

The Right Help at the right time in the right place

Strategic Review of Learning Provision for
Children and Young People with Complex
Additional Support Needs

CONTENTS Page

Foreword	3
Part 1 Introduction and Key Messages	5
Part 2 Main Findings	15
Culture, Complex Additional Support Needs and Expertise Recommendations 1-8	15
Case Study 1	23
Policy, Choice and Learning Experiences Recommendations 9-12	24
Case Study 2	31
Interagency Working, Planning and Review Recommendations 13-16	33
Case Study 3	38
National and Local Provision and the Role of Scottish Government Recommendations 17-21	40
Summary Conclusion	48
Acknowledgements and Participants	50
Bibliography	53
Annex A- Doran Review Interim Report (Including Annexes A-E)	57

Foreword

All parents want to see their children reach their full potential and live happy and fulfilling lives. Children and young people with complex additional support needs face particular challenges in achieving this goal and, without appropriate support and intervention, they and their families will be severely disadvantaged, their quality of life adversely affected and their aspirations quashed.

In commissioning this review, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning provided me with an opportunity to review and report on how well Scotland is doing in assessing and meeting the complex additional support needs of our children and young people. The invitation to make recommendations which will improve the learning experiences and lives of children and young people reflects the continuous attempts by Scottish Governments to ensure that the needs of all are met within a progressive, accessible and effective educational and care system.

It has been a privilege and an honour to lead this demanding piece of work and now the most important challenge needs to be faced. Reflecting the concerns of many who spoke during the review we need to ask, "What difference will this report make?" The pertinence of this question is underlined by the fact that this review has not unearthed a raft of "silver bullets" to enduring issues. In many instances, we confirm and reinforce many of the well-researched and articulated conclusions of others who have addressed these issues. I do not apologise for that. The barriers in the way of progress still exist.

Many who spoke to the review voiced an understandable sense of feeling disheartened by repeated failures to improve in key areas. It is clear that, if this review is to have a positive and enduring impact, action must be taken to remove the barriers. This cannot be done without determined, cohesive and accountable leadership. Those actions require to be implemented within realistic and achievable timescales so that Scotland's children and young people and their families are able to experience a real difference in response to their needs.

There is much on which to build. Improvements in learning and care for children and young people with complex additional support needs have taken place over many decades as a consequence of progressive legislation, policy and practice initiatives, all of which, Scotland, as a nation, can be justly proud. Many parents and children and young people reported positive experiences and outcomes from current provision. However a sizeable number do not have positive experiences. We must therefore consider the factors that work well enough for many and ensure that this becomes the experience of all.

In the current challenging financial climate that is predicted to last for several years, there is understandable concern about funding and affordability of services. Whilst that concern is real we need to remain ambitious in our pursuit of the highest practice standards and quality services which our potentially most marginalised children and young people deserve. The recommendations of the review focus on how we can continue to develop capacity within the whole system of services and supports upon which children and young people and their families rely. Capacity is more than buildings and expensive resources; it is also about the expertise, values

and attitudes that make a real difference to the experiences and outcomes for children and young people.

The difficulties faced in the implementation of recommendations are not underestimated. Complexity can however be used as one of many reasons for doing nothing, moving too slowly to change or not fully including those who use and depend on services.

The review process has been challenging and I thank the many professionals and their organisations for their help, support, guidance and expertise. I am particularly grateful to all who participated on the National Review Project Group and in the phase 1 and 2 working groups, as well as to the many practitioners, schools and organisations who so willingly gave of their time and expertise. I am particularly indebted to the children and young people and their parents and carers who have contributed their views and experiences to the review.

Peter Doran
September 2012

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION AND KEY MESSAGES

INTRODUCTION

The review addressed complex and controversial issues and it is a challenge to respect that complexity within a report that is relevant for a wide readership. To improve readability and de-clutter the main body of this report, copies of the independent reports commissioned by the review are available on the Doran Review website¹. My interim report is however included as Annex A as it covers the legislative and policy frameworks within which the review is grounded. The rights of children and young people and their parents are clearly identified in those papers. The report is structured in two parts. This first part highlights the key messages and the second part details the main findings and recommendations. Three case studies are presented through the report. These exemplars of excellent practice demonstrate very clearly that getting the right help at the right time in the right place does make a real difference to the lives of children and young people with complex additional support needs and their families.

The major focus of the review has been on how best to meet the immediate needs of children and young people. Meeting those immediate needs is critical to ensuring that long term positive outcomes are realised. The emotional context of this review also needs to be acknowledged. Tears arising from frustration and anger were evident in many of the conversations with parents and carers. Feelings of relief and joy that children and young people's needs were being met were also expressed. The conditions of some children and young people with complex additional support can entail physical frailty and shorten their lives. It is particularly sad that in two of the schools that contributed to the review a total of 4 pupils died within the space of a year. Staff were deeply affected and concerned for the parents and families involved. They were able to offer each other mutual support because of the strong relationships that existed however the impact on the whole school communities was immense.

The review title refers to the complex additional support needs of children and young people and there is an inherent danger of only thinking about children and young people in the context of those needs. The skills, strengths and resources of the children and young people we met through the review process were evident. We must therefore keep at the forefront that all children and young people have significant strengths and those strengths need to be noticed, encouraged and built upon in supportive and nurturing living and learning environments.

The potential scope of the review was very wide and judgements had to be made about key areas of focus that could be examined within the available resources. Two areas in particular were not examined sufficiently to enable any clear conclusions to be drawn and will require to be addressed further in the process of implementing review recommendations. These relate to children educated at home and children receiving education in hospitals.

Problems associated with definitions and data were identified in my interim report

¹<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/DoranReview>

and continued to provide challenges within the review process. The report² on the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning Act presented to the Scottish Parliament in February 2012 provided data on overall numbers of pupils identified as having additional support needs. Data compiled from 12 of the 14 health boards published in March 2012 through the Support Needs System (SNS)³ goes some way towards quantifying the range and incidence of severity (complexity) of needs. There are however significant problems of reliability with all data currently collected and for these reasons I see little added value in producing another wide range of incomplete or flawed tables here. My recommendations will support the work that will address the issues of data collection and recording so essential to planning. The review groups spent a great deal of time in an attempt to define the term, complex additional support needs. The conclusion was that there was no neat and easy definition, because of the many factors which came into play and the range of support needs so wide and diverse. The term however was recognised as having value as it recognised that some children and young people required a complex set of arrangements and input from a numbers of specialist practitioners to allow them to progress. The review resisted defining complexity by condition in recognition that the need for complex support and specialist professional inputs can change or develop over time.

In Scotland, 32 local authorities and 14 health boards provide services to support children and young people with complex additional support needs. Children and young people can require assistance from a range of professionals based in these bodies as well as from other statutory and voluntary agencies. The sheer complexity of services can be bewildering. Many parents and carers told the review that they faced severe difficulties and challenges in accessing the services their child needed. This report attempts to navigate through these complexities and reach realistic, achievable and evidence based recommendations that will improve the systems within which complex additional support needs are assessed and met.

Limitations in the evidence base of the review are important to acknowledge and there was particular concern about how representative the respondents to the review activities were. The parents and carers who attended the engagement events in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh were however fairly evenly split between those whose children attended local mainstream and special schools and those who attended grant aided special and independent schools. The criticism of some local authority provision and approaches by some parents and carers was strong however the review also heard from parents and carers who were very pleased with their local provision. The review team also had the opportunity to visit excellent mainstream, special and independent schools. My conclusion is that this review provides an opportunity to commend best practice across all provision, as described in the case studies, and ensure that all children and young people in Scotland have access to best practice. In order to make improvements to services we must be open to hearing all perspectives and responding positively to those perspectives. The review has also been able to test the validity of comments made during the review process with a wide range of professionals and with groups who represent parents who

²<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/02/7679>

³<http://www.isdscotland.org/health-Topics/Child-Health/Publications>

would have found it difficult to contribute to the review process. These conversations have validated the range of responses the review has received.

The review commenced in November 2010 and an interim report was produced in October 2011 (Annex A) In that report I set out the vision and principles that I continue to believe underpin provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. These are:

Vision

- That children and young people, supported by their parents and/or carers, have an easily accessible route to early integrated assessment of, and provision for their complex additional support needs from the earliest stage of development.
- That services offered are responsive to changing needs, lead to the best possible outcomes and are delivered where possible within the home community.
- That there is a presumption of entitlement to the highest quality of services which should be inclusive, efficient, equitable and effective in meeting the assessed needs and promote optimum inclusion in society.
- That local and national provision are complementary and operate with coherence.

Principles

- That at all times, positive outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs and their families will drive policies.
- That we support the six principles of Curriculum for Excellence⁴, including that all children and young people are entitled to a broad general education which develops their talents and personality, reflecting the ways different learners progress and addresses barriers standing in the way of learning.
- That this entitlement extends to the provision of the health, social care and support necessary to allow them to maximize educational opportunities.
- That the views and experiences of children, young people and their families will be reflected in the review's conclusions
- That all activity will be in line with the principles of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC⁵), and will seek to ensure that children and young people are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included.
- That to be consistent with the principles for the commissioning of national services for children established by the National Residential Child Care Initiative (NRCCI)⁶, the review will promote a national sector which is shaped to deliver efficient and effective holistic educational outcomes in a manner which complements local authority provision and reflects Best Value.

In the interim report the purpose of the review was restated in the following terms:

⁴<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum>

⁵<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gettingitright>

⁶<http://www.celcis.org/resources/higheraspirationsbrighterfutures>

—Ultimately the objective of this review is to make a set of recommendations that lead to better outcomes and experiences for children and young people with complex additional support needs. We all want an education system in Scotland that supports every child and young person to realise their potential. This review will be considering systemic changes that could make that aspiration a more consistent reality for all of our children and young people. This will include the integration of non-educational resources, such as health or social care, in the planning and delivery of services”.

The Review Process

The review was undertaken in two phases under the guidance of a National Project Review Group. Two working groups were formed in phase one and they examined the following areas:

(a) National Need and (b) Pathways and Decision Making.

Reports from these groups were included in my interim report. Building on the work of these groups a phase two working group was established to address four key questions:

- What are the barriers to the efficient interaction between local and national provision and how could this interaction be improved?
- How can we improve assessment and decision making, recognising the importance of effective and efficient collaboration across Education, Social Work and Health services and with children and families?
- What role should the Scottish Government play, including the use of national funding, in ensuring that every child and young person in Scotland has their additional support needs identified, prioritised and met, across all provision including local authorities, the independent sector, and the grant-aided special schools?
- What lessons can we learn from other international models and from research to deliver better outcomes for children and young people?

A range of independent activities was commissioned in phase two. This included:

- A call for evidence,
- Parental engagement events,
- A literature review.
- In-depth Interviews with children and young people in a range of educational settings.

In addition, HM Inspectors in Education Scotland provided a paper identifying some of the best practice in Scotland in learning provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. Members of the review team visited a number of schools and organisations and met a wide range of individuals whose perspectives were relevant to the review. This included staff leading on other relevant policy streams across Scottish Government.

KEY MESSAGES

1. Children and young people with complex additional support needs are not a uniform group whose needs can be met in exactly the same way. In most instances the pattern of needs is unique to the individual and the circumstances of his or her life and environment. Many with the right support will progress into independent lives and higher education. Others will need intensive physical and social support throughout their lives. Like all other children and young people they progress through learning and require the best conditions in which to learn. All contributing to their wellbeing share a responsibility for helping them to learn. The review resisted taking a narrow definition of complexity based on conditions because the needs of each child or young person change over time and the provision made for them needs to be adapted accordingly. Some children and young people have complex additional support needs from birth, while others acquire them later as the result of trauma, or adversities arising in their families, from disability or health needs or social and emotional factors of an individual. The review identified children and young people who having received the correct support no longer required complex arrangements to meet their needs. The evidence from the review underlined the importance of accurate assessment of the additional support needs of the child or young person and that this is understood and agreed by all contributing to his or her education, health and care.
2. The call for evidence and the parental engagement events indicated variations in all aspects of services that children with complex additional support needs and their families receive across the country and even within individual authorities and health boards. There were very stark contrasts. The paper submitted by Education Scotland through HM inspectors identified progress in improving the quality of education across all types of learning provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. However, only 40% of respondents to the Call for Evidence⁷ stated that the education services were providing “well” or “very well” for children and young people with complex additional support needs while 22% thought it was poor. Local authorities views on the quality of their own provision and processes were therefore sometimes at odds with parental perceptions. This disparity needs to be considered and take account of possible imbalance in the experiences of the respondents to the call for evidence. It also indicates the need for more targeted, robust and independent quality assurance of standards for provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs within schools and across authorities.
3. The review heard from many parents, children and young people who were happy with their school provision and their journey to that provision. A sizeable minority of parents reported on their struggles to

⁷<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/DoranReview>

be heard and to obtain appropriate services. One summed up her approach 'I used to cry, now I fight'. This included accessing information despite the legislative requirement⁸ for local authorities to provide information to parents. Parents who had learned how to make their views heard expressed concern for the children and young people whose parents and carers were not in a position to articulate their views.

4. The review team was also very concerned that there was an effective voice for the many children and young people who are —looked after” as identified in the Literature Review⁹. The recent report to the Children’s Commissioner by Stalker and Moscardini¹⁰ also noted this concern. All children who are looked after are deemed to have additional support needs until assessed otherwise. Many will need complex arrangements in place to support them. There is legitimate concern that looked after children and young people who, in the main, rely on —Corporate Parenting” by authorities should not be disadvantaged by lack of voices advocating on their behalf. The role of elected members on councils is particularly important. Councillors need to fully understand their role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the care and wellbeing of those children and young people for whom they have assumed parental responsibilities. They need to assure themselves that looked after children and young people have a voice, are heard and that council officers advocate on their behalf as if they were their own. Similarly Chief Executives in Councils have a pivotal role in providing strategic leadership and in ensuring that all services within their Council work together to meet the needs of children and young people with complex additional support needs and their families. The Chief Executive has important responsibilities in relation to forging strong and sustainable links with partners such as health personnel and voluntary services and ensuring that all fulfil the terms of service level agreements or responsibilities in children's services plans.
5. Many respondents reported unhelpful attitudes and values that existed in some organisations and which were expressed by some professionals in the assessment and decision making processes. In discussions, it was evident that views of what is meant by inclusion sometimes got in the way of objective assessment of the needs of some children and young people and how they may be met. The review team was surprised by the continuation of polarisation of views about the interpretation of the concept of inclusion which is enshrined in the UN Declarations on the Rights of the Child¹¹ and in the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 (as amended), Curriculum for Excellence, and GIRFEC. Defence of a polarised position limits the

⁸<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/08/15105817/58187>

⁹<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/DoranReview>

¹⁰ A critical review and analysis of current research and policy relating to disabled children and young people in Scotland-A report to Scotland's Commissioner for Children' (Stalker and Moscardini -April 12)

¹¹<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/healthandwellbeing/b0074766/uncrc/>

considerations of some professionals of what is best for the child's or young person's development and well-being and restricts the perceptions of some parents and carers as to what would best meet their child's needs. The cost of provision has to be considered but the code of practice indicates that the spirit of the legislation is that consideration of provision of services should be based on clear and realistic assessment of a child's needs. Some parents and independent agencies were convinced that authorities based their decisions purely on costs.

6. As in so much recent national advice, notably the Christie Report¹² and Susan Deacon's report on early education¹³, the review team heard frequent calls for more and better 'joined-up' working. During the review process it also became clear that there were a number of policy streams within Scottish Government focussing on related issues. The range of policy initiatives across education, social work and health, each set within their legislative frameworks and funded from different sources entail considerable duplication of effort by policy and professional staff in maintaining communication and ensuring cohesion across disciplines and agencies. This duplication and the resultant bureaucratic complexities are replicated in efforts to maintain cohesion and communication at local level. It is not surprising therefore that parents and children and young people are often bemused about where core responsibilities lie. Parents expressed their frustrations in having to "tell their story" over and over again to different professionals and in not having one lead person who they could relate to and rely on to navigate between different agencies and systems. Some parents were also critical of the contributions of some professionals involved in decision making about their child and particularly resented when those professionals did not attend review meetings relating to the assessment and review of their children. The other side of this coin is that the contributions of professionals were regarded as being very important. Indeed, one of the prime messages given to the review team was the very high level of appreciation for well-trained and highly experienced practitioners.
7. Plans for children and young people are a source of further contention. Many different terms are applied to plans and there is often confusion about the legal status of plans and issues about accountability for implementation. Despite the legislative requirements and guidance, the use of coordinated support plans¹⁴ (CSP) varies widely across authorities. The review heard widespread support for a single plan and planning process as outlined in GIRFEC. However, the proviso was that such a single plan should be legally enforceable and must protect the rights and entitlements of children and young people. Hopes were expressed that the proposed Children and Young People Bill¹⁵ can

¹²<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/21104740/1>

¹³<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/03/02093147/0>

¹⁴<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/04/04090720/8>

¹⁵<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2012/05/childrensbill11052012>

place GIRFEC principles and practices within a clear legal framework while, at the same time, ensuring that in any alignment of legislation the rights enshrined in the additional support legislation are enhanced rather than weakened or removed.

8. The review has focussed on the “holistic” needs of children which is consistent with the values and principles of GIRFEC. These entail taking a whole child approach and recognising that what is going on in one part of a child or young person’s life can affect many other areas of his or her life. In addition to ‘joined-up assessments’, specialist interventions from different agencies are often essential to ensure children and young people are in the best position to learn and develop and that their parents and carers are supported to meet their children’s needs. The essential role that health and social work play in the assessment and provision of services and supports was recognised throughout the review process. In terms of intervention and support, parents particularly identified the importance of therapy provision, support for activities out of school, short breaks and specialist technical aids and adaptations. In each of these areas many parents expressed concern that they were experiencing a significant reduction in availability of these services and they feared further reductions. It was a concern in the review that a significant number of parents and professionals referred to the difficulties they had in learning about resources that could help the individual child or young person. Some referred to the immense frustration of finding that when suitable equipment was identified, the different services disagreed over the source of funding. The difficulties of maintenance and replacement of worn or outdated equipment and excessive waiting time for services following assessment were also noted.
9. Whilst the qualities of caring, empathetic and willing practitioners were warmly praised by parents, carers, children and young people and professionals, such qualities are not enough on their own. The members of each team around a child or young person need to be highly trained and experienced in the particular conditions giving rise to the additional support needs. They also require the capacity to inform colleagues and parents/carers about the particular condition, its impact on learning and development and implications for care and teaching. The review identified a great deal of concern about the continued availability and affordability of professional training courses affecting teachers and educational psychologists. Concerns were also raised that the number of experienced paediatricians with disability training is declining and that this decline will affect the availability of support to parents and to GIRFEC planning processes.
10. Learning environments required by children and young people with complex additional support needs vary from minimal adaptations to mainstream schools to highly planned learning and care facilities. A striking feature in the review was the evidence of extensive efforts made by education authorities in the past ten years to build very high

quality new schools specifically designed to meet the needs of children and young people with a range of complex additional support needs, generally involving intellectual impairment. A number of these schools are co-located with mainstream schools in order to provide opportunities for social integration. Some are designed to respond separately to the needs of children and young people who require a highly stimulating learning environment and those who thrive only in low stimulus provision. In some instances these new schools offer placements to children and young people from other authorities. While many parents and carers were highly appreciative of the purpose built environments, some were not convinced that grouping children and young people with varied complex additional support needs was appropriate. Very effective head teachers recognised and agreed with the issues raised and ensured that arrangements were made through grouping, use of facilities and approaches to learning and teaching to respond to the varying social and educational needs of pupils.

11. The principles and overall framework of a Curriculum for Excellence has great potential to support and enhance the learning experiences of children and young people with complex additional support needs. The emphasis on health and wellbeing is particularly helpful as is the concept of a continuous programme from early years to the senior stages. In many instances the curriculum framework can be adapted to take account of the needs of individual children and young people for example, through alternative or augmentative means of communication, a communication supportive environment, nurture classes or adaptations to take account of lack of physical mobility or sight. Some highly successful schools for children and young people with complex additional support needs arising from profound and severe intellectual impairments have been working on their own to apply the learning outcomes and experiences to be appropriate for children and young people functioning at the very earliest levels of development. There is concern about the capacity of smaller special units or mainstream schools to undertake this demanding and highly specialised work on their own.
12. The review was concerned with children and young people up to the age of 19 and the issue of preparation for transition to post school provision loomed large. The review team had expected it to concern parents and carers and the young person in the last two years of school, but found that the deep anxieties and concerns about transition arose as early as the later stages of primary school. Some young people were anticipating university or college with the same enthusiasm as their peers. However, many parents were concerned that all of the services would change and their adult children would not have a package of support and activities that would continue their education and participation in community activities. A number of parents were contemplating having to give up paid employment to be at home for young people who needed constant supervision. Parents described tremendous variations on what services were on offer and

were often completely baffled about benefits available to their young people. Several young people we met in June of 2012 did not know what was happening for them when they left school at the end of that month.

