

# Report

Report to:	<b>Education Resources Committee</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>19 January 2020</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Education Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Additional Support for Learning Review- Support for Learning: All our Children, All their Potential</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ inform the Committee of the outcome of the review of the implementation of additional support for learning (ASL) in schools; and
- ◆ advise of the Scottish Government's response to the review in the form of an Action Plan published in October 2020

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the outcome of the Additional Support for Learning Review chaired by Angela Morgan, Deputy first Minister be noted.
- (2) that the contents of the Scottish Government's action plan on the Additional Support for Learning Review be noted.

## 3. Background

3.1. A review of the implementation of additional support for learning in schools was announced by the Deputy First Minister in January 2019. Angela Morgan was appointed as the independent chair of the review in September 2019.

3.2. The review was implemented between October and December 2019 and the Chair undertook a desk review and analysis of evidence that informed the engagement phase. She gathered the views of stakeholders across Scotland, including South Lanarkshire and submitted a report to the Scottish Ministers and COSLA at the end of February 2020.

3.3. The review considered:

- ◆ how ASL legislation works in practice across all educational settings
- ◆ the quality of learning and support, including overall achievement and positive destinations achieved post school
- ◆ the different approaches to planning and assessment to meet the needs of children and young people
- ◆ the roles and responsibilities of support staff, teaching staff, leadership role, education authorities and national agencies
- ◆ the areas of practice that could be further enhanced through better use of current resources to support practice, staffing or other aspects of provision

- 3.4. The most recent statistics indicate that children who face additional barriers to learning and to fulfilling their potential comprise 30.9% of our school age population. The children and young people referred to in the report are those who have additional support needs as set out under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004.

#### **4. What did Children and Young People Tell the Review?**

- 4.1. Children and young people were clear that they want to be included in their schools and communities. They feel that it is important that those working in schools are aware of additional support needs and sensitive to individual needs. They identified the following issues as being important:

- ◆ Meaningful relationships between children and young people and staff are important for learning
- ◆ A willingness to adapt teaching approaches to children and young people's learning styles, needs and varying pace and challenge and the use of technology is helpful
- ◆ Schools need to be a safe place
- ◆ All school staff need to have more knowledge and understanding of additional support needs so they can meet everyone's needs
- ◆ Children and young people with additional support needs don't want to be underestimated for their ability and capability
- ◆ More understanding and empathy from their peers would improve their learning experience
- ◆ Timely responses to bullying were important
- ◆ Support should be consistent
- ◆ Communication needs to improve, particularly at transition
- ◆ They need to feel involved in information sharing as part of decision making
- ◆ ASL needs to be adequately funded

#### **5. Overview of Findings and Recommendations**

- 5.1. The findings and recommendations of the report are divided into nine themes:

##### **Theme 1: Vision and visibility**

- ◆ Development of a national overarching vision statement
- ◆ Positive public communication plan highlighting the range of conditions and issues identified in the ASL legislation
- ◆ Achievements and successes of children and young people with ASN must be celebrated publicly and given parity with attainment and exam results
- ◆ Language of ASL must change to stop focussing on deficits
- ◆ National measurement framework must be developed and the National Improvement Framework must be revised to ensure parity
- ◆ Framework should be rooted in improvement methodology and support local improvement and not comparison.
- ◆ Measurement must value diversity of achievement and experience
- ◆ Investment in Pupil Support Assistants must be measured for impact and improvement on children and young people's experiences and achievements
- ◆ Plan to test how the National Performance Framework can be expanded to include achievement measures should be developed

##### **Theme 2: Mainstreaming and inclusion**

- ◆ Independent review of Curriculum for Excellence must integrate the findings of this review and focus on equity for all children

- ◆ The work of the Scottish Education Council must be informed by this review

### **Theme 3: Maintaining focus, but overcoming fragmentation**

- ◆ There must be clear, values driven leadership
- ◆ Local authority planning must incorporate the implications of ASL for all services
- ◆ Children and young people with ASN must be fully considered in policy making at all levels
- ◆ Children, young people, parents, carers must be partners in the development of policy and guidance across the system

### **Theme 4: Resources**

- ◆ Audit Scotland must use the key themes and findings of the audit of educational outcomes to inform the scope of their national performance audit on outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs
- ◆ This must include assessment and impact of spend, highlighting good practice and gaps
- ◆ Grant aided schools must examine how their specialist expertise can be developed to be complementary to statutory mainstream and specialist provision

### **Theme 5: Workforce development and support**

- ◆ Teacher recruitment, selection, education and professional development must align with the changing profile of children and young people across Scotland.
- ◆ The Classroom Support Staff working group must, as part of their work, undertake a review of roles and remits of Pupil Support Assistants including how teacher/PSA roles interact and complement each other and issues related to career progression

### **Theme 6: Relationships between schools and parents/carers**

- ◆ Practice in relation to working together including planning for transition should support and promote positive relationships
- ◆ Parents and carers must be equal partners in the development of key guidance
- ◆ Further investment is needed for family support services
- ◆ The use of mediation should be promoted

### **Theme 7: Relationships and behaviour**

- ◆ The remit and membership of the Scottish Advisory Group on Relationships and Behaviour in Schools (SAGRABIS) should be reviewed and updated
- ◆ SAGRABIS should be more closely aligned with the work of the ASL Implementation Group

### **Theme 8: Understanding Rights**

- ◆ The incorporation of the UNCRC and its impact on Additional Support for Learning legislation and processes must be anticipated and planned for
- ◆ The planned review of CSPs must take the review findings into account

### **Theme 9: Assurance mechanism and inspection**

- ◆ A mechanism should be developed with the Additional Support for Learning Implementation Group (ASLIG) and put in place to allow progress against the review recommendations to be reported and scrutinised
- ◆ Local authorities must take account of the findings of the report to review and align their quality improvement processes to drive improvements in processes, practice and outcomes

- 5.2. The overarching recommendation of the review is in relation to the participation of children and young people and is that children and young people must be involved in all decision making relating to additional support for learning.

## **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1. The Scottish Government has produced an Action Plan [www.gov.scot/isbn/9781800042094](http://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781800042094) with responses to each of the themes which will be overseen by ASLIG. Progress will be reported by October 2021.
- 6.2. Inclusion Services will consider the recommendations of the review and actions detailed in the action plan for local implementation and will embed resultant actions into established planning mechanisms.

## **7. Employee Implications**

- 7.1. There are no staffing implications

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1. There are no financial implications

## **9. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

- 9.1. There are no climate change, sustainability and environmental implications arising from this report.

## **10. Other Implications**

- 10.1. There are no risk implications in terms of the information contained in this report.

## **11. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 11.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.
- 11.2. Consultation and engagement has taken place with children, young people, schools and services and other agencies.

**Tony McDaid**

**Executive Director (Education Resources Resources)**

23 December 2020

## **Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

- Improve achievement, raise educational attainment and support lifelong learning
- Ensure schools and other places of learning are inspirational
- focused on people and their needs
- working with and respecting others
- accountable, effective, efficient, and transparent
- ambitious, self-aware and improving

## **Previous References**

None

## **List of Background Papers**

[www.gov.scot/isbn/9781800042094](http://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781800042094)

**Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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