have the right to formally appeal against any decisions about a CSP, and any failure by the local authority to provide the support written into your child's CSP. The Additional Support Needs Tribunal hears these appeals. You can find out more about the tribunal in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

Requesting a CSP

You have the right to ask your local authority to assess your child for a CSP.

If you think your child may be eligible for a CSP, you can make a request to the local authority directly, or you can go through your child's school or nursery. If your child is aged 12-15, they may also be able to request a CSP. Find out more about how your child can use this right in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

If your child is over 16, they can make the request themselves. If they are not able to understand how to do this, you can make the request on their behalf.

Our factsheet on Co-ordinated support plans explains how to ask the local authority to assess your child for a CSP, what happens after you have made the request, the timescales involved, and what to do next if you disagree with any decisions about a CSP.

Case study

Oscar's story

Oscar is 14 and has complex healthcare needs and a learning disability. He uses a wheelchair most of the time and uses aids to stand and walk short distances. He has difficulty with eating, drinking and swallowing and has a feeding programme which is co-ordinated by a speech and language therapist. He gets support from an occupational therapist to develop his motor skills, and from a physiotherapist to help with his posture and develop his muscle strength.

When Oscar was in P5, his mum Sameera felt like she was spending all her time passing information between the school and all the different health professionals involved. No-one seemed to know what the others were working on, and while Oscar had a healthcare plan which covered some arrangements, and an additional support plan that set some learning goals, things did not feel joined up.

Sameera spoke about her concerns to the head teacher, who agreed to make some changes and said they would look into setting up a co-ordinated support plan (CSP). However, after a month, Sameera had not heard anything more about this. She decided to make a request directly to the local authority to ask them to assess Oscar for a CSP.

It took a few months for the CSP to be agreed to and drawn up, especially as Sameera had put her request in just before the school holidays. In the meantime, Sameera met with the head teacher a few more times to agree some changes to Oscar's support and update his healthcare plan. Once the CSP was in place, Sameera began to feel like everyone had a better understanding of Oscar's needs and how their separate roles contributed to supporting him. Having the CSP also helped with planning Oscar's move to high school.

Delivering your child's support

Once the local authority has identified that your child needs additional support for learning, assessed your child's particular needs and planned their support, they have a duty to provide them with 'adequate and efficient' additional support that helps them do the best they can.

What this support will look like will be different for each child, as it will depend on their individual needs. Here are some examples of the types of support that a school, nursery or local authority might offer:

Adapting the curriculum:

- revisiting earlier stages of the curriculum with pupils who take a bit more time to learn
- offering a more able pupil access to more advanced parts of the curriculum
- breaking down instructions into smaller chunks to help a pupil understand and process what they need to do.

Teachers taking advice from a specialist:

- an educational psychologist can recommend support strategies for a pupil's class teacher to follow
- a behaviour support teacher can draw up a behaviour management programme for class teachers to use if a pupil has difficulties regulating their behaviour at times.

Providing support from a classroom or pupil support assistant who can:

- help a pupil understand instructions given by the class teacher
- check in with a pupil throughout the lesson, helping them stay on task.

Giving pupils access to additional resources and materials:

- giving a pupil use of a tablet device with communication apps that can help them communicate with teachers and other pupils
- giving a pupil access to a laptop to support them to take notes independently, for example if they have difficulty holding a pen or with handwriting.

Making adaptions to the school or nursery environment:

- putting up clear signs around the building to help a pupil with a visual impairment to find their way around
- reducing the volume of the school bell or announcement system to take account of a pupil's sensory needs.

Individual or small-group teaching:

- having a learning support teacher work one-to-one with a pupil for 15 minutes each morning to develop their literacy skills
- arranging for a pupil to work in a smaller group to help them develop their social interaction skills without becoming overwhelmed by large group-based activities.

Giving access to a nurture or support base:

- using coping strategies like a time-out card that allows a pupil to leave a classroom and go to a safe space to calm down if they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed
- attending a support base full- or part-time where a pupil can get a more focused and flexible support package that is not possible in a mainstream classroom.

Bringing in support from a visiting teacher:

- having a visiting English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher come and work with a pupil if English is not their first language
- having a specialist teacher visit and work with a pupil with a hearing impairment and suggest some strategies for their teachers to take forward.

Providing peer support:

- linking a pupil up with another pupil as part of a 'buddy' scheme to help support their social and emotional development
- having an older pupil meet with a pupil for paired reading to help develop their reading skills and confidence.

Having a therapist work with individual pupils:

- working with a speech and language therapist to develop and demonstrate strategies and supports for a pupil's language development that their teachers can use
- having a physiotherapist help a pupil to do exercises during the day to encourage their mobility and independence.

Placing a pupil in a special unit, school or nursery:

- placing a pupil in a special unit that is part of a wider mainstream school where a pupil can get more focused and flexible support than is available in the wider school
- placing a pupil with complex support needs in a special school or nursery, either full- or part-time, that is better suited to providing them with specialist support to meet their complex support needs.

You may have ideas about what kind of support would most help your child. You can share information with the school or nursery about what works at home or in other settings and agree together on plans for supporting your child's learning. The school or nursery must listen to your views and take account of any advice or information you give them when they are making decisions about your child's support.

Trips and extra-curricular activities

Your child's school or nursery should take account of your child's needs when planning outings or activities. Depending on your child's needs, the school or nursery may need to carry out risk assessments to make sure adequate support is in place. Staff should also consider what the procedures will be if an emergency occurs while your child is taking part in an activity or outing.

If your child is disabled, the school or nursery has a duty to plan in advance to make sure that your child will have the same opportunities to be involved in all aspects of school or nursery life as non-disabled pupils, including any trips or extra-curricular activities.

Transport to and from school

Under the law, local authorities are responsible for making the arrangements they consider necessary to provide free transport to school for pupils living in their area.

The law also allows local authorities to provide free transport even when they do not have a legal duty to do so. This means that different local authorities have different policies about providing free transport. You can contact the local authority to find out about their policy, and whether your child is entitled to free transport to school.

The law on transport to school and nursery is complicated. You can find out more in our factsheet on Transport to school or contact our helpline on **0345 123 2303** for advice about your child's situation.

Exams

If your child needs extra help to be able to demonstrate their learning in exams and national assessments, the school should make adjustments or provide support for them.

It is best to start by speaking to the school about the support or adjustments you think your child might need. For in-class tests and ongoing internal assessments at school, the school is responsible for giving your child the help they need. For national assessments and exams set by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA), the school and the SQA both have responsibilities, but the school will need to ask the SQA to approve the arrangements that it thinks your child needs.

There are many kinds of adjustments that the school can make, including giving your child extra time to sit a test or an exam, allowing your child to do an exam in a separate room, providing an exam paper in a digital or other accessible format, or providing a prompter or scribe. The adjustments the school makes will depend on your child's individual needs and on the kinds of skills and knowledge that are being assessed.

Finding the right school for your child

An essential part of providing the right support for your child is finding the right place for them to learn.

You can find information about nursery placements in our factsheet on Additional support for learning in the early years.

Once they reach school age, most pupils will attend their local mainstream school. However, the local authority should base their decision about which school your child should attend on your child's specific needs, the support they need to help them fully benefit from their education, and where this can be provided. They should take account of your and your child's views (bearing in mind your child's age and maturity) and any other professionals involved in supporting your child's learning.

Decisions should be made in good time so that your child's move into a new school can be planned well in advance. As part of the transition planning process, you and the professionals working with your child should discuss whether you think your child's needs can be met at their local mainstream school, and if not, what other options there are locally.

The professionals who work closely with you and your child will be able to give you advice and help make sure the right arrangements are made for your child.