13. There was general acceptance that out of authority' or national provision', is required to meet needs that cannot be met by local authorities themselves or through cross authority arrangements. 82% of all respondents to the Call for Evidence supported the view that Scotland required national provision. Only 4% disagreed. Government funding in the form of grant aid goes to 7 independent special schools known as the Grant Aided Special Schools (GASS). Whilst local authorities often source places and services from the independent sector and the GASS, relationships between local authorities and independent providers have been characterised over the years by tensions related to factors such as feeling incompetition', costs, policies and negative attitudes. The independent sector feels vulnerable to what they perceive as local authorities being eluctant customers', purchasing services which they would rather provide themselves in line with their stated policies. Concerns were also raised that the current use of Government funding, to support the GASS in particular, was out-dated and an inequitable use of such funding. Throughout the review process it was remarkable that providers and purchasers expressed a wish for more cooperation and partnership, improved trust and there was a particular emphasis on sharing expertise and building capacity. A strategic approach to planning and commissioning of services that centred on the best ways of meeting the needs of children and young people was widely supported. There were strong views that successful planning and commissioning processes must involve local authorities and health boards working together and sharing responsibilities. It was not surprising, but disappointing, that parents and carers and the children and young people themselves reported that they did not know and had difficulty in finding out about provision for children and young people including the range of early years centres and schools. Some staff in authorities and schools did not know and had difficulty in finding out about the range of provision and services available within and outwith their areas.
14. Children and young people with complex additional support needs have, like their peers, the right to express their views but the review indicated highly variable practices in schools and authorities in attempts to elicit and act upon the opinions of each individual. The review found that the children and young people interviewed had the same wishes for friends and family, a good social life and education which would equip them for adult life as well as being enjoyable. Individuals differed in their views of the kind of school they wanted to attend and showed enthusiasm and appreciation for both mainstream and special schools. Getting the right help at the right time in the right place from a sympathetic and respectful adult who understood and did not over protect was the key message.

PART TWO: MAIN FINDINGS

Section 1: Culture, Complex Additional Support Needs and Expertise.

1.1 The right to education and the support from health and social care that is essential to enable children and young people to learn and develop are enshrined in legislation. The responsibilities of local authorities to provide information to parents and carers on services are also clearly laid out in legislation and guidance. These rights and responsibilities are defined in the papers in annex A of my interim report. Throughout the review however many parents and carers articulated their struggle to access information and services. Tensions in relationships between parents and authorities are reported in studies described in the literature review and the following quotes reproduced from work by Riddell and Weedon¹⁶ are particularly pertinent:

—Responses from parents indicated that local authorities were not seen as honest brokers but as inflexible bodies which were more concerned with balancing the books rather than meeting children's needs... [referring to a parent of a deaf child]... Without it [separate (ASL) legislation] the disabled child would have no protection from the local authority and their proposed provision".

—The legislation thus reflected an attempt to balance parental and local authority preferences and interests. In its implementation, it is clear that local and health authorities have subverted elements which were designed to safeguard the rights of disabled children and their parents".

1.2 Distrust can lead, in some instances, to unhelpful adversarial positions being taken. Within such negative climates significant energy and resources that could be utilised to find solutions are wasted. Local authorities have a clear responsibility to provide information to the parents and carers of children and young people with additional support needs and advocacy groups including Enquire¹⁷ have a national remit to advise and support parents. It is clear that more needs to be done to ensure that parents and carers have access to information. A map of provision and services for children and young people with complex additional support needs and explanations as to how they may be accessed and funded would go some way to addressing these issues. The voluntary sector plays an important role in providing services and should be fully involved.

1.3 The overall culture within agencies and the attitudes and values of individual practitioners are key determinants of the experiences of service users. The aspiration for partnership working and keeping the child at the centre, as required by legislation, guidance and national policies can be negated by the conversations that take place at the point of service delivery. The importance of good communication and engagement processes is commonly accepted. A literature review on Multiple and Complex Needs published by the Scottish Executive in 2007¹⁸ noted; Overall ---

¹⁶Riddell,S. & E. Weedon (2010) Reforming special education in Scotland: tensions between discourses of professionalism and rights. In *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol. 40:2, p. 113 – 130

¹⁷<http://enquire.org.uk>

¹⁸Scottish Executive Social Research (2007) A Literature Review on Multiple and Complex Needs: Lessons for Policy and Practice

service users would want a personalised, sensitive and holistic or comprehensive approach' characterized by staff who listen and believe and treat users with respect, valuing their views---- while at the same time treating them as a person.' It is clear that this expectation is not the experience of all. Successfully meeting the complex additional support needs of children and young people is therefore, first and foremost, dependent on the attitudes, values and humanity of those planning and making provision and of the wider society. Members of the review team encountered so many people of conviction, insight and determination to play their part in enabling each individual to learn, grow and enjoy their childhoods and adolescence as well as help them prepare for the future. The children and young people interviewed were often enthusiastic in their praise of teachers, therapists, classroom assistants and ancillary staff who helped them. Many parents too expressed immense gratitude to the health, education and social work staff who advised, supported and included them.

1.4 Working with the children, young people and their families is a human process and human failings can come into play and the review heard from children and young people and their parents and carers about their sometimes negative experiences of authorities, schools and individual professionals. Some practitioners may, for example, lack basic training in and understanding of the conditions they are asked to address. Poor communication skills or even anxiety can also determine the difference between helpful and unhelpful interactions and conversations. Effective practitioners invested time in listening to and understanding the needs and concerns of parents and the child or young person with complex additional support needs. They well understood that establishing trust based on mutual respect benefited the child or young person, their families and the practitioners working with them. They also knew that such investment had long term benefits in time and effort. Solution focussed and strength based interventions have much to offer. The principles and conversation skills of these methods require a collegiate stance where in the goals and aspirations of the service users are central and as a result it is more likely that all parents, carers and children and young people will and should experience being worked with as opposed to being done to.

1.5 Despite what policies and procedures state, organisations can be perceived as having lost sight of their primary responsibility to the community they serve and appear self protective and defensive. This may be more apparent when there are severe pressures on the allocation of scarce resources. However resources, including those that are scarce, should be allocated on the basis of need, rights and entitlement, not on the basis of —two shouts the loudest”, the threat of legal challenge or the undue influence of individuals or groups. It was disappointing that some parents and carers who spoke to the review held the view that these approaches were sometimes necessary to secure the services their children and young people needed. Some parents and carers can however adopt unreasonable positions and have unrealistic expectations of services. In these situations parents and carers, may strive for solutions that are not necessary or ultimately not in the best interests of children and young people. Independent mediation is necessary and helpful in these cases.

1.6 In the schools visited during the review the empathy and human qualities of professionals were often tangible and it was obvious that children's and young

people's needs were central to every aspect of the school's functioning. In every instance this approach was clearly led by the senior management in the school whose personal and professional commitment generated a —cardo”, solution oriented attitude. In contrast a parent detailed how her teenage son, who had complex additional support needs, redesigned and rebuilt his wheelchair to his own higher performance specification. In so doing he sacrificed some stability for speed and manoeuvrability. His mother was very proud of his achievement and commented that he had many a —rip” from his previous wheelchair and in a very caring way related this to the normality of other children falling off bicycles when learning to ride. School staff refused to allow the young person to use the wheelchair in the school as he had lowered the handles at the side of the chair and this required staff to bend lower if assisting him. The staff deemed this a health and safety risk to themselves and had not sought other safe ways of helping him.

1.7 Negative attitudes and values can also severely restrict the breadth and depth of children and young people's learning opportunities. Examples of not being allowed to access, what were perceived by some school staff and managers in mainstream provision to be, high risk teaching areas such as food technology rooms, craft and design rooms and sporting activities were mentioned in the review process. A parent of two children, who had similar needs and who were placed at different schools in the same authority, shared her anger and disbelief that one child took part in school outings and challenging activities whilst the other child was denied access to these activities on the basis of safety'. Other examples related to meeting personal care needs of children and young people and administering medication. In some schools staff took these tasks on board whilst in other schools staff did not accept these responsibilities.

1.8 Assessing and responding to complex and multiple additional support needs challenges practitioners as well as parents and the child or young person to consider priorities for attention be it in terms of disabilities, learning context, family and social and emotional wellbeing. Parents and carers reported positive experiences of dealing with practitioners who had experience and expertise in understanding and advising on their child's condition. Often however professionals were perceived as not having that expertise and experience and professionals sometimes compounded matters by not valuing the parent as knowledgeable and in many cases —expert” on their own child. The parents of children who had autism spectrum disorders were particularly vocal and upset about their perception that their children were sometimes treated very badly by school staff who attributed blame to the child, or the parents, for their conditions. The expertise of professional staff educating and supporting children and young people with complex additional support needs is seen as one of the most critical factors in ensuring the best outcomes for them. Therefore, the quality of training and continuous professional development of all staff who work with the child or young person on a daily basis or who support and advise those staff is of great importance.

Graham Donaldson's report —“Teaching Scotland's Future”¹⁹ notes;

¹⁹<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/01/13092132/0>

—The expectation that initial teacher education will cover all that the new teacher needs to know and do is unrealistic. Teacher education needs to be seen as something where foundations laid in the initial phase continue to be built thereafter. Expectations of how and when that deeper expertise will be acquired need to be explicit".

1.9 The approach of the General Teaching Council of Scotland²⁰ (GTCS) to specialist training is that all teachers should have a core understanding of and general skill in the assessment, learning and teaching of children and young people with additional support needs and then develop specialist expertise through courses and other forms of continuous professional development (CPD). The review concurs with the approach that the overall focus on the learning needs of children and young people should be the pivot for career-long professional learning. The only statutory requirement for training of teachers to teach children and young people with additional support needs is the Teachers (Scotland) Regulations 2005, Scottish Statutory Instrument 2005/355²¹. This set of Regulations refers only to teachers of deaf, visually impaired or deaf/blind children. While the GTCS maintains a register of teachers qualified to teach in primary schools and subjects in secondary schools, it does not hold records of the numbers of teachers with specialist qualifications in additional support needs. There appears to be a dearth of information on the numbers of teachers who have expertise in relation to complex additional support needs. Some authorities appear to have well developed approaches to building specialist skills in their staff but others do not systematically plan. The Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC) and staff at the University of Edinburgh have recently undertaken an investigation of the numbers and qualifications of teachers teaching children and young people with sensory impairments which indicates that nearly 60% of teachers specialising in visual impairment are aged 45 and over while 68% of those specialising in hearing impairment are over 45.²² The review also heard that some of the lead practitioners in services and schools have either retired or are nearing the end of their professional careers with the consequent loss of expertise. The review concluded that there is a need for a body to be responsible for registering, recording and monitoring the qualifications and expertise of teachers specialising in additional support needs. Such a register is needed as part of local and national workforce planning to ensure the provision of specialist teachers.

1.10 The range of expertise required to teach children and young people with complex additional support needs is immense. One contributor to the review referred to some education authority and other staff as often not knowing what they don't know' in terms of what quality learning and teaching looks like for children and young people with highly specific but low incidence needs. However, focusing mainly on individual teachers and schools is not sufficient for ensuring that there is a cadre of teachers with sets of expertise relevant to children and young people across the diverse range of complex additional support needs. Children and young people cannot wait until their teacher acquires the additional expertise rather the specialist needs to be on hand. In most cases forward planning should anticipate changing needs that will require more specialist inputs however the review heard of a young

²⁰<http://www.gtcs.org.uk>

²¹<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2005/355/contents/made>

²²Weedon, E. Ahigren, L. Riddell, S. and Sugden, J. (2012) The Education of Children and Young People with a Sensory Impairment in Scotland SSC and CREID

boy who had gone blind over the summer holidays when going into P5. He reported that the teacher assigned to provide specialist support was learning Braille along with him and he wasted a year of vital learning in literacy skills as a result. Whilst it may not have been possible to anticipate this need the response to meeting the need, once known, was clearly unacceptable.

1.11 Until recently several of the universities offering teacher education had teams of experienced tutors who ran specialist courses for teachers wishing to teach children and young people with additional support needs and some also undertook research. Many of the teachers responsible for pioneering work in schools on the education of children and young people with additional support needs undertook a diploma in special educational needs, some on full time courses and others through modular courses. Ring fenced funding was given to education authorities to support such training. However, ring fencing has ended, in 2009, the Scottish Government supported the universities to develop a National Framework for Inclusion²³ which was designed to support the development of teacher education in additional support needs. However since then, in response to the reduction in number of teachers seeking in-service training, the numbers of staff in universities experienced in complex additional support needs have been reduced. Initial enquiries indicate this reduction is to a very serious level. In one university that had ten lecturers specialising in additional support for learning a few years ago, the number is now 2. The previous role of universities in promoting and supporting CPD and research for those working with children and young people with complex additional support needs appears to have been seriously undermined. The resultant loss of research capacity in the universities in relation to complex additional support needs is serious and will severely limit Scotland developing evidence based approaches to teaching and learning. In some authorities an education officer had the responsibility to monitor the provision of specialist teachers and other staff and to project needs over several years. Such practice enabled the authority to identify individual staff for training and specialist development and secure the provision of that training from the universities or other organisations such as SSC, CALL and other accredited providers.

1.12 The Donaldson report made little reference to the specific training and development needs of teachers who work with children and young people with complex additional support needs. However, the National Partnership Group (NPG) is due to report to Scottish Ministers on recommendations for taking forward teacher education in Scotland and the recommendations on career long development will be particularly relevant to how best to support teachers in developing specialist expertise. Meantime a significant element of GLOW²⁴, the national intranet for Scottish schools, is the development of specific on-line professional learning communities. It is understood that the NPG recommendations include the further development of such on-line support through a professional learning portal which will be linked to the redevelopment of GLOW. It is also understood that NPG recommendations include proposals to take forward the establishment of Scotland's College of Educational Leadership. Should these developments take place they offer

²³<http://www.frameworkforinclusion.org/>

²⁴<http://www.glowscotland.org.uk>

additional opportunities to ensure that the needs of staff working with complex additional support needs are considered, included and addressed.

1.13 Non teacher expertise within health boards, in particular, the allied health professions, and a range of organisations including CALL Scotland²⁵ and The Scottish Sensory Centre²⁶ has been greatly appreciated by parents, carers and professionals who responded to the review. Educational psychologists have a particularly important role to play in assessment and in supporting the staff who are in daily contact with children and young people. The long waiting lists and waiting times to access educational psychologists are already a cause for concern and there is increasing anxiety that matters will deteriorate further. Concern has been expressed by local authorities about the longer term effects of the removal of government grant funding for the post graduate professional training of educational psychologists. The overall challenge for Scotland is how to maintain, embed and build on existing expertise and ensure that it is available to children and young people with complex additional support needs in all parts of the country no matter the distances involved. It is acknowledged that for this to become a reality a range of barriers including systemic issues related to funding models and organisational constraints that can limit and ration access to that expertise need to be addressed. Section 4 of this report deals further with these systemic issues.

1.14 Classroom assistants were highlighted as making significant input to the direct care and learning of a child or young person on a daily basis. The children and young people and the parents and carers frequently cited their appreciation of the skill, knowledge, and personal commitment of these assistants. The personal relationships, mutual respect and trust that underpin the work undertaken were highly valued. There is concern that this group of staff, whose numbers have increased in recent years²⁷ are under current threat as a result of financial cutbacks in authorities. Reduction in numbers and less availability of the individual support and attention that children and young people require would have a significant negative impact on the learning experiences and outcomes of children and young people. Some classroom assistants were considered by a few individual children and young people as being too intrusive and preventing the development of social relationships with peers. Classroom support staff currently have no common training and qualification base and there are wide variations in how their need for training and continuous development is addressed. The needs of this group of staff require to be fully considered in any approaches to further development of the workforce

1.15 GIRFEC highlights the importance of workforce development for all staff across agencies and professions. The Scottish Government published in 2012 a common core²⁸ of skills, knowledge and understanding and values for staff working with children, young people and families in Scotland. These skills relate to the context of relationships with children, young people and families and to relationships between workers and should be basic to all professional development.

²⁵<http://www.callscotland.org.uk>

²⁶<http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk>

²⁷<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/PubTeacherCensus>.

²⁸<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/5565>

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

Scottish Government should require all organisations working with children and young people who have complex additional support needs to make public the values which underpin their policies and plans so as to ensure these are reflected in the way in which their staff go about assessing and meeting needs of children and young people with complex additional support needs and their families.

Recommendation 2

Education Scotland, working with the GTCS and relevant training providers in universities, further education colleges, voluntary organisations and local authorities should consider how to lead and develop learning communities of expert professionals at local, regional and national levels to advise, support and contribute to the professional learning of teachers and other school staff working with complex additional support needs. Particular consideration should be given to how GLOW can support this development.

Recommendation 3

In taking forward the advice of the National Partnership Group (NPG), Scottish Government should consult with the universities local authorities and accredited providers of professional development on how best to provide qualifications and courses for teachers of children and young people across the range of complex additional support needs.

Recommendation 4

Within the GIRFEC framework which provides the approach to working with all children and young people further consideration should be given to what specific supports are required for those working with children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Recommendation 5

Scottish Government should consider with the GTCS the establishment of a register of teachers with qualifications in meeting complex additional support needs in order to assist national workforce planning and ensure sufficient numbers of specialist staff.

Recommendation 6

Local authorities should ensure that sufficient numbers of suitably qualified learning support staff continue to be available to support children and young people with complex additional support needs in their school placements.

Recommendation 7

The Scottish Government should consider ways of ensuring that sufficient funding is provided to universities and other agencies in order to maintain their research and development capacities in the education and development of children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Recommendation 8

Scottish Government through ENQUIRE should produce a comprehensive map of provision throughout Scotland for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

CASE STUDY 1

Anne, aged 9, has a muscle wasting condition and uses a wheelchair. She has also been diagnosed as having autism spectrum disorder. When Anne was just two years of age her mother, a single parent, died and since then she has been looked after by Mr and Mrs J. Social work staff in the authority placing Anne have played a crucial role in ensuring that Mr and Mrs J have as much support as possible and work with them in co-ordinating provision within a strong GIRFEC framework.

Suitable adaptations to Mr and Mrs J's home accommodate Anne's mobility difficulties and her care needs. Recognising the demands of caring for Anne, the authority has set up shared care arrangements and Anne has short breaks with another family for a weekend, generally once per month.

In line with GIRFEC principles, a team of practitioners meet regularly to plan together and review Anne's progress and the needs of her family. They have fully integrated Anne's care plan and co-ordinated support plan. As an experienced paediatric nurse, Mrs J is well placed to understand and pursue medical advice. She and Mr J feel that they are part of the team planning for and supporting Anne. They are particularly appreciative of the training that was offered to them on caring for a child with complex additional support needs.

Mr and Mrs J felt that they were fully involved in taking the decision that Anne should attend a local primary school and they liaise closely with staff there. Anne spends 75% of the week in a special class and the rest in activities in a mainstream class with children of the same age. All working with Anne use Makaton signed communication and a system of pictures to help her to understand what is happening throughout the day and enable her to make her wishes known. A physiotherapist and speech and language therapist work directly with Anne and with her teaching staff and Mr and Mrs J. An occupational therapist monitors her progress and is readily available if Mr and Mrs J or Anne's teachers need advice. Discussions are already taking place about the best provision for Anne's secondary education. She may attend one of two possible local secondary schools with support or travel the distance to a special school.

In addition to all of this support, Mr and Mrs J feel that they have to keep abreast of developments which may be of benefit to Anne. They are members of a charity formed to support people with conditions like Anne's and they go out of their way to attend events. Mr and Mr J sums up the reason for such searches as 'We don't know what we don't know'.

They are particularly appreciative of the Family Fun Day held at the CALL Centre at the University of Edinburgh, because it gives them information and hands on experience of technology and software to aid Anne's communication and learning and advice from a range of experts.

2. Policy, Choice and Learning Experiences.

2.1 The review engaged with a number of policy teams and review groups working on areas related to children and young people with complex additional support needs. Whilst each group has a particular area of interest there was evidence of overlapping concerns and even some duplication of work. Attempting to provide 'integrated' services to individuals and families across 32 Local authorities, 14 Health Boards and numerous professional disciplines is already a complex matrix for a population of just over 5 million. Many policy teams and review groups, each progressing their own interpretation of issues, guidance and action plans, can create confusion, make communication difficult and can lead to a lack of clarity about accountability for actions. The parents who spoke to the review often expressed confusion about the complexity of systems. Many practitioners reported the challenges of keeping abreast of developments in policy and also noted the demands placed on them in responding to or contributing to policies and work groups progressing those policies.

2.2 Particular issues related to the interpretation and implementation of policy and legislation arose during the course of the review, the most contentious of which were inclusion and the presumption of mainstreaming. For some parents and professionals inclusion was considered to mean attending mainstream classes in mainstream schools. For many others in this review inclusion was about taking steps to ensure that a child or young person had experiences in a suitable environment that would support their learning and development and inclusion in wider society. The Scottish legislation makes clear the expectation that children and young people should be supported to be included in mainstream classes alongside their peers unless such provision would not promote their education and welfare. In spite of the clarity in the legislation and guidance it is clear from listening to the views of parents and children that professionals within and between authorities can hold positions based on their own or their authorities' understanding of or interpretation of both inclusion and the presumption of mainstreaming.

2.3 Research is limited in terms of experiences and outcomes between mainstream and special schools²⁹. The discourse captured during this review on different types of provision did not generally centre on attainment however but on parental choice and the preferences of children and young people. Choice or rather lack of choice in relation to decisions about the centre or school their child should attend was a major issue for parents. Some voiced very negative views about being offered only mainstream provision. The negativity of these parents towards mainstream school placement centred on their perceptions of lack of resources, limitations in staff expertise, poor staff attitudes, social isolation of their children, and in some cases exclusion of children and young people. For some young people their issues in mainstream were of social isolation, restriction of learning experiences, lack of expertise in staff and bullying. Many children and young people placed in mainstream schools and their parents however stated their satisfaction with their school placement. In these cases the limitations evident in other mainstream school placements had been addressed. Within some special school provision, in some

²⁹Riddell (May 2011) Policies and Practices in Education, Training and Employment for Disabled people in Europe. <http://www.nesse.fr/nesse>

authorities, the range of pupil needs which were being met within the school was a cause for parental concern. One parent of, in her words, a fragile seven year old girl with cerebral palsy was extremely concerned about the level of aggression exhibited by some children in the school she was advised to consider by her authority. She could not see, or be persuaded, that either her child's needs could be successfully met in the school or that her child could be socially included in the school. Parents' beliefs on differing types of school provision are clearly an important factor and the review heard from those who were happy in mainstream, special or independent schools. The main issues in determining parents' views and their level of satisfaction with placement is that they are convinced that the school has the right attitudes, expertise and resources to meet *their* child or young person's needs.

