

Understanding Education Jargon and Abbreviations

Starting a new school, moving between stages of education, or working with different support services can sometimes feel overwhelming, especially when faced with unfamiliar acronyms and professional terminology. This guide explains commonly used education, health, and children's services abbreviations in plain language, helping young people, parents, carers, and professionals better understand the language used throughout the transition journey.

Glossary (updated August 2026)

Browse the glossary below to find clear explanations of the terms, abbreviations, and jargon you may encounter when working with schools and partner agencies.

1+2 Mother tongue plus two additional languages

The plan to expand and improve language learning so that by 2021 every child will learn the first additional language from P1 and a second by P5.

ACEs Adverse Childhood Experiences

ACEs help us to understand how a child's early experiences might impact upon them.

ADD Attention Deficit Disorder

ADD is a medical condition affecting children, young people, and adults with symptoms that might include short attention span and poor concentration. The symptoms may be mild or severe.

ADHD Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD is a medical condition. A person with ADHD has differences in brain development and brain activity that affect attention, the ability to sit still, and self-control.

ASD Autism Spectrum Disorder

ASD is a medical condition that affects social interaction, communication, lack of flexibility in thoughts and behaviours.

ASL Additional Support for Learning

Additional Support for Learning means giving children extra help or support so they can get the most out of their education.

ASN Additional Support Needs

A child or young person is said to have additional support needs if they need more or different targeted support to what is normally provided in schools or pre-schools to children of the same age.

BGE Broad General Education

This is the learning which is done from the age of 3 to 15 – up to the end of S3 (Secondary year 3). The aim is to make sure children have a wide range of learning before they start to specialise in different subjects.

CAMHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

CAMHS is a team of people who have expertise in mental health. They offer a community based service across the region to children, young people and their families/carers, who are experiencing mental health problems including psychiatric disorders. These are conditions such as schizophrenia, psychosis, and eating disorders for example.

CBT Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

CBT is a 'talking therapy' that focuses on the links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour. It aims to help you manage your feelings and change any thinking or behaviour patterns you have which might be unhelpful and making your problems worse.

CITS CAMHS Intensive Treatment Service

CITS provides appropriate high intensive treatment for young people who have been admitted to hospital or are at risk of harm or as an alternative to being admitted to a specialist psychiatric hospital. You may hear this service being referred to as CITS.

CfE Curriculum for Excellence

CfE is the mix of subjects children and young people are taught in early years settings and schools from age 3 – 18.

Child Protection Practitioners

Those staff that may have to attend Child Protection Case Conferences, providing reports, giving analysis and taking part in decision making. Social Work Staff, Health Visitors, School Nurses, Child Protection Co-ordinators, Principal Teacher Pupil Support, Police Officers, CAHMS Supervisors, and those who manage any of the previously mentioned children's services staff above.

Child Protection Specialists

Those who hold the roles of Senior Social Workers, Child Protection Advisors, Detective Sergeants within Police Scotland, Child Protection Officer.

CLD Community Learning and Development

Teams who work with and support communities in areas such as adult and family learning and youth work.

CLG Closing the Literacy Gap

A short-term, targeted intervention designed to accelerate progress in reading and writing and close the literacy gap. Specially trained Pupil Support Assistants deliver one-to-one coaching sessions, four times a week, for a period of 8 weeks. It uses a book based approach, with opportunities to read and write in every lesson.

CNG Closing the Numeracy Gap

Closing the Numeracy Gap is a bank of short-term targeted intervention programmes for numeracy. There is a clear focus on accelerating progress in learning and closing the attainment gap.

CSP Co-ordinated Support Plan

A child/young person is suitable for a CSP when they need support. A CSP contains information on the educational objectives for the child or young person; the additional support needed and who will provide the support for example speech and language therapists or social work.

CPMs Child's Plan Meetings

CPMs have been introduced so that children, young people, families and those professionals working with families are clear about their responsibilities. This is a personalised child's plan to support a child who may need a range of extra support planned, delivered and co-ordinated. In these meetings professionals, the family and the young person discuss what should be improved for the child by creating actions to be taken and why the plan has been created. The child's plan is managed by a named person: someone with the right skills and experience to make sure the plan is managed properly. Depending on the situation and the child's needs, the lead professional may also be their named person. In primary schools this is normally the Headteacher. In secondary schools it is often the pupil support teacher. Parents are part of this process and need to agree the plan.

CRIS Cyber Resilience and Internet Safety

Children and young people learn how to navigate the digital world, reducing risks and keeping themselves safe.

CVI Cortical Visual Impairment

Cerebral visual impairment (sometimes called cortical visual impairment or CVI) is a disorder caused by damage to the parts of the brain that process vision. It's most common in babies and young children but can continue into adulthood.

CYPCS The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

The Commissioner aims to promote and protect the rights of children and young people in Scotland.

DNA Did Not Attend

DNA is a term by the National Health Service that stands for a child or young person who did not turn up for their planned appointment.

DNK Developing Number Knowledge

Developing Number Knowledge is an approach used in many of our schools to teach numeracy. The approach supports the development of children's number knowledge.

DYW Developing the Young Workforce

DYW is the Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy to better prepare young people for the world of work.

