



**Argyll and Bute Council
Community Services : Education**

Meeting Additional Support Needs
in Argyll and Bute Schools

INFORMATION BOOKLET

INTRODUCTION:

The Education Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 was designed to clarify some of the responsibilities of education authorities and others towards children and young people who need support to help them to do as well as they can in school. It specified that education authorities must publish certain pieces of information.

In Argyll and Bute we have already taken a number of steps in this direction and we have made available leaflets which are readily accessible to parents, voluntary organisations and other interested people. We see this booklet as a further development of our efforts to provide publicly accessible information about how we identify, assess and provide for the needs of a variety of learners in our schools.

This booklet is intended to give an overview of our approach in a number of key areas. It provides a general introduction for anyone who is interested in additional support for learning. For those who are seeking more information the booklet provides a route into our other documents which have been produced and gathered together in the *Supporting Children : Supporting Effective Learning* guidance which is present in all schools. It also makes connections with the *Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice* guidance from the Scottish Executive which is available in our schools.

Additional support for learning is an area in which there is always development work going on. The new Act also requires us to carry out further development in some areas. For both these reasons we expect to revise this booklet regularly.

I would like to conclude by emphasising that we in education very much recognise the indispensability of our partnerships with parents in working together to meet the needs of all the learners in our schools. We are also committed to a view that schools are most effective when they work alongside others to achieve these aims and that our partnerships with other agencies and the voluntary sector are essential. I hope you find the information in this booklet of value to our joint efforts.



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SECTION 1: WHAT ARE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS?

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 came into force on 14 November 2005. The Act introduces a new framework for supporting children, young people and their families. This framework is based on the idea of additional support needs. We in education in Argyll and Bute are now using the idea as the basis for our approach to identifying, assessing and planning for the range of children who need extra support in school. The next three sections of this booklet explain our approach to these particular tasks and they should be read together.

The term 'additional support needs' applies to children and young people who, for whatever reason, require additional support, long or short term, in order to help them make the most of their pre-school or school education. It is a wide ranging concept

Children may require additional support for a variety of reasons and may include those who:

- have a physical impairment
- have a sensory impairment
- have learning difficulties
- are more able or particularly talented
- are looked after
- are affected by substance misuse
- are affected by the health or disability of a family member
- are on the child protection register
- are being bullied
- have experienced a bereavement
- are not attending school regularly
- have English as an additional language
- are experiencing emotional or social difficulties

The above list is not exhaustive but gives examples of reasons which may contribute to a child or young person requiring additional support. It should not be assumed that inclusion in the list means that additional support will be necessary. A guiding principle is that support should be given in ways that are effective but do not make children unnecessarily different.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice Chapter 2*

SECTION 2: IDENTIFYING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS, ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Whoever is involved in assessment the same principles apply. The aim is to establish as full a picture of the child or young person as is appropriate to the question being asked. To the extent that is necessary this will take into account their developmental history, their learning profile, their emotional adjustment and any relevant family circumstances. Wherever possible assessments by various agencies should not repeat one another.

We see assessment as an ongoing process in which a picture emerges of how a child responds to various approaches to teaching, learning and support. We do not see it as a one off snapshot where a child is pigeonholed for ever. Assessment is only useful if it leads to action.

ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN IN PRACTICE:

Assessment of pupils' learning is a normal part of teaching. It helps teachers to see what their pupils are learning and to plan the next steps. It also enables teachers to check progress and to identify when children are not learning as well as they might be. With some exceptions, the identification of additional support needs will generally come through this process

In some cases the identification of an additional support need may come from another source. This might be a medical specialist, say identifying an unnoticed hearing or visual difficulty. It can be a parent noticing a difficulty at home or identifying a capability at home that a child is not using in school. We will always take other people's identification of a need for support seriously and our assessments will take this information into account.

Assessment is not the same as testing. It can take a variety of forms, including observation of children's learning and behaviour, asking questions, listening to what children say, checking the work children are producing and marking class work. More formal assessment is also carried out using tests developed in schools, commercially produced tests and national tests.

Where a child is finding the learning, behavioural or social demands of school difficult the first step will always be to look at the match between what is being asked of the child and his or her current learning and capabilities. This is a normal process for classroom teachers and is the first step towards providing support for a pupil's learning.