How school placements are made

Every mainstream Scottish school has a 'catchment area' fixed by the local authority. Pupils who live in the catchment area for a school will normally attend that school — known as the 'catchment school'. Most pupils with additional support needs will attend their catchment school. The local authority for where you live is responsible for making sure that your child either has the support they need to attend their catchment school, or is offered a place at a different school.

In most local authorities, there are panels of people that make decisions about school placements for children with additional support needs. If the local mainstream school would not be suitable for your child, then usually someone working with your child, like someone from their nursery or school, or an educational psychologist, will refer your child to one of

these panels. You should get the opportunity to contribute your views (for example, by sending in a written statement), but parents do not usually attend these panel meetings. The local authority should then let you know what school placement they will offer your child.

If you think your child needs a place at a school other than their catchment school, speak to your child's health visitor if your child is in nursery, or the person responsible for additional support for learning if your child is in school.

If you do not agree with the school your child has been placed in, you should start by raising your concerns with the local authority. If you are not able to reach an agreement with them, you have the right to make a 'placing request' to a school of your choice. See '**Placing requests**' later in this section for more about this.

Choosing a school

If you have a child with additional support needs, you may want extra information and help with choosing the school you would like your child to attend. Choosing the right school can seem difficult, so it is important to take time to think about all the available options. You should feel confident that your child will be going to a school that can meet their needs, and where you can discuss their progress with school staff.

The people supporting your child should help you understand the options available for your child, and which schools might be best for them.

It is important that you and your child feel involved in the decision-making and that your views are listened to. The people helping you plan for starting or moving schools may arrange for you to visit schools that may meet your child's needs. You can also ask schools directly whether you and your child can visit, have a virtual tour and/or speak to staff.

Depending on your child's needs, you may be particularly interested in one aspect of the school but try to get a feel for the whole school. As well as access to a good education, it is also important to find out about other opportunities your child will have, for example to make friends or get involved in new activities.

You can find more information, including advice on what to think about when visiting a school, in our factsheet on School placements.

Placing requests

A placing request is a formal, recordable request you can make to a local authority for a place for your child in a school that is not their catchment school, or the school recommended by the local authority.

Most placing requests are made for pupils starting primary school or high school. But you can make a placing request at any time during your child's school education, including to a nursery.

Young people aged 16 or over can also make their own placing requests.

You can make a placing request for your child to attend:

- a school or nursery in Scotland that is run by a local authority
- an independent nursery in Scotland that is working in partnership with a local authority to deliver funded hours of early learning and childcare
- an independent or grant-aided special school in Scotland
- a school in England, Wales, Northern Ireland or outwith the UK that provides support wholly or mainly for pupils with additional support needs.

Support bases or units which are attached to mainstream schools come under the legal definition of a special school, if they cater wholly or mainly for pupils with additional support needs. This means that you can make a placing request for a place at a support base or unit for your child.

Before making a placing request to an independent or grant-aided special school, or a school outwith Scotland, you must check that the school managers are willing to admit your child. You cannot make a placing request to an independent or grant-aided school that is not a special school.

Transport

It is important to know that if you make a successful placing request to a school run by a local authority, the local authority will not have a duty to provide transport for your child to attend the school, even if it is further away than walking distance.

However, if the school you have applied for is the only one that can meet your child's needs, your local authority should consider whether refusing to provide transport would lead to them not providing your child with the support they need to get the best from their school education.

If the school is a grant-aided or independent special school, the local authority must pay all the costs of the placement, including transport to the school if this is needed.

You should always discuss transport with your local authority before making a placing request.

The local authority's decision

If you want your child to start at the school at the beginning of the next school year in August, and you apply by 15 March that year, you should get a decision by 30 April.

Different local authorities may set their own deadlines for placing requests. You should find out as soon as possible what the deadline is for the local authority you want to make a request to. This information is often available on the local authority website, or you can contact the local authority to ask about this.

If you want your child to move to a different school in the middle of a school year, or if you make your request after 15 March, the local authority has two months to decide (though you may get an answer sooner).

If the local authority accepts your request, you will be able to start making arrangements for your child to move into the school.

If your placing request is refused, the local authority must explain why. You have a right to formally appeal the decision if you disagree with it. Your appeal would either go to the local authority's education appeal committee or the Additional Support Needs Tribunal depending on the type of school you requested, and other factors like whether your child has a co-ordinated support plan.

Our factsheet on School placements explains in detail how to make a placing request, what happens after you have made the request, and more about appealing refused requests.

Planning for starting, moving and leaving school

The local authority has a duty to plan for your child starting, moving and leaving school.

Your child will have changes throughout their education, as they enter nursery, then move through primary, secondary and on to preparing for adulthood. Some children may also move schools at other times, perhaps if they move home or need different support.

For any change in your child's education, everyone working with you and your child should make sure they pass information about their needs on to their next school and that your child is supported to manage the transition.

Starting nursery or primary school and moving to high school

When your child is due to start nursery or primary school, or move to high school, it is important that everyone involved in supporting them works together to help make sure the move is as smooth as possible. This is often called 'transition planning'.

Transition planning should start early to make sure that:

- they have a place at a school or nursery where their support needs can be met
- the support your child will need is identified and in place ready for when they start
- they have time to prepare for the move.

There are legal timescales that set out when local authorities must take certain actions to help plan for children with additional support needs starting nursery or primary or moving to high school. This is to make sure that information is passed on about your child's needs in good time, so that support will be in place for them when they start. It also helps everyone support your child to prepare for the change.

For starting nursery, local authorities must:

- gather the information and advice about your child's needs that you and the professionals that work with them can provide **no later than six months before your child is due to start nursery**
- provide information about your child's needs (with your consent) to the people who will be supporting your child at nursery **no later than three months before they are due to start nursery**
- send a copy of this information to you.

For starting primary school or moving to high school, local authorities must:

- gather the information and advice about your child's needs that you and the professionals that work with them can provide **no later than 12 months before your child is due to start their new school**
- provide information about your child's needs (with your consent) to the people who will be supporting your child **no later than six months before they are due to start their new school**
- send a copy of this information to you.

Local authorities have some discretion over which children these duties apply to. For example, if your child has very short-term support needs, this amount of planning may not be necessary.

The transition planning should be co-ordinated by one person. This could be someone at your child's nursery or school, or another professional that works closely with them, such as a social worker.

Some children will have an 'enhanced transition' to start or move school. This usually means extra visits to their new school before they start so they can meet some of the staff and become familiar with the environment. It usually also involves opportunities for you to have joint meetings with staff from your child's current placement, their new school, and any other professionals that work with them so that you can work out together the support your child will need.

If you do not think your child is ready to start primary school at the usual stage, and should wait another year before starting school, you should discuss this with your child's nursery and the local authority. This is usually called a 'deferred year'. Find out more about this in our factsheet on Additional support for learning in the early years.

Changes in support

For all children, starting primary school or moving to high school will be a big change. It is likely that their school will be a different environment to what they are used to, with new staff and pupils to get to know.

The change can mean your child may need different support to what they previously had. There can also be changes to how your child's support is planned and delivered. Planning in advance for the move should mean that you and your child will have a good idea of what their support will look like at their new school before they start.

The support your child gets should be kept under review, so if any unforeseen issues come up after they start at the school, changes can still be made to their support. It may be that your child will not need all the support that had been planned once they have had time to settle in, or they might find certain aspects of school more difficult than expected. You can speak to the school in advance about what arrangements there will be for monitoring how your child is getting on and how you will be kept up to date with their progress.

Case study

Archie's story

Archie is 11 years old and has autism. He currently attends his local primary school, where he loves art and music. He has a written support plan that is reviewed once a term that sets out things Archie finds challenging, the support his primary school offers him, and some targets he is working towards. Both Archie and his foster carer are worried about his move up to high school next year. Archie finds changes to his routine challenging, and he is worried about going to a bigger school, in particular having to move between different classrooms and teachers throughout the school day.

