

# South Lanarkshire Council

The Committee is specifically seeking a response to the following –

**details on what parts of Additional Support for Learning provision are working well and what are not, and any reasons they can provide which might help to explain why aspects are working well or not.**

## **Working well and why?**

The ASL legislation and supporting Code of Practice are working well. Guidance from the Morgan Review has enabled focus on specific areas to make improvements in outcomes for children and young people with additional support needs.

South Lanarkshire Council has built an ASN CPD hub to support building capacity in all school staff to meet additional support needs, in response to the Morgan Review. This is working well.

We are working to build knowledge, skills and capacity and to support developing inclusive ethos across all educational establishments to meet the huge rise in complexity of need. An understanding of the changing landscape is developing due to training and focused guidance, but this takes time and commitment to change.

The use of Alternative and Augmentative Communication in specialist provisions has improved due to the focus on this over past few years.

A curriculum Tracking and Monitoring Programme (B squared) is employed across specialist establishments. This allows developmental milestones and broader, more extended pace of learning to be measured and achievements acknowledged and celebrated.

A proactive approach and response to anti bullying and the promotion of equalities is comprehensive and underpinned by a sound policy framework at authority and establishment level.

A clear commitment to an inclusive and effective partnership approach between the Inclusive Education Service, schools and establishments and the Educational Psychology Service supports positive, inclusive outcomes for individual children and young people.

## **Not working well and why?**

The presumption of mainstreaming continues to be challenging as the complex additional support needs of children and young people have increased in number and range, requiring the skills, knowledge and expertise of teachers and support staff to be further developed. This has made the change response more challenging.

The prevalence of distressed behaviour in schools due to the complexity and rise in level of needs has increased. This may be misunderstood as an out of context high number, however within South Lanarkshire, local research has indicated that distressed behaviour is most prevalent in specialist standalone schools and in P1-4 children with additional support needs and related barriers and challenges in language and communication and developmental delay. The impact of the pandemic and restriction in service delivery during periods of lockdown must also be taken into account when considering effects on young children's social and emotional development. Raw media reporting of the issue in educational establishments is often without analysis of the needs of children and young people affected and has a resultant detrimental impact on staff morale and understanding of the reality of the causes of the situation.

Newly qualified teachers are not sufficiently trained in supporting children and young people with complex needs and the behaviours that present. Many are unprepared for meeting the range of children's needs as they have little or no experience of this and expectations are not realistic.

Requests for Home Education have increased since the pandemic which may illustrate that delivery of school education, in a traditional Monday-Friday, 9:00am-3:00pm is out of step with modern working and family life. This may present a challenge when considering how we design education in the future.

It is always challenging to move children and young people from specialist to more inclusive, mainstream pathways despite evidence of progress in learning and development, so pressures on specialist educational placements tend to be one way.

### **What are the barriers to supporting this provision?**

- **any examples of good practice in this area;**

#### **Barriers**

In South Lanarkshire Council there are over 100 ASN specific classes across the school estate and still we do not have enough provision to satisfy the number of referrals to specialist provision. We do not have the finance to expand these resources and we are lacking in staff support numbers. Staff attendance is adversely affected by the nature and requirements of the role in working with children and young people with profound and complex additional support needs.

Buildings require to be adapted to meet the more complex physical and behavioural needs of children and young people and costs are increasing. There is no scope for expansion.

Specialist equipment is more sophisticated than in the past and therefore more expensive. The pressures on budget for this is significant and increasing.

The opportunity to work in partnership with NHS colleagues, including the Nursing, CAMHS and Allied Health Professional services, to plan and review support for children and young people with additional support needs are lessening as resources are reducing. This is at a time when needs are increasing in number and complexity. Education staff are being increasingly asked to take on elements of these roles.

Input from Allied Health Professionals has been seriously impacted by the pandemic. Waiting lists for speech and language assessment in Lanarkshire can be up to 2 years—for neurodevelopmental assessment waiting times are now 3.5-4 years.

Conversations on Inclusion need to shift from focus on resources to focus on values. The Angela Morgan review highlighted that, unfortunately not all individuals in Scottish education are signed up to the principles of inclusion and presumption of mainstreaming. Children with additional support needs continue to be viewed as individuals needing something extra or an individualised, specialised approach and planning, rather than educational establishments working to ensure that every classroom is inclusive so that less individual adaptations are needed.

Discussion on an inclusive approach to education in Scotland would appear to be considerably adrift from countries like Canada, Australia and New Zealand where the focus is on UNCRPD and Article 24—children with disability have right to be educated in inclusive settings, and placement in segregated or special setting are viewed as a breach of their rights. These countries have active campaigning against more ASN/Special schools opening. It would appear that Scotland and the UK are out of step—focusing on increasingly segregated environments.