Sometimes the teacher's own assessment leaves some questions unanswered. In this case he or she will look for support from other members of school staff, either a more senior teacher or a teacher with responsibility for

support for pupils. At this stage it is likely that parents will be involved in discussions and information about how the child learns and behaves at home will be sought.

Where the school's own assessment suggests that there might be some specific areas that should be examined in detail the school may seek outside help. Within education this help may come from area network support team teachers or educational psychologists. It may be that, in agreement with parents, further information is sought from another agency such as health or social work.

ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN NOT YET AT SCHOOL IN PRACTICE:

Exactly the same principles of a staged approach to assessment apply to children who are attending preschool establishments. Staff will always want to look directly at how a child is learning and behaving before seeking to carry out tests.

However, at an early stage some children have a recognisable condition or the pattern of their development does not follow the expected path. This can mean that they are likely to find learning more difficult than other children. In many cases identification of the child's likely need for additional support will come from a health professional.

Typically in these circumstances a number of agencies will be involved. The education service helps to make sure they work together by running pre school community assessment teams. Here any relevant professional will share the information that they have with parents and other people working to support the child. Again we want to emphasise that assessment in the early years is an ongoing process in which information about how the child is likely to progress accumulates gradually. This applies whether a diagnostic label is attached or not.

HOW CAN PARENTS FIND OUT IF THEIR CHILD HAS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS?

All schools and preschool establishments have parent afternoons or evenings at which parents are able to discuss their child's progress. These provide an opportunity to identify jointly whether there are any areas in which support is needed. Parents can also arrange appointments to discuss their child's progress. Schools will equally take the opportunity to talk to parents outwith these times if there is any concern about a child's progress.

Sometimes parents take a view that the teacher knows best or they are reluctant to make a fuss about something which is concerning them. In fact schools would prefer to hear from parents at an early stage and they will be happy to explain how support is provided for children and young people as

part of the normal processes of learning and teaching. Schools are also happy to discuss the support which is being provided which is additional to that provided for most children.

Parents have always been able to ask that their child's needs be assessed. They have also been able to ask for a specific assessment for example, by an educational psychologist. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 has introduced a formal procedure for parents to make such requests. A parent can request an education authority to establish whether a child has additional support needs or requires a coordinated support plan. Any such request from parents must be made in writing or another permanent form such as video or audio tape. Young people, that is those over sixteen, can make such requests on their own behalf.

If the education authority agrees to carry out this assessment a parent is able to ask for educational, psychological, medical assessments or other kinds of assessments. The education authority will consider whether the request is a reasonable one. If it agrees that it is reasonable it will either arrange for an education or psychological assessment to be carried out or approach another agency which is able to carry out the requested assessment.

If we do not agree that the request is reasonable or another agency does not agree that it is reasonable we will write to the parent explaining the reasons for the decision.

MONITORING PROGRESS:

This section must be read in conjunction with Section 4: Planning for individual needs.

If a child or young person needs support which is clearly greater than that needed by most pupils an individualised education plan or support plan will be in place. This plan will be based on the assessment which has been carried out. It will identify specific and measurable targets.

The key component of monitoring in the areas where a pupil needs additional support is careful evaluation of how well these targets are being met. If the child or young person is meeting their targets easily and quickly either success has been achieved or new more demanding targets need to be set. If the targets are not being met we need to consider whether too much was being asked of the child or if a different approach is needed.

At times it is also necessary to take a wider look at the pattern of a child's progress. Children who have IEPs or Support Plans will have a review at least once a year where parents, school staff and relevant outside agencies take stock. At this stage more detailed assessments might be identified to try to shed light on areas of positive progress or those of concern. These

assessments can then feed in to a new plan which will be reviewed in the same way.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Supporting Children: Supporting Effective Learning Section F papers 2 & 4;*
- *Supporting Children's Learning: Code Of Practice Chapter 3 p21 & pages 26-32*

SECTION 3: PLANNING FOR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Planning for learning is something that happens every day in schools and preschool establishments. Childcare and education workers and teachers plan, teach and assess as part of the teaching and learning going on in their classrooms. This planning has to take account of individuals and their needs. Most children and young people who require additional support will have their learning needs met by this day to-day classroom practice.

