

Dear Education and Skills Committee / COSLA

As parent of a child with additional support needs who has (anecdotally) spent the past 3 years arguing with our local authority I was flabbergasted at the COSLA submission to the additional support needs panel dated 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017

While Stephanie Primrose is correct to point out the panel should be examining the evidence it's an act of misdirection to point solely at the tribunal figures. Tribunals themselves only cover a few areas of disputes (Child Support Plans, School Placements and Disability Discrimination), they do not include tier 1,2,3 complaints about the additional support services provided by local authorities (Visiting teacher/Education Psychology/ audit hours/the school and staffing etc.) and they certainly do not indicate the number of families going to mediation. Furthermore is complaint data on health professionals that children and educators are dependent upon (e.g. Speech and Language Therapists, CAMHS) held by the relevant local NHS board/Community Health Partnership/Health and Social Care partnership? It would be interesting to see how COSLA reports and collates data that is (hopefully) communicated between 32 local authorities and 14 different health boards.

In order to avoid accusations of anecdotal evidence please can the panel request the following data from COSLA for each local authority for the past 5 years (broken down by year).

Number of tier one, two or three complaints

Number of complaints about audit hours or low incidence hours

Number of complaints against Education psychology, visiting teacher or ASL service, and body shopped speech and language and occupational therapists.

Number of cases going to mediation

And if the panel would really like to see anecdotal in action, please ask COSLA to gather and present the criteria all 32 local authorities use to decide if an individual child has additional support needs and is deserving of further funding.

Personally I would evidence local authority support for COSLA's submission when it is signed by the head of children and families services for each of Scotland's local authorities.

Yours Sincerely

Emma Meikle

31 May 2017