2.4 The interviews³⁰ of children and young people indicated that they valued having the opportunity to build enduring friendships and not be excluded because of their differences. They also expressed the view that specialist teaching of the skills and resources they needed was immediately available to them. All the children and young people interviewed particularly appreciated having support when required. They resented having 'things done to them' or having intrusive and unwanted assistance. Parents greatly valued the regular input of allied health professions and appreciated their expertise and insights into their children's conditions.

2.5 Decisions on the type of centre or school a child or young person with complex additional support needs should attend need to take fully into account the relative importance of, and interaction of needs related to, care, health, education, family circumstances, as well as the views of parents/carers and the child or young person. In some instances a residential placement may be required. This is particularly the case for some children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties who may need to attend these schools on a residential basis not because the school is at a distance from their home rather because their needs are most likely to be met with 24 hour care and education often over 52 weeks per year. The placement is a placement of choice based on the needs of the child or young person. Some children and young people attend such residential schools as a result of legal proceedings notably as through decisions of the Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland and as a result of compulsory measures through the children's hearing system³¹ in order to ensure their care and protection and including those who need secure care. For many with social, emotional and behavioural needs there is no viable birth or foster family placement at the time of admission. Local authorities depend on the independent sector to make provision for the complex additional support needs of children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Of the 41 special schools registered with the Registrar of Independent Schools in 2012, 37 are specifically for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. One of the grant-aided special schools also provides for children with these difficulties.

2.6 Considerable improvements have been made to residential care over the last decade as a result of developments in approaches to care, education and therapy and relationships with families. Residential placements are often used as part of the

³⁰<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Review/DoranReview>

³¹<http://www.chscotland.gov.uk/>

support for families to enable positive relationships between child and parent to be maintained. Shared care arrangements between residential schools and families are common. These allow the child or young person to spend quality time in their home environment and maintain important links with their home communities as well as encouraging their learning and attainment and improving their attitudes to education. Knowing that they have the real and effective supports of the residential placement immediately available, if needed, enables many families to meet the child or young person's needs when they are at home and work towards their eventual return to the full time care of their families.

2.7 Education Scotland in its report for the review drew on evidence from recent inspections and activities related to specific tasks particularly those related to schools for pupils with multiple and more complex needs. They point to the range and diversity of specialist provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs with excellent practice occurring in some establishments across the range. They state 'the majority of schools for those with complex needs make very good or excellent provision' and that 'schools and units for those with complex needs are some of the very best schools in the country'. Among the areas for development are, improving the quality of the curriculum in some schools and units and extending the length of the school week, where this does not match that of mainstream. HM Inspectors advise that schools need to continue to improve achievement, ensure use of challenging activities and broaden the range of certification of learning, particularly in special schools and units, as well as seeking improvement through the use of self-evaluation and use of data.

2.8 The principles and overall framework of Curriculum for Excellence have already been noted as having great potential to support and enhance the learning experiences of children and young people with complex additional support needs. The review strongly supports the framework of a single curriculum for all and recognizes the adaptations, which are required to make the curriculum relevant and accessible to all. The Scottish Government, Education Scotland and The Scottish Qualification Agency³² (SQA) have ensured that all pupils at the secondary stage can attain qualifications from Levels 1 to 6 on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework. The SQA has a long history of making special arrangements many of which recognise the specialist approaches needed in the learning of children and young people with complex additional support needs. Education Scotland provides some guidance on its website on adapting courses to meet the needs of pupils with various conditions. Work will need to be ongoing to ensure that all children and young people have full access to the learning experiences in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence. The review was able to see examples of this being done in a number of special schools, which have much to share. Many practitioners other than teachers have important roles in helping pupils to engage in the learning experiences and achieve the learning outcomes in specific areas of and across the curriculum. One area of concern was the extensive developments to the curriculum required by children and young people who are at the earliest stages of cognitive and all round development and who have extensive health needs. Staff in schools and parents expressed concern about the extensive work required to ensure that

³²<http://www.sqa.org.uk>

their children and young people were working towards relevant goals, an issue relevant to all children and young people not just those with complex needs.

2.9 In three local authority schools visited, dedicated and insightful staff had been working for several years largely on their own to produce curriculum guidelines within the framework of Curriculum for Excellence. Staff in nursery establishments and small, special and large mainstream schools are not likely to have the capacity to undertake such work. A national initiative is required to draw on the work already achieved to produce national guidance on the ‘Early’ level of the curriculum for children and young people with the most complex additional support needs who are at the earliest stages of development.

2.10 Much of the learning of children and young people in our society takes place in the social and leisure pursuits in and around the school day and in evenings and holidays. These learning experiences are recognised as part of Curriculum for Excellence. Being included in clubs and leisure activities meant a great deal to the children and young people with additional support needs interviewed for the review. They and their parents and carers brought to the attention of the review the difficulties that they faced in accessing such opportunities. The situation was complex. Some young people reported on feeling well integrated in mainstream schools, while others felt isolated, sometimes because they were accompanied everywhere by a support assistant and did not get the opportunity to relate to their peers free from an unwanted adult presence. Young people who were deaf described the pleasure they had from being in an environment where other pupils and teachers were able to communicate through British Sign Language. As one child in a residential special school put it when contrasting previously negative mainstream school experiences –‘ve got three friends already and I’ve only been here two months’ Many children and young people with complex additional support needs in both mainstream and special schools stated that they were not able to spend time with friends after school or during holidays³³ for reasons to do with distance or mobility and in some cases parental reluctance to allow their children to travel independently. In some of the local authority schools visited during the review out of school time activities were offered including through holiday periods. The commitment of school staff to these activities, often in their own time was impressive. Parents, carers and their children were highly appreciative of these and after school clubs.

2.11 The increasing availability of technological aids greatly improves the learning experiences of children and young people. In many of the schools visited the reliance on aids to communication was apparent as was the pride and confidence pupils demonstrated in their use. The range of resources is vast, varying from small and cheap adaptations to everyday objects, through aids for mobility, sight and hearing to complex and expensive adaptations of technology. Applications of technology have provided children and young people with new opportunities to communicate and thus take a greater part in society. The CALL Centre and other members of the Augmentative Communication Practices Group³⁴ play a key role in providing information and in assessing and supporting children and young people

³³Stalker-Moscadini opcit

³⁴<http://www.acipscotland.org.uk>

whose complex additional support needs include alternative or augmentative communication. The provision of the most appropriate technological aids and appliances is a highly specialized field where mistakes can be extremely costly. Parents, carers, teachers and other practitioners usually need training in the use of the equipment as well as the individual child or young person. Their peers too benefit from some knowledge. Concern was expressed to the review that staff and parents did not always get the help they required to support the effective use of that technology, often central to the daily life of the child or young person. Concern was also expressed that there is an increasing trend for authorities to hand over sourcing and purchase of technological aids to centralized information and communications (ICT) departments. These departments do not always have the relevant specialist experience and expertise to select the most appropriate equipment and software for a child or young person. The provision of any aid or adaptation will be more effective as a result of careful assessment of the particular environment in which they are to be used and taking account of the individual needs of the child or young person. In this respect the expertise and specialist experience that exists in organisations such as CALL, Scottish Centre of Technology for the Communication Impaired (SCTCI) and Fife Assessment Centre for Communication through Technology (FACCT) could be made more available and accessible to all authorities. There also need to be in place arrangements for funding and maintaining equipment that is critical to a child's or young person's ability to communicate and be more independent. Some children and young people are dependant on health technology such as ventilators. Similar issues exist in relation to training in the use of this essential equipment.

2.12 Throughout the review, parents and carers repeatedly referred to the value of short breaks, particularly involving residential stays for their child, echoing the points recorded in the report of the National Review for Services for Disabled Children³⁵. Short breaks can offer enjoyable experiences for the individual child or young person and refreshment for the families and siblings. Whilst a large number of parents and carers reported positively on the short break provision provided for them, many would have liked more frequent opportunities particularly during long summer holidays. Many families told the review that the availability of short breaks enabled the family to hold together and without breaks they worried about their capacity to cope. They were deeply concerned that if short breaks were not available they may need residential care for their child. Scottish Government has provided additional funding for short breaks and it is vital that this tangible support for families is maintained and not reduced as a result of pressure on local authority budgets

2.13 Effective management of transitions from one stage of education to another and on to life after school is a key component to effectively meeting the needs of all children and young people. It is crucial when considering any changes for those children and young people with complex additional support needs. The review regularly heard concerns about all transitions including; into school, from primary to secondary, from one kind of school to another and particularly from school to adult services. Adequate time for planning and preparation, full involvement of the child and family and coordination of professionals were identified as contributing to successful transitions. When any of these are not properly addressed problems

³⁵The Scottish Government (2011) 'Report of the National Review of Services for Disabled Children <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/02/25151901/0>

arise. By far the greatest concern for parents was about the move to adult services and the fear of the young person falling into a 'back hole' where there was no direct accountability for continuing services. These issues are widely reported in literature and the green paper³⁶ in England makes particular reference to the problem that:

Too often, professionals working with these young people are not encouraged to focus on young people's ambitions for adulthood and how best to help them prepare. Such poor planning of support is exacerbated by a lack of choice and opportunities for young people: for example, a limited choice of entry-level courses in further education that do not build on what has gone before, or prepare young people for life and work; poor quality work experience; and a lack of supported employment opportunities to help them prepare for, find and retain work. In addition, the transition from children's to adult health services is often badly coordinated, which can lead to a deterioration in young people's health.'

2.14 The Commissioner for Children and Young People has recently received a report from Professor Kirsten Stalker and Dr. Lio Moscardini³⁷ that identifies the issues of transition in the Scottish context and makes recommendations on how the Commissioner might take these forward. My remit did not specifically include examining the move into adulthood and adult services but, given the strength of feelings shared in the review process, it would be wrong not to include comment. We all should recognize the issues and fully endorse any moves to improve the services and coordination of services to children and young people through this crucial period. Putting it very simply, it does not make sense nor is it in any way justifiable or tolerable that any 'back holes' in this important period in a young person's life are allowed to continue because of the failure of services to coordinate and take responsibility.

2.15 The devastating effects on each child or young person with complex additional support needs if appropriate provision is not made for them and the costs of providing the necessary support indicate the importance of robust quality assurance measures. In a well delivered cycle of assessment, planning, intervention and review, it should be possible to demonstrate that learning and development targets are being met and the processes of meeting them are fit for purpose. It should not be difficult to insert a process of verification at intervals by an informed and objective practitioner. However, basic to all forms of quality assurance is the need for clear benchmarks of what constitutes acceptable standards. Current Care Inspectorate standards and Education Scotland quality indicators go some but not all the way towards such benchmarks. There is room for more precise measures related to the highly specialised aspects of provision made for a child or young person with particular needs. The disparity between local authorities' perceptions of the effectiveness of their services and the perceptions of some parents challenges the efficacy of quality assurance of local authorities and individual schools. Education Scotland's independent role in inspection is widely recognized and valued and many contributors to the review thought that HM Inspectors should be more involved in regularly quality assuring the provision made by local authorities and schools for small groups of and individual children and young people with complex additional

³⁶<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/b0075291/green-paper>

³⁷Stalker - Moscardini op cit

support needs. They also asserted that ways should be found to evaluate the quality of contributions by all practitioners in the team around the child or young person. The review concurs with these views.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 9

The Scottish Government and Education Scotland, working with local authorities, relevant health board staff and universities, as appropriate, should continue to build on the developments in guidance and advice on meeting the curricular and learning needs of children and young people with complex additional support needs within the framework of Curriculum for Excellence and GIRFEC. In particular, they should provide more specific guidance and support to help those contributing to the learning of children and young people at the earliest stages of cognitive and all round development.

Recommendation 10

All local authorities in partnership with health boards, university based and voluntary organisations should review their approaches to the provision of aids to mobility and communication, including ICT so as to ensure that what is provided is fit for purpose and that staff and parents, as well as the child or young person have the necessary skills to utilise these resources.

Recommendation 11

The Scottish Government should provide leadership and where appropriate direction to local authorities and health boards and consider the adequacy of existing legislation to ensure that the transition from children's to adult services for young people with complex additional support needs is properly coordinated, managed and delivered.

Recommendation 12

The Scottish Government, Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate should work with local authorities and other relevant quality assurance agencies to develop a performance management framework to quality assure the implementation of GIRFEC and Additional Support Legislation. This should include the introduction of meaningful performance data complemented by relevant quality indicators specifically related to children and young people with complex additional support needs.

CASE STUDY 2

Martin, aged 13, has severe learning difficulties, some co-ordination problems and is visually impaired. He fitted well into his local primary school where his parents felt his needs were being met. When he transferred to his local secondary school, he found it difficult to understand the many different demands of the day and missed the stable peer group that had supported him in primary school, where he felt secure. The resources of the secondary school were not adequate to meet all of his needs including therapy. Martin's parents supported by his educational psychologist sought a placement which would better suit his needs. They selected a residential special school with expertise in visual impairment and other complex needs.

Martin joined an S1 class as a weekly boarder and responded well to the calm and measured pace of an environment in which his needs, particularly those related to his visual impairment, were met by staff who integrated care and education. The consistent approach of the new school to building Martin's self care and independence throughout the day and in the evenings was very effective in promoting his health and wellbeing. Responding well to individual and group teaching, he quickly made friends and felt confident enough to take part in a range of subjects such as craft and design technology, home economics, science and physical education. He had not had full access to these subjects in his previous school due to health and safety concerns arising from his poor muscle tone and limited vision.

The team of physio, occupational and speech and language therapists in the new school fully assessed Martin to identify the precise nature of his difficulties in movement, communication and organising himself to do every-day tasks. They set up programmes and worked with teaching and care staff to integrate them into his classes and residence. Augmentative and alternative communication was introduced to facilitate Martin's speech. The impact of his visual impairment on his ability to move around within and outwith the environment of the school was also assessed and the habilitation team started Martin on a mobility programme to help him to travel independently.

Assessment showed that Martin had very limited literacy skills in part due to low expectations and a lack of appreciation of the impact of his visual impairment on responding to pictures and text. Too little attention had been paid to ensuring that he was given information in alternative, accessible formats. His new school's approach was to provide all learning materials in a way that is 'visually optimal' that is high contrast, large, uncluttered images and words. As a result of using more appropriate materials, Martin is making very good progress in acquiring literacy skills.

The outcomes from the first year at the new school have been very positive. As a result of the combined inputs of education, care, therapy and habilitation staff, Martin has gained confidence. His favourite area of the curriculum now is outdoor education in which he has had experience of horse riding, kayaking and bike riding. Gaining confidence, pride in new skills, enjoying the company of friends, combined with the school's approach to responding to his social and emotional needs throughout the week has helped Martin to manage his behaviour. He is making steady progress across all of his subjects.

His parents who previously were finding his behaviour increasingly difficult to manage report that the positive changes in him mean that they can all go out as a family and the stress on them and his siblings has been significantly reduced.

Officers from Martin's local authority take part in reviews of his progress and consult with staff in the school to ensure that the placement is meeting his needs.

3. Interagency Working, Planning and Review

3.1 Children and young people with complex additional support needs require support and services from a range of agencies and professionals. The composition of the team around the child or young person changes with age, stage of development and the impact of personal and family circumstances. While there was evidence of these changes being well managed the review frequently heard about the challenges and frustrations of parents and carers and even of practitioners trying to navigate between agencies and differing professional perspectives to secure supports and services. All of the literature contributing to this review contained similar themes going back over many years. In his commission on the Future of Public Services in Scotland, Christie³⁸ described:

Scotland's patchwork of strategic authorities--- evolved piecemeal over many decades ----inadequate strategic coordination between public service organisations that work routinely to different objectives, with separate budgets and processes for accountability.---Operational duplication is rife ----- Collaboration often relies on the persistence and flexibility of individual front-line workers and leaders.

3.2 The literature review identified barriers to various forms of collaborative working such as lack of clarity related to roles, poor communication and lack of stability in staffing. The Call for Evidence identified key factors that prevent services from working together effectively as:

- a lack of co-ordination and continuity across all relevant services
- a lack of understanding of joint working and all this entails
- a lack of clarity and understanding of roles and responsibilities, leading to a lack of cohesive working
- a lack of information sharing
- different management structures and priorities within different agencies and services
- pressures in terms of resources, funding, workloads and time.

3.3 The parental engagement events noted that

---grievances such as ‘having to repeat one’s story over and over again’ were familiar from previous consultations on user experiences of services and are exactly the kind of issues that GIRFEC is seeking to address. Children with complex needs and their families are the most likely among service users to come into contact with multiple professionals and agencies. Ensuring professionals and agencies are held to account in terms of implementing GIRFEC is a crucial step towards ensuring that their experience of services is positive.

3.4 The review process identified the key role Scottish Government has in providing the leadership and vision to develop all aspects of provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. One of the specific factors noted in

³⁸Christie op cit

responses to the call for evidence was that the Scottish Government and its agencies have a role to play in governance of the quality of education and support provision. Specific responses noted the role of government and its agencies, Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate in setting, and monitoring through inspection, standards for provision meeting complex additional support needs. Concern was raised about current accountability to ensure the implementation of existing policy and legislation. Parents in particular found it difficult to understand how authorities could seem to pay little attention to what legislation required. The theme of accountability and the role that Scottish Government could play extended, for some respondents, to making agencies (health, social work and education) work together.

3.5 The move towards greater integration of services between Health and the Local Authority in Highland region is a particularly recent development that may offer a way forward for all authorities in their attempts to achieve improved outcomes for children. Highland have also led the way on implementing the GIRFEC approach which is a unifying framework for children's services to ensure that the needs of all children are put at the centre of practice and ensure that all agencies respond appropriately to individual children's needs. In particular GIRFEC requires '*systems, services, planners and practitioners to work in an integrated and consistent manner, using a single planning and delivery system, cutting out duplication and as much red tape as possible*'. The respondents, including parents and carers, local authorities, health board staff and voluntary organisations, to this review were consistent in their desire to see such simpler and more effective systems put in place to assess and meet needs. Many who knew about GIRFEC were enthusiastic about the policy and its principles and had high hopes for the developments in practice to which GIRFEC aspires. However a significant number had not heard about GIRFEC. More worryingly some teachers and support staff in local authority schools had either very limited engagement with or limited understanding about GIRFEC's relevance to their work with children and young people. Experienced practitioners, while appreciating the value of the GIRFEC practice model as a general approach to children and young people in need of help in the short or long term, expressed concern that its application to children and young people with complex additional support needs would need very clear guidance. The levels of detail required to make appropriate provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs are evident in the extant guidance, such as the 'Pathway of Care for Children with Exceptional Healthcare Needs'³⁹, and the 'Integrated Care Pathways for Mental Health Scotland: Child and Adolescence'⁴⁰. Perth and Kinross Council have developed two extensive manuals to support staff in the local authority to make provision for children and young people with additional support needs through integrated inter-professional collaboration. One parent, echoing the stance of many, stressed the importance of detail in effective practice when she stated 'it is the little things that matter'. This review is of the view that, in fully implementing the GIRFEC practice model, detailed attention should be given to getting it right for each child and young person with complex additional support needs.

³⁹National Managed Clinical Network for Children with Exceptional Healthcare Needs (2011) *Pathway of Care*

⁴⁰National Health Service Scotland *Integrated Care Pathways for Mental Health Scotland: Child and Adolescence*

3.6 The implementation of GIRFEC across Scotland is at different stages. It is crucial that the excellent principles of getting it right are embedded in practice consistently across Scotland. Taking a holistic view of each child and young person is important for all but it is essential when the individual has, or is in, conditions which require complex arrangements to support their learning and development. The child or young person is most likely to prosper when parents, carers and other family members are empowered to give support, their roles and needs respected and their contributions fully valued. The proposed new legislation in the Children and Young People Bill⁴¹ is to strengthen the legal basis of GIRFEC. One problem which requires to be addressed is that whereas education authorities carry statutory responsibility for providing educational services, they cannot require health services and other agencies to assess and provide services for a child or young person with complex additional support needs when these are required to support his or her education.

3.7 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) instituted and provided a legal basis for coordinated support plans (CSPs) to ensure that education authorities worked with other local authority services and services in health boards to assess and support children and young people who require interagency input. Most children and young people with complex additional support needs would appear to require a CSP but the review found that many who appeared to meet the criteria did not have one. Despite the statutory basis of CSPs, education authorities vary widely in the percentage of pupils having CSPs⁴². Parents and carers were mainly supportive of CSPs although many were critical of aspects of their preparation and implementation. It was notable that in one large special school where every pupil had a CSP and where parents were confident that the school was meeting their needs the need for a CSP was not seen as a priority. Some parents saw the CSP as an insurance policy that if services were not provided then they could invoke its terms. In this school senior managers were concerned about the administrative burden of preparing and reviewing the plans. Education authorities all had their own approaches to planning although plans with different names were in fact forms of individualised educational plans. Practitioners, other than education staff, and particularly those working in more than one authority found the differences in planning confusing and difficult. Problems also existed over exchange of information relating to educational plans due to issues of confidentiality. Where a child or young person was looked after, the child plan was often managed in different ways from the CSP or IEP. The review concluded that plans to rationalise and streamline planning are a priority.