Continuing to fund specialist settings means local authorities cannot shift resources/finance to better support mainstream settings to be more inclusive.

The language used by teacher unions is unhelpful. Children with additional support needs are often described as a workload issue and as contributing to teacher stress.

The Angela Morgan review requires to be publicised and shared more widely and prominently. The Review was published in 2020 during lockdown and nationally, the education workforce is not as familiar as they should be. In particular the values and cultural developments supported by the Review should be promoted. It appears to have been overshadowed by The Promise, the Hayward Review and the Muir report on Education Reform.

The Action Points arising from the Morgan Review require to be progressed. Elements that are behind schedule include development of a national measurement framework, multi-agency CSP training etc.

The tension between the narrow focus on attainment/qualifications and the need to respectfully recognise the achievements of children with additional support needs still exists.

The link between poverty and prevalence of additional support needs requires more overt and explicit attention and resources directed at national and local authority level to recognise this. The cost-of-living crisis has of course, further exacerbated the challenges for these families and children.

### **Good Practice**

Examples of good practice in South Lanarkshire Council include:

- A shared understanding of staged intervention is well established across all services in education.
- A CPD Hub has been developed and is located on GLOW- this provides a suite of training opportunities to support capacity building in staff.
- A detailed Framework for the deployment of Support Assistants has been developed in line with the recommendation of the Morgan Review.
- A curriculum Tracking and Monitoring system - B Squared – has been rolled out for use across the school estate with the aim of achieving an equitable approach to the monitoring and celebration of progress and achievement for all learners.
- Robust anti- bullying and equalities guidance is available at authority level and supports the development of establishment policy in this area.
- Guidance on Managing sexually harmful behaviour has been distributed and is available in all establishments.
- Guidance on meeting needs of children and young people with severe and profound learning needs has been developed.
- There has been a significant response to provision of services in response to the mental health agenda for all ages.
- A loan system has been developed for the use of high-cost sensory equipment for an agreed period, resulting in richer experiences for children and young people with complex needs.
- The Youth, Family and Community Learning Service (CLD) delivers a range of groups meeting local need for children and young people with a range of additional support needs including LGBT, Young Carers etc.
- The Inclusions Allocations Process, Attachment and Trauma Intervention process and Exceptional Cases process are robust in considering sound assessment information and making transparent and fair decisions in relation to education placement.
- The Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour (PPRUDB) Guidance offers comprehensive guidance in relation to the management of pupils displaying distressed behaviour and is a mandatory component of the training for education staff.
- Violent Incidents are monitored, analysed and reported in a systematic way.
- A Reflective Tool based on Staged Intervention assists schools with consideration of support strategies and assessment of need.
- Co-located ASN bases and mainstream schools provide a working model that promotes close collaboration and sharing of expertise, resources and experiences.

- The development of outdoor education in many settings provides an enhanced curriculum offer that better meets the learning needs of a range of children and young people.

**How does the authority support good relationships with parents and young people, especially where there are disagreements around the provision of additional support for learning and reach collaborative agreement**

The Inclusive Education Team support all schools, parents and children in addressing any disagreements. A Senior Manager Pupil Support (SMPS) and a Quality Improvement Officer (Inclusive Education Service) for each locality can support schools with this and act as a representative of the local authority in working towards resolution.

The Council’s complaints procedure (Have Your Say) is online on the council website. In all education school placement letters, the parent is directed to the process of review and/or appeal. Parents are directed to Enquire for advice and the availability of independent mediation through RESOLVE.

Co-ordinated Support Plan discussions are led by the locality SMPS and the process is made clear to all.

There is a clear framework for placing requests, that offers additional information in relation to right of appeal where desired.,

There is an emphasis on the collation and consideration of parental views in all placement decisions.

**How many placing requests have been made over the last 5 years by parents or carers wishing that their children be educated in a specialist Additional Support Needs (ASN) unit or school. And how many placing requests have been made by parents or carers wishing their children to be educated in a mainstream setting as opposed to a specialist ASN setting. The Committee would be grateful for the total numbers, along with the numbers of requests refused and agreed.**

**ASN Placing Requests**

Session	Total Number of Requests	Total Number approved	Total Number Refused
2018/2019	9	0	9
2019/2020	0	0	0
2020/2021	32	8	24
2021/2022	34	0	34
2022/2023	61	22	39

**Mainstream Placing Requests**

Session	Total Number of Requests	Total Number approved	Total Number Refused
2018/2019	2397	2318	79
2019/2020	2250	2117	133
2020/2021	2447	2278	169
2021/2022	2539	2349	190
2022/2023	2642	2428	214

**How does the authority ensure that parents and young people are aware of the rights to various remedies under the 2004 Act?**

All schools and education services have copies of the Enquire resource, ‘Additional Support for learning: A Guide for Parents and Carers’. And this can also be located on the Council website.