More formal planning arrangements may be needed for some children and young people. Sometimes our assessment tells us that a different approach to learning from the one that is working with most children is needed. Sometimes we need to adjust what we expect a child to learn. In other cases more adult support is needed to allow the child to get as much as he or she can from school. If school staff and parents decide that these kinds of arrangements are needed they will want to draw up a plan to make sure that they are working effectively.

Quite often another agency, like health or social work, is involved in supporting a child. Obviously it will make sense that work carried out by that agency which is relevant to the child's learning and development in school is reflected in educational plans.

To be fully effective plans about children and their experiences in school need the children themselves and their parents to be part of the process for developing them.

PLANNING FOR INDIVIDUALS IN PRACTICE:

Where a plan needs to be developed for a child's education we generally use Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) or, increasingly, Support Plans. Both kinds of plan have a similar structure. They aim to:

- describe in detail the nature of the child or young person's additional support needs,
- identify the ways in which these needs are to be met using educational objectives, both long term and short term
- specify what additional support will be provided including support from education services from outwith the school and partner agencies.

The child or young person and his or her parents or carers will be involved in setting the educational objectives and will be given a final copy of the IEP or Support Plan. Short term objectives may last for a few weeks. School staff will evaluate progress and revise the targets as they are overtaken. This may not involve discussion with parents in every instance. Every short term

objective is related to a longer term one and as these are gradually overtaken and new ones have to be set parents should expect to be consulted.

We understand education to be about much more than simply learning the curriculum, important as that is. The educational objectives set for a child or young person therefore may cover a number of areas of learning, behaviour and social development. In other cases they may apply to one or two quite specific aspects. In every case they will relate directly to learning and behaviour that occurs in school. They will also always be directed towards helping the pupil to make progress in his or her education.

A child or young person may have more than one Plan. Examples are Person Centred Plans, Care Plans and Family Health Plans. Education staff will work with staff from other agencies to make sure that assessment for, and production of, an IEP or Support Plan takes account of any other planning processes and that educational objectives are shared across plans.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Planning for Individual Needs Folder*
- *Supporting Children's Learning: Code Of Practice Chapter 3 pages 40 – 44*

SECTION 4: OUR APPROACH TO PROVIDING SUPPORT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Most children and young people find something difficult at some time in school. With a little extra help from a teacher, a parent or someone else they usually overcome the problem and move on. With good quality teaching and learning and an appropriate curriculum most children and young people are able to make good progress without the need for any more support than this. However, some children require support which is additional to, or different from, the support generally provided to other children of the same age. They need the support so that they can benefit from preschool or school education. Any support provided needs to be based on high quality, proportionate assessment.

All children and young people share a basic need for education. They all also progress through the education system in ways that reflect their growing maturity and independence. The ways in which they do so are different, as are the rates at which they progress. This means that we regard each child as an individual and where additional support is needed we will provide it in a way that is appropriate for that child as an individual.

In line with the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000) we support the general right of children to attend their local mainstream school. In fact in Argyll and Bute the overwhelming majority of children who need additional support do attend their local school. We also recognise that for a few children and young people our own learning centres and special school (and occasionally special schools run by other people) can more readily provide opportunities for them to learn and develop.

PROVIDING SUPPORT IN PRACTICE:

Our approach to providing additional support uses a staged process where support starts in the classroom or the preschool setting. The main source of support in preschool establishments and schools is the staff. Through their normal work they identify barriers to learning and find ways to help a child overcome them.

The next stage involves using resources within the school or the preschool establishment. Examples of this include: extra teaching or use of the school's additional adult support, a flexible approach to the curriculum or the timetable, opportunities for targeted small group work, the use of quiet areas or learning support bases, access to information technology and the following of specialised work programmes. The availability or use of these approaches and facilities depends on the pupil's stage in education, the physical context and the profile of the school.

The next stage only applies to a minority of children and young people. Here the existing resources of the school have to be added to by more specialised educational support. Examples of this include: additional teaching or advice from the area network support team, the provision of specialist equipment including information technology or shared placements with a local learning centre.

In some situations professionals other than teachers are used to help in the planning and delivery of support. Within education, educational psychologists fall into this category. Other professions within health or social work can also play a role in helping children and young people to get the most out of their education. The other profession may help teachers to work more effectively or they may provide direct support to the pupil which helps them to do better in school and beyond. This support needs to be linked to that being provided by the school itself.