3.8 Despite all of the difficulties, this review confirmed that some excellent interdisciplinary work exists in areas, often because members of teams understood the benefits of sharing expertise and insights. In addressing the complex additional needs of children and young people, the review found that parents, carers and practitioners appreciated a cyclical process of:

- assessing and specifying the additional support needs of each child or young person

⁴¹ Children's bill op cit

⁴²<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/02/7679/6>

- determining and setting out the aims and targets and how to achieve them in an individual plan
- implementing the plans
- reviewing and updating the plans.

3.9 This framework is endorsed and illustrated in the code of practice⁴³ with guidance on the roles and responsibilities of practitioners and the involvement of parents/carers and the child or young person. It is also integral to the GIRFEC practice model. Many respondents to the call for evidence and the parental seminars thought that full implementation of the GIRFEC model and the move towards the ‘Single Plan’ would strengthen the procedures.

3.10 A sizeable number of parents and staff in schools and agencies stated that the quality of interdisciplinary work was often marred by the failure of key professionals to attend and contribute to assessment and review meetings. They were particularly incensed when a practitioner attending a review meeting did not have an informed view of the needs of the child or young person. The value of review meetings depended on those participating having a shared understanding of their purpose and being clear about the decisions to be made, who had the power to make them and who was responsible for carrying them out. Some parents reported on meetings taking place and then the outcome being totally different from the decisions made at the time. A number of parents reported that they were not listened to at the meetings and their opinions were ignored. Some children and young people felt that professionals often did not ask for their views or listen to them. In some instances, decisions were made on information from outdated assessments and did not take account of the age and stage of development of the child or young person. While endorsing the GIRFEC concept of a lead professional to ensure the processes were carried out, many parents/carers and many agency and school staff stated that the lead must be a person ‘with the clout’ to compel involvement of all key professionals and the authority to implement decisions. Overall this review supports the full implementation of GIRFEC across all authorities as a means to address many of the concerns raised about interagency working, assessment planning and review. There is however a necessity for a clear legal requirement on all authorities to implement plans for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

3.11 Most authorities have devised a —Staged Intervention”⁴⁴ framework to help with planning services and to guide staff in schools on the levels of provision offered to meet levels of needs. Whilst the framework has been well used and has much strength, it was not always used for the purpose intended which is to match provision to levels of needs. In some cases children and young people were thought to have to “progress” through the framework exhausting different levels of support and provision during their journey. This can involve numerous interventions and different staff and agencies and sometimes contribute to an enduring sense of failure for the child or young person and an increase in frustration for the parent or carer. Providers of independent services often report that such use of a staged intervention

⁴³<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/04/04090720/0>

⁴⁴<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/supportinglearners/whatisupport/targetedsupport/stagedintervention.asp>

framework simply delays the opportunity for the child or young person to receive the services they need with unnecessary damage being inflicted along the way.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 13

In taking forward the development of the single plan as proposed in the Children and Young People Bill future legislation should specify the responsibility and accountability of all agencies to implement the actions and resources needed to fulfil that plan.

Recommendation 14

The Scottish Government should take action to address the concern that all authorities are held to account for implementing national policies and legislation and thereby ensure that all parents, carers and children and young people can expect similar responses to meeting their needs regardless of where they live in the country.

Recommendation 15

The Scottish Government working with local authority services, the health boards and the voluntary sector should provide detailed guidance and support for the application of the GIRFEC approach and specifically the practice model to meeting the changing needs of all children and young people and specifically those with complex additional support needs from the earliest stages to transition to adult life.

Recommendation 16

In taking forward workforce development specific attention should be paid to improving the specialist communication skills required by those working with children and young people with complex additional support needs and their families and in relating to each other.

CASE STUDY 3

James's mother gave the following account of her experience of working with Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) (His name has been changed and the names of his schools omitted.)

James, a bright and happy six year old, became suddenly and progressively ill with a rare neurological condition in 2001. This affected his speech and schoolwork. At the age of eight, James' condition became rapidly worse and he lost his ability to hear and speak properly. It was impossible for him to function normally and he was withdrawn from mainstream school. This is when PKC became closely involved.

PKC's history of support includes a range of services over ten years. Initially James was given additional support for learning classes. However, his worsening medical condition meant that more support was required. Ultimately, I, James's mother, became responsible for both his full time care and education at home, supplemented by home visits from his school and an additional weekly visit from a class teacher. Sadly, his condition deteriorated further to the point of aphasia: being unable to speak, hear, or even understanding basic communication.

Through regular meetings with support staff, we decided that James would not be able to return to mainstream and a place at a grant aided school in Edinburgh was agreed. The placement at this school was non-residential, which was best for James to maintain a close family bond and ensure his overnight medical care. James continued at this school for five years. In the early years he reached a low point when his general motor skills deteriorated. Then his medical condition started improving. He was able to begin reading again, learnt sign language, and over the years recovered hearing and learned to talk again. During this time, his progress was monitored by PKC to ensure his needs were met. When James was 13, it was agreed to start integrating him back into mainstream schooling.

With full agreement of his parents and PKC, James joined pupils in a secondary school which was chosen as the best match for his needs. With continued medical improvements, and the school's support, he successfully found his own place within the school. He improved in his studies and discovered a love for reading. His teachers quickly got to know him and gave glowing reports. While social situations still presented problems, James gradually built up a small group of close friends.

By 16, James was and is flourishing academically. His latest achievements in 2011 include Int-2 Mathematics grade "A", Standard Grades in Art "2", Biology "1", Chemistry "1", Geography "1", and Physics "1". On top of this, he gained both a UK Maths Challenge "Best in School" and "Gold" award. With his history of speech and language difficulties, James had to work very hard and relentlessly with his English studies. To his credit, he was able to sit the Standard Grade English exam in 2011 and his effort was rewarded with an excellent pass at grade one. James' more recent achievements are his Prelim Higher results, 5 A's in Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Geography - (the Geography he self-studied with excellent support from his Geography teachers). He has accepted an unconditional offer from a university to study Bio-Molecular Sciences.

PKC helped to achieve a successful outcome by continually assessing James's needs and taking appropriate actions. This meant being flexible and adapting solutions to match an ongoing and changing medical condition. Team members offered a professional and caring interest in James. They listened to, and acted on, requests made by us, his parents. There was good communication between parents, education, and medical staff, including both regular reviews and ad-hoc meetings. This gave James the time and space to develop, re-learn and grow. The future for James is now very positive and his attitude is reflected in his own words "I want to make the most of my second chance". In the 2012 SQA examinations James achieved 5 Highers all Band 1A grade passes.

4. National and Local Provision and the Role of Scottish Government

4.1 The desire to maintain children and young people within their families and in schools within or close to their immediate communities is at the centre of national and local policies. Sometimes needs cannot be met within local authorities and their schools and day or residential placements outwith authority boundaries are necessary. Many authorities share their facilities with others and sometimes have a service level agreement with another authority. Most authorities make use of grant-aided or independent special schools. As noted, 82% of respondents to the Call for Evidence agreed that some form of national provision was necessary.

4.2 Whereas in the past national placements were largely either full-time residential or day, now grant-aided and independent schools offer more flexible packages often working closely with the authorities and local provision. These packages can involve some of the following:

- 52 week a year residential care and education
- term-time residential care and education
- term-time education with or without after school clubs
- part of the week education and care shared with facilities in the pupil's local area
- short-term residential or non residential care and education for assessment
- short-term residential or non residential care and education for intensive enhancement programmes
- outreach support from staff in grant-aided or independent special schools to a child or young person, their family and teachers and practitioners supporting them

4.3 Whilst the review has continued to refer to 'national' provision there is justifiable debate about what 'national' actually means as a concept and in practice. Some independent and GASS schools have placements from a wide range of local authorities and therefore lay claim to be 'national' resources; others tend to be mostly used by local authorities within their more immediate geographical area. Changing placement patterns by local authorities can affect the spread of pupil home areas in any school within relatively short timescales. A more fundamental issue however is that there is a lack of common understanding and agreement about what national needs require to be met by national provision.

4.4 There are many reasons, some of which were described earlier in this report in 2.5 and 2.6, why children and young people are placed in other than authority provision. Some children's and young people's complex support needs are of such low incidence within authorities that it would not be practical or cost effective for an authority to meet those needs without external assistance. Some needs require specialist resources and expertise that again would not be practicable for the authority to provide on their own. Some children and young people have needs of such severity and complexity that they exhaust the specialist resources within an authority. In some instances an authority may be able to meet some of the child's needs but not all, for example meeting education needs may be possible but the child may not have a viable family placement. Some of the grant aided and other independent schools have however experienced falling rolls as local authorities

continue to develop their own services. These schools have worked to diversify their services in response to changing needs and most are making provision for children and young people with ever more complex additional support needs. The review also heard that providers have little certainty about how they will continue to be used by authorities in the future and this has a serious impact on their capacity and willingness to invest in their services for the medium to long term. When children and young people are placed a fee is charged for the placement. The local authority normally pays the fee and sometimes, depending on local structures, the fee is the prime responsibility of either the education or social work department within the authority. Views were expressed however that health boards do not generally contribute to fees even when health needs are significant.

4.5 Placements, and in particular residential placements, outwith authorities in the independent and grant aided special schools have attracted controversy for a number of reasons. Some of these reasons, noted earlier, relate to matters of policy, negative perceptions about cost and quality and, particularly when parents choose out of authority placements against the wishes of the local authority, there are feelings of being in competition. These issues have been well documented in many publications and were summarised in the following abstract from the commissioning report of the National Residential Child Care Initiative (NRCCI)

The relationships between local authorities and independent providers vary considerably; some authorities have extremely good partnerships with providers but the Initiative found that in general relations between purchasers and providers can be characterised by a degree of mistrust. The lack of genuine transparency around costs and benefits across the system, for example, leads to a tension between independent providers and local authorities.

4.6 Some key professionals remain fundamentally opposed to residential care and in particular to placements in residential schools. They do not agree that such placements can be aplacement of first choice⁴⁵and at best continue to view such placements as a last resort. These views can contribute to the providers of independent and grant aided special schools believing that, even where there is a —god” relationship with local authorities, it mostly felt that authorities were —reluctant customers”.

4.7 Independent schools and providers of services to children and young people with complex additional support needs charge a fee to the local authority and most operate a simple business model which requires fee income to cover operating costs and future investment in their business. Some independent providers are registered charities and others are private companies. The Grant Aided Special Schools are all registered charities and also charge fees for their services. These schools also receive direct funding from Scottish Government in the form of revenue and capital grants. The grant is currently agreed on a year on year basis. The legal status of the GASS and the authority of the government to make grant is based on legislation going back to 1948⁴⁶, revised in 1990⁴⁷. A number of other organisations providing

⁴⁵Higher Aspirations-Brighter Futures NRCCI Overview Report 2009

⁴⁶Residential Special Schools and Orphanages (Scotland) Grant Regulations 1948

staff training, advocacy and specialist support services for children and young people with complex additional support needs also receive direct government funding, these include the Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC), Enquire, and CALL Scotland.

4.8 The receipt of grant by the 7 GASS is perceived as inequitable by other independent providers who question the continuation of this funding from which they are excluded. Some believe they also provide for similar needs and/or that their services are rational. They also argue that they have to work to a business model that charges the real cost of their services and that grants to some create unfair competition. Many local authorities also question the continuation of grant to the 7 schools. Their reasons include that needs have changed and policy, practice, and local resources have progressed since the inception of the schools. Some authority personnel also stated that in their view the GASS create in parents a perception of higher quality services than local authorities provide. Some local authorities would prefer to use any central funding to further build their own capacity. The Riddell report⁴⁸ recommended the redistribution of grant to local authorities however that recommendation was not acted upon. There was at the time and there remains concern that spreading the grant across 32 authorities would result in each receiving a relatively small amount of additional funding. There is also concern that there would be a danger of this funding getting used for other purposes. Some authorities, that make little or no use of the GASS, do not feel they currently derive benefit from the central funding of the GASS.

4.9 The parents and carers of children and young people placed in the GASS greatly value the service they receive and fear that any change to funding would pose a significant threat to the schools' futures and consequently impact on their children. The GASS are strongly of the view that, over many years, grant has supported the creation of expertise and resources of the highest quality that have made and continue to make a real difference to the experiences and outcomes of many children. The GASS also remind authorities that the grant can be viewed as a direct subsidy to the placement fees of children and young people, which would be higher without the grant. Overall the respondents to the Call for Evidence generally supported national funding of services and there was a consistent call for more funding. Some deemed the current funding level through direct grant to the grant aided special schools and other organisations providing national services as wholly inadequate.

4.10 The review received the views of many of the purchasers and providers on the controversial issues related to out of authority placements. Even in an overall context of negativity and mistrust, significant common ground emerged summarised in the following:

- The complex additional support needs of each child and young person should be the determining factor when considering the further development of services.

⁴⁷ Special Schools (Scotland) Grant Regulations 1990

⁴⁸ Riddell (1999) Advisory Committee Report into the Education of Children with Severe Low Incidence Disabilities

- A more strategic approach should be taken to developing services across Scotland, taking full account of the varying contexts of communities.

4.11 The aspiration to maximise the provision of services at a local level is also a unifying factor and all providers resented the notion that they were 'in competition' for pupils. Providers consistently describe their desire to be included as partners in provision and whenever possible share particular expertise and experience they have developed. All providers share a preference to be part of a system that builds capacity overall and within which particular specialisms and expertise are recognized. Barriers to achieving these aspirations are mostly related to funding because income in the sector is predominantly generated by 'bringing the child to the service not bringing the service to the child'. To move away from this historical model is accepted as challenging but is not dismissed as unachievable. Such a move would require different funding and contractual relationships than exist currently. Whilst there is agreement on the wish to increase local capacity there is a strong case made by some providers that in some cases the holistic nature of children's needs and the need to have a 'critical mass' of expertise and resources to hand would mean that for some children and young people the only reasonable and effective option would be to continue to bring them to the service.

4.12 Bringing the child or young person to the service leads to discussion about the current geographical spread of out of authority provision. Whilst the majority of Scotland's population is contained within the central belt, as is the majority of out of authority provision, it is recognized that there are real issues of equitable access for those who do not reside in the central belt. Whilst accepting this inequity some reiterated the case for 'critical mass' and drew an analogy with highly specialized medical services where there is acceptance of the need to centralise some services and expertise in specialist centres. In understanding these perspectives and the potential challenges inherent in doing something different it is also important to conclude overall that we need to resist simply justifying what is and also focus on what should be.

4.13 In considering configurations of services for children and young people with complex additional support needs, the review was struck by the extent to which they were fragmented resulting in different teams working on solving similar problems. Reference has already been made to the work going on in different locations to develop Curriculum for Excellence for children and young people with multiple difficulties including profound cognitive impairment. Differences in approach can be productive, but can also cause loss of potential synergy and duplication of effort. Conditions such as autism, hearing impairment and visual impairment are addressed in differing and sometimes competing ways by different provision within local authorities, health boards, national provision and voluntary organisations. It is likely that more could be achieved if the different interest groups worked more closely together to create clear networks of communication and support for children, young people and their families as well as for the practitioners who are responsible for supporting them. Such networks could be effective in promoting research and development on best practices.

4.14 The key points raised in the review process related to national funding are therefore:

- Government funding of national provision is valued and can provide a safety net for those children and young people whose needs cannot be met in their Local Authority or in the wider independent sector.
- We currently have a wide range of independent provision including the GASS that has developed over many years in an unplanned way.
- As local authorities have developed their own services the needs which require to be met at a national level have changed and should be specified
- The current central funding of the GASS is perceived as inequitable by other independent providers
- Local authorities and the independent sector agree that a more strategic approach to the planning of services is required based on cooperation and a shared belief that the needs of children and young people should be the determining factor in planning and delivering services
- Current funding arrangements makes it difficult to bring services to the child
- Building overall capacity and ensuring equitable access to services is essential

4.15 A range of ideas on how to progress in promoting a national sector which is shaped to deliver efficient and effective holistic educational outcomes in a manner which complements local authority provision and reflects Best Value have been discussed during the review. These have included;

- Maintain the current grant system and make adjustments so as to make the expertise and experience in the GASS more accessible and responsive to national need
- Spread the grant either across local authorities or across more independent providers
- Develop a model of funding which follows the child or young person

4.16 These options do not however ensure an improvement in Scotland's overall capacity to meet the needs of children and young people with complex additional support needs and they do not address the inequity of the current national funding arrangements or help us to develop better planned national services. A response to the call for evidence, in recognising that any Local Authority can't be a universal provider of all specialist services for what can be a very complex and diverse population suggested that National specialist services aimed at supporting local authorities capacity building, developing expertise and contributing to best practice would be the most helpful use of national provisions in future'. Taking this approach could provide an opportunity to make a radical change to the way we plan and deliver services in Scotland to meet those complex additional support needs that cannot be met at local authority level.

4.17 There is a consensus on the continued need for central funding of national provision and considerable support for an increase in that funding. The rationale for any service receiving national funding should however be that the service provides for agreed and evidence based national need. As noted earlier we can identify many of the reasons why out of authority placements in the independent and grant aided special schools are currently used however we have no effective means of

determining which of those uses are truly meeting an agreed national need. Equally we have no current methodology that enables future need to be predicted.

Development of a national strategic planning and commissioning framework could take us forward and ensure that we have the national resources that;

- are needed
- are accessible
- work in partnership to build overall capacity
- are capable of delivering a broad range of support to meet current and future needs.

4.18 In addition to providing direct education, care and health services nationally planned, commissioned and funded services should be research oriented. National resources should also support training and development opportunities for all staff working with children and young people with complex additional support needs to deliver early intervention and appropriate support. There is widespread acceptance of the benefits of early intervention in the early years for all children. In relation to complex additional support needs we have recognised that those needs and the complex arrangements to meet those needs can also arise at any time. It is vital that all staff recognise emerging and changing needs and ensure the effective co-ordination of services to meet those needs. This could include utilising short term support from national provision.

4.19 National services that provide education and care to children and young people could entail the forming of new partnerships across education, care, health, voluntary organisations, independent and grant aided special schools and the universities. Existing providers and voluntary organisations that have relevant expertise and experience would have the opportunity to position themselves, either alone or through new partnerships, to play a part in the development and delivery of these national resources. It is however noted, and the concern is shared, that progress in implementing the recommendations of the NRCCI in relation to the commissioning of residential children's care has been slow. It would be essential therefore that Scottish Government provide direct leadership and support to a strategic planning and commissioning process. Moving from where we are today would take time and it is envisaged that an achievable timeframe could be up to 5 years. It is crucial that capacity is not reduced in the interim. The current national funding arrangements would therefore need to continue until a strategic planning and commissioning process is able to determine existing national needs and ensure that the services required to meet those needs are in place. Planning and commissioning processes would also need to be capable of predicting and responding to changing needs. Continuation of present national funding in the interim would ensure that the education and care arrangements for any child or young person currently placed in the grant aided special schools are not affected. The grant aided special schools would benefit from support to position them to be part of nationally commissioned services and to develop business models that are non grant dependent. A tangible starting point for that support would be to move from allocation of grant from the current year on year renewal to a three yearly basis. Such a move would enable the schools to do more effective forward business planning and reduce their administrative burden.

4.20 This overall proposal in relation to strategic planning and commissioning of national services affords the opportunity for COSLA, health boards and the voluntary sector under the leadership of central government to work together in determining not only the future shape of national resources but also their respective support to those resources. It is also essential that parents, carers and children and young people themselves are part of those planning processes. The cost of new resources would be transparent and, as commissioned resources, the opportunity would arise to move away from the unhelpful and destructive feelings of either being in competition with' or eluctant customers' as described earlier. The issues of data collection and reliability of data have been raised often in this review process. A strategic planning and commissioning approach would require these issues to be thoroughly addressed in order to identify current national need and predict future needs. Scottish Government in conjunction with health boards and local authorities will need to review current systems for collecting data on children and young people with complex additional support needs and develop a more reliable and effective nationally agreed system. The current NHS Scotland SNS data base and classifications used could be further developed to provide the information required to plan for future needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 17

The Scottish Government should lead COSLA and health boards in the development of a strategic planning and commissioning process to deliver, within a 5 year period, the national services and provision required to ensure that the complex additional support needs of children and young people across Scotland can be met.

Recommendation 18

The Scottish Government in conjunction with health boards and COSLA should ensure there is an effective system for the national collection of data in relation to children and young people with complex additional support needs which will inform the planning and commissioning of national services and provision.

Recommendation 19

The Scottish Government should provide funding to nationally commissioned services to meet the complex additional support needs of children and young people and ensure that the level of funding is not less than currently provided across the grant aided special schools

Recommendation 20

The Scottish Government should review the overall level of and distribution of funding it provides to non local authority services working directly with and supporting children and young people with complex additional support needs and their parents and carers to ensure that needs are identified, prioritized and met'.

Recommendation 21

The Scottish Government should ensure that the Grant Aided Special Schools have the necessary assistance to enable them to develop their business models and prepare for the development of a national planning and commissioning process. As a starting point it is further recommended that revenue grant to the schools is renewed on a three yearly basis.

Concluding Comments

Scotland has a long history of endeavour in educating children and young people with additional support needs including those which are more complex. The first school specialising in the education of children with hearing impairment opened in Edinburgh in the 1760s to be followed by the Edinburgh Blind Asylum in 1793. However, even by 1945 some children were denied education. David Petrie, reflecting in 1978⁴⁹ on the Education (Scotland) Act 1945 noted that it introduced 3 new categories of mental handicap. These were the mentally handicapped-educable, the mentally handicapped-ineducable but trainable and the mentally handicapped-ineducable and untrainable. He wryly commented: At the time not many pondered on what ineducable meant. Still fewer seemed alive to the fact that to describe human beings as ineducable and untrainable was to place them in the evolutionary scale lower than sea-lions or performing fleas.