EAL English as an Additional Language

This includes children/young people and parents who have recently arrived in Scotland from another country and are new to learning English, or who have always lived in this country but use a language other than English at home.

ELC Early Learning and Childcare

This term is meant to emphasise that care and education of very young children are not two separate things as babies and young children are learning all the time. Early Learning and Childcare settings include family centres, nursery schools, nursery classes attached to primary schools, and childminders. These places may be run by local authorities, private businesses, voluntary sector organisations, and self-employed individuals.

EP Educational Psychologists

An EP role is to apply psychology to make a positive difference to the educational outcomes of children and young people. This is done through Consultation, Assessment, Intervention, Research and Training.

ES Education Scotland

ES is the national body in Scotland for supporting quality and improvement in learning and teaching.

ESOL English for Speakers of Other Languages

Support for English language classes and other information for those people whose first language is not English. As parents you can access support through discussion with your school or early learning setting.

EV Educational Visitor

A teacher who identifies and supports the learning of pre-school pupils with additional needs, both at home and within Early Learning and Childcare settings.

EYP Early Years Practitioners

These people make up most of the staff who work in nurseries and pre-school settings.

FASD Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

FASD is a condition that has damaging effects on the brain and body of an unborn child. FASD is a lifelong disability.

FA's Foundation Apprenticeships

Foundation Apprenticeships are a Skills Development Scotland (SDS) initiative, providing new, work-based learning opportunities for learners in their senior phase of secondary education. It enables them to complete elements of a Modern Apprenticeship while still at school.

FBT Family Based Therapy

Family Based Therapy is a type of psychological therapy that works to change the relationships within families to help them better deal with a wide range of problems. Family therapy helps family members find constructive ways to help each other. Due to this flexibility, family therapy is useful in a wide range of situations.

FE Further Education

This is post-compulsory education which is different from that offered in universities. It is mainly taught in colleges and is sometimes done as work-based learning or in adult and community learning.

FSME Free School Meals Entitlement

Naturally Dumfries and Galloway is our sustainable school meals brand. It is about more than just the food we serve – it reflects our commitment to sustainability, legislation, health and tackling climate change across all aspects of the school meals service. Detailed information on school meals is available at

<https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/schools-learning/schools/school-meals>.

FTE Full-Time Equivalent

This is a way to measure how much time a member of school staff works in school. For example, FTE of 1.0 means the person is equivalent to a full-time worker, while FTE 0.5 means the person is half-time.

GBO Goal Based Outcomes

When a young person is working with the CAMHS team they may ask young people to identify what matters to them and ask which goals they would like to work towards.

GDPR General Data Protection Regulation

GDPR is a standard intended to strengthen data protection for individuals. Find out more at <https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/council-elections/data-finance-performance/data-privacy-information-requests/privacy-statements>.

GIRFEC Getting it Right for Every Child

A Scottish Government policy which aims to make sure all Scotland's children, young people and their families have support across public services, such as health, education and social work. More information is available on the **Council website** -

<https://www.dumfriesandgalloway.gov.uk/social-care-health/children-young-people-families/getting-right-every-child>,

and on the **Children's Services website** -

<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/dg/girfecdg/>.

GTCS General Teaching Council Scotland

This is the professional body which maintains the register of teachers and ensures teachers' professional standards. In Scotland, children must be taught by qualified and GTCS registered teachers.

HE Higher Education

This is post-compulsory education which usually takes place in universities.

HI Hearing Impairment

Hearing Impairment is used to describe a child when there's a problem with or damage to one or more parts of the ear.

HNC Higher National Certificate

HNCs are offered by colleges, some universities and many training centres. They usually take one year to complete and provide skills you need to do a job.

HND Higher National Diploma

HNDs are offered by colleges, some universities and many training centres. They usually take two years to complete and provide the skills you need for a job.

ICT Information and Communications Technology

ICT in education can be found in the following ways:

- as a subject, e.g. computer studies
- as a tool to support teaching and learning, e.g. the use of whiteboards
- as an administrative tool

IEP Individual Education Plan

An IEP is a document which sets out the learning targets and records achievements for children and young people who have needs and require significant individual planning to meet their needs. Sometimes a Group education plan will be used if your child is part of a small group for additional learning opportunities. As a parent you should expect to see this twice a year.

IGBE Improving Gender Balance and Equalities

A national programme from Education Scotland which encourages practitioners and learners to challenge gender stereotypes; address unconscious bias; improve gender balance in subject uptake and learner pathways; and promote whole establishment approaches to equality.

IPT Interpersonal Therapy

A form of therapy focusing on relationships with other people to improve anxiety.

LA Local Authority

This is term used to describe Dumfries and Galloway Council.

LA Pupil Support Assistants (PSA)

A person who supports learning and teaching within the curriculum and the personal development of children and young people.

LAC Looked-After Children

When a young person has previously been looked after by the Local Authority they are described as care experienced.

Lead Professional

A lead professional is someone who takes the lead to co-ordinate provision and be a single point of contact for a child and their family, when a range of services are involved with the child or family and an integrated response is required.

