

Additional Support Needs

Category: Early Years

Risk Management and Legal Implications

Failure to manage risk may impact on the delivery of Service objectives and the outcomes achieved by Service users. Education and Children’s Services aim to mitigate the implications by ongoing management and review of risk in all elements of work activity.

The production of this document is one way in which we aim to reduce our exposure to risk. By providing staff with information on good practice, making reference to other guidance that is available across the Council and providing clarity on how we should do things, we can ensure that the management of risk is intrinsic to what we do.

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Additional Support Needs

Getting it Right for Every Child

How to do the right thing for me

“Having an understanding of how early experiences impact on children and young people’s development and the importance of relationships in shaping later outcomes is well accepted in Scotland. It is the foundation which underpins much of the Scottish policy landscape and curriculum. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) recognises that children and young people will have different experiences in their lives, but that every child and young person has the right to expect appropriate support from adults to allow them to grow and develop and reach their full potential.

The Scottish Government’s ambition is to make Scotland the best place to grow up. The National Performance Framework (2018) sets out a vision of the country we want to create. It aims to get everyone in Scotland to work together to achieve our national outcomes which include that all children grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential.

You can help me to:

- grow up loved, safe and respected
- live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
- be creative and celebrate my diverse culture
- have the opportunity to be well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society
- learn to value, enjoy, protect and enhance their environment
- be part of a thriving society
- be healthy and active
- learn to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination

GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes for children

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>.

Promoting and supporting wellbeing is the fundamental basis of the GIRFEC approach. The importance of the contribution that we in ELC and early primary can make to this process cannot be underestimated. We know that early support for those families and children who need it most makes a positive difference. The GIRFEC approach is designed to be flexible enough to support all children and families whatever their need, whenever they need it. It is about responding in a meaningful, supportive way, working with parents and carers wherever possible. It considers that everyone involved with the family has an important part to play and puts the wellbeing of children and families at the heart of any support. It



puts children's rights and wellbeing of children with services that support them such as ELC settings, schools and the NHS."
(Realising the Ambition: Being Me)

Scottish education law outlines a framework for children to be supported to make sure they benefit from education and reach their full potential. The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 outlines how to meet the needs of children who require additional support to ensure they can make the most of their education. Amendments were made to this act in 2009, which became law in November 2010.

"The Act aims to ensure that all children and young people are provided with the necessary support to help them work towards achieving their fullest potential. It also promotes collaborative working among all those supporting children and young people and sets out parents' rights within the system."
(Supporting children's learning code of practice (third edition) 2017)

Under this law, any child who needs more or different support to what is normally provided in schools or pre-schools is said to have additional support needs.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that within the expansion of 1140 hours that:

"ELC provision is delivered in a way that ensures equality access for, and accounts for the varying needs of, all children. These needs can vary depending on a number of factors, including whether a child is disabled or has additional support needs, is from an ethnic minority background, or lives in a deprived area.

GIRFEC is the Government's national approach that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Scotland. Our approach underpins all our work with children and young people and means working across organizational boundaries and putting children and their families at the heart of decision making. It plays a fundamental part in realizing the Scottish Government's goal of giving all our children and young people the best possible start in life."

(A Blueprint for 2020: The Expansion of Early Learning & Childcare in Scotland)

Our aims are:

- To provide an inclusive environment and ethos which enables all children to achieve and thrive.
- To identify a child with Additional Support Needs (ASN) as early as possible.
- To develop sensitivity to individual needs and a climate of warmth and support in which self-confidence and self-esteem can grow.



- To develop skills in identifying and supporting children with additional support needs, building capacity in consultation with other professionals, to support children to access high quality learning experiences and opportunities.
- To adopt positive and consistent strategies to support children whatever their need.
- To work in partnership with parents to identify and support the needs and progress of their child.
- To take into account the interests of the child to ensure their participation relevant to their age and comprehension.
- To ensure effective and supportive transition at all stages.

“A person has ‘additional support needs’ if *for whatever reason*, they are unlikely to be able to benefit from school education without additional support. This is a very broad definition and includes, for example, very able children and those who may need temporary additional support due to family circumstances such as bereavement. The legislation underpinning this does not list any particular conditions or type of need, except that there is a presumption that ‘looked after’ children have additional support needs.”

(How is Additional Support for Learning Working in Practice, Scottish Parliament, May 2017)

“When working with children, it is essential that we start from what a child can do rather than what they can’t do. A skilled practitioner will use their knowledge of the individual child’s strengths appropriately, to build on small steps of progress.

To access support, we need to ensure that we work with parents from the very start, and make every effort to try to understand their hopes, and concerns. By working together and building on the things children can do, and by recording really accurate observations, we will notice over time the small steps of improvement that children are making.”

(Realising the Ambition – Being Me)

Co-ordinating support

It is understood that most children will need some additional support at some point in their time in nursery. Family difficulties, new babies, change of home and divorce are just a few of the difficulties that young children can encounter early in their lives.

We need to support all children as and when the need arises.

It is important that we get to know each family well right from the start.

All children and families will have:

- An induction pack, which may include a home visit, to introduce families to the aims and services of the provision.
- A completed “ALL about ME” to be placed in the child’s Personal Learning Journal.
- Regular parent chats with parents, the child and keyworker.



- Regular, planned observations of the child's development, interests and progress.
- Regular opportunities to share information about their child's progress and about things at home.

Transition for children who come to nursery with an identified need.

Some children have additional support needs that have been identified prior nursery enrolment and may be involved with Speech and Language Therapy (SLT), Occupational Therapy (OT), Pre-3 Community Team, Child Development Centres, Educational Home Visitor (E.H.V.), Social Work, Children and Families.

Some children may already be attending an under 3s provision due to their entitlement and/or through a multi-agency referral. Criteria for under 3s placements are clearly set out in Fife Council's admissions policy.

Prior to a child's entry to nursery, a transition meeting will take place in order to ensure a positive and smooth transition into the 3 to 5 nursery placement for both the child and the parent/carer. This helps to build on prior knowledge and to plan appropriately for each child.

Regular review meetings will then be planned throughout the year. The child's Health Visitor will always be invited to attend.

Children with additional support needs identified in nursery

Staff teams will meet regularly to discuss the needs of all children. Regular consultations and liaisons with the management team ensures that the needs of children and families are identified. Where we can respond immediately e.g. extended day, additional time and where we can provide short-term support we will do so.

Where longer-term provision is necessary, a review meeting will be arranged in consultation with the family and appropriate professional invited to attend.

A Person-Centred approach will be used to gather information about the child and family with a focus on identifying need and next steps. Information will be documented, and an action plan produced and shared with all involved.

Children's development and progress will be closely monitored by the staff team and their progress will be captured in their personal learning journal (PLJ) and by subsequent review and action plan meetings using the wellbeing indicators. If appropriate a Summary of Support may be completed for a child identifying strategies to help the child access the learning environment.

To do this, eight indicators of wellbeing: safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. These are often referred to using the acronym



“SHANARRI”. These indicators represent the basic requirements that all children need to grow and develop. They are used in the planning process for any child in need to ensure the best possible outcomes for children to improve their life chances and wellbeing.

“For all children and young people to achieve their potential and become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens – the aim of Curriculum for Excellence - they must each be helped to do the best they can on these eight indicators.”

(ENQUIRE, The Parents’ Guide to Additional Support for Learning)