It was only in 1974⁵⁰ that all children and young people with complex additional support needs were given the right to education. Progress was lamentably slow. However, history also shows that Scotland has been fortunate in having a succession of imaginative and energetic educational pioneers who have demonstrated what can be achieved. Civil servants, local government, social work and health officers, HM Inspectors, academic staff and voluntary agencies have been ready to support them and disseminate effective practice.

I opened this report by asking the question others have asked me 'what difference will this report make'. Putting it simply, my hope is that when the next generations look back at developments in this decade to securing the best services and outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs they will applaud Scotland's Government, local authorities and health boards and the independent and voluntary sector for grasping this opportunity to achieve the vision of this review:

- That children and young people, supported by their parents and/or carers, have an easily accessible route to early integrated assessment of, and provision for their complex additional support needs from the earliest stage of development.
- That services offered are responsive to changing needs, lead to the best possible outcomes and are delivered where possible within the home community.
- That there is a presumption of entitlement to the highest quality of services which should be inclusive, efficient, equitable and effective in meeting the assessed needs and promote optimum inclusion in society.
- That local and national provision are complementary and operate with coherence.

⁴⁹Dockrell W. B. Ed. *Special Education in Scotland*, Scottish Council for Research in Education. ISBN-0-901116-11-4

⁵⁰Education (Mentally Handicapped Children) (Scotland) Act 1974

We must make this vision a reality within the shortest possible time to give all children and young people with complex additional support needs, and their families the best possible means of being fully included in Scotland's future and able to contribute to it.

Acknowledgements

I noted in the foreword to the report my appreciation and gratitude to the many individuals and organisations that contributed to the review process. I am particularly indebted to Margery Browning who was appointed as Education Advisor to the review in Phase 2. Margery's wisdom, experience and expertise, gained in her lifelong commitment to improving education in Scotland, has been invaluable. I am also grateful for the help and support I have received from all the members of the Secretariat provided by Scottish Government to support the review process.

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John Edward, Scottish Council of Independent Schools

Richard Hellewell, Royal Blind School

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STRATEGIC REVIEW OF LEARNING PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

THE DORAN REVIEW

INTERIM REPORT: 3 OCTOBER 2011

1. Introduction

I have been asked by Scottish Government to chair an independent and strategic review of learning provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs known in brief as —The Doran Review”.

My professional background has mostly involved me working in and managing services for children and their families who have needed and benefitted from significant support from a wide range of professionals and agencies in order to feel included in the wider community. I have experienced progressive improvements in those services and supports over the course of my working life. This review offers a challenging opportunity to focus on further systemic improvements which could be made to ensure better outcomes for children who have complex needs and their families.

1.1 This report is for anyone with an interest in the review and will outline why it is being undertaken, what it is aiming to achieve and emerging themes following its first phase. It will also set out the questions needing to be answered in the second phase. I am expecting to conclude the review and make my final recommendations to the Scottish Government in Spring 2012.

1.2 I will be publishing this report on the review website and I would very much welcome any comments or suggestions you may have. You can reach me at:

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2. Background

2.1 In May 1998, the then Scottish Executive issued "Special Educational Needs in Scotland: A Discussion Paper". It highlighted the Government's commitment to a more inclusive society, in the context of a national policy framework which aimed to develop a range of approaches and opportunities to meet the needs of children with special educational needs.

2.2 The paper recognised that the complex special educational needs of a small number of children, often with associated social or medical needs, required particularly careful consideration and announced the establishment of an Advisory Committee to examine how the needs of these children were being met. The Committee reported in 1999⁵¹ and made a number of recommendations, including a review of the funding of the grant-aided special schools.

2.3 There have been a number of policy and legislative developments since then such as the introduction of Curriculum for Excellence, the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach and the commencement of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (the Act) (as amended) (the 2004 Act). Curriculum for Excellence has set clear expectations in terms of learning outcomes, with every child entitled to become a successful learner, confident individual, effective contributor and responsible citizen – wherever their learning is taking place. The 2004 Act, as amended, brought in a broader view of needs, than existed under the previous system, and recognised the complex interplay among educational, health and social care factors which impact on learning outcomes for children which the education system was expected to address. The GIRFEC approach enhances this, aiming to ensure that a child and their family experience a single support team organised around their needs, whether from the public or third sector.

2.4 Considering the new educational and social policy agenda, advances in medical interventions and improvements to local and national provision, the Scottish Government believed this was the right moment to consider whether the current system for meeting the educational needs of our most complex children and young people is achieving the best possible outcomes for them today and in their future.

⁵¹ Riddell (1999) Advisory Committee Report into the Education of Children with Severe Low Incidence Disabilities

3. Vision

My aspiration, is that this review will help ensure:

- That children and young people, supported by their parents and/or carers, have an easily accessible route to early integrated assessment of, and provision for their complex additional support needs from the earliest stage of development
- That services offered are responsive to changing needs, lead to the best possible outcomes and are delivered where possible within the home community

3.1 That there is a presumption of entitlement to the highest quality of services which should be inclusive, efficient, equitable and effective in meeting the assessed needs and promote optimum inclusion in society

3.2 That local and national provision are complimentary and operate with coherence

4. Principles

4.1 Central to the review are the following principles:

- That at all times, positive outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs and their families will drive policy
- That we support the six principles of Curriculum for Excellence, including that all children and young people are entitled to a broad general education which develops their talents and personality, reflecting the ways different learners progress and addresses barriers standing in the way of learning
- That this entitlement extends to the provision of the health, social care and support necessary to allow them to maximise educational opportunities
- That the views and experiences of children, young people and their families will be reflected in the review's conclusions
- That all activity will be in line with the principles of GIRFEC, and will seek to ensure that children and young people are safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included
- That to be consistent with the principles for the commissioning of national services for children established by the National Residential Child Care Initiative (NRCCI), the review will promote a national sector which is shaped to deliver efficient and effective holistic educational outcomes in a manner which complements local authority provision and reflects Best Value

5. Purpose of the Review

5.1 Ultimately the objective of this review is to make a set of recommendations which lead to better outcomes and experiences for children and young people with complex additional support needs. We all want an education system in Scotland which supports every child and young person to realise their potential. This review will be considering systemic changes which could make that aspiration a more consistent reality for all of our children and young people. This will include the integration of non-educational resources, such as health or social care, in the planning and delivery of services.

5.2 However, before exploring the evidence gathered so far I think it is important to unpack some of the key terms within the title of the review. This section will set out our understanding of learning outcomes, children and young people, complex additional support needs and national provision.

Learning outcomes

5.3 In her seminal 1978 inquiry into the “education of handicapped children and young people”⁵², Mary Warnock described education as a human good and one to which all human beings are entitled. She set out two long-term goals for education:

- Firstly, “to enlarge a child’s knowledge, experience and imaginative understanding, and thus his awareness of moral values and capacity for enjoyment”; and
- Secondly “to enable him to enter the world after formal education is over as an active participant in society and a responsible contributor to it, capable of achieving as much independence as possible”.

5.4 While she acknowledged that each individual child would face their own challenges in achieving those goals, Baroness Warnock felt every child should be entitled to the support they needed to progress as far as possible towards them.

5.5 Following the Education (Mentally Handicapped Children) (Scotland) Act 1974, no child in Scotland could be described as being “incurable” or “untrainable” and had access to a teacher and an education. Since then legislation such as the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (the 1980 Act), the Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc Act 2000 (the 2000 Act), the 2004 Act as amended, and the Equality Act 2010, have progressively enshrined the right of every child to receive the support they need to realise their potential. Curriculum for Excellence is providing a framework to enable all our children and young people to gain the knowledge and skills that they will need to succeed in learning, life and work, wherever their learning is taking place.

⁵² Warnock (1978) Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People

The Requirements of Key Legislation

- The 1980 Act entitles every child of school age to adequate and efficient education **suitable to their age, ability and aptitude**
- The 2000 Act states that when an education authority provides school education to a child or young person, then that authority shall provide education which is directed to **the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential**. This mirrors the language of Article 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The 2000 Act also provides every child of school age with the right to be **educated alongside their peers** in a mainstream school unless there is a good reason for not doing so
- The 2004 Act, as amended, provides children and young people with the right to **have any additional support needs identified and met** in order for them to benefit from school education

Key Policy Frameworks

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) was ratified by the UK Government in December 1991. This Convention sets out a set of human rights specifically for children and is a key policy framework on which much subsequent legislation and policy has been built.
- Curriculum for Excellence is a curriculum for all and provides a framework for school education across Scotland. Every child or young person is entitled to be a **successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and an effective contributor**, wherever their learning is taking place.
- The Getting it Right for Every Child Approach aims to improve the life chances of all children through ensuring they are **safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included**

5.6 For additional background on key legislation and frameworks please see Annex A, a paper produced by Maire McCormack, a member of the national need working group.

Children & Young People

5.7 Through stage one of the Review, it was agreed that the age range of children and young people for which provision was being considered should be from **0-18 years**. This reflects the provisions in the 2004 Act and its accompanying Code of Practice.⁵³

⁵³ Supporting children's learning: code of practice, paragraph 9, p10 (Revised Edition, 2010)

5.8 The 2004 Act, as amended, requires an education authority to provide additional support to a child under three if they have additional support needs arising as a result a disability⁵⁴. It also requires education authorities to identify, meet and keep under review the additional support needs of all children and young people for whose school education they are responsible and to tailor provision according to their individual circumstances. This includes prescribed pre-school children being educated by the authority in their own provision or, for example, in partnership nurseries.

Additional Support Needs

5.9 The 2004 Act, as amended, provides the legal framework underpinning the system for supporting children and young people in their school education, and their families. It aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them achieve their full potential.

5.10 This is a framework based on the idea of additional support needs. This broad term applies to children or young people who, for whatever reason, require additional support, long or short term, in order to help them make the most of their school education and to be included fully in their learning. Children or young people may require additional support for a variety of reasons and may include those who:

- have motor or sensory impairments
- have significant health conditions
- are being bullied
- are particularly able or talented
- have experienced a bereavement
- are interrupted learners
- have a learning disability
- are looked after by a local authority
- have a learning difficulty, such as dyslexia
- are living with parents who are abusing substances
- are living with parents who have mental health problems
- have English as an additional language
- are not attending school regularly
- have emotional or social difficulties
- are on the child protection register
- are young carers

5.11 The above list is not exhaustive nor should it be assumed that inclusion in the list inevitably implies that additional support will be necessary. Every child is an individual. What may be a barrier to learning for one child may not for another⁵⁵.

⁵⁴ within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010

⁵⁵ Supporting children's learning: code of practice (revised edition) (2010)

Complex Additional Support Needs

5.12 As illustrated above, the spectrum of additional support needs ranges from those which are long term, profound and complex to those which are short term and may be quickly met. However, there has traditionally been little consensus around a definition of the term complex need⁵⁶. There is a danger that it is interpreted as referring solely to the needs of children and young people who have multiple physical, sensory and intellectual impairments. As is made clear in the code of practice⁵⁷, complex additional support needs may arise from one of a number of factors relating to the learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs, and social and emotional factors of an individual. A single factor of a severe nature, such as deafness from birth, can give rise to complex needs requiring the input of medical, educational and social work specialists. Equally, a set of factors each mild on its own can also give rise to a child or young person having complex additional support needs. For example, a child with difficulties in learning to read, making relationships with peers and controlling anger, combined with fragmented schooling and difficult home or family circumstances, may require complex arrangements in order to progress.

National Provision

5.13 The majority of existing services and provision is provided and funded by local authorities. There are some examples of local authorities sharing resources with neighbouring authorities. Local authorities also use a range of independent and grant-aided providers to meet needs which are, for whatever reason, beyond their capacity. Independent and grant-aided providers are paid fees by the local authority based on an agreement about the costs of providing for the individual child's needs. However, in the case of grant-aided providers this fee is subsidised by the Scottish Government through an annual grant.

5.14 The Scottish Government also funds a range of organisations, who are expected to operate at a national level, in supporting local authorities meet their obligations under the 2004 Act, as amended.

⁵⁶ Scottish Executive Social Research (2007) A Literature Review on Multiple and Complex Needs: Lessons for Policy and Practice

⁵⁷ Supporting children's learning: code of practice (revised edition), (2010)

6. First Phase of the Review

6.1 In order to draw upon the knowledge and experience of those concerned with the education of children and young people with complex additional support needs, a national review project group was established on 30 November 2010. This group includes practitioners and representatives from education authorities, the independent and grant aided sector, the third sector, advocacy groups, COSLA and parental groups. Please see Annex B for the full membership list. At the meeting on the 25 January 2011, the national review project group agreed to form two working groups below to progress the detail of the review and set them the remits as set out below. Full membership of these groups can be found in Annex C.

6.2 In addition to the activity of the two working groups, a range of groups and individuals have contributed their views to the first phase of the review. Some of these views were submitted through the contact details on the website whilst others were elicited from a wide range of meetings which I and/or my secretariat attended.

Remit for the national need group

- Provide clarity on the children and young people we are looking at (should this be a condition or needs/abilities based distinction, are we looking at 0-18). Are there any prevalence projections we should be aware off? Map out current provision across all providers.
- Define what their needs are and what outcomes public interventions are designed to deliver.
- Define the current roles of partners in delivering these e.g. Health, Education, Skills Development Scotland, Justice, Social Work.
- Identify where the system (is it the capital or resource which is making the difference) of national and local provision is working well in meeting their needs.
- Consider other international models.

Remit for the pathways and decision making group

- Define the current system for determining allocation of additional resources or placements out-with authority, while recognising there may be local differences.
- Consider what factors drive parents and local authorities to seek out of authority provision?
- Consider what lessons can be learned from the tribunal cases?
- Consider how the decision making process could become more transparent and centred around the child's needs?

6.3 The following sections outline progress so far in delivering those remits. My summary and conclusions from all activity in phase one of the review are detailed in section 7.

National Need Group

Provide clarity on the children and young people we are looking at (should this be a condition or needs/abilities based distinction, are we looking at 0-18)

6.4 The group centred on the statutory definitions of age used when referring to duties of local authorities regarding provision for additional support needs, 0-18 years. However, the group strongly believes that post-school transition issues are of significant importance and that further consideration should be given to young people up to the age of 25 years. It was also felt that given the individual nature of each child, the interaction between barriers to learning and the broad spectrum of need contained within each condition, that to define needs based on conditions would be futile.

6.5 Definitions were raised as an issue in the early stages of the review and the difficulties in this area were still as was reported in the literature review on multiple and complex needs produced in 2007⁵⁸. As noted in section 6.12 issues of complexity are variable dependent on the child and his/her circumstances and not necessarily fixed over time. It is important to note that what is considered complex in one setting or area may not be thought so in another. Complex can in part be defined by the ability to address the need in assessment and response.

Are there any prevalence projections we should be aware off?

6.6 The group did not have time to explore prevalence projections in detail. However, they did discuss the continuing impact of advances in medical care on the survival rates and survival times of children and young people with complex health needs. For example, 385 children and young people were identified by NHS Scotland as having —exceptional needs”⁵⁹.

6.7 Broad survival rates of babies born under 26 weeks is also improving. A comprehensive study by EPICure in 1995 of all babies born under 26 weeks gestation across the UK identified broad survival rates as:

- Babies born at 23 weeks or below have a 20 per cent chance of survival to discharge home
- Babies born at 24 weeks have a 35 per cent chance of survival to discharge home

⁵⁸ Scottish Executive Social Research (2007) A Literature Review on Multiple and Complex Needs: Lessons for Policy and Practice

⁵⁹ National Managed Clinical Network for Children with exceptional healthcare needs (2010) Year Report 2009/10

- Babies born at 25 weeks have a 55 per cent chance of survival to discharge home

6.8 A more recent EPICure study of all babies born under 27 weeks gestation in England in 2006 identified statistically significant improved survival rates at 24 and 25 weeks.

- Babies born at 24 weeks have a 47 per cent chance of survival
- Babies born at 25 weeks have a 67 per cent chance of survival

6.9 The group also noted an increase in diagnosis rates of Autism Spectrum Disorder⁶⁰ and the number of children and young people presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Map out current provision across all providers.

6.10 In 2010⁶¹, 69,587, or just over 10% of pupils in Scotland, were identified as having additional support needs. Of these, 62,787 were supported in mainstream schools, 6,537 in one of the 156 local authority special school and 263 in one of the 7 grant-aided special schools. These figures do not include pupils who attend independent special schools. In 2009⁶², 982 pupils were supported in one of the 45 independent special schools. Of these 97% were funded by Scottish local authorities. Of this, only the GASS receive a direct subsidy from the Scottish Government. However, a range of other organisations are also funded by the Government to support the delivery of the outcomes laid out in the 2004 Act, as amended.

6.11 In order to further investigate interaction between the local and national sector, the group wrote to each education authority asking for information on where they currently have children placed outwith their area and what national services they draw on to support their own provision. At the time of writing this information was still incomplete and being checked for accuracy. However, this will be carried forward into phase two.

Define what their needs are and what outcomes public interventions are designed to deliver.

6.12 Every child is an individual and has a unique set of needs. There is a question as to whether this review should be generalising and estimating children's needs at a national or local level, or investigating the system to ensure that it can effectively identify and meet individual needs. Some of the sub groups of complex additional support needs will be spread evenly across the country, while others are likely to be concentrated in areas of socio-economic disadvantage. The extent to

⁶⁰ Gillberg & Wing (1999) Autism: not an extremely rare disorder

⁶¹ Summary Statistics for schools in Scotland: No.1 (2010)

⁶² Independent Schools Census (2009)

which provision reflects this spread is unclear. The extent to which provision matches this spread is also unclear for similar reasons.

6.13 Maire McCormack presented a paper to the group which explored outcomes and legal entitlements. This can be found in Annex A.

Define the current roles of partners in delivering these e.g. Health, Education, Skills Development Scotland, Justice, Social Work.

6.14 Although there is a clear policy and legislative framework as set out in section five, no single definitive statement could be made on the role of different agencies in supporting the delivery of the objectives set out in the same section. However, the group did acknowledge the prospect of developments in this area in terms of providing a legislative basis to the GIRFEC approach. It is currently proposed that consultation on proposals for the Children's Services Bill will take place in January 2012 and that this will be followed by consultation on a draft Bill by the Autumn of 2012. Thereafter, it is proposed that the Bill will be introduced to the Scottish Parliament in the first half of 2013, with commencement following in mid 2015.

6.15 The importance of education, social work and health working together in an efficient and effective manner was raised by professionals and parents. Further consideration is required to identify and address barriers to such cooperation, including funding streams and respective responsibilities.

Identify where the system (is it the capital or resource which is making the difference) of national and local provision is working well in meeting their needs.

6.16 This question was beyond the time available of the group to answer. However, the group did consider children and young people too ill to attend school. In excess of 40 children⁶³ were identified by local authorities as being supported by hospital teaching services or similar arrangements. Given that for this one element of the complex additional support needs cohort there could potentially be a growing demand for healthcare, surgery and frequent/prolonged admission, the group felt that the education of children too ill to attend school would merit further investigation.

Consider other international models.

6.17 The group did not have the time or capacity to consider other international models.

⁶³ Children educated outwith school (2009)

Pathways and Decision Making Group

Define the current system for determining allocation of additional resources or placements outwith authority, while recognising there may be local differences.

6.18 Each Local Authority has its own guidance which incorporates the legislative and policy framework set out in section five, including in particular the code of practice⁶⁴ and GIRFEC. This would determine their system for the allocation of additional resources or placements outwith authority. In each case, a foundation for this would be a staged intervention framework. The working group considered as an example the guidance from Fife Council Education Service which states that:

—The foundation of universal services is important, not least because this is the stage where many of the agreed key principles of *Getting It Right in Fife* can be put into practice; in particular a model of staged intervention including:

- Least intrusive assessment and intervention
- Meeting children's needs where possible within universal and locally available services
- Building capacity within the local community and family context through universal provision
- Provision of specialised support where this is appropriate and required.
- Equity of access to services for all children and young people in Fife.”⁶⁵

6.19 Further background on current systems can be found in Annex D which contains a paper produced by Margery Browning.

Consider what factors drive parents and local authorities to seek out of authority provision?

6.20 Evidence suggests that parents and local authorities seek out of authority provision for a range of reasons. Each local authority is unique in terms of its inherited assets, demographics (including deprivation and population sparsity), relationships with its public sector partners (such as coterminous boundaries) and the range of needs presented by its pupil population. Therefore, each Authority will come to its own conclusions when planning efficient provision and making decisions on where to place an individual child in order to best meet their needs.

6.21 Within this context, experience suggests that drivers often relate to the specialist provision a child may require to overcome their particular barrier to learning. This could be the environment, equipment or range of expertise needed and can often include specialist health or social care support.

⁶⁴ Supporting children's learning: code of practice (revised edition) (2010)

⁶⁵ Fife Council Education service (2011) Individual record-keeping and planning for pupils who need additional support (Draft version)

6.22 Perceptions of quality of services available, which might include cost considerations, can influence the decision making processes within Local Authorities. These perceptions are also reported as important drivers for parents when they are considering the options available to their children. Conflict can emerge when perceptions are not shared.

Consider what lessons can be learned from the tribunal cases?

6.23 The group did not have time to formally consider lessons from tribunal cases. However, members of the group did bring their experience of such cases to the discussions.

Consider how the decision making process could become more transparent and centred around the child's needs?

