

Education Scotland

EDUCATION AND SKILLS COMMITTEE FINDINGS OF THE MORGAN REVIEW

Introduction

1. Education Scotland welcomes the review of the implementation of additional support for learning and the resulting recommendations.
2. The report clearly identifies the need to improve the implementation of the legislation and guidance, acknowledging that there is no fundamental deficit in the principle and policy intention of the Additional Support for Learning (ASL) legislation. The challenge is in translating this into practice for all our children and young people who experience barriers to their learning.
3. The OECD¹ report (pg. 79) described Scottish Education as “highly inclusive”. Education Scotland are clearly cited on our role in delivering the vision and intention of the legislation, which is regarded as country leading (see European Agency for Special Needs in Inclusive Education (EASNIE) Country [reports](#)). Angela Morgan’s review provides us with further clarity about what needs to happen to make this a reality for all our children and young people.
4. We are committed to building on our work in relation to inclusion and supporting children and young people (CYP) with Additional Support Needs (ASN). We will take account of the Report and work with our partners to ensure meaningful engagement and to identify gaps in resources, professional learning, and practice at both operational and strategic levels.

Context

5. Education Scotland’s Inclusion, Wellbeing and Equalities (IWE) team have an important role in implementing the wider agenda of inclusion for all children and young people. The team consists of four Senior Education Officers (SEO), one Education Officer (EO), and is led by the Head of IWE.
6. Each member of the team works in a Regional Improvement Team comprising a broad range of staff with remits for Community Learning and Development, Curriculum Innovation and Practice, Attainment Advisors, National Improvement, Developing the Young Workforce, Professional Learning, and Digital e-Learning and Support.
7. The IWE SEOs are responsible for supporting schools, education authorities and the Regional Improvement Collaboratives to implement inclusive practice. They also contribute to the National agenda, influencing policy, informed by their understanding and knowledge of practice across schools and Local Authorities (LA). It is this group of professionals who will be key drivers within the organisation to implement the

¹ [Improving Schools in Scotland: An OECD Perspective - OECD](#)

findings from the Review. However, in keeping with the main findings, inclusion needs to be owned by everyone, it needs to address the holistic needs of children, young people and their families within the context of lifelong learning. To do this, all staff within Education Scotland will continue to work in partnership to deliver the recommendations outlined in the report.

What are we doing to improve inclusion and ensure more effective implementation of the legislation and guidance?

8. Angela Morgan's report emphasises that the themes identified and resultant recommendations in her Report are all interconnected. They cannot be acted upon in isolation. As such, Education Scotland will continue to work across all of the themes identified in the report, and almost all of the recommendations to support schools, Local Authorities and Regional Improvement Collaboratives as stated in 9.2.2. 'The whole is greater than the sum of the parts'.
9. We believe that inclusion applies to all children and young people. To implement the legislation we need to have strong universal practice so that we can ensure consistently high quality teaching and learning and support for all. Our starting point for improvement is therefore to strengthen the universal offer for all CYP, to prevent some additional support needs from arising and remove the barriers preventing CYP from reaching their potential. This involves building on our existing professional learning resources through the lens of the Review. This will include the following resources:
 - [Embedding inclusion, equity and empowerment](#)
 - [Online Professional Learning on Inclusive Education;](#)
 - [Inclusion in Practice: The CIRCLE Framework – Secondary](#)
 - [Introduction to Inclusive Education for Support Staff](#)
 - [Professional Learning resource to support whole school inclusive practice](#)
 - [Dyslexia and Inclusive Practice](#)
 - [Compassionate and Connected Community*;](#)
 - [Multiagency collaboration to improve health and wellbeing*2](#)
 - [The Autism Toolbox\)](#)
10. We will need to place a greater emphasis on working alongside senior officers, and practitioners to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable CYP ([Gypsy Travellers](#), [Complex additional support needs](#), [Care Experienced](#), [Young Carers](#), [Children from Service Families](#)). Our recent work during the Covid 19 pandemic, has demonstrated the power of bringing professionals together to share practice and to support and challenge each other's practice. (see [Additional Support Needs Wakelet](#), [Re-connecting school communities Wakelet](#); [Supporting Young Carers in Education during COVID 19](#); [Positive Mental Wellbeing](#); [Transitions from an ASN Perspective](#))

*Professional learning for educational practitioners - requires GLOW login.