SCHOOL PLACEMENT IN PRACTICE:

When a child is about to start school or is ready to transfer to secondary school the first option that will always be considered is his or her local mainstream school. This applies irrespective of the nature or extent of the child's need for support.

Wherever possible we will endeavour to build support into a child's local school that will allow his or her needs to be addressed. In the nature of our schools we often use creative local solutions and these are usually as effective as those in more obviously specialised facilities.

Sometimes it is clear that a child will benefit from some time in a learning centre or special school. We will always consider first whether that can be combined with attending his or her local school for most, part or a little of the school day or week. Some children will benefit more from full time attendance in the learning centre or special school. Some children need the predictability of attending the same school each day so that a shared placement does not suit them.

Discussions about placement always take place with parents as full participants. Normally any alternative to a local school will be considered over a period of time and the views of any other agency involved will be sought and taken into account.

Our philosophy is to keep children and young people in their own communities. Only very exceptionally and almost always in conjunction with other agencies will we consider day or residential special schools outwith Argyll and Bute for children and young people who have very particular needs.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Supporting Children: Supporting Effective Learning Section C; Section D; Section E; Section F*

SECTION 5: COORDINATED SUPPORT PLANS

WHAT IS A COORDINATED SUPPORT PLAN?

In order to do as well as they can in school some children and young people need additional support from agencies outwith education. This support needs to be coordinated. If the support is likely to be substantial and long lasting and the child or young person meets a further criterion then the education authority will consider opening a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP). As the name indicates this is a document which sets out a plan defining how more than one agency will cooperate together to provide support to a child. The plan will cover a period of one year after which it will be reviewed and a decision taken about whether it needs to continue.

For a CSP to be opened for a child the other aspect that has to be considered is whether his or her additional support needs are complex or multiple. This may mean that there is one factor which affects the vast majority of areas of the child or young person's life at school. Alternatively there may be a number of smaller factors which have the same effect.

THE PROCESS OF OPENING A CSP:

In most cases it is likely that Education staff and others will have been working for some time to address a child's additional needs. It will have become clear over this time that these needs are going to continue for at least the next year and that the input from other agencies is substantial and ought to be coordinated formally. In discussion with parents the local team will suggest to the education authority that a CSP should be considered for the child. The education authority will consult with partner agencies and reach a conclusion about whether a CSP is needed.

If the education authority takes the view that a CSP should be opened, parents, school staff and any agency providing support will meet to develop the Plan. A representative of the education authority (normally the area network support team coordinator) will also be present. The Plan will then be considered by us and our partner agencies and issued as a formal document which specifies the agreement to work together to support the child or young person.

If it is decided that a CSP is not needed normally a child will have an Individualised Education Plan or Support Plan. This plan will make sure that the necessary steps are taken to support the child's learning and development in school. However a parent has a right to appeal against the decision not to open a CSP to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. (Please see the section on resolving disagreements for information on appeals.)

Parents also have a right to ask the education authority to consider whether their child should have a CSP. They must do so in writing or some other permanent form such as an audio tape. The education authority has to consider firstly whether this request is reasonable. If it is a reasonable request then a member of education staff will collate information about the child and young person and any necessary assessments will be carried out. The process then is the same as for any other child who is being considered for a CSP, that is to say the education authority will consider the request along with partner agencies and inform the parent of the outcome.

CSPs AND PUPILS WITH RECORDS OF NEEDS:

The Legislation which put the Record of Needs in place is no longer in force and Records of Needs are no longer legal documents. They will be retained for a period of five years for reference only. The new Act specifies that any child with a Record of Needs at the time when it commenced in November 2005 would be considered to have additional support needs. He or she will also in due course be considered for a CSP. The normal process for doing so will be to collate the necessary information at the point of an annual review and to pass this information to the education authority. It will then be considered along with partner agencies and a conclusion reached as to whether a CSP is required.

A further provision of the new legislation is that any child who had a Record of Needs at the point of commencement of the new Act should have their current level of provision guaranteed for two years. This will only change if there is a significant change in a child or young person's needs or if a CSP is considered which overtakes the Record of Needs. It is worth noting that if a CSP is not considered appropriate then the current level of provision is guaranteed for a further two years following the decision not to open one.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Standard Circular 3.12 (2006 revision) Procedures leading to the consideration and opening of a coordinated support plan*
- *Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice Chapter 4*

SECTION 6: HOW WE INCLUDE PARENTS IN THE PLANNING OF SUPPORT

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Like our partners in other agencies we recognise that it is vital that parents are involved in planning support for their children. The Additional Support for Learning Act strengthens the rights of parents to be involved in decisions made about how their child is to be educated.