6.24 The group would recommend that self assessment guidance should be developed to illustrate good practice in pathways and decision making for children and young people with complex additional support needs. Such guidance should be designed to support practice improvement, across agencies, in individual planning for children and young people. It should also be developed jointly by children's services practitioners and relevant inspectorates, in consultation with parents and young people. Further information on the group's thinking around this proposal can be found in Annex E which contains a paper produced by Margery Browning.

6.25 Educational provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs, be that local authority, grant-aided or independent, is almost entirely funded from the public purse. The group recognised the importance of bringing greater coherence and complementarity to the relationship between local and national services. National services could include independent, grant-aided and other local authority provision where these services have the capacity to support regional provision and enhance the objectives set out at the beginning of this paper. Other services which currently receive national funding to support the education of children with complex needs across all national and local services include CALL Scotland and the Scottish Sensory Centre. The Group also noted the potential of strategic commissioning approaches to enhance that coherence and complementarity.

7. Summary and Conclusions on Phase One

7.1 Phase one of the review brought together a wide range of individuals and agencies with experience in the organisation, management and delivery of existing services to children and young people who have complex additional support needs. The commitment of all those who contributed in phase one to achieving optimum outcomes for children and young people was clearly evidenced. Significant differences of views on the efficacy of existing systems were also expressed.

7.2 From the outset views were expressed about the clarity of the remit and scope of the review. Concerns were raised about the complexity of the task, timescales and resources available to the review. Many of these views and concerns were realised and the progress of the working groups was affected by these factors. Phase two offers the opportunity to address these issues.

7.3 Some overarching conclusions from phase one are detailed below and will require to be addressed further in phase two.

- Reliable data collection and dissemination is essential to strategic planning processes and to the identification of needs which might require to be met at a regional or national level.
- Strategic commissioning of services should be further developed to ensure the range of provision is available to meet the needs of all children in Scotland who have complex additional support needs.
- There are strong views that the interagency cooperation required to address the complex interplay of factors which are described in 5.12 could be improved. These strong views extended to the equity of the current resource contribution of relevant agencies to meet identified need.
- The current pattern of national funding is a contentious issue. For example those organisations which receive national funding strive to justify their receipt of that funding. Other views are that current funding is inequitable and lacking in evidence of effectiveness. Previous recommendations to change national funding have not been acted upon. Renewed discussion about planning and funding mechanisms will reopen past debates and anxieties.
- Some parents have expressed strong views that services are not easily accessible and they often feel the process of securing those services is adversarial.

8. Second Phase of the Review

8.1 The Review will now begin its second phase by establishing a small working group which I will chair. Over the next six months, it will take forward the remit below and draft recommendations which will be presented to the National Review Project Group and then finally to the Scottish Government.

8.2 A key aspect of the second phase will be further engagement with all stakeholders. We will pay particular attention to seeking the views and experiences of parents, carers and children and young people themselves when considering options for reform.

Remit

1. What are the barriers to the efficient interaction between local and national provision and how could this interaction be improved?
2. How can we improve assessment and decision making, recognising the importance of effective and efficient collaboration across Education, Social Work and Health services and with children and families?
3. What role should the Scottish Government play, including the use of national funding, in ensuring that every child and young person in Scotland has their additional support needs identified, prioritised and met, across all provision including local authorities, the independent sector, and the grant-aided special schools?
4. What lessons can we learn from other international models and from research to deliver better outcomes for children and young people?

8.3 I expect to make my final recommendations to the Scottish Government in the Spring of 2012.

Peter Doran
Chair

October 2011

It was agreed that Maire McCormack would expand on Mark Bevan's paper from the first meeting of the working group, on the purposes of education, to include the rights of children and young people and other core policies.

This briefing paper responds to the above minute of 3rd May. It aims to provide a children's rights perspective to discussions around educational provision and highlight other key (and relevant) policies and frameworks.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) was ratified by the UK Government in December 1991. This Convention sets out a set of human rights specifically for children. It recognises children as rights-holders (in their own right), whilst also reflecting their 'evolving capacities' and additional vulnerabilities due to their age and stage of development and lack of social, political and economic power.

Unlike the European Convention on Human Rights which has been given direct legal effect in the UK through the Human Rights Act 1998, this is not yet the case for the UNCRC. However, ratification of the Convention places binding international obligations on the UK and devolved governments and institutions to implement its provisions and ensure the realisation of all rights in the UNCRC for all children across their jurisdiction.

The UNCRC's 54 articles are often grouped into three sets of children's rights, referred to as the 3 Ps: protection, provision and participation.

There are four overarching principles contained within the UNCRC:

- all rights apply to all children - non-discrimination (article 2),
- the principle that in all actions concerning children the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration (article 3),
- the right to life, survival and development (article 6) and
- that children's view must be taken into account in decision making /matters affecting them (article 12).

There are also two rights which relate directly to education and which are relevant to this paper: article 28 (the right to education) and article 29 (the aims of education), both of which are reflected in Scottish law. Article 29 notes that the education of the child be directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. This principle was adopted by section 2 (1) of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act and reinforced by section 1 (2) of the Additional Support for Learning Act (2004).

Many see the UNCRC as an aspirational wish list of no relevance to Scotland, but this both misunderstands the nature of the Convention and the profound effect it is having on both UK and Scottish legislation. It is incorrect to see the UNCRC as aspirational. Rather it is the minimum acceptable standard in state parties' treatment

of all children under the age of 18. States which ratified the Convention have made a commitment to deliver on the promises contained within the Convention.

A close look at legislation illustrates that the UNCRC is reflected in many laws and policies relevant to children and this is increasingly seen to be the case. For example, the way the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 has been constructed promotes key UNCRC principles, such as the best interests principle and the principle of taking into account the views of the child. While children had the right to have their views heard in certain areas before 1995, the Act gave children the right to express their views in a far wider range of decisions including court decisions on parental responsibilities, local authority decisions for ‘looked after’ children, and some decisions made by courts and children’s hearings.

Education

The three key Scottish Education Acts which state the rights to education and young people, have also been influenced by the UNCRC. They are:

- Education Scotland Act (1980)
- Education (Standards in Scotland's Schools etc) Act 2000
- Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 (and as amended in 2009)

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that it is the duty of the parent or guardian of every child of school age to provide adequate and efficient education for them suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, either by them attending a public school regularly or 'by other means.

The Scottish Parliament passed legislation to implement the UK's international obligations under Section 1 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000 which gives every child of school age a right to be provided with school education by (or by arrangements made by) an education authority. Prior to the 2000 Act, the child had the right to education due to their parents having a duty to provide education and the education authority a duty to secure the availability of school education (1980 Act s1 (1). The Act gave children the right to seek education and to challenge a failure to provide that education.

The 2000 Act also provided that —~~were~~ school education is provided to a child or young person, by or by virtue of arrangements made or entered into by an education authority, it shall be the duty of the authority to secure that the education is directed —~~to~~the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential.” This is taken directly from article 29 of the UNCRC. The extent to which this can be enforced is not clear – the legislation requires only that the education is directed to the development of full potential, which is somewhat vague.

In carrying out the duty to secure education directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child, an education authority must also have —~~de~~ regard, so far as is reasonably practicable, to the views of the child or young person in decisions that affect them, taking account of

the child or young person's age and maturity S 2 (1). Children's views thus now hold statutory significance in education decisions, a fact which led the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (which monitors UNCRC implementation) to praise the provision.

An education authority shall have due regard, so far as reasonably practicable, to the views (if there is a wish to express them) of the child or young person in decisions that significantly affect that child or young person, taking account of the child or young person's age and maturity (Section 2.2)

The Act also gave pupils of age 12 and over the right to appeal against school exclusions whereas before this right only applied to those of 16 years or over or parents.

The principle of the views of the child can also be seen in other Acts including the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 which requires local authorities, to produce accessibility strategies aimed at improving access to education for pupils with disabilities. The guidance to this legislation places an obligation on local authorities to consult with children and young people in the development of these strategies. The Additional Support for Learning again echoes these UNCRC principles under S 1.

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (amended 2009)

This Act came into force in November 2005 with the aim of creating a stronger, better system of supporting children's learning. It is the main piece of legislation relating to the education of children and young people with additional support needs in Scotland. It places a range of legal obligations on education authorities and replaced the special educational needs system (and with it the record of needs). Its aim was to be more inclusive, recognising all additional needs regardless of their cause. Under the Act education authorities have a duty to identify, meet and keep under review the additional support needs of all children and young people for whose school education they are responsible. S1 of the Act describes the duties placed on Local Authorities in terms of entitlement of children to receive additional support.

A child or young person has additional support needs for the purposes of this Act where, for whatever reason, the child or young person is, or is likely to be, unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided or to be provided for the child or young person.

Additional support is defined as:

(a) in relation to a prescribed pre-school child, a child of school age or a young person receiving school education, provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children or, as the case may be, young persons of the same age in schools (other than special schools) under the management of the education authority for the area to which the child or young person belongs,

(b)in relation to a child under school age other than a prescribed pre-school child, such educational provision as is appropriate in the circumstances [applies to children from birth]

The definition of additional support provided is inclusive and the Code of Practice accompanying the Act elaborates on this⁶⁶. Essentially, additional support falls into three overlapping headings: approaches to learning and teaching, support from personnel and provision of resources.

There is a range of factors which may lead to some children and young people needing additional support and these fall into four key areas: learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health need, and social and emotional factors. Clearly schools will be aware of their responsibilities to provide —adequate and efficient education for all children and young people” on their roll, including those with additional support needs, yet the educational experiences of some children may not take sufficient account of their particular needs and circumstances to ensure that they benefit appropriately from school education. These 4 areas, outlined in the Code of Practice, highlight when a child or young person may need additional support.

The Act also contains provisions relating to young people leaving school. It requires a range of agencies (including local authorities, NHS Boards, Careers Scotland and Further/Higher Education institutions) to work with schools to help plan for a young person’s transition and gives children, young people and parents a range of rights and access to mediation, dispute resolution and the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

Section 4 of the Act defines the duties in relation to children and young persons for whom education authorities are responsible:

(1) Every education authority must—

- (a)in relation to each child and young person having additional support needs for whose school education the authority are responsible, make adequate and efficient provision for such additional support as is required by that child or young person, and
- (b)make appropriate arrangements for keeping under consideration—
 - (i)the additional support needs of, and
 - (ii)the adequacy of the additional support provided for, each such child and young person.

(2) Subsection (1)(a) does not require an education authority to do anything which—

- (a)they do not otherwise have power to do, or
- (b)would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred.

Education authorities in Scotland must put in place appropriate arrangements for identifying which children and young people have additional support needs. S5(2) of the Act also refers to the duty to provide additional support needs arising from a

⁶⁶ Supporting Scotland’s Learning: Code of Practice (2005)

disability. (The functions, duties and powers of education authorities are provided in Annex 2 of this paper)

The Act covers more than just education and has implications for service providers and professionals working in health and in other appropriate agencies. An appropriate agency must help the education authority in the exercise of any of its functions under this Act, if requested to do so by the authority, unless the request is incompatible with the agency's statutory or other duties or unduly prejudices the agency's discharge of its own functions. Under the Act an appropriate agency is:

- any other local authority
- any NHS Board
- and others (see code of practice)

In some circumstances an appropriate agency will respond to a request for help from an education authority. However, if, that agency is unable to comply with the request, this is then a matter for the education authority to pursue with the particular appropriate agency. It is the education authority which must provide (or arrange for the provision of) services. For example, if the education authority make a request to an NHS Health Board and the request is refused, it would be for the education authority to either raise a court action to compel the NHS Board to provide the service or to provide the service itself.

The Act's reference to school education links both the 1980 Act and the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000. The 1980 Act states that school education "means progressive education appropriate to the requirements of pupils, regard being had to the age, ability and aptitude of such pupils". This definition does not require pupils to be attending school in order to be receiving school education. For example, pupils could be receiving school education in hospital or at home due to ill-health. The 1980 Act also places a general duty on education authorities to secure for their area adequate and efficient provision of school education.

The 2000 Act requires the education authority to secure that school education is directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential. School education includes education provided by education authorities in exercising their duty to provide school education for eligible pre-school children, such as may be provided, for example, in nursery classes.

The benefit from school education for children and young people will vary according to their individual needs and circumstances. However, all children and young people benefit from school education when they can access a curriculum which supports their learning and personal development; where teaching and support from others meet their needs; where they can learn with, and from, their peers and when their learning is supported by the parents in the home and their wider community. A difficulty or particular need in one or more of these areas may lead to a requirement for additional support to be put in place to ensure child or young person benefits from school education. Through *Curriculum for Excellence* all children and young people are entitled to a curriculum that includes a range of features at the different stages

Key Policy Frameworks

There are a raft of policy frameworks linking into this area of work, all underpinned by the UNCRC:

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)

The ASL Act reflects the values and principles to be found in Curriculum for Excellence and the national programme *Getting it right for every child* involving those working with children and young people across all agencies.

Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in school education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible curriculum from 3-18. The curriculum comprises the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people wherever they are being educated. Children and young people are entitled to experience

It provides the framework for school education across Scotland, aiming —to enable each child or young person to be a successful learner, a confident individual, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor". It describes 4 capacities which education is tasked with developing in all children.

1. Successful learners
2. Confident individuals
3. Responsible citizens
4. Effective contributors

The curriculum aims to ensure that all children and young people in Scotland develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need if they are to flourish in life, learning and work, now and in the future. These are summed up in the wording of the four capacities which (as noted) can form a very useful focus for planning choices and next steps in learning. The attributes and capabilities can be used by establishments as a guide to assess whether the curriculum for any individual child or young person sufficiently reflects the purposes of the curriculum. (see annex 3 for detailed wording of the 4 capacities)

There is a specific section for children and young people who may require additional support. This serves to underline the fact that CfE is a curriculum for all children and young people.

For children who need additional support for their learning, this may involve interpretation of the curriculum in ways which address their particular needs and enable them to achieve to the highest levels of which they are capable. This may include planning for enrichment of learning within a particular level, rather than applying pressure to progress to a new level of cognitive development where this is inappropriate. Enrichment of learning through exploration of different contexts may, in some circumstances, also be an effective way of meeting very able pupils' needs at some points. All children and young people should experience personalisation and choice within their

curriculum, including identifying and planning for opportunities for personal achievement in a range of different contexts. This implies taking an interest in learners as individuals, with their own talents and interests.

All establishments will work with a range of partners to address the needs of all children and young people and provide motivating and challenging opportunities, particularly for those who may require more choices and more chances. Action to address the needs of learners requires an integrated approach across children's and young people's services with strong links to community learning and development and community regeneration.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

Getting it Right for Every Child is a Scottish Government programme which aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people and support the Government's aim that:

- our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
- we have improved life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

The main aims of the programme are:

- A common, co-ordinated framework across all agencies that supports delivery of appropriate, proportionate and timely help to all children as they need it
- Streamlined systems and processes, efficient and effective delivery of services focused on the needs of the child
- A common understanding and shared language across all agencies
- A child-centred approach
- Changes in culture, systems and practice across services for children
- More joined up policy development

Early Years Framework

The Early Years Framework was developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA and other partners and focuses on the earliest years (conception to eight years) with a particular focus on improving the ability of services to prevent crisis and intervene early with appropriate and effective support. The framework supports other key government policies including GIRFEC and the Equally Well programme.

Happy, Safe and Achieving their Potential

This report of the review of guidance support in schools sets out ten standards for personal support that all children and young people can expect. It covers primary, special and secondary schools and clarifies the role of school staff and other agencies in providing support to pupils. It also provides examples of different approaches to providing personal support in schools.

Maire McCormack 28th May 2011

Annex 1**The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**

The UNCRC contains two articles dedicated to education: Articles 28 and 29.

Article 28

1. States Parties recognise the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international co-operation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

- (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
- (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
- (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilisations different from his or her own;
- (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

The UNCRC advances a view of children as active participants in education. Those providing education must afford the child an opportunity to express his / her views in decisions affecting them and are bound to consider those views. A further article of the UNCRC is also of importance. Article 12 provides

Other key articles

The four guiding principles

Article 2

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Article 3

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.
3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

Article 6

1. States Parties recognise that every child has the inherent right to life.
2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Annex 2 (taken from the Code of Practice to the 2009 ASL Amendment Act)**Functions and duties of education authorities**

The Act confers various functions and imposes duties on education authorities in connection with the provision of school education for children and young people with additional support needs belonging to their area. Some of the main duties are listed below. Education authorities must:

- make adequate and efficient provision for the additional support required for each child or young person with additional support needs for whose school education they are responsible, subject to certain exceptions
- make arrangements to identify additional support needs
- keep under consideration the additional support needs identified and the adequacy of support provided to meet the needs of each child or young person
- provide appropriate additional support for certain disabled children under school age (in this case, generally children under 3 years of age) belonging to their area who have been brought to the attention of the authority as having additional support needs arising from their disability
- presume that all looked after children and young people have additional support needs unless the authority determine that they do not require additional support to enable them to benefit from school education
- presume that all looked after children and young people require a co-ordinated support plan unless the authority determine that they do not meet the requirements for having one
- publish, review and update, as necessary, specified information about their policy and arrangements in relation to provision for identifying, addressing and keeping under consideration such provision for each child or young person with additional support needs for whose school education the authority are responsible
- provide parents of children with additional support needs (and young people with additional support needs), for whose school education the education authority are responsible with all of the information they are required to publish under the Act
- ensure that a summary of the information published under the Act is available, on request, from each place in the authority's area where school education is provided, regardless of whether the school is under the management of the education authority
- provide the above summary in any handbook or other publications provided by any school in the authority's area or by the authority for the purposes of providing general information about the school or, as the case may be, the services provided by the authority, and on any website maintained by any such school or the authority for that purpose
- provide those children or young people who need one with a co-ordinated support plan and keep this plan under regular review
- provide independent and free mediation services for those parents and young people who want to use such services and publish information on these services
- have in place arrangements for resolving disputes

- at least 12 months prior to the expected school leaving date, request, and take account of, information and advice from appropriate agencies likely to make provision for the child or young person when he or she leaves school
- no later than 6 months before the child or young person is expected to leave school provide information to whichever appropriate agency or agencies, as the authority think appropriate, may be responsible for supporting the young person once he or she leaves school, if the child's parent or young person agrees.

Powers of education authorities

The Act gives education authorities the **power** to help children and young people belonging to their area who have or may have additional support needs and for whose school education they are not responsible. A power is a discretionary function of an education authority which the authority may or may not decide to exercise whereas duties **must** be carried out. Those who may be supported include children and young people sent to independent schools by their parents and those being educated at home. The support can include, for example, provision of learning and teaching support, resources or advice, as considered below.

Parents of the above children or young people may request the education authority to establish whether a child or young person has additional support needs or, if the education authority were responsible for the school education of the child or young person, would require a co-ordinated support plan. The education authority are not required to comply with the request but if they do they must provide the parent or young person with information and advice about the additional support required.

Parents may arrange directly for children and young people to attend grant-aided and independent schools; that is, the parents and not an education authority are responsible for the child's or young person's school education. In these circumstances, managers of grant-aided or independent schools may request the education authority, for the area to which the child or young person belongs, to establish whether a child or young person attending their school has additional support needs and would require a co-ordinated support plan, if the education authority were responsible for the school education of the child or young person. The education authority are not required to comply with the request but if they do they must provide the managers of the school with information and advice about the additional support required. Education authorities may arrange for children or young people with additional support needs to attend establishments outwith the United Kingdom which make provision wholly or mainly for those with such additional support needs.

Annex 3**successful learners****with:**

- enthusiasm and motivation for learning
 - determination to reach high standards of achievement
 - openness to new thinking and ideas
- and able to:**
- use literacy, communication and numeracy skills
 - use technology for learning
 - think creatively and independently
 - learn independently and as part of a group
 - make reasoned evaluations
 - link and apply different kinds of learning in new situations.

confident individuals**with:**

- self-respect
 - a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being
 - secure values and beliefs
 - ambition
- and able to:**
- relate to others and manage themselves
 - pursue a healthy and active lifestyle
 - be self-aware
 - develop and communicate their own beliefs and view of the world
 - live as independently as they can
 - assess risk and make informed decisions
 - achieve success in different areas of activity.