11. Getting it Right for all Learners ([Getting It Right For All Learners during Covid-19](#)) has recently been produced by Education Scotland to re-focus educators on the principles underpinning Scotland's curriculum and the ASL legislation. The approach will be a key driver in taking forward the spirit of Angela Morgan's report, and specific recommendations related to the themes 1, 2, and 3. Staff across each Regional Improvement Team worked on the tool and will be the Inclusion Champions for their Region. The approach draws on the [refreshed narrative](#) and the [resources](#) provided by Education Scotland to revisit the core principles and practice which underpin the Curriculum for Excellence, and which support inclusion. Key drivers for improvement are Leadership, Curriculum, Learning, Teaching and Assessment. In this way, ASN, is not seen as an afterthought, (as noted in the Report), but as part of good practice which takes account of every child's needs.
12. As stated in the report (Theme 1 and 8), the participation of children and young people is key to ensuring that their needs are met (Overarching Recommendation: Children and Young People Participation). We have, and continue to work with schools, and education authorities to improve the participation of all children and young people ([Learner Participation in Educational Settings](#) and [How Good is OUR School?](#)), and in particular those with ASN ([Young Ambassadors for Inclusion](#)). For example:
- Learner participation training for learners. Digital sessions have been developed as a direct response from schools to train children and young people to become confident in contributing to school improvement.
 - Young Leaders of Learning – This programme was developed to involve children and young people in school improvement, including visits to other schools. Prior to the first lock down a very successful try out in two ASN settings took place. The potential to develop the programme to be delivered remotely is being explored. Our most recent work has focused on ensuring that all educators and others are aware of and putting into practice the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (themes 1 and 8).
 - [Recognising and Realising Children's Rights](#) – professional learning resources developed to support the schools to reflect on what a rights based approach looks like and what they need to do to enable this to happen. A series of online webinars have been piloted/delivered in the Northern Alliance which included a group of ASN practitioners. These training resources will now be made available for delivery by Education Scotland through the other regions or local authorities.
13. Education Scotland staff work across many national bodies such as The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), The Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES) and The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP). We also work with senior managers responsible for supporting CYP with ASN in local authorities. Our engagement in Implementation groups such as Scottish Advisory Group for Relationships and Behaviour in Schools

(SAGRABIS), ASL Implementation Group (ASLIG), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), Gypsy Traveller Ministerial Working Group, Scottish Service Children's Strategy Group (SSCSG), Young Carers Working Group (YCWG), Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP), and Youth Justice Improvement Partnership (YJIB); all allow us to influence policy, and to support professional learning and good practice. For example:

- Joint work with ADES on the measurement of achievement and attainment, and possible application of improvement methodology (recommendation 1.2).
- Engagement with SAGRABIS to provide a comprehensive resource of practical approaches to developing positive relationships (themes 6, and 7 ([Supporting Relationships and Positive Behaviour](#) - draft).
- Work with Health colleagues in NHS Education for Scotland (NES) on supporting CYP who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (Themes 6 and 7).

14. An important part of our work in supporting the recommendations and to overcome fragmentation (theme 3) is our input into the development of national policy and guidance to support the ASL legislation. Working across Scottish Government policy colleagues across Directorates on The Promise, Mental Health, Support and Wellbeing, Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC), staged intervention and implementation of the UNCRC, and Care, Protection and Justice helps us to provide cohesion across workstreams. It also enables us to support the implementation at school and local authority levels, and make explicit the synergies across areas of legislation and practice.