Parents are very knowledgeable about their children. They can therefore contribute important information to any discussion and they are likely to have opinions about what can help. We will always be listened to and respect parents' views. Sometimes there are differences of view but a way forward can normally be found. If parents and schools are to work together it is very important that they have a comfortable relationship based on mutual trust. Parents ought to feel able to discuss concerns and issues with the school and any other person who is working with their child.

Our approach to children and young people is based on being aware of strengths and points for development as well as needs for support. Our plans will always reflect the strengths that children and young people have and take a positive approach.

WORKING WITH PARENTS IN PRACTICE:

Schools are happy to discuss children's progress with their parents and their handbooks will give advice about how to arrange a discussion.

Often the most effective joint work with parents is very simple. When it is possible, a quick word at the end of the day can ease the flow of communication. Small scale meetings can be used to deal with specific questions or plan for the near future. Such meetings need to be properly organised but they do not need to take up great amounts of time. Telephone contacts can also help to keep things on track. Home school diaries can be an efficient way to keep people in touch.

If more formal meetings are planned parents will be given plenty of notice. We will make sure that meetings are set for times that are practical for parents, taking account of any access need or family responsibilities. When they are available papers for the meeting will be sent out in plenty of time for them to be read and considered properly. Decisions will be taken at the meeting when the parents are present or agreed with them beforehand

A parent is entitled to bring a supporter to a meeting. The supporter may be a friend, relative, professional or a representative from a voluntary organisation. They can help parents to make decisions or ensure that their views are made

clear and that they are being listened to. An advocate who may have particular expertise can also act on a parent's behalf. The education authority may be able to help parents find out what services of this kind are available in their area.

We will make sure that the verbal and written information we give to parents and others is clear and jargon free. We will try to conduct meetings in a way that parents and others can understand what is being said. We will welcome requests to make things clearer. The different needs of parents, such as those arising from a disability or a communication or linguistic barrier, will be catered for.

When a parent has a concern we will respond to it as quickly as possible.

The list of contacts in the section 'People and organisations that can help' may be useful to parents, schools and others.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Supporting Children: Supporting Effective Learning Section H*

SECTION 7: INCLUDING CHILDREN IN MAKING DECISIONS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

As a general principle we are keen to encourage all children and young people to take an active role in planning their own learning and commenting on it. This includes discussing with them the support that they need to help them to learn, get along with others or manage their behaviour.

A balancing principle is that children and young people should only be consulted about matters where they are genuinely able to influence the outcome. They should also only be consulted about matters on which they can reasonably be expected to have an informed opinion.

CONSULTATION IN PRACTICE:

Younger children and children who have difficulty with communication can present a challenge to those who would like to consult with them. We do not think that this is a reason for not consulting. It does demand creativity, sensitivity and imagination on the part of those who are doing the consultation. Over the forthcoming months we will carry out some work to identify good practice in this area and look at ways of developing our approaches further.

When meetings are held about children and young people it is important to ask them to contribute. This can mean asking a child or young person to attend a whole meeting or part of a meeting. Attendance however must not be confused with participation. Meetings need to be organised carefully so that children and young people can have their say. There are a number of other ways in which children and young people can contribute to meetings. For example they may record their comments on tape or in writing, a trusted adult may pass them on, or they may come along with a supporter who talks for them.

Children and young people in fact often have clear opinions about the support that does and does not help them. This feedback can sometimes be obtained directly through what the child or young person says but it can also be apparent from their reactions to the support that is in place. It is important that school staff, parents and others look out for this sort of feedback.

CONSULTING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND COORDINATED SUPPORT PLANS:

Consultation with the child or young person is part of the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) process. Whenever a CSP is being developed school staff will make efforts to understand the child or young person's views about the

support that is being provided. They will work alongside parents and others to see how these views can best be recorded. In some cases it will be possible to ask the child or young person to make a written or scribed statement. In other cases a more indirect form of noting the child's views will be used. The guiding principle will be one of obtaining the child's own perspective independently of what his or her teachers or parents think.