Archie's foster carer asks for a meeting with his primary school to discuss their worries. Archie comes along to the meeting too. His primary school feels that with the right support, Archie will get on well at his local high school and will like getting to move to the same school as his friends from primary school. His primary school agrees to share Archie's support plan with the high school, and they organise a transition meeting that Archie, his carer, his current class teacher and the new high school's guidance teacher attend. At this meeting they organise an enhanced transition so Archie can visit the high school a few times to get used to the environment. He is particularly looking forward to seeing the art department he has been told so much about.

In further meetings, Archie's support plan is reviewed and the support he will need at high school is added into the plan. For example, Archie will be allowed to leave his classes a few minutes before the bell, so he can get to his next classroom before the corridors become really busy. He is also going to have a weekly check-in with his new guidance teacher for the first month.

School moves at other times

If your child needs to move school at other times, for example if you move home or they need different support, this should also be planned in advance as much as possible.

If you or your child will be moving into a different local authority area, contact the person responsible for additional support for learning at the local authority as soon as you know you will be moving. They can help by telling you whether there are places at the new catchment school, and also tell you about the specialist provisions in the area if your child may need this.

Helping your child plan for leaving school

Your child has the right to leave school from the age of 16. Planning for leaving school should start as early as possible to give your child and the people working to support them plenty of time to consider the options available to them. For example, they may wish to continue their studies at college or university, start work or an apprenticeship or take up other training opportunities. The Scottish Government has made a commitment to offer an appropriate place in post-16 learning to every young person who wants it.

You and your child should be fully involved at every stage of transition planning. The school and local authority must take your child's views into account. If your child is not able to understand the situation or make an informed decision themselves, the school, local authority and other agencies must work with you to plan your child's transition to adult life.

Transition planning may include:

- meetings between the school, you and your child to discuss the options open to them
- advice and guidance from Skills Development Scotland
- work experience or visits to colleges or universities

- multi-agency meetings involving the school and relevant professionals who can provide advice and support such as an educational psychologist or social work
- organising phased entry to college for one or two days a week, while continuing at school the rest of the week
- developing skills needed for life after school, such as managing money or learning to travel independently.

Timescales for leaving school

If your child turns 16 between 1 March and 30 September, they can leave school after 31 May of that year. If they turn 16 between 1 October and the end of February, they can leave at the start of the Christmas holidays in that school year.

The local authority has a duty to plan in advance for your child leaving school. They must gather information about the support your child receives and is likely to need when they leave school from people working to support your child (for example, health professionals or social workers). They should do this at least 12 months before your child is due to leave school.

No later than six months before your child plans to leave school, the school or local authority must pass relevant information about your child's support needs to the agencies that will support them in their adult life.

The local authority or school can only share this information with either:

- your child's consent, or
- your consent, if your child is not able to make an informed decision.

There should be one person who co-ordinates the planning. This will often be someone at your child's school but could also be another professional such as a social worker if they play, or are likely to play, a big part in supporting your child.

If you or your child feel that the local authority has not followed post-school planning procedures, you have the right to take this to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Find out more about the tribunal in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

Preparing your child for leaving school

The following steps are examples of support that may make your child's progression beyond school as smooth as possible:

- Make sure that the local authority is involving you and your child in decisions that will affect them and is taking both your views seriously. If you have questions or concerns, speak to the person with lead responsibility for support for learning at the school.
- Make full use of the services provided by Skills Development Scotland and your child's careers adviser. Skills Development Scotland can provide a wealth of information on post-16 employment, learning and training opportunities.
- Where appropriate, find out what benefits and services your child may be entitled to. You can contact your local social work department, benefits office or Self Directed Support Scotland for more information. Your local Carers Centre or Citizens Advice Bureau will also be able to help.
- Consider what medical, psychological, teaching or therapeutic services your child may need when they leave school and how they can access them.
- Find out about the range of support available from voluntary organisations in your area.
- Consider what social support, if any, your family may need. For example, do you get enough breaks from caring? Does your child have enough leisure and social opportunities? What about their siblings or other family members, do they need support? Your local social work department or voluntary organisations should be able to give you advice on this.

You can find lots more advice and information about preparing for leaving school on Contact's Talking about Tomorrow website: **www.talkingabouttomorrow.org.uk**

If your child is disabled, you can also find out more about the support available for them to continue learning after they leave school from Lead Scotland: **www.lead.org.uk**, **0800 999 2568**.

The law at a glance

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

- The local authority must provide additional support to children under three who need support because they are disabled **section 5(3)**
- The local authority must make arrangements to identify:
  - which children and young people have additional support needs **section 6 (1)(a)(i)**
  - which children and young people need a co-ordinated support plan **section 6 (1)(a)(ii)**
  - the particular support needs of those children **section 6(1)(b)**
- You, and your child if they are aged 12 or over, have the right to request:
  - an assessment of whether your child has additional support needs **section 6(2)(a)**
  - an assessment of whether your child needs a co-ordinated support plan **section 6 2(a)(b)**
  - a specific assessment or examination of your child's support needs **section 8A**
- The local authority must prepare co-ordinated support plans for pupils who meet the criteria **section 9**
- The local authority must provide 'adequate and efficient' support for pupils with additional support needs and keep their support under review **section 4**
- You, and your child if they are aged 16 or over, have the right to make a placing request to a particular school or nursery and the local authority must comply, unless certain exceptions apply **schedule 2**
- The local authority must meet certain timescales and take certain actions when planning for a young person leaving school **section 12(5-6)**, **section 13(1-5)**

The Additional Support for Learning (Changes in School Education) (Scotland) Regulations 2005

- The local authority must meet certain timescales and take certain actions when planning for a child starting nursery, starting primary school, and moving to high school.

Attendance and exclusion

Attendance and exclusion

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Introduction

This section explains your responsibilities to make sure your child attends school, and what happens when your child is absent from school. We will explain when a school can exclude a pupil and what the law says about this. Finally, we will set out what support your child should receive to continue learning when they are out of school, and how the school should support them to return after an absence or exclusion.

If your child is at nursery and is struggling to attend or has been excluded, you can find information in our factsheet on Additional support for learning in the early years. You can also contact our helpline for advice.

School attendance and absence

The law says that you must make sure your child attends school regularly while they are of 'school age', which is from age five until they turn 16. Your child must not be absent from school without a 'reasonable excuse'.

If your child is not able to attend school or is finding it difficult to go in, the school should work together with you and any other professionals who support your child to work out how you and they can help your child get the best from their education.

There are many reasons why it might be difficult for a pupil with additional support needs to attend school.

Some of the reasons that can lead to a pupil finding it difficult to attend include:

- ill health
- problems at school
- looking after another family member who is ill or needs help
- other things going on at home that prevent them attending school.

Often there is more than one reason, or one reason may lead to another. For example, if a pupil is feeling anxious about school, this may lead them to feel too unwell to attend.

Missing a lot of time from school can also lead to a pupil needing extra support, for example they may need help to catch up on work they have missed.

Whatever the reason your child is not able to attend school, or is finding it difficult to go in, it is important to speak to the school as early as possible. This can help to identify what support they need to attend regularly and get the most from school.

Ill health

If your child is not well enough to attend school, they still have a right to an education. Your child's school and the local authority must make alternative arrangements so that your child can continue learning while they are off school.

This duty will apply if your child misses school for reasons including:

- accident
- trauma
- mental health issues
- chronic long-term, life-limiting or terminal illness
- health conditions that mean regular hospital visits.

The duty to make alternative arrangements applies if your child is absent for one long period of time, or if they often miss school for shorter periods. It also applies if they are unwell or recovering at home or if they are in a hospital or hospice. It does not cover common childhood illnesses (such as chickenpox or a cold) where your child would be likely to return to school quickly.