15. Prior to the pandemic we were involved in re-writing the guidance for the implementation of the ASL Act. The key focus was to bring together GIRFEC, and the staged intervention guidance related to the ASL Act, thereby avoiding confusion around the Child's Plan, from Getting it right for every child, and the Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP) arising from the legislation. We will resume this work as part of the recommendations and in partnership with ASLIG (p18, par 7 and 8.; theme 1).

16. Education Scotland recognise the importance of positive relationships between schools, parents and carers. We also firmly believe in the need to develop relationship approaches to manage behaviour and support our most vulnerable children and young people. To this end, we have already provided professional learning and resources in Nurture, Self-regulation, attunement strategies, and the identification and prevention of the impact from Adverse Childhood Experiences theme 7. We will build on this work to refresh our approaches, with particular attention to the findings in the Report ([Applying Nurture as a whole school approach, Nurture, ACES's and Trauma Informed Practice, Compassionate and Connected Classroom](#)) and experiences from the pandemic.

17. Parents need support to help their children reach their potential. This is particularly the case for those who have children with severe and complex learning difficulties. We have produced resources, working closely with the special sector, to help parents help their children, particularly during lockdown ([Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs: Resources and guidance for parents to support their child's learning at home](#)). We will continue to develop the co-production of resources, with specialists in the education sector. We will also try to encourage the use of specialist knowledge in special schools and Units to support the mainstream sector better.
18. We agree that health and wellbeing is critically important in helping CYP to feel included, safe, and valued. When schools were closed during Term 4 session 2019- 20, and on children's return in August 2020, mental health and transitions were particular areas of concern for children and young people with additional support needs ([Resources for School Staff to Support Positive Mental Wellbeing of Children and Young People](#)). Our work during this time will be further developed to ensure greater consistency across schools. Inspection evidence will help us to identify where this is most needed. This will help us to intervene early and prevent further harm.
19. Education Scotland staff have continued to work alongside Regional Improvement Collaboratives, local authorities, and schools to support recovery through bespoke support. Regional Improvement plans have been amended to take account of the current situation and local authorities have reported a focus on staff and learner wellbeing as being a key priority at this time. The examples below, demonstrate how practitioners are using the national materials and thinking to inform the delivery and dissemination of positive mental health and wellbeing approaches in each region. We will continue to build on this work.

- **South East Improvement Collaborative**

The [Inclusion and Equity Professional Learning Programme](#) is offered through partnership between Education Scotland's South East Regional Improvement Team and the South East Improvement Collaborative and will be available from November 2020 – March 2021.

- **Tayside Regional Collaborative**

Tayside Regional Collaborative has developed an [Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Children and Young People](#).

- **The West Partnership**

The West Partnership recovery plan includes a collaborative learning network for early years and primary colleagues with a focus on nurturing and supporting pupil wellbeing. The aim of the network is to learn about the challenges facing practitioners and to share how these are overcome.

20. HM Inspectors are also well sighted on the implications of the Report on their work. Of note is the following:

- HM Inspectors are currently undertaking a national overview of remote learning across Scotland. The purpose of the national overview is to learn what is working well, identify challenges or issues facing schools and local authorities. This will include what is working well and challenges in supporting children and young people with additional support needs.
- HM Inspectors have studied the key findings and recommendations of the Review. An initial audit of current scrutiny and inspection practice has taken place. Consideration is being given as to how current approaches can be strengthened in line with the findings of the Review. This will form a key component of future scrutiny and inspection practice. HM Inspectors will undertake further career-long professional learning to support this process.
- Future scrutiny and inspection activity will continue to have thematic inspections on specific areas of practice. Future thematic inspection and review will include a specific focus on aspects of additional support for learning. The findings of this scrutiny activity will provide evidence of progress in line with the recommendations of the Review. It will also support improvement in schools and local authorities.

Conclusion

21. Education Scotland recognise that we have a key role in delivering the vision and intention of the ASL legislation and welcome the findings of the Morgan Review. We are committed to building on our work in relation to inclusion and supporting children and young people (CYP) with Additional Support Needs (ASN) in partnership with Scottish Government and others and ensuring that we do all we can to support children and young people to reach their potential.