➤ *Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice Chapter 6 pages 81-86*

SECTION 8: OUR APPROACH TO RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS RELATING TO ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

CONTEXT:

We work hard to avoid disputes with people who use our services. We do this by involving them in discussion and decision making. In our schools we already involve parents in educational planning for their children. Increasingly, children and young people help to plan their own learning.

Equally, we accept that disagreements will arise from time to time. We will always seek to have a constructive discussion about matters of concern to parents and to young people. In most cases it is possible to have this discussion informally and amicably. We are committed to resolving any disagreement at the level closest to where any adjustments will have to be made. In education this means the school.

RESOLVING DISAGREEMENTS AT SCHOOL LEVEL:

If parents have a concern about their child they should contact the head teacher or a designated member of the senior management team. Where a parent contacts anyone else from education before discussing a concern with the school they are always asked to discuss it first of all with the head teacher or a senior member of school staff.

The normal first step for the school will be to arrange a meeting with the parents raising the issue. This will be held at a mutually convenient time and the atmosphere should be relaxed and friendly. Parents have the right to bring a supporter or advocate to any meeting that is arranged. The supporter or advocate is there to help the parents to get their point of view across.

Frequently apparent disagreements are a result of arrangements for supporting a child not being clear to their parents. If misunderstandings are present explanation and clarification can be carried out informally. It will always be helpful to end such a meeting with a summary of what has been clarified and agreed. A method for reviewing the agreement should always be decided upon. It can be helpful to make a brief note.

If agreement is not reached or over time an initial agreement does not resolve everything more formal approaches will be required. These will include formal meetings where a minute or note is kept and points of agreement as well as disagreement are noted.

THE INVOLVEMENT OF SENIOR OFFICERS:

Sometimes discussions about a disagreement result in incompatible views of what should be done to support a child or young person. In these circumstances a formal process of dispute resolution can be put in place. This will consist of an investigation being carried out by a senior officer. Where the dispute relates to additional support needs the first point of contact will be the Principal Educational Psychologist. The senior officer will compile a report summarising the issues, identifying room for negotiation, and recommending the next steps.

If matters are not resolved by this process a further stage is available. The report which has been compiled will be considered along with representations put forward by any party by the Head of Service. All parties may then be interviewed separately or a joint meeting may be arranged. The Head of Service will provide guidance either directly or through the minute of a meeting. While this guidance will be adhered to by education staff, parents are not bound to accept it.

EXTERNAL PROCEDURES:

We do not have the answers to every question. We also recognise that independent perspectives can be very useful where disagreements are not reaching a satisfactory solution. The Additional Support for Learning Act mandates three approaches to resolving disagreements by involving an independent party. Each is appropriate to a different set of circumstances.

MEDIATION:

Where communication is proving very difficult, in spite of everyone's best efforts, the involvement of an independent third party can sometimes improve the flow of information. This is **mediation**. The purpose of mediation is to help two parties to develop a shared perspective and work towards a shared solution. Mediation is not a process where someone listens to both sides and provides an answer. We can make mediation available in appropriate cases at no cost to parents. This will be arranged with a recognised independent mediator who is acceptable to both parties.

Mediation: a brief guide

- It is open to anyone to suggest mediation.
- If there are clear areas identified where an independent person may help, an approach will be made to a mediation service.
- Arrangements will be made by the mediation service to meet relevant people.
- One or more meetings may be arranged to move matters forward.

Mediation is not a precondition for moving on to other forms of resolving disagreements, although successful mediation may mean that they are not needed. It is possible to engage in mediation about one issue while addressing another issue through one of the following approaches.

EXTERNAL ADJUDICATION:

There may be situations where the full range of the local authority's procedures for dispute resolution has been used and no outcome acceptable to the parents involved has been reached. In these circumstances, as a last resort, it is possible to seek **dispute resolution by independent adjudication**. This provides advice from experts in additional support needs appointed by the Scottish Executive.

Independent adjudication can provide advice on matters relating to additional support needs but not where these are covered by other procedures such as placing request processes or the additional support needs tribunal. The advice is not binding but in most circumstances it will provide a clear guide to action.