Because every pupil's needs are different, there are different ways that your child might learn while they are off school. It should suit their state of health and where they are (for example, in hospital or at home).

Often your child's school will take the lead by sending work home or arranging for them to access learning online. They may also work with the local authority to arrange out-of-school education, for example through an outreach teaching team or interrupted learners' service.

If your child has been missing school due to ill health, or you know that they have treatment coming up that means they will be absent, speak to the school as soon as possible. You can talk to them about:

- arrangements for them to continue learning while they are out of school
- what support they need to be able to return to school
- what support they might need once they are back in school.

Find out more in our factsheet When your child is too unwell to attend school.

Problems at school

If your child is struggling to attend because of problems at school, it is important to inform the school as early as possible. You can explain why your child is finding it difficult to go into school. The school should work with you and your child to try and identify the reasons why your child feels unable to attend.

Problems at school might include:

- bullying or other issues with other pupils
- the school environment making them anxious
- being worried about their progress
- not getting the support they need
- teachers or other pupils not understanding their needs.

Your child has a right to get the support they need and the school should take action to reduce or remove the problems that are preventing your child from feeling able to attend school.

If your child is feeling very anxious or unhappy about school, you or your child could also speak to your child's GP to discuss whether they should be referred to other services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The GP may also be able to provide a note you can give to the school to explain your child's absences. You can also ask the school whether they have a counselling service that your child could access.

If you are concerned that the school is not providing the support that your child needs, ask for a meeting to talk through your concerns and review their support. You can find more advice about how to work with the school to solve problems with your child's support in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

Case study

Holly's story

Holly is 13 and has started to miss quite a few days from school and often comes in late. She struggles to concentrate in class and often seems disengaged to her class teachers who have been giving her repeated warnings about handing in work late and being on her phone during lessons. After a couple of weeks where Holly was barely in school at all, her guidance teacher Mrs Khan arranges to meet with Holly and also separately with her dad, Ian.

Holly finds it difficult to talk to Mrs Khan, but it is clear she is feeling very anxious and low and has not been sleeping much. When Mrs Khan talks to Ian, he shares that Holly's mum has been very ill and that Holly worries about something happening to her while she is at school. Holly has been doing a lot to help out her mum at home, as Ian has to travel for work.

Mrs Khan offers to arrange for Holly to speak to the school counsellor once a week for a while, and to put her in touch with the local young carers service. Holly asks Mrs Khan to speak to her class teachers so that they understand the reasons why she has not been concentrating in class and handing in her work late. Ian also agrees to seek support from the local carers centre for extra help at home.

As a result, Holly is given extensions for her current assignments and is allowed to check her phone once each lesson to make sure she doesn't miss important messages from her mum. For the short-term, the school agrees to a flexible part-time timetable and to send work home for Holly to complete for the lessons she misses. Some of her teachers for her core subjects arrange extra sessions to help her catch up on work she has missed.

Home circumstances

If circumstances at home are making it difficult for your child to attend school, it is important that you explain to the school how the situation might be affecting your child. Your child still has a right to an education, and they should be able to access help to continue learning at home when they cannot physically attend school.

The school can also arrange support for your child when they are at school and tell you and your child about other services they might be able to access. For example, if your child is helping to look after another family member at home, the school may be able to refer them to the local young carers service.

Part-time education

There may be some circumstances when school staff or another professional suggest that your child moves on to a part-time timetable. For example, if they are returning to school after a period of illness or exclusion, or if some time is needed to put in place the support they need.

Any period of part-time education should be short-term. Your child should only be on a part-time timetable if you agree to it. Any plans for part-time education should be based on what is in your child's best interests, with their wellbeing at the centre of the decision.

Part-time education should not be used on a long-term basis or as a way of managing your child's support needs. Your child's school should have a plan for helping them return to full-time education as soon as they can.

While your child is on a part-time timetable, they continue to have the same right to an education as the other pupils in their school. Professionals working with your child should explore ways for them to continue learning when they are not physically attending school.

If your child has been on a part-time timetable for some time or you are unhappy with the arrangement, contact the school to discuss how they can help your child back to full-time education. If you are not satisfied with the response, there are further steps you can take. Find out more in the **Working with the school and solving problems** section of this guide.

Unauthorised absences

If your child is absent from school without a 'reasonable excuse', the school will mark the absence as 'unauthorised' on their recording system. If your child is regularly marked as having 'unauthorised absences', the local authority could take action against you. As you have a legal duty to make sure your child attends school regularly, you may be guilty of an offence if this does not happen.

Before taking any formal steps against you, the school and local authority should work with you to try and identify the reasons why your child has not been at school and to provide any support that is needed to help them attend.

Find out more about the steps a local authority may take in our factsheet on School attendance.

Exclusion from school

Exclusion is when a school sends a pupil home from school and does not allow them to return for a certain number of days.

Schools must keep a record of all exclusions and must follow a set of procedures when they exclude a pupil.

Schools should only exclude a pupil as a last resort and when there is no suitable alternative. The exclusion should be for as short a period as possible and the school must keep the pupil's wellbeing at the centre of decisions they make.

Schools should focus on preventing exclusion by encouraging positive relationships and behaviour in schools. They should identify issues that might lead to exclusions and address them as early as possible.

If a school permanently excludes a pupil, this means their name will be removed from the school register and they will not be allowed to return to that school at all. This is rare in Scotland and if it happens, the local authority is responsible for finding the pupil a place at another school as soon as possible.

Can my child's school exclude them if they have additional support needs?

There are two circumstances when a school can exclude a pupil:

- when the school thinks order and discipline in the school and the education of other pupils will be badly affected if the pupil continues to attend
- when the school thinks that a pupil's parent(s) did not follow school rules or have allowed their child to break school rules, or, if the pupil is aged over 16, when the school thinks they themselves broke the school rules.

These reasons apply to all pupils. However, a school should take great care when deciding to exclude a pupil with additional support needs and consider the impact of the exclusion on their wellbeing.

The school has to make sure that by excluding a disabled pupil it is not discriminating against them. Schools must also take particular care when considering and managing the exclusion of care experienced children and young people, and others who have experienced or are experiencing difficult life circumstances.

What happens when a pupil is excluded

There are certain procedures that the school must follow if they decide to exclude your child. This includes contacting you on the day your child is excluded to arrange a meeting to discuss the exclusion. The meeting must take place within seven days after the exclusion. The school must also write to you to tell you:

- why your child was excluded
- any conditions that must be met before your child can return to school
- about the right to appeal the exclusion.

You and the school should use the time during and after the exclusion to resolve the situation and make sure the right support is in place for your child. During the exclusion, the school must continue to provide your child with an education and give them the additional support they need.

If you disagree with your child's exclusion, you have a right to appeal the decision to the local authority's education appeal committee. If your appeal is successful, the school must remove the details of the exclusion from your child's school records.

You can find more information in our factsheet on Exclusion from school.

Unlawful exclusions

Sometimes schools may ask parents or carers to collect their child from school early, using reasons such as:

- informal exclusion
- cooling-off period
- saying the pupil cannot cope with a full day.

These are all types of exclusion, so the school should be following the exclusion procedures described above. If schools do not record these exclusions and follow the proper procedures, they might be regarded as 'unlawful exclusions'. The school must not send your child home as a way of managing their additional support needs.

If you think your child has been excluded and the school has not followed the correct procedures, you can ask the school why your child was sent home and ask for the proper procedures to be followed. You can discuss other strategies that could be tried for your child, as it is also likely to be a sign that your child needs more or different support at school. It may be useful to ask for a copy of the school's and local authority's policies on exclusion.