LGBTQIA

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual. For more local information visit <https://lgbtplus.org.uk/>.

MANLP Multi-agency Neuro development Liaison Panel

MANLP is a multi-agency group involving Psychology, CAMHS and Autism Outreach. This group meet on a regular basis to discuss and accept referrals from Child Planning Meetings regarding children and young people with complex needs.

MASH Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

A multi-agency team of people who screen child and adult protection referrals to safeguard vulnerable people.

MHW Mental Health Worker

MHW are a professional group within the CAMHS team to supporting children and young people with mental health problems.

Named Person

Named Person is one point of contact that children and families can go to for advice or support if they need it. In Dumfries and Galloway this will include Health Visitors, Head Teachers, Principal Teachers Pupil Support etc.

NAS Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome

NAS is a condition that occurs in a newborn who was exposed to addictive opiate drugs while in the mother's womb.

NIF National Improvement Framework

This is a Scottish Government framework about measuring and evaluating performance in schools. It should include parents and carers as part of the process.

NQ National Qualifications

NQs are taken by young people in secondary schools and colleges (and some training centres).

NVQ National Vocational Qualification

These are work-based qualifications.

OCD Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

OCD is a common mental health condition in which a person has obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours.

OT Occupational Therapist

OT helps children and young people improve or maintain skills for day-to-day activities and wellbeing.

PC Parent Council

A representative group of parents in any school.

PEF Pupil Equity Funding

This money is given to schools to help support children who may be falling behind and don't have the same chances in education because their family is experiencing poverty or other financial difficulties. The Headteacher decides on how the money should be spent in discussion with staff and parents.

PLP Personal Learning Plan (Personal Development Plan for Nursery)

A document/folder where a pupil can keep a record of their goals and achievements alongside examples of their work.

PMHW Primary Mental Health Worker

PMHW are the first to see a child and young person to identify which worker is the best placed to support them. They may also work directly with young people for a short time.

PSD/PSE Personal and Social Development/Education

Under Curriculum for Excellence this is now called Personal Development. Pupils may choose to build up a range of personal, social and vocational skills.

PVG Protection of Vulnerable Groups

The PVG Membership Scheme is the Scottish disclosure system. It aims to ensure those who have regular contact with vulnerable groups do not have a history of harmful behaviour.

RFA Request for Assistance

RFA is a form used by all Children and Young People Services to request help, support and advice from another children's service regarding the young person that they are currently working with.

SAC Scottish Attainment Challenge

A Scottish Government initiative that aims to achieve equity in education by ensuring that every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

SALT Speech and Language Therapy

SALT provides treatment, support and care for children and young people who have difficulties with communication, or with eating, drinking and swallowing. Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are health professionals.

SCN Severe and Complex Needs

SCN describe children and adults with multiple barriers to learning such as communication, cognition, sensory (vision and hearing) and physical.

SCQF Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework

This organisation promotes lifelong learning in Scotland. The Framework can help parents and youngsters to plan learning and develop routes through different types of learning to reach learning goals.

SEBN Social Emotional and Behavioural Needs

Some children may find it difficult to cope emotionally in school and may display distressing or disruptive behaviour in class. Additional support, such as timeout strategies or nurture support, can help them develop positive behaviour in school.

SEMHN Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Social, emotional and mental health needs are a type of special educational needs in which children/young people have severe difficulties in managing their emotions and behaviour.

SFBT Solution Focused Brief Techniques

SFBT concentrates on finding solutions in the present time and exploring one's hope for the future to find quicker solution. This method takes the approach that you know what you need to do to improve your own life and, with the appropriate coaching and questioning, are capable of finding the best solutions.

SHANARRI

Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, and Included.

These themes are part of GIRFEC and are necessary for a child or young person to reach their potential. They are used to record observations, events and concerns to create an individual plan for a child.

SMHW Support Mental Health Worker

SMHW are a professional group within the CAMHS team to support PMHW and MHW with mental health problems among children and young people.

SMT School Management Team

Usually includes the headteacher and deputies; may also include the business manager and principal teachers.

SNAP Specialist Neuro-developmental Advisory Panel

A multi-agency group made up of staff from Education, Third Sector and Mental Health. They have knowledge, skills and experience in helping services to support children (and their families) with autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions such as ADHD in challenging and complex situations.

SNSA Scottish National Standardised Assessments

These assessments take place in schools in Primary Years 1, 4 and 7, and in Secondary Year 3.

QS Qualifications Scotland

QS is responsible for the design, setting, assessment and certification of qualifications.

SSSC Scottish Social Services Council

The SSSC regulates the workforce and aims to make sure that the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

SVQ Scottish Vocational Qualification

These qualifications are based on standards drawn up by industry, commerce and education.

TOD Teacher of the Deaf

A shorthand term to describe a member of staff who works with hearing impaired children.

UNCRC United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

This is an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people (aged 17 and under) a set of rights.

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>.

Visual Impairment

Vision impairment or vision loss is a decreased ability to see to a degree that causes problems not fixable by usual means, such as glasses.

VSDS Volunteer Scotland – Disclosure Services

VSDS provides free support for voluntary groups when their helpers join the PVG Membership Scheme.