Dispute resolution by independent adjudication: a brief guide

- Parents ask the education authority to arrange the adjudication
- Parents are asked to provide specific information, as are the education authority
- In most cases it is a paper based procedure
- The independent adjudicator will read the evidence and, if necessary, look for more information
- The adjudicator will issue his or her advice

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS TRIBUNAL:

Some matters can be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal. These must relate to a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP). Examples of such matters are whether a CSP should be opened or not, the time taken to complete it and the content of the plan. Some matters relating to placing requests can be referred to the Tribunal.

Referral to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal: a brief guide

- It is open to parents to refer a case to the Tribunal
- Parents are able to bring a supporter or advocate to any meetings
- Parents and the education authority can provide up to two witnesses
- The Tribunal will operate as informally as possible
- It will take regard to the Code of Practice related to the Act

The Additional Support Needs Tribunal has provided comprehensive guidance on making a reference and the processes involved.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

Schools require order and discipline. This means that adults who are responsible for children and young people have to take decisions on their behalf. Equally children and young people may have legitimate questions to ask about any aspect of their experience at school. The extent and nature of additional support provided to them is, in fact, an area in which some children and young people do have well developed views. As in all circumstances, it will be essential to take due account of the pupil's capacity and maturity in reaching a view about what action to take.

We expect children and young people with additional support needs to be included in personal learning planning. This provides a natural vehicle for a discussion about support. Similarly, these questions can be addressed where pupils are involved in an annual review procedure.

It is perfectly proper for a child or young person to raise a question about additional support outwith these opportunities. Any teacher may be involved in such a discussion. The pupil should expect to be taken seriously and to be helped, if necessary, to express their views. Where the point at issue requires action or a decision from another member of staff the pupil may be encouraged to discuss it directly. Alternatively they may agree that the teacher acts as a representative for their views.

In some cases young people will be eligible to use dispute resolution procedures in their own right. In other cases the pupil's reaction to support

may be the only indication that there is an issue. Invariably it will be important to address the apparent issue directly but sensitively.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

- *Supporting Children Supporting Effective Learning Section H Paper 2*
- *Supporting Children's Learning : Code of Practice Chapter 7*
- *The Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland : A Guide for Parents and Leaflet (available in schools)*

SECTION 9: PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS THAT CAN HELP

Argyll and Bute Council Community Services : Education

Community Services
Education
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ
Tel 01369 704 000

Educational Psychology Service
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ
Tel 01369 708537

Quality Improvement Officer
(Additional Support Needs)
Drummore Education Development
Centre
Soroba Road
Oban PA34 4SB
Tel 01631 564908

Disability Access Coordinator
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon PA23 8AJ
Tel 01369 708537

Area Network Support Teams

Bute - Coordinator
Rothesay Academy
Tel 01700 503097

Cowal - Coordinator
Dunoon Primary School
Tel 01369 70 4159

Helensburgh - Coordinator
John Logie Baird Primary
Tel 01436 673631

Islay - Coordinator
Islay High School
Tel 01496 810525

Kintyre - Coordinator
Dalintober Primary School
Tel 01586 554315

Oban and Lorn - Coordinator
Drummore Learning Centre
Tel 01631 564811

Mid Argyll - Coordinator
Whitegates Learning Centre
Tel 01546 602583

Mull - Coordinator
Tobermory High School
Tel 01688 302062

**Argyll and Bute Council
Community Services : Social Work**

Bute
Bute Area Team
Union Street
Rothesay
PA20 0HD
Tel 01700 501300

Mid Argyll
Mid Argyll Team
Dalriada House
Lochnell Street
Lochgilphead
PA31 8LP
Tel 01546 604518

Cowal
Dunoon Service Centre
Ellis Lodge
Argyll Road
Dunoon
PA23 8ES
Tel 01369 707300

Mull
Mull Area Team
The Centre
Salen
Aros
Isle of Mull
PA72 6JB
Tel 01680 300258

Helensburgh
Helensburgh Service Centre
Lomond House
29 Lomond Street
Helensburgh
G84 7PW
Tel 01436 658750

Oban
Oban Service Centre
Soroba Road
Oban
PA34 4JA
Tel 01631 563068

Islay
Islay Area Team
Kilarrow House
Bowmore
Isle of Islay
PA43 7HW

Tiree
Tiree Area Team
The Business Centre
Crossapol
Isle of Tiree
PA77 6UP
Tel 01879 220765