We have a service level agreement with Children in Scotland and make use of Resolve Mediation.

Parents may make an enquiry or complaint using the 'Have your say', Council complaints procedure and this will be directed to the appropriate service.  
All letters offering or declining ASN placement outline a parent or young person's rights to review, mediation and appeal.

The Council has a well-established Parental Engagement strategy.

Wellbeing assessments which are a core element of the information gathered to inform decisions in relation to resource allocation, including education placement, are required to include child and parent views.

Training in the UNCRC has been delivered to education and children's services staff and this will be further developed during session 2024-25.

**The Committee is aware that there can be variations in approaches to identification of ASN across local authorities and between primary and secondary schools. The Committee would be grateful if you could briefly set out how you ensure that children's additional support needs are identified and Seemis records are updated to ensure accuracy of the data.**

Staged Intervention, as part of the South Lanarkshire Council Framework for Inclusion and Equality, details the staged intervention process and four stages of intervention with associated assessment, specification of need, planning requirements and review process.

The Educational Psychology Service works to assess need and the resources required to meet those needs. A range of frameworks are used for specific needs including autism and literacy (dyslexia) needs.

Schools assess wellbeing using the national GIRFEC Practice model. The wellbeing assessment is recorded in the SEEMIS Wellbeing Application, and in addition to school staff, includes contributions from Educational Psychologists, Senior Managers Pupil Support ( SMPS) and their specialist support teachers.

NHS and CAMHS also contribute to the assessment of need where relevant.

ASN is an identifier on SEEMIS. Directives (policy, guidance and operating procedures) and associated training are given to schools regarding recording and in ASN Schools, checks are completed on a termly basis.

**How does the authority ensure staff have adequate training on Additional Support for Learning provision?**

There is mandatory training for all education staff in Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour (PPRUDB) to support them to understand and manage complex and dis tressed behaviours.

Training matrix and training needs analysis linked to Promoting Positive Relationships and Understanding Distressed Behaviour for schools. Newly developed De-escalation Training will be launched and delivered to all who request it.

The CPD Hub located on GLOW is open to all education staff for the purpose of extending knowledge, skills and expertise and building capacity within schools.

A network for Depute Head Teachers (ASN)has been established and meets regularly acting as a vehicle for delivering training and sharing good practice.

A Corporate Training resource 'Learn Online' offers online learning for all Council employees and covers a varied range of topics.

Psychological Services deliver comprehensive training in Attachment, Trauma, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Nurture, Emotion Coaching, Literacy etc...

Support Assistant Framework of Training is compulsory induction training for new School Support Assistants.

South Lanarkshire Council contributed to the West Partnership Support Assistant training matrix in 4 areas of additional support needs.

Training is provided directly to education establishment staff by NHSL colleagues where required, to meet individual medical needs.

Training is provided by Allied Health Professionals (notably, Speech and Language therapy).

The Inclusive Education Team offers input to training for Newly Qualified Teachers.

**If parents/carers have a concern about the ASN provision in a mainstream school, what process can they follow to try and get it resolved?**

Parents/carers will be directed to discuss the issue with a senior manager within the school. This is likely to be the Depute Head Teacher responsible for Base provision or the Head Teacher. If they wish further information or alternative advice, they may be directed to the link SMPS, Educational Psychologist and Quality Improvement Officer (Inclusive Education Service) who can assist in seeking resolution.

Alternatively (or subsequently), they may wish to follow the Council's complaints procedure (Have Your Say), request mediation (RESOLVE) or take legal advice. All of these options are signposted to them.

Parents can raise a formal request for assessment under the terms of the ASL legislation which is actioned in partnership between the Educational Psychology Service and Inclusive Education Service, working with schools.

**Where the provision of ASN is not working in specific cases in schools, what can teachers do about that? Is there support that can be accessed? What happens if the matter cannot be resolved?**

School staff follow the process of staged intervention and seek advice and support in line with each stage of the four stages of intervention:

Stage 1 - within the class

Stage 2 - out with the class but within the school

Stage 3 - out with the school but within Education Resources

Stage 4 - out with Education Resources and from other services/agencies.

School staff are supported to share practice with colleagues through a range of networks and access the continuum of training, advice and support available to them.

Each case would be considered on an individual basis and creative solutions sought to ensure best outcomes for the child or young person.

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