Case study

Jamie's story

Jamie is seven years old and has a sensory processing disorder. He finds the classroom environment overwhelming sometimes, particularly when there are large group-based activities where everything is louder and busier. This can lead to him feeling distressed and shouting and hitting out at other children and the classroom assistant.

School regularly phones Jamie's mum, Kirsty, when this happens to explain that he is not coping and ask if she can come in to calm him down and take him home. After seeking advice, Kirsty learns that it is unlawful for the school to send Jamie home without formally excluding him. She asks for a meeting with the head teacher, Jamie's class teacher and the educational psychologist to talk things through.

At the meeting, Kirsty raises her concerns about the school phoning her so often and asks if they can review Jamie's support to prevent the need to do this in future. Kirsty shares information about what she does at home to help Jamie feel safe, and to calm things down before he has a meltdown. The educational psychologist suggests that the teacher tries having the class working in smaller groups when possible and that the whole class does some work around awareness of managing noise levels to help each other. The class teacher says that they will set up a quieter space for him at the back of the classroom for him to go to when he is struggling.

The head teacher suggests that they add these strategies into Jamie's learning support plan and review how things are going at another meeting in six weeks' time.

Returning to school after an absence or exclusion

If your child has missed a lot of time from school, or their needs have changed as a result their absence, the school should work with you and your child to agree:

- the support they will need to help them return to school
- the help they will need once they are back in school.

For example, if your child will need to take medication or have other medical treatment given or managed in school, the school should work with you and relevant health professionals to put a healthcare plan in place for them. Find out more in our factsheet on Supporting pupils with healthcare needs.

If your child's support needs have changed as a result of their absence, you can ask for a review of their learning support plan. If they do not have a plan in place, you may want to ask the school to open one.

The law at a glance

Education (Scotland) Act 1980

- You must provide your child with an 'efficient' education that is suited to their age, ability and aptitude, either by sending them to a local authority school regularly or by other means **section 30**
- If your child attends a local authority school, your child must not be absent from school without a 'reasonable excuse' **section 35**
- If your child is absent from school due to ill health, the local authority must make alternative arrangements for their education **section 14(1)(b)**
- If your child is excluded from school, the local authority must make alternative arrangements for their education **section 14(3)**
- If your child is excluded from school, you have the right to appeal the decision **section 28H**

Schools General (Scotland) Regulations 1975

- There are two circumstances when a school can exclude your child **regulation 4**
- Schools must follow certain procedures when they exclude a pupil **regulation 4A**

Equality Act 2010

- The local authority and school must not exclude your child for a reason directly linked to a protected characteristic, such as disability **section 85(2)(e)** and **(5)(e)**

Working with the school and solving problems

Working with the school and solving problems

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Introduction

This section will focus on how you and your child can expect to be involved in their education. We will explain how the school, nursery and local authority should involve your child in decisions. We will provide advice about how to build positive relationships with the people supporting your child and explain what you can do if you have any concerns or worries.

Involving your child in decisions

The school, nursery or local authority should involve your child when making any decisions about the support they need. This will often happen in a fairly informal way. For example, staff should encourage your child to contribute to any learning support plans they have. Your child is also likely to be involved during the normal school day in setting goals and discussing and reviewing their progress. Involving your child can start at an early age in nursery, where staff can ask for and listen to your child's views about their support.

There are certain times when the local authority must seek and take account of your child's views. These include when they are:

- assessing whether they have additional support needs
- deciding or reviewing what additional support they should receive
- deciding or reviewing whether they need a co-ordinated support plan (CSP)
- preparing a CSP for them
- deciding what agencies may work with your child after they leave school, and what information to share with those agencies.

Your child's ability to share their views

Nurseries and schools should build children's confidence in this area during day-to-day activities from an early age by:

- asking for their views
- listening to them
- allowing them to make choices.

You can help your child become more confident about sharing their views by encouraging them to express how they feel and involving them in making decisions. It may also be useful if you discuss your child's additional support needs with them. You and the staff who support your child can work with your child to help them to understand their own needs better, and how their support might help them.

Expressing views can be easier for some children than others. However, there are very few children who cannot express any view at all. Some may simply need encouragement and the right support to do so.

The following examples show how people working with children can help them express their views:

- a child whose first language is not English may need an interpreter, not only to help them communicate their views, but also to help make sure they fully understand the issues being discussed
- a child who has a hearing impairment may require visual aids or sign language (or both) for the same reason
- a child who finds it difficult to concentrate and process information may need imaginative approaches such as play, or the use of art.

How your child's views will be noted and considered

The staff working with your child will seek your child's views and record them. If your child has difficulty expressing a view, they will try to help. This may be by recording what your child expressed, whether this was by speaking, writing, signing, making a video, or even a facial expression or adopting a certain body posture. They will also record how they have interpreted this.

You can also help your child say what they think and feel by encouraging them to tell you, to write down their thoughts and feelings, record them, or use other means, such as drawing pictures. You can then share their views with the school, nursery or local authority.

When listening to your child's views, the school, nursery or local authority will consider things such as:

- your child's ability to understand the information that they were giving their views on
- your child's ability to express their views
- your child's understanding of other options
- how well those who record and interpret your child's views know your child.

The school, nursery or local authority will also consider what is appropriate and realistic for your child. They may not be able to fulfil all your child's wishes but if they cannot, they should explain why.

If your child is unable to express their views

People should not assume that your child cannot express their views without first checking whether a different method of communication would enable them to do so.

They should also be aware that your child may still have a view on something, even if they are unable to express their view about it. The people who work closely with your child should use their (and your) knowledge of your child to consider what their view might be.

Even if your child is unable to express a view about one thing, they may be able express a view on something else, so it is important to consider your child's views each time a decision is being made about their support.

If your child is unable to express their view on a particular issue, this is called 'lacking capacity'. In some cases, the local authority might decide that your child lacks capacity to express their views or take certain actions. In these situations, you can speak and act for your child.

Children aged 12-15

As with all children, children aged 12-15 should be involved in decisions by the people working with them on an ongoing basis.

Children aged 12-15 who have additional support needs also have many of the same rights to be involved in decisions and take certain actions as parents, carers and young people (aged 16 and over) have. We have mentioned throughout this guide when your child may have the same right as you to do or ask for something — for example, to ask for assessments of their additional support needs.

These rights can be particularly helpful for children whose parents may not be able to act on their behalf, like some care experienced children or young carers.

If your child wants to use one of their specific rights, such as asking the local authority to assess whether they need a co-ordinated support plan, they must tell their school or local authority. They need to do this in writing or in another way that can be kept for future reference.

You can help them with this, and they can also get help from a service called My Rights, My Say. This service is a partnership between Enquire, Partners in Advocacy, Children in Scotland and Cairn Legal that provides:

- advice and information about children's rights
- advocacy to support children to use their rights
- support to professionals to help them gather children's views and make sure they are heard in formal processes (such as placing requests)
- legal representation to support children making a reference to the Tribunal.

You can find out more about My Rights, My Say and how to contact the service at **www.myrightsmysay.scot**

Capacity and wellbeing assessments

Each time your child asks to use one of their specific rights, the local authority must check that your child has the maturity and understanding (the 'capacity') to use that right.

The local authority must also make sure that using that right would not negatively affect your child's wellbeing.

In most cases your child's teacher, or another professional who knows them well, will be able to assess their capacity to use a specific right and understand the impact using that right may have on their wellbeing. If they are in any doubt, they may ask for advice from other local authority staff (such as an educational psychologist).

My Rights, My Say can help the people working with your child to gather their views. Find out more at **www.myrightsmysay.scot**

Your child's school or local authority should make any decisions about your child's capacity and wellbeing as quickly as possible. The school or local authority must let you and your child know the decision.