To enable all young people to become:

responsible citizens**with:**

- respect for others
 - commitment to participate responsibly in political, economic, social and cultural life
- and able to:**
- develop knowledge and understanding of the world and Scotland's place in it
 - understand different beliefs and cultures
 - make informed choices and decisions
 - evaluate environmental, scientific and technological issues
 - develop informed, ethical views of complex issues.

effective contributors**with:**

- an enterprising attitude
 - resilience
 - self-reliance
- and able to:**
- communicate in different ways and in different settings
 - work in partnership and in teams
 - take the initiative and lead
 - apply critical thinking in new contexts
 - create and develop
 - solve problems

List of members

- Peter Doran, Chair
- Mark Bevan, Capability Scotland
- Carol Chalmers, Association of Directors of Social Work
- John Edward, Scottish Council of Independent Schools
- Richard Hellewell, Royal Blind School
- Carol Jackson, Kersland Special School
- Dr Patricia Jackson, National Managed Clinical Network for Children with Exceptional Healthcare Needs
- Sally Ann Kelly, National Advocacy Service (Barnardos Scotland & Scottish Child Law Centre)
- Bryan Kirkaldy, Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
- Janice MacNeill, Donaldson's
- Jim McCaffrey, Hillside Special School
- Margaret McFadden, Croftcroighn Special School
- Neil McKechnie, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
- Jennyfer McNiven/Anne Littlefair, Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists
- Chris Mangham, East Park
- Mary Morris, Care Commission
- Robert Nicol, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
- Shona Pinkerton, Educating Through Care Scotland
- Professor Pat Salter, Scottish Centre for Children with Motor Impairments
- Lorraine Sanda, National Parental Involvement Coordinator
- Colin Spivey, Scottish Government
- Neil Squires, Harmeny Education Trust

Working group 1 - National Need

- Mark Bevan, Chair - Capability Scotland
- Dr Pat Jackson - National Managed Clinical Network for Children with Exceptional Healthcare Needs
- Anne Littlefair - Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists
- Jim McCaffrey - Hillside Special School
- Maire McCormack - Parent
- Chris Mangham - East Park
- Mary Morris - Care Commission
- Shona Pinkerton - Educating Through Care Scotland
- Norma Wright - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education

Working group 2 - Pathways and Decision Making

- Bryan Kirkaldy, Chair - Association of Directors of Education in Scotland
- Margery Browning - Independent
- Carol Chalmers - Association of Directors of Social Work
- Steven Fairbairn - Parent
- Douglas Hutchison - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
- Janice MacNeill - Donaldson's
- Jennyfer McNiven - Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists
- Selwyn McCausland - Barnardos/Take Note Advocacy Service

The Doran Review: Pathways and Decision Making Group

Starter Paper on Pathways and Decision Making

May/June 2011

Output as defined in the Terms of Reference for the Doran Review

The national review group will produce a set of recommendations to the Scottish Government designed to deliver a strategic planning framework for the provision of learning to children and young people with complex ASN's, identify an education/healthcare pathway for individual children and families, and set in place a plan to deliver a national sector which reflects the national need. This will provide a system of decision making that is:

- Outcome focused;
- Assessable;
- Consistent;
- Transparent; and
- Evidence Based.

1. The Context

The legislative and policy context

1.1 The Pathways and Decision Making Group (the Group) is undertaking its work in the context of the commencement of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009, legislation intended to strengthen the impact of the 2004 Act. Also, the recent elections mean that there will be a continuation of the ground breaking policy developments designed to improve significantly the lives of all of Scotland's children and young people, including those with complex additional support needs. Supporting children's learning: Code of Practice (Revised Edition) hereafter referred to as the code of practice, The Early Years Framework, Equally Well, Getting it right for every child, Curriculum for Excellence, More Choices More Chances and the move to commissioning all have implications for, and are already impacting on, the provision that is made for children and young people with complex additional support needs. In addition to these initiatives a plethora of recent documents provide evaluations of, and recommendations on approaches to the care, education and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people. The list of these documents in Annex 1 is long. The Doran Review itself features in the Action Plan of the National Review of Services for Disabled Children. In this complex and changing situation, the Group needs to consider how to harness the national policies and guidance to create a clear, coherent and consistent pathway to help parents/carers and service funders and providers to promote and sustain the growth and development of children and young people with complex additional support needs. In setting out a pathway and the decisions to be made along the way, the Group is able to draw on much good practice, as illustrated in so many of the documents in Annex 1, as well as to address the weaknesses which are so clearly flagged up.

Perspectives on the pathway

1.2 This starter paper is written from the perspective of the centrality of the child and young person and his or her family. However, their perspective on what constitutes an appropriate pathway may differ quite significantly from practitioners and providers of services. Parents and carers and the child or young person will naturally perceive their route through educational and care provision from their unique standpoint. Parents and carers can often find themselves having to fight for what they regard as the optimum provision for their children. Local authorities and health boards must consider the pathway in terms of fair distribution of finite resources and value for money. The latter, of course, encompasses effectiveness of provision and not just the economic use of funding. Sometimes practitioners may find themselves in between the service users and those allocating resources. On one hand they recognise and wish to meet the unique needs of individual while on the other they have to fulfil their roles in implementing the policies and practices of their employers. The other player is national government which wishes its policies implemented. The Group needs to tease out the extent to which there is one clear and direct pathway and identify possible deviations to it.

2. Some Key Points to Consider in Setting out a Pathway

Clarifying outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs

2.1 The destination for children and young people with complex additional support needs is, in broad terms, the same as for all of Scotland's children, currently encompassed in the four capacities and the eight outcomes neatly laid out in The National Practice Model see 2.9 below. However, what each child or young person with complex additional needs is able to achieve will vary according to their disabilities and the barriers that they face. It is essential that practitioners assessing and providing services work with each individual child or young person and his or her family to determine their aspirations in terms of long term outcomes and the shorter term steps towards achieving them. Clearly expressed individualised outcomes are essential to determining what provision should be made and how successful it is.

2.2 The complex additional support needs of children and young people do not necessarily arise from birth or early life. They may be acquired as the result of late onset conditions or sudden illness or accident. The outcomes for and the needs of these children may change quickly as recovery sets in and, therefore, they need close monitoring and sufficient flexible provision to adjust to changing circumstances. For some children and young people their complex additional support needs may become every more profound as a result of a deteriorating condition. They too need close monitoring. In all circumstances, practitioner need to be alert and responsive to the needs of the parents/carers and families of the children and young people.

2.3 The GIRFEC principles emphasise the centrality of the child or young person in providing services and the importance of taking a holistic approach to his or her growth and development. These principles are of immense importance for children and young people with complex additional support needs. The demands on families of these children are very great. Parent and carers should be central to the

processes of decision making in determining the outcomes for their child and, indeed, often for themselves and any siblings.

Understanding the range and diversity of disabilities and barriers to learning giving rise to complex additional support needs

2.4 The term complex additional support needs comes with some ‘baggage’ and there is a danger that it is interpreted as referring solely to the needs of children or young people who have multiple physical, sensory and intellectual impairments. As is made clear in the code of practice, complex additional support needs may arise from one of a number of factors, relating to the learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs, and social and emotional factors of an individual. A single factor of a severe nature, such as deafness from birth can give rise to complex needs requiring the input of medical, educational and social work specialists. Equally a set of factors each mild on its own can also give rise to a child or young person having complex additional support needs. A child with difficulties in learning to read, making relationships with peers and controlling anger combined with fragmented schooling and poor parenting may require complex arrangements to progress.

2.5 It is not sufficient just to diagnose the difficulties that a child or young person is experiencing. A holistic assessment will consider the impact of these difficulties on the child or young person’s growth and development, and his or her relationship with the world, as well as what is needed from the people who look after him or her.

2.6 One of the most striking and recurring conclusions from reading the materials in Annex 1 is the extent to which weaknesses have been identified in the provision for children and young people who share certain specific conditions. The failure to address the need of children and young people looked after at home or away from home has been so severe that legislation was required to ensure that their additional support needs were consistently considered and addressed. Some of these children and young people have complex additional support needs. Children and young people with mental health problems have also been identified as receiving inadequate services. A great deal of work is being done to develop a national strategy for children and young people with autism spectrum disorders. Of course, some children and young people with complex additional support needs may experience a combination of these disadvantages as well as others. It is essential that these needs are teased out through careful assessment.

2.7 Every child or young person changes with growth and development as a result of which their interests, abilities and needs change. It is a strange phenomenon that professionals and even parents and carers do not always recognise that the needs of children with significant disabilities and barriers to learning change too. Some of the children and young people have out of date needs assessments. The most common recommendation made in the dispute resolution reports is for assessments to be updated in order to specify the precise needs of an individual. The pathway the Group offers must have stopping points along the way where progress is reviewed and needs restated.

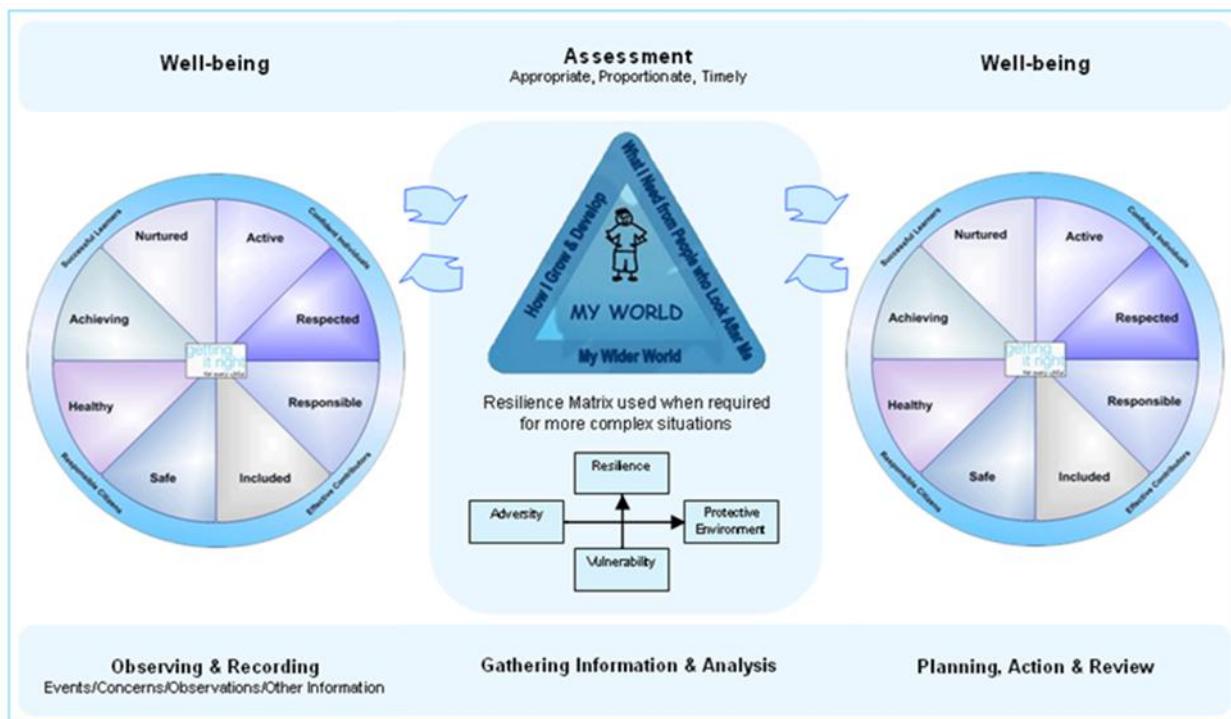
Recognising and supporting the range and diversity of practitioner expertise and contexts for learning and care required to respond to complex additional support needs

2.8 By their very nature the complex additional support needs of children and young people need input from a range of practitioners with the insights and skills to assess, intervene and give advice on specified conditions and approaches. In many cases, these practitioners need to be highly qualified and experienced in a particular aspect of disability. They are likely to be in short supply resulting in long delays for a service to be given or perhaps not given at all. Some children and young people require precisely regulated learning environments to enable them to respond and also become more independent. Smaller authorities or services may not be able to support and sustain highly specialised provision. Health services address these issues by building expertise in specialist hospitals and outpatient clinics. A few authorities combine to provide highly specialised services, such as the sensory visiting teacher service in the Ayrshires and the current merger of educational psychology services in Clackmannanshire and Falkirk councils. Another option is to commission services from the grant-aided schools and the voluntary and private sector. The CALL Centre and Scottish Sensory Centre are national bodies which provide highly specialist advice and continuing professional development for practitioners. The recently formed New Centre for Excellence in Looked After Children will focus on building expertise in relation to children who are looked after including those in residential schools. It is important that Scotland has a strategy for ensuring that it builds and maintains a cadre of highly qualified and experienced practitioners able to meet the complex additional support needs of its children and young people in the most appropriate settings. They are key to the pathway.

Ensuring effective and efficient assessment as a basis for quality planning

2.9 Both the code of practice and the GIRFEC National Practice Model, see below, stress the importance of an assessment process which is appropriate, proportionate and timely. It is a concern that over thirty years after the publication of the Warnock Report, one of the strengths of which was its emphasis on assessment, that the Audit Commission, HMIe and the National Review of Services for Disabled Children are still finding significant weaknesses in approaches to assessment as a basis for determining needs and how to meet them. Among the encouraging developments in respect of assessment has been the acceptance of the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach particularly with children and young people whose needs are complex. However, GIRFEC and the code of practice recognise the dangers inherent in large multi-disciplinary meetings which fail to become interdisciplinary and fail to provide an integrated plan for action.

The GIRFEC Practice Model



The concept of a **co-ordinator or lead professional** has much to commend it particularly in the case of children and young people with complex additional support needs. So too does the approach of each practitioner asking five questions.

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

2.10 Assessment is not an end in itself, nor is it a one-off event. The Assessment is for Learning project memorably defined the purposes of assessment in three ways: assessment as learning, assessment for learning and assessment of learning. This approach is relevant to the growth and development as well as the learning of the child or young person with complex additional support needs. All contributing to assessing a child or young person should learn from being involved. Assessment must be integral to planning, implementing the plan and reviewing it. The process of assessment must include careful analysis of what has been learned about the needs of the individual and how they may be met. The code of practice has important things to say about the relationship between assessment and decision making. It makes clear the separation between the objectives the child should achieve and the additional support required to achieve them.

Decisions about what are appropriate educational objectives to be achieved to enable the child or young person to benefit from school education should be taken independently of the additional support required to achieve these objectives and should be informed by the assessment information available. The starting point should be to establish what it is reasonable to expect the child or young person to achieve over the course of the next year, taking account of the assessment information available. The objectives should be described in terms that are specific enough to enable the education authority, and the other agencies involved in supporting the child or young person, to monitor and review progress over time. However, they should not be so overly specific that they narrow and constrain what should be learned. **When setting an objective, a question that needs to be answered is “How will we know the objective has been achieved?”** Since each coordinated support plan has to be reviewed on, at least, an annual basis then the objectives should be those which can be achieved in a year approximately or for which progression milestones will be identifiable within the year.

2.11 While there are disadvantages in having overly large multi-disciplinary meetings, inter-professional meetings with parents and, when appropriate, the child or young person provide a focus for discussing and making major decisions affecting the direction of the child's or young person's education and care. In such meetings, the views of the parents/carers, the child or young person and the key professionals contributing to the assessment and support service can be pooled and adjusted to determine the most effective next steps.

2.12 The outcome of the assessment may be recorded in the child plan which is the integrated plan bringing together the views of all services and agencies and those of the child or young person and their parents/carers. The code of practice makes it clear that, where the child or young person has a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP), it should be integral to the planning. However, the CSP must also be capable of standing on its own, as the education authority holds the responsibility for delivering this plan. Often schools and other services regard a child plan and CSP as high level strategic documents from which they derive action plans, such as personal learning plan(PLP) or individualised programme (IEP), to guide day by day work.

2.13 In most instances parents/carers and practitioners work well together on assessment and reach agreement. However, some parents are suspicious that assessments are not about the child or young person and his or her needs but are about how to fit him or her into the authority's provision without additional resourcing. Such concerns were highlighted in the Lamb Inquiry where there was a suggestion that assessment should be ‘arms' length’ from the authority. The UK Government's current Green Paper consultation suggests that objectivity in assessment would be helped by involving voluntary and community agencies in co-ordinating assessments. The Group may wish to offer guidance on the ways in which assessment may be carried out in an open and transparent manner and fully involve and gain the trust of parents and carers and the children and young people themselves.

Establishing meaningful reviewing and revision of care and education plans

2.14 Many of the documents in Annex 1 reveal weaknesses in, or even failures of practitioners to undertake reviews of plans made for children and young people with complex additional support needs. Such reviews are critical stopping points along the pathway. They are essential in:

- providing an account of the nature and extent of progress
- celebrating success
- reviewing the effectiveness of the curricular programme and approaches to learning, teaching and care
- showing what worked well and what did not
- reconsidering the extent to which barriers to learning and disadvantages are still impacting on the child or young person and their families
- considering whether adjustments are needed to long term outcomes
- redefining the child or young person's additional support needs including the nature and levels of inputs from essential practitioners or specialist resources
- laying out the curricular programme and where it is to be undertaken
- setting out new targets
- updating provision of staffing, resources and facilities
- setting a date for the next review meeting.

Matching the curriculum to needs and selecting approaches to learning and teaching

2.15 Children and young people with complex additional support needs have, like other Scottish children and young people, an entitlement to a planned and progressive curriculum from 3 to 18 years founded on the principles of challenge and enjoyment, breadth, progression, depth, personalisation and choice, coherence and relevance. With its encouragement for integrated study and tailoring the curriculum to the needs of pupils, Curriculum for Excellence provides a flexible framework for developing curricular programmes for children with complex additional support needs. However, making decisions about the areas of the curriculum to be followed are crucial in ensuring that the child or young person has the best means of progressing. As the child or young person progresses to the secondary stage, decisions about the curriculum can determine the opportunities available in the post school phase. Where children or young people with additional support needs have particular talents or abilities, these need to be fully developed.

2.16 For some children and young people with complex additional support needs part of their curricular programme necessarily includes elements designed to give them additional skills and insights to address a specific barrier or barriers to learning. Often these are highly specialised inputs which may not be readily understood by those not experienced in the care, education and support of children and young people with specific barriers. For some children and young people with mental health issues, counselling and therapy may be essential parts of their day and practitioners need to be aware of the effects of medication on their capacity to learn. A child or young person who is blind needs to learn to move around independently in the environment, an activity which requires intense concentration and highly skilled training. The selection and application of resources, particularly technology, may be critical to the development and progress of the child or young person.

Planning for and ensuring continuity of support through transitions

2.17 A common theme running through the documents in Annex 1 is that of the importance of preparing for transitions in the lives of children and young people with additional support needs. Sadly, however, there are recurring references in the documents to many weaknesses in relation to planning and supporting transitions. It is natural to think of transitions in purely linear terms relating to the stages in the growth and development of the child and young person. From home to pre-five provision, entry to primary school, entry to secondary school and then on to post school provision are conventional patterns which are likely to apply to all children and young people in Scotland including those with complex additional support needs. Within Curriculum for Excellence the learning outcomes and experiences for each curricular area are laid out in terms of levels of study and stages as laid out in the diagram below.

CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE LEVELS AND STAGES

Level	Stage
Early	The pre-school years and P1, or later for some.
First	To the end of P4, but earlier or later for some.
Second	To the end of P7, but earlier or later for some.
	S1 to S3, but earlier for some. The fourth level broadly equates to Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework level 4.
Third and	
Fourth	The fourth level experiences and outcomes are intended to provide possibilities for choice and young people's programmes will not include all of the fourth level outcomes.
Senior phase	S4 to S6, and college or other means of study.

Some pupils with complex additional support needs will need help to progress through the stages of Curriculum for Excellence. For others curricular programmes will need to be elaborated to match their levels of development. Some will not be able to attain the outcomes even at the early stage.

2.18 Many children and young people, including those with complex additional support needs, may face additional transitions arising from personal situations such as family breakdown or a house move which result in changes in support services and schooling. These are demanding for all children but for children and young people with complex additional support needs, such transitions will mean a loss of skills unless there is a high level of planning and support over the transition.

Making informed and realistic decisions about placement

2.19 Section 15 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 lays out the presumption that children and young people will be educated in mainstream schools except under exceptional circumstance as laid out in the table below.

<p>(3)The circumstances are, that to provide education for the child in a school other than a special school—</p> <p>(a)would not be suited to the ability or aptitude of the child;</p> <p>(b)would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom the child would be educated; or</p> <p>(c)would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred which would not ordinarily be incurred,</p> <p>and it shall be presumed that those circumstances arise only exceptionally.'</p>
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In choosing schools parents and carers want to be assured that their children will be happy and secure, be encouraged to progress educationally and be able to travel safely between home and school. Parents and carers of children and young people with complex additional support needs require assurances that the school placement will be able to meet the holistic needs of their children and that staff will understand and support them, giving expert input consistently. An important part of decision making will be about what provision is available within an area or education authority and the extent to which it can ensure high quality services. Authorities differ in what they can offer, but are all required to provide, or make arrangements for the provision of, the additional support (whether relating to education or not) required by each child or young person with additional support needs. The assessment and review cycle needs to address the issue of appropriateness of the provision being made and to change and improve it where it is failing to meet needs. Some authorities enhance their own provision by seeking services from neighbouring authorities and/or from the grant-aided, voluntary and private sector

Ensuring high quality decision making and how it could relate to the assessment, planning, implementation and review cycle

2.20 The nature and direction of the pathway through childhood and adolescence into young adulthood taken by children and young people with complex additional support needs are wholly dependent on the kinds of decisions taken, the quality of the judgements made in reaching decisions and the context in which the decisions are considered. Of course taking a decision is only the first step towards benefiting the child or young person. The decision needs to be fully implemented in the best possible way and be capable of being changed if an outcome is not being achieved.

2.21 In laying out a pathway, the Group may wish to consider a model where decision making is placed in the context of a continuous cycle of assessment, planning, implementation and review punctuated by the various transition points from birth to 25 years. While the code of practice was able to create a decision tree

around CSPs, the pathway through education is too complicated to be summarised in this way.

Respecting and supporting the autonomy of the child or young person and ensuring effective and ‘least intrusive’ support

2.22 There is a danger that focusing on what should be done to meet the needs of children with complex additional support needs that the autonomy of the child or young person and his or her parents and carers is taken away by administrators and practitioners.

2.23 The role of the child or young person in the assessment process is often overlooked. Within the school system increasing emphasis is being laid on children and young people reflecting on their own learning needs and the progress that they are making towards achieving targets they have agreed with their teachers. Such an approach needs to become more prominent in the assessment of additional support needs. Certainly it is becoming more common for older pupils and young people with complex additional support needs to be invited to assessment team meetings along with their parents and to be engaged in the discussion and decision making. Such inclusion needs to become the norm with other arrangements for a child or young person who would find such a meeting stressful. There is little evidence in the documents in Annex 1 to show the extent to which the child or young person is fully informed about ongoing assessments.