Kintyre
Campbeltown Service Centre
Old Quay Head
Campbeltown
PA28 6BA
Tel 01586 552659

Some National Organisations

Advice Service
Capability Scotland
11 Ellersley Road
Edinburgh
EH12 6HY
Tel 0131 313 5510
Email: ascsc@capability-scotland.org.uk

Barnardo's Scotland
235 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh
EH12 7AR
Tel: 0131 334 9893
Web: www.barnardos.org.uk

Childline Scotland
18 Albion Street
Glasgow
G1 1LH
0870 336 2910
Helpline: 0800 1111
Web: www.childline.org.uk

Children in Scotland (Enquire)
Princes House
5 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh
EH2 4RG
Tel: 0131 228 8484
Web: www.childreninScotland.org.uk

Commission for Racial Equality (Scotland)
The Tun
12 Jackson's Entry
Edinburgh
EH8 8PJ
0131 524 2000
Web: www.cre.gov.uk

Education Law Unit – Govan Law Centre
47 Burleigh Street
Govan
Glasgow
G51 3LB
Tel 0141 445 1955
Web: www.govanlc.com

Learning and Teaching Scotland
74 Victoria Crescent Road
Glasgow
G12 9SN
Tel 0141 337 5000
Web: www.ltscotland.org.uk

NHS Helpline Scotland
Network Scotland
Ruthven Lane
The Mews
Glasgow
G12 8NT
Tel 0800 224488

Resolve: ASL
Children in Scotland
Princes House
5 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh
EH2 4RG
Tel 0131 222 2456
Web: www.resolveasl.org.uk

Scottish Refugee Council
5 Cadogan Square
170 Blythswood Court
Glasgow
G2 7PH
Tel: 0141 248 9799
Web: www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Scottish Sensory Centre
Moray House School of Education
University of Edinburgh
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8AQ
Tel: 0131 651 6501
Web: www.ssc.mhie.ac.uk

Scottish Traveller Education Programme
The University of Edinburgh
2.5 Charteris Land
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8AQ
Tel 0131 651 6444
Web: www.scottishtravellered.net

SECTION 10: WHO'S WHO – A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

The following people may work with your child at different times during their education.

Support Teacher -- a specialist teacher who may provide direct support to individuals or small groups and may provide advice and guidance to class teachers.

SEN assistant/classroom assistant – a non-teaching member of staff who may provide direct support to individuals or small groups.

Pupil support assistant – a non teaching member of staff who supports children in the early years of primary school education

Educational psychologist -- a psychologist specialising in child development and education who may assess a child, put information into its psychological context and give advice to schools, parents and other agencies.

Social worker -- a social worker can assess a child in their family and community and provide advice to parents and others. He or she can coordinate support from within social work including help with respite care, advocacy, befriending, behaviour management and money or benefits advice.

Occupational therapist – an occupational therapist works with parents/carers and others to assess if a child has difficulties with the practical and social skills necessary for the child's everyday life. He or she will aim to enable the child to be as physically, psychologically and socially independent as possible.

Physiotherapist – a physiotherapist assesses and manages children and young people with movement disorders, disability or illness. The aim of the physiotherapist is to help the child/young person reach their full potential through providing physical intervention, advice and support.

Speech and language therapist – a speech and language therapist works with parents/carers and others to assess if a child has speech and/or language difficulties, communication or eating and drinking difficulties. The therapist will consider the difficulties the child has and the impact these will have on his/her life. If appropriate the therapist will decide how the child can be helped to reach their full communication potential.

Paediatrician – a doctor who specialises in children's development including disorders and conditions of childhood.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – a multi disciplinary team including psychiatrists, specialist nurses and social workers providing assessment, advice and treatment as appropriate for children and young people with mental health and psychiatric difficulties.

SECTION 11: GETTING THIS BOOKLET IN OTHER FORMATS AND LANGUAGES

HOW TO ACCESS THIS DOCUMENT:

This information can be found on the Argyll and Bute Council web site

Web address: www.argyll-bute.gov.uk

This document is available in other formats:

On tape

On CD

In Braille

In large print

In other languages:

On video with BSL

If you need any help with the information in this document please contact:

Disability Access Coordinator
Argyll House
Alexandra Parade
Dunoon
PA23 8AJ
Contact Tel 01369 708537