If you or your child disagree with the decision about their capacity or the impact on their wellbeing, either of you can appeal (called 'making a reference') to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. Find out more about the tribunal in our factsheet on The Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

Find out more about your child's rights in our factsheet on the Rights of children aged 12-15.

Case study

Mohammed's story

Mohammed is 12 and has recently started high school. He has lived with his grandmother as a result of a kinship care order since he was eight. Mohammed is struggling to cope with the move to high school and is feeling overwhelmed in the new environment. He moved schools several times in the first few years of primary but had been feeling settled at his last primary school. He is now finding the change and all the new people to meet very difficult. He has a stammer and feels like other pupils are making fun of him and as a result he is becoming increasingly withdrawn at school.

He has tried to speak to one of his class teachers and his guidance teacher, Mr Harris, but does not feel they have listened to his concerns. His grandmother wants to help but does not feel confident about speaking English. She is also nervous about having meetings with school. Mohammed learns about his right to have an advocate to help him speak to school and contacts the My Rights, My Say service to ask for help.

Mohammed's advocate meets with him and learns about the things he is struggling with. They help him to write down the things he is finding difficult and share this with Mr Harris. Mr Harris arranges a meeting with Mohammed and his advocate where they discuss what might help Mohammed feel better about school. They agree that Mohammed should have a 'time out' card to go and spend time in the school's support base when he is feeling overwhelmed. Mr Harris suggests some lunch and after school clubs that Mohammed could join to help him meet new friends. They agree that Mohammed will meet with Mr Harris at the start and end of each week for a while to check in and see how he is getting on. Mohammed's advocate also helps him to share information with all his teachers about his stammer and how he feels other pupils are laughing at him, so they can keep a close eye on this and support him when he needs it.

Building positive relationships with your child's school or nursery

Evidence shows that when parents are involved in their child's education, children do much better at school.

You will play a vital role throughout your child's education. You have unique and expert knowledge of your child and you should be involved in decisions and discussions about their additional support.

Being able to take an active and positive role in your child's education will also depend a lot on your relationship with your child's school or nursery and the staff who work there.

The staff working with your child should draw upon your expertise and knowledge of your child throughout their time in education.

You have the right to:

- share your views about your child's support needs
- have your views taken into account
- take a supporter or advocate with you to meetings about your child's support.

There are certain times when the local authority **must** seek and take account of your views and any information and advice you provide. These include when they are:

- assessing whether your child has additional support needs
- deciding or reviewing what additional support your child should receive
- deciding or reviewing whether your child needs a co-ordinated support plan (CSP)
- preparing a CSP for your child.

Usually it will be staff at your child's school or nursery who will seek and take account of your views.

Knowing your rights

Understanding your and your child's rights can help you to feel more informed and confident about working together with the school or nursery. We tell you what your rights are throughout this guide and you can see a summary of them at the end of each section.

Finding out about additional support for learning in your area

The local authority must make information available about local arrangements for additional support for learning. They must be able to provide you with information about:

- their arrangements for identifying children and young people who have additional support needs, finding out what those needs are, and making sure those needs are met
- the role of parents, children and young people in these arrangements
- their arrangements for resolving disagreements about additional support for learning
- the person you can contact for more information or advice about additional support for learning
- other services that you can get further advice, information and support from.

A summary of this information must be available:

- on your local authority's website
- in the handbook for child's school or nursery
- on request from your child's school or nursery.

This information can help you understand how things work in your local area, for example what types of support plans they use and who you can contact if you need advice. This can help you feel more informed when going into meetings and sharing your views about your child's support.

If you feel that you need some help getting your views across, you can ask others to help.

Supporters and advocates

You have the right to take a supporter or advocate along to meetings about your child's additional support. Supporters and advocates can also help you in other ways, such as helping you to write letters or prepare what you want to say in a meeting.

If your child is aged 12 or over, they also have a right to have a supporter or advocate at meetings, but all children should have the support they need to give their views.

A supporter can be a family member, friend, partner, or anyone else who you would like to support you. It can also be someone from a voluntary service or another professional supporting your family — if supporting you would not conflict with any of their professional duties.

A supporter can attend meetings with you, take notes, and give you moral support and advice.

An advocate can be someone from an advocacy organisation or anyone else that you would like to speak on your behalf. An advocate can wholly or partly communicate on your behalf, both in meetings and in other ways.

We can provide contact details of local support or advocacy organisations. You can contact the helpline on **0345 123 2303** or email us at **info@enquire.org.uk**.

Sharing your views

The school, nursery or local authority must ask for your views about your child's needs and the support that will help them to get the most out of their education. This might be during a meeting or they may ask you to provide written comments on your child's support plan. If you find it difficult to know what to say, here are some things you might think about:

- Are the right people involved, in the right ways, in helping your child?
- Have you noticed anything that shows that your child is making progress, or not making progress?
- Is there anything that is working really well, or that has worked well in the past?

- What works well at home? For example, you could talk about your child's interests or how you manage their behaviour at home. Include anything that you think would help to build up the most accurate picture of your child for the people working with them.
- What next steps are important to you and your child — what would they like to learn more about? What information do you need to help them achieve these next steps?
- Do you have any concerns that the school or nursery have not addressed?

Remember, you do not need to wait until reviews or meetings to raise any concerns or discuss your child's progress. You can speak to the school or nursery or write to them at any time to explain what you feel your child needs.

Communicating positively with the school or nursery

Having a good relationship with your child's school or nursery can help with getting your child the support they need. Being able to have open, honest and positive conversations with the school or nursery can help to identify and address issues early, and avoid disagreements starting.

Creating positive conversations involves two-way sharing of information. As a parent or carer you have a lot to offer. You know your child best and can help everyone else understand your child better. The staff who support your child can tell you how they are getting on and share their professional knowledge to keep you updated and give advice on their learning progress.

The following steps can help you to build and maintain positive relationships:

- prepare what you want to say in advance if there are issues you want to raise
- arrange a time to talk with the teacher or other staff member
- explain what you want to talk about so that they can prepare for the conversation
- try to stay calm and focus on what is most important for your child

- listen to other people's perspectives and be open to suggestions
- where possible, have solutions in mind and offer them for discussion
- make it clear that you want to work together with the school or nursery to solve any problems that arise.

If talking to people at the school or nursery feels difficult, you could try putting your thoughts in writing before you meet them. This can help give you time to gather your thoughts and clearly set out the things you would like to say.

Meetings

Attending meetings about your child's education and support can be a positive experience and a good opportunity to hear about the progress your child is making.

However, sometimes meetings can be difficult, especially if you need to talk about things you are feeling worried or unhappy about.

Remember that you have the right to be involved in decisions and to have your views heard and that you can take someone along with you to support you if you would find this helpful. If you have meetings by phone or video call rather than in person, you still have these same rights.

Depending on where you live and your child's needs, there might be different names for the different types of meetings you may attend. Meetings will often be just between you and the teachers that are most involved in your child's education.

If your child gets help from professionals outside their school or nursery, such as from health services or social work, you might also have joint meetings with everyone together. These can be called things like 'team around the child (TAC)' meetings or 'multi-agency' meetings. There are lots of things you can do before and during meetings to help you feel prepared and confident. On the next page are some tips that parents have given us about attending meetings.

Before the meeting:

- write down some notes about what you want to say to take in with you
- if there are specific things you want to talk about, contact the person organising the meeting in advance to let them know
- if your child is not going to attend the meeting, ask them what they would like to say to the people at the meeting
- if an important member of staff cannot attend, ask if they can put something in writing that can be shared at or before the meeting
- arrange to bring along a supporter or advocate.