2.24 Practitioners and parents need to be sensitive and ensure that assessments and interventions do not impinge unnecessarily on the life of that child or young person at home, in school and in his or her community. They need to try to obtain the perceptions of the child or young person of the impact of the arrangements made to assess and meet their additional support needs. Most children and young people will prefer to live at home and attend school without attention being drawn to them. Some children find that attending a specialist unit or school is ‘least intrusive’ as their needs are met without fuss, they do not need to keep explaining their difficulties and they consistently receive appropriate support to help them to learn and develop.

Empowering parents and carers of children with complex additional support needs

2.25 Empowering parents, carers and young people was one of the drivers of the Education (Additional Support Needs) Scotland Act 2009. It sets out more stringent requirements for education authorities to provide information and support for parents, carers of children and young people with additional support needs, including young people sixteen years of age and over. An advocacy service has been set up to support parents, carers and young people taking disputes to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal (ASNT). Policy documents relating to health, to GIRFEC and Curriculum for Excellence promote the concept of choice for the individual child or young person and for parents and carers. While many parents and carers are content with the services their children receive, the evidence from the ASNT, mediation services and dispute resolution is that there remain points of difference for a number of parents and carers and a few young people. Those using dispute resolution processes are the most intrepid of parents and carers and, therefore, the number of parents and carers who are dissatisfied may well be higher than the data

on dispute resolution processes suggest... A striking quote in the Lamb Inquiry resonates.

This is the real story of the SEN system. In many places and for many parents, it can and does work well, but for too many parents it represents an unwarranted and unnecessary struggle. For some, what should be easy becomes hard; where there should be support there can be indifference; and where there should be speed there is delay. It is no wonder that confidence breaks down in these circumstances.

While this Inquiry related to work in England, some Scottish parents also provided evidence of their dissatisfaction. Professor Sheila Riddell and her team at the University of Edinburgh are currently taking forward a second stage of the ESRC funded knowledge exchange programme on Dispute resolution in additional support needs: Working together to improve children's and families' experiences.

2.26 The Group needs to consider as it develops its proposed pathway how to ensure that parents, carers and young people with additional support needs are empowered.

2.27 Some children and young people with complex additional support needs are looked after by their authorities. The pathway needs to ensure that the named people in the authority are supported to fulfil their roles as corporate parents.

3. What Form Should the Pathway Take?

3.1 The work on this starter paper began as a search for a pathway. Prime among the problems encountered in considering a form that the pathway may take is the plethora of documents which relate to the whole area of vulnerable children and young people including those with complex additional support needs. The Group needs to consider how best to recommend an approach to pathway planning which will have impact and not be swamped by the mass of information currently available. The following are some suggestions about possible forms a pathway may take.

A Pathway and the Staged Intervention Model

3.1 The HMIE report in November 2010 to Scottish Ministers Review of the Additional Support for Learning Act: Adding Benefits for Learners indicates that all education authorities in Scotland have in place models of looking at making provision for all children in a staged way, according to broadly defined levels of need. GIRFEC too conceives of provision in stages from universal through single agency plans and multi agency plans. The relationship of the staged approaches is seen in the diagram from the code of practice in Annex 2. Authorities vary in their models, some having four or five stages.

3.2 Among the advantages of the model is that it shows what levels of support would be offered in response to different levels of need, and the model helps resource providers estimate levels of input and make fair allocations to schools. It also helps to determine the partnership with other services. With effective record keeping the staged intervention model too can help authorities to plan provision such as anticipating how many children will require specialist input at a particular stage in

their education. However, the model also has some drawbacks, particularly as it relates to children and young people with complex additional support needs. The idea of staging has led some practitioners to believe that children and young people have to progress from the lowest level of support through each of the stages rather than to be placed at the level of provision that best meets their needs. Another problem is that because children and young people with complex additional support needs have high tariff needs, then they do not need universal services such as from health and other practitioners. While the staged intervention model may be used to determine, in the broadest of terms, the level of provision required and whether a CSP is necessary, it is not a substitute for a pathway for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Decision Trees

3.3 One way of presenting the pathway would be through a decision tree or algorithm which takes users through a series of gateways, based on decisions. An example of such a decision tree is in the code of practice to guide users through the decisions to be made in preparing a CSP. However, charting a way through all the stages and transitions in the life of a child or young person with complex additional support needs would be too complicated and is unlikely to be relevant across the range and diversity of needs. Decision trees have their place but they are not the whole answer to preparing a pathway for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Integrated Care Pathways

3.4 National Health Scotland uses a model referred to as integrated care pathways as described in the box below.

Integrated Care Pathways (ICPs) provide a template for multi-disciplinary care that is evidence-based and co-ordinated.

ICPs developed in the late 1990s as a basis for plotting and agreeing pathways of care for particular conditions or procedures. Pathways are designed to reduce variation in practice and allow the same quality of care to be delivered to patients across multi-disciplinary and multi-agency teams and in different care settings.

An ICP will plot the best sequence and timing of interventions by clinicians, nurses, other professionals and agencies for the best patient outcome. ICPs can be developed nationally and locally. The development of a pathway is based on:

- evidence of good practice
- patient experience
- professional experience and judgement

The pathway is presented with the following features:

- a context and rationale
- notes and explanations
- algorithms of decisions and actions
- a set of standards
- bibliography and web sites

Such a model would serve to illustrate the pathway for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Self-evaluation guides

3.5 HMIe and the former SWIA use a self-evaluation approach to guide users through the various components which contribute to high quality services and provision. These approaches to self-evaluation are derived from and dependent on evaluations of practice in the field. In earlier HMIe guides, key questions are asked in relation to a set of quality indicators and illustrated by good practice descriptors. In the more recent HMIe guides such as ‘Count us in: Mind over matter’ the following make up the self-evaluation guide:

- the context and description of the aspect of provision the guide is addressing
- a small number of strategic questions including ‘what do we need to do better?’
- issues to consider
- illustrations of interesting and effective practices in real situations
- suggested reading
- helpful websites.

3.6 In the SWIA ‘Guide to strategic commissioning’ the essential features of an aspect of the process are laid out and the user is given self-evaluation prompts in the forms of questions to ask. The standards relate back to the SWIA Performance Improvement Model.

3.7 It would be possible using the expertise of the Doran Review Group the subgroups to produce a guide which covered the various stages of care and education. Whether there should be a self-evaluation approach would require discussion and consultation with relevant agencies.

Core decisions

3.8 The presentation of the five core questions of the GIRFEC model laid out in paragraph 2.9 above is powerful in its simplicity and applicability to all practitioners. However, these questions relate to the work of an individual practitioner and children and young people with complex additional support needs require integrated contributions from a number of practitioners. There may be merit in exploring further the idea of key questions which would be common elements in decision making process relating to the integrated assessment, planning, review and implementation cycle for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Margery M Browning
28 June 2011

Annex 1 Relevant Documents

National Reports and Guidance

Riddell, Sheila (1999) Advisory Committee Report into the Education of Children with Severe Low Incidence Disabilities The Scottish Executive

The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (2007) Guideline 98: Assessment, diagnosis and clinical interventions for children and young people with autism spectrum disorders.

NRCCI (2009) Higher Aspirations Brighter Futures: particularly reports on Commissioning Services and Matching resources to Needs

Audit Scotland (2010) Getting it right for children in residential care Audit Scotland

Legislation and Scottish Government Publications

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and 2009

Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities Equally Well (2008) Web publication

The Scottish Government (2008) Equally Well Implementation Plan

The Scottish Government and COSLA (2008) The Early Years Framework

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009

The Scottish Government (2010) Supporting children's learning: Code of Practice (Revised Edition) 2010 On line publication Scottish Government

The Scottish Government and the Autism Spectrum Disorder Reference Group (2010) Towards and Autism Strategy for Scotland Draft National Strategy

The Scottish Government (2010) A Guide to Implementing Getting it right for every child: Messages from the Pathfinders and Learning Partners

The Scottish Government (2010) The Practice Briefings 1 to 7
(Covers the Named Person, the Lead Professional, Using the National Practice Model and the contributions of the Children's Hearing System)

The Scottish Government and the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Reference Group in the Scottish Parliament (2010) Towards an Autism Strategy for Scotland Draft Report Web publication

The Scottish Government (2011) Report of the National Review of Services for Disabled Children Web publication

The Scottish Government (2011) Improving Children's Services: Update from the Scottish Government Web publication

The UK Government

The Lamb Inquiry (2009) Special Educational Needs and Parental Confidence The Department for Children, Schools and Families

UK Government Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability: UK Government Green Paper consultation 9 March to 30 June 2011

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education

HMIe (2010) Review of the Additional Support for Learning Act: Adding Benefits for Learners A Report by HMIe to Scottish Ministers November 2010 Web publication

HMIe (2011) Count Us In: Mind over Matter: Promoting and supporting mental and emotional wellbeing HMIe

HMIe (2006) Education for Pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorders HMIe

HMIe (2007) Count Us In: Achieving Success for Deaf Pupils HMIe

HMIe (2008) Education for Learners with Dyslexia HMIe

HMIe (2009) Count Us In: A Sense of Belonging Meeting the Needs of Children and Young People Newly Arrived in Scotland HMIe

HMIe (2010) Count Us In: Success for all HMIe

Learning and Teaching Scotland

Curriculum for Excellence

- Building the Curriculum 3 A Framework for Learning and Teaching
- Building the Curriculum 4 Skills for learning Skills for Life

Learning and Teaching Scotland Supporting Learners Website

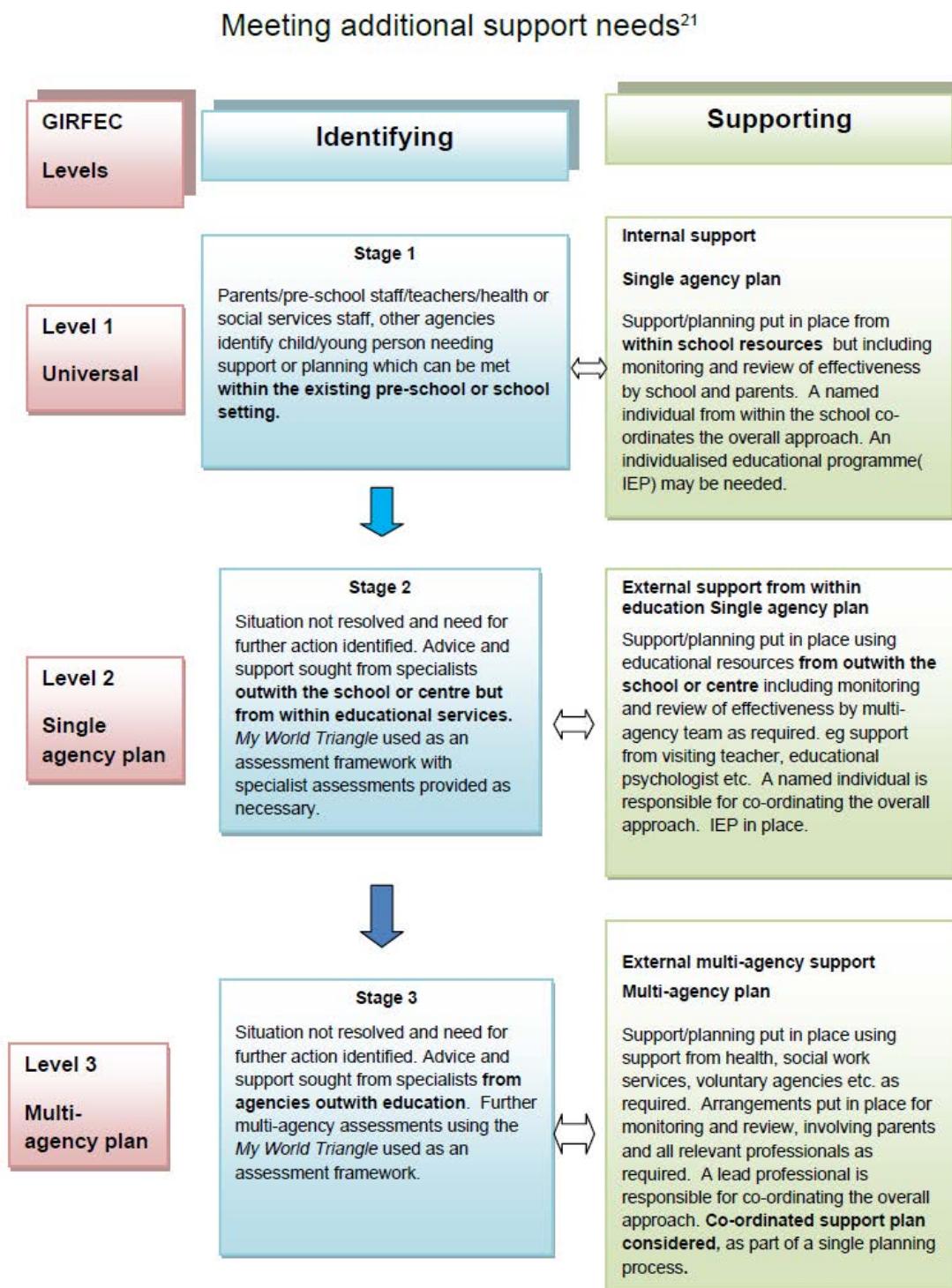
The Additional Support Needs Tribunals

ASNT (2010) Fifth Annual Report of the President of the Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland 2009/10 Web publication

Hearing decisions on ASNT website.

Social Work Services Inspectorate

SWIA (2009) *A guide to strategic commissioning*



The Doran Review: Pathways and Decision Making Group

Outline of Proposed Good Practice/Self-evaluation Guide

The following is an outline of a proposed good practice/self-evaluation guide to be recommended to the Doran Review to be considered for development and dissemination. Those involved in its preparation are Janice McNeill, Douglas Hutchison and Margery Browning. In addition, Mary O'Brien, Head teacher, Carol Binnie, Depute Head teacher, and Douglas Thomson, Educational Psychologist, all of Donaldson's, contributed to a seminar focussing on the principles and practices which support effective decision making.

1. Title: How good are we at achieving the best possible outcomes for each child and young person with complex additional support needs?

2. Rationale:

E.g. This guide is intended to help parents/carers of children and young people with complex additional support needs and their practitioners in education, social care, health and the voluntary sector to make and implement decisions about how best to achieve the optimum outcomes for them in terms of their wellbeing, education and all round development. The materials are arranged to enable users to evaluate their contributions as individuals and as part of integrated support teams as well as to provide illustrations of effective practices. The guide is intended for use to evaluate the quality of provision for one child or young person with complex additional support needs or a group of such children and young people, for example within an establishment such as a nursery, school or specialised unit. The evaluation toolkits of Education Scotland, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland and Audit Scotland are designed for evaluation of services and establishments.

3. The complex additional support needs of children and young people

E.g. The term complex additional support needs comes with some ‘baggage’ and there is a danger that it is interpreted as referring solely to the needs of children or young people who have multiple physical, sensory and intellectual impairments. As is made clear in the code of practice, complex additional support needs may arise from one of a number of factors, relating to the learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs, and social and emotional factors of an individual. A single factor of a severe nature, such as deafness from birth, can give rise to complex needs requiring the input of medical, educational and social work specialists. Equally a set of factors each mild on its own can also give rise to a child or young person having complex additional support needs. A child with difficulties in learning to read, making relationships with peers and controlling anger, combined with fragmented schooling and poor parenting, may require complex arrangements to progress.

It is not sufficient just to diagnose the difficulties that a child or young person is experiencing. A holistic assessment will consider the impact of these difficulties on the child or young person's growth and development, and his or her relationship with the world, as well as what is needed from the people who look after him or her.

4. Context: The Guide is set in the context of the National Review of Services for Disabled Children and specifically in relation to;

- the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and 2009, the related Regulations;
- Supporting children's learning: Code of Practice (Revised Edition)‘ hereafter referred to as the code of practice;
- The National Framework Model of GIRFEC;
- Children and Young People who are looked after at home or away from home
- Curriculum for Excellence;
- The Early Years Framework;
- Equally Well‘;
- More Choices More Chances.

The guide draws on and relates to the wealth of extant policies and guidance provided by the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland, Audit Scotland, NRCCI and The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network and other relevant documents. It is also informed by the current work on commissioning services and on outcomes undertaken by Education through Care Scotland (ETCS). If the guide is developed, it will be important to co-operate with all of these agencies.

The Guide considers how to harness the national policies and guidance to create clear, coherent and consistent pathways to help parents/carers and service funders and providers to promote and sustain the growth and development of children and young people with complex additional support needs.

5. Principles Underpinning the Guide

The principles underpinning the Guide are those of the Additional Support Needs legislation and related code of practice, GIRFEC and CfE. The following are particularly important.

- The individual child and young person is at the heart of all decision making and should play their full part in making choices, taking the decisions and commenting on the provision made.
- Practitioners must always be informed about and responsive to the demands on the parents/carers of each child or young person with complex additional support needs and on the other members of the family.
- Practitioners from education, social work, health and the voluntary sector should work together to implement the GIRFEC approach to assessment and intervention.
- Practitioners should work closely with parents/carers and involve the child and young person in the cycle of:

- **Identifying and assessing** the barriers to learning and assessing the context of the child or young person's care and education and **determining the intended outcomes** for the child or young person
- **Agreeing and planning** pathways to achieve the outcomes
- **Taking action** to work together to support the child or young person and his or her family
- **Reviewing** the effectiveness of the decisions and their implementation and planning next steps.

This cycle will be ongoing until the child or young person has moved into adulthood.

- Practitioners with a range of expertise and experience are required to identify and meet the needs of children and young people with complex additional support needs. The inputs should be co-ordinated by a **lead practitioner** who is the main point of contact with parents/carers and be well known to the child or young person.
- Practitioners should work closely with parents/carers and the child or young person in analysing assessment information to determine longer term outcomes and the steps towards achieving them.
- The planning documents of the different practitioners should be fully integrated and be reviewed as far as possible at the same time.
- When key decisions are to be made about ways of meeting the complex additional support needs of a child or young person, parents/carers, the child and young person, as appropriate, and the practitioners should be fully informed about the various options and their availability including options on educational placement within and outside local authority boundaries.
- Decisions should be made as speedily as possible while allowing for careful consideration of all options.
- Parents and carers and young people should be fully informed of the arrangements for appeals and resolving disputes when they are dissatisfied with the decisions made.

6. Critical phases in making decisions

The code of practice emphasises the importance of giving each child or young person continuity and progression in the provision made for them. Inevitably because of the way in which education is organised in Scotland there are periods of transition from one form of education to another. Careful preparation is required to ensure that no momentum is lost during these phases. It is essential that all caring for and supporting children and young people with complex additional support make well judged decisions about intended outcomes and how they are to be achieved. The code of practice identifies four stages or phases where transition preparation is required. Because disability and health needs play such a large part in determining outcomes for many children with complex addition support needs, there is an

additional phase related to initial assessment and identification of needs. Practitioners from different disciplines are required to contribute during all phases or stages but the lead practitioner role may change. For example, paediatricians and other medical specialists usually take the lead during the initial identification stage.

- **Initial identification of factors giving rise to complex additional support needs**
- **Starting nursery school**
- **Pre-school to primary**
- **Primary school to secondary school**
- **Preparing for adulthood**

An additional transition planning and preparation stage is required when significant circumstances impact on the life of a child or young person with complex additional support needs. For example, they may need to change school because of family relocation or the unsuitability of provision or require home tuition because of health issues.

Within each of these phases the same set of questions need to be considered, although the answers will vary according to the progress of the child or young person, the resources of the family, the context, past experience and intended outcomes.

- What are the strengths and needs of the child or young person?
- What are the intended outcomes for him or her?
- What are the strengths and needs of the family of the child or young person?
- How is the child or young person to achieve the intended outcomes?
- Who will provide and contribute to the education and care of the child or young person and at what level?
- Where will the child or young person be educated?
- What resources are required?
- How will we know that the child or young person is making progress towards achievement of the intended outcomes?

7. Integrated assessment, planning, intervention and review: some questions to ask

GIRFEC identifies five key questions that each practitioner should ask in respect of a child or young person.

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

In addition the integrated practitioner team working with parents/carers and the young person need to reflect on the following aspects of their practice.

- How open and clear are our channels of communication and the sharing of information?
- Do we all have access to relevant information about the child or young person?
- How effective are we at analysing the information we hold in order to provide a rounded profile of the child or young person?
- How good are we at framing the outcomes for and with the child or young person and defining the steps towards achieving them?
- To what extent do parents/carers, the child or young person and each practitioner understand and share an understanding of the outcomes and how they are to be achieved?
- To what extent is the role of the lead practitioner understood and carried out?
- How effective, efficient and integrated are our planning, recording, reporting and review procedures?

8. Quality indicators and standards

Carried out systematically, openly and robustly, the iterative cycles of assessment, planning, action and review applied at key phases in the development of the child or young person with complex additional support needs should contain their own hard edged evaluations. Is the child or young person achieving the outcome? If so what are the next steps? If not, why not and what do we do now? From time to time, however, those responsible for interdisciplinary teams and the teams themselves may wish to select a set of quality indicators or quality standards against which to measure their performance. Such measures may be extracted from the HMIE Journey to Excellence series or the standards used by Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland.

Final Note

As education, social care, health and the voluntary sector are all required to ensure that children and young people with complex additional support needs, it would be appropriate for the guide to be developed by an integrated practitioner team. It will also be important to consider the approaches to dissemination and staff development.

In working up a good practice/self-evaluation guide, it would be essential to provide well worked example of good practice to illustrate expectations in general and at each stage. It may also be useful to provide examples of recording formats to record evaluations of practice.

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Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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