During the meeting:

- ask if you could speak first at the meeting to make sure you get the opportunity to have your say
- try to start with something positive — for example, 'thank you for arranging this meeting'
- take a photo of your child with you
- keep the conversation focused on your child and what they need so they can do their best at school or nursery
- if you are not clear on what someone has said, say in your own words what you have understood, and check this with the other people at the meeting
- take your own notes or ask your supporter or advocate to do this for you
- ask for a written record of the meeting's main points or actions.

And remember:

- you are the expert on your child
- it is OK to show your emotions
- take your time to express your views
- be open to suggestions and willing to negotiate.

Communicating during difficult times

We know there are times that can be particularly difficult for children and young people with additional support needs and their families.

These include:

- when concerns are first raised that a child might have additional support needs
- waiting for assessments to take place, and when a diagnosis is received, or perhaps no diagnosis is given
- perceived changes or reductions in support
- when your child is starting and moving school
- planning for the future after leaving school.

These can be emotional times for any family, with a mixture of worries, hopes and expectations. During these times, difficulties in the relationship between home and the school or nursery can be more likely to arise due to misunderstandings or disagreements about what your child needs. It can feel harder to communicate when you are feeling worried and you want to make sure that everything possible is being done for your child.

It is important to continue to try and keep a positive relationship with the school or nursery, where you can be honest about the things that are worrying you and have open conversations to find solutions together. The school or nursery will also want what is best for your child and may have useful insights and advice that can help.

If you want to discuss how to work positively with the school or nursery, our helpline advisers can help. You can call them on **0345 123 2303** or email **info@enquire.org.uk**.

Case study

Mhairi's story

William's daughter Mhairi is nine and was recently diagnosed with dyslexia. William has been talking to the school about support for Mhairi since P2 and most of the time has had a good relationship with school. They have meetings once a term to discuss Mhairi's progress and review the support she is getting. William knows that Mhairi can find it difficult to ask for help and is concerned that this means the school does not always know how hard she is finding things. She says that she feels stupid and is upset about being different to her friends.

Before his next meeting with school, William spends some time thinking about what he wants to say. He is feeling worried that the school does not understand how much Mhairi is struggling and is feeling frustrated that staff have not noticed how she is feeling. He decides that instead of letting all this come out at the meeting when he might be feeling emotional, he will write down the key points he wants to bring up and email the class teacher in advance to explain the things he wants to discuss.

At the meeting, William tells the school what Mhairi has been saying. The class teacher says she will look at ways she could provide more positive feedback to Mhairi and more regularly check with her whether she needs any help. After getting William's email, she also looks into arranging some sessions to help Mhairi build her confidence and suggests that these could start in a couple of weeks' time. She is also seeking advice about technology that Mhairi could access that will help with her reading and spelling.

William is pleased that his concerns have been taken seriously and emails the school after the meeting to confirm what they have agreed and to thank them for a positive meeting.

Good practice for staff working with your child

Guidance on the law (the Code of Practice we mentioned earlier in the guide) explains how local authorities, schools and nurseries should work with parents and carers. It encourages good relationships and partnership working and sets out some guidelines for communicating with parents and carers of pupils with additional support needs. The Code of Practice gives the following guidance:

Professionals should:

- acknowledge and draw on parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their child
- consider the child's strengths as well as additional support needs
- recognise the personal and emotional investment of parents and be aware of their feelings
- ensure that parents understand procedures, are aware of how to access support and are given documents to be discussed well in advance of meetings
- respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints
- cater for the differing needs parents may have, such as those arising from a disability, or communication and linguistic barriers.

Information should be:

- clear and understandable and avoid jargon
- provided easily in accessible formats
- readily available and provided automatically without a charge and without a fuss.

Communication works well when:

- people have the interpreters they need
- someone in authority takes responsibility for keeping parents up-to-date

- people are told what has been happening between meetings
- any information provided by parents is acknowledged
- formal references to statutory procedures are avoided.

Effective working relationships develop when:

- contact with parents is sensitive, positive, helpful and regular
- parents feel included and are encouraged to contribute to discussions
- positive, clear and easily understood language is used
- parents are involved and processes and roles are explained from the beginning
- parents are told what to expect and the next steps
- times of meeting take account of parents' availability.

Meetings work best when:

- parents are asked what times and places suit them best, taking account of any access need or family responsibilities
- notes from meetings, and any papers to be considered, are sent out in good time
- parents are invited to add points to the agenda, at the same time as everyone else
- people attending are aware of their roles and the roles of others and they understand the child's or young person's additional support needs
- there are no hidden issues, and no last-minute surprises
- decisions are made when parents are at the meeting, or agreed with them before the meeting takes place, not after the meeting has closed, unless further consultation takes place with them
- ample time is given to allow people to raise concerns, so that decisions are not rushed.

Identifying the way forward works well when:

- all views are taken on board — including those of the child or young person
- people are interested in learning from each other
- people show an interest in general family priorities and take them on board
- services are identified in agreement with the family and are responsive to individual needs.

Accountability and involvement:

- who is responsible for what is clearly defined and understood
- parents' concerns are responded to quickly
- decisions are open to scrutiny
- parents have a clear point of contact who can answer questions, make decisions and ensure that agreed actions are taken
- people do what they agreed within the timescale committed to — if a decision is likely to take time, parents are told and given some idea of when a decision is likely.

Solving problems with the school or nursery

You can resolve most of your concerns about your child's additional support by talking to your child's school or nursery. It is important to tell them what your concerns are so that everyone understands the problem and you can start working together towards a solution.

The steps below are our suggestions for trying to resolve things as quickly and easily as possible.

Step 1 – ask for a meeting

If your child is in primary school, start by talking to your child's class teacher. If your child is in high school, their guidance teacher (sometimes called pastoral care teacher or head of year) is a good person to speak to. If your child is at nursery, you can speak to their key worker.

If a longer discussion would be helpful, ask for a meeting to talk things through. Involving the person with responsibility for additional support for learning at the school or nursery can be useful if the issue is something beyond the class or guidance teacher's control. This is often a deputy head or principal teacher — if you are not sure who has this role in your child's school or nursery, ask the school or nursery office.

Schools and nurseries usually have procedures for contacting or arranging a meeting with a member of staff. The school office or nursery can tell you about this, too.

It can be helpful to discuss:

- the school or nursery's understanding of your child's support needs and how their views match with yours
- the additional support the school or nursery is providing for your child and how they feel this meets their needs
- how they keep the support your child receives under review and how they monitor your child's progress

- whether it might be helpful for your child to have a written support plan (or to review their existing plan if they already have one)
- arrangements for making sure they keep you up to date with how your child is getting on.

Remember that you have the right to take along a supporter or advocate to any meetings about your child's support.

Step 2 – put your concerns in writing

If you have tried meeting with the school or nursery but still have concerns, put your concerns in writing. Focus on your child's needs and the impact of the current situation on their learning and wellbeing. You can make it clear that you want to continue to work together, but that there are things that you are still feeling unclear or worried about. Explain what these things are and what you would like the school or nursery to do about them.

Step 3 – speak to the head teacher

If you are not satisfied with the response you get, contact the head teacher or head of the nursery to talk things through. It is a good idea to confirm in writing anything you discussed and agreed.

Further steps for resolving disagreements

If you have tried to resolve things by following steps 1 to 3 above but there are still issues, you can get in touch with the person responsible for additional support for learning at the local authority.

Every local authority must have a named officer that you can contact for advice or information about additional support for learning. You can find out who this is on our website: **www.enquire.org.uk/local-authorities** or by contacting our helpline.

You can explain your child's situation and what steps you have already taken to try and agree a way forward. The local authority officer will tell you what they will do next to try and find a solution.

It is likely that the local authority officer will contact the school or nursery to speak to them about the situation. They might come along to a meeting to talk about ways of resolving any issues.

You can email or write to the local authority officer to confirm what you have discussed. This helps to keep a record of who you have spoken to and what they have agreed to do. This can be useful if you cannot resolve your disagreement with the local authority and need to take further action.

If you still have concerns after involving the local authority, there are further steps you can take. The local authority officer dealing with your case should give you information about the options available to you, but we have also listed them below. The best option for you will depend on what your disagreement is about.

Independent mediation

An option which is available to you at any time is to try independent mediation.

Mediation is when a neutral and independent third person (a mediator) helps people involved in a disagreement come together and agree on the best way forward.

It is a voluntary process between parents (or young people aged 16 or over) and the school, nursery or local authority. Mediation can help rebuild relationships and communication by focusing everyone on the best interests of the child or young person.

You can request mediation at any time and for any aspect of a disagreement about additional support for learning. You can also use mediation more than once, if needed.

Every local authority must provide independent mediation services free of charge for parents, carers, and young people to use.

Find out more in our factsheet on Mediation.

Other options for resolving disagreements

If communication has broken down and you cannot reach an agreement through discussions and meetings with the school, nursery or local authority, or through mediation, it may be necessary to involve others to make decisions or suggestions about what should happen next. Below we have summarised some of these options and the situations when you can use them.

Formal complaint against the local authority

All local authorities have complaints procedures that you can follow if you are unhappy with the way they have dealt with a situation. Information about the process for making a formal complaint should be on the local authority's website, or you can contact the local authority to ask for this.

You can use the local authority's complaints procedure for most disagreements about education that you cannot resolve in a more informal way.

If the local authority does not uphold your complaint at the first stage, you will usually be able to take it to a second stage, where it will be fully investigated. If you disagree with the local authority's final decision, you can refer your complaint to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO): **www.spso.org.uk**.

Independent adjudication

Independent adjudication is a way of resolving disagreements about additional support for learning. An independent and neutral third person (an 'adjudicator') looks at information about a disagreement and then makes recommendations for how to resolve it. It is a paper-based exercise where you and the local authority both get the opportunity to submit relevant documents along with your views on what should happen next.

You can request independent adjudication if you disagree with the local authority's decision about any of the following:

- whether your child has additional support needs, or the kind of support needs your child has
- refusing a request for an assessment of your child's needs
- the person doing an assessment, or the way it is done.

You can also use it if you think the local authority has failed to:

- provide the additional support for learning that your child needs
- request help from another agency, such as the NHS.

Your child may also be able to ask for independent adjudication if they are aged 12 or over.

Find out more in our factsheet on Independent adjudication.

The Additional Support Needs Tribunal

The Additional Support Needs Tribunal is an independent and expert body that hears and decides on certain matters related to additional support for learning.

The tribunal can hear appeals (known as 'references') about:

- decisions about co-ordinated support plans (CSPs)
- refused placing requests to special schools or nurseries
- refused placing requests to mainstream schools or nurseries if the pupil has a CSP or one is being prepared for them
- failure to plan effectively for a young person leaving school
- decisions about children aged 12-15 being able to use their rights.

There is a deadline of two months to make a reference to the tribunal for any of these reasons.

There is a free advocacy and legal support service for families who have a right to make a reference to the tribunal called Let's Talk ASN: **0141 445 1955**, **letstalkasn@edlaw.org.uk**.

The tribunal also hears claims of disability discrimination against pupils. There is a deadline of six months for disability discrimination claims to the tribunal.

Your child may also be able to make references or disability discrimination claims to the tribunal if they are aged 12 or over. However, only young people aged 16 or over can appeal placing request decisions.

The local authority must do what the tribunal directs them to do. Find out more in our factsheet on The Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

Education appeal committees

Every local authority has an education appeal committee. Education appeal committees consist of no more than seven people from the local area who are from a range of backgrounds, such as elected councillors, parents and teachers.

They can consider appeals about:

- exclusions from school or nursery
- most refused placing requests to mainstream schools or nurseries.

For exclusions there is no deadline for appealing, but it is best to submit it as soon as you can so that the appeal can be heard as quickly as possible. Your child may also be able to appeal their exclusion.

For placing requests, you have 28 days from when you receive the refusal letter to submit your appeal.

Find out more in our factsheet on Education appeal committees.

Seeking support from your MSP or local councillor

You can contact your MSP or local councillor with a complaint about a school, nursery or local authority. They may be prepared to make enquiries or write letters on your behalf, though they do not have to do this.

You can find out who your MSP is and how to contact them at **www.parliament.scot/msps** Your local authority's website will have information about who your local councillors are.

Section 70 complaints

Scottish Ministers can consider complaints by parents or other interested parties who think a local authority has failed to carry out a legal duty under education law. This kind of complaint is called a section 70 complaint. Before you complain under section 70, you should try other ways of resolving your disagreement.

Find out more in our factsheet on Section 70 complaints.

The law at a glance

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000

- The local authority must have due regard of the views of children and young people in decisions that significantly affect them, taking account of their age and maturity **section 2(2)**

Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006

- Scottish Ministers and local authorities must promote the involvement of parents and carers in their child's education **section 1**

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

- The local authority must seek and take account of views, advice and information from children, young people and their parents and carers at certain times **section 12**
- The local authority must publish information about local arrangements and policies for additional support for learning **section 26**
- You, and your child if they are aged 12 or over, have the right to take a supporter or advocate to meetings about additional support for learning **section 14**
- The local authority must make independent mediation services available for helping to avoid and resolve disagreements with parents, carers or young people **section 15**
- You, and your child if they are aged 12 or over, can ask for independent adjudication about certain matters **section 16**
- You, and your child if they are aged 12 or over, can make references about certain decisions or failures to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal **section 18**

Education (Scotland) Act 1980

- Any 'interested party' can make a complaint to Scottish Ministers about a failure under education law **section 70**
- Every local authority must set up and maintain an education appeal committee to hear appeals against exclusions from school and certain placing request refusals **section 28D**

Common abbreviations

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience
ASL	Additional Support for Learning
ASL Act	Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, as amended
ASN	Additional support needs
ASP	Additional support plan
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
CYP	Children and young people
CSP	Co-ordinated support plan
EAL	English as an additional language
GIRFEC	Getting it Right for Every Child
GIRFMe (plan)	Getting it right for me (plan)
IEP	Individualised educational programme
LAC	Looked after child
LAAC	Looked after and accommodated child
PLP	Personal learning planning
PPP	Pupil placement panel
SEBN	Social, emotional and behavioral needs
SHANARRI	Safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included (the 'wellbeing indicators')
TAC (meeting)	Team around the child (meeting)

Enquire publications

Understanding additional support for learning

- Additional support for learning: key facts
- Inclusion, equality, and wellbeing
- Disabled pupils and the law
- Additional support for learning for care experienced pupils
- Additional support for learning in the early years
- Rights of children aged 12-15
- Education and additional support after 16
- Home education and additional support for learning
- Independent schools and additional support for learning

Attendance and exclusion

- School attendance
- When your child is too unwell to attend school
- Exclusion from school

Getting the right support

- Identifying and assessing your child's needs
- Planning your child's support
- Co-ordinated support plans
- School placements
- Planning for starting school
- Planning for moving to high school
- Supporting pupils with healthcare needs
- Transport to school

Working with the school and solving problems

- Working together with your child's school
- Avoiding and solving problems
- Mediation
- Independent adjudication
- Education appeal committees
- The Additional Support Needs Tribunal
- Section 70 complaints

You can find all of our factsheets on our website, www.enquire.org.uk. You can also contact us to request paper copies on 0345 123 2303 or info@enquire.org.uk.

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Helping you understand additional support for learning in Scotland

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www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Scottish Government

The Scottish Government is the devolved government for Scotland. Its responsibilities include health, education, justice, rural affairs and transport.
www.gov.scot

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