

## Submission to the Education and Skills Committee

***How is Additional Support for Learning working in practice?* Published 15 May 2017**  
***Let's talk about Personal and Social Education* Published 22 May 2017**

### Introduction

Colleges Scotland is the membership body for all Scotland's 26 colleges, sited in our local communities and providing education, skills and training in the right place at the right time to support the needs of individuals, their communities, and the labour market. Colleges Scotland commends the work on both the Additional Support for Learning report, and the Personal and Social Education report, and recognises many of the issues raised which impact on primary and secondary-stage education as issues which also exist within the college sector.

In considering which college students would be classed as having Additional Support for Learning needs, the guidance from Enquire was reviewed. Colleges Scotland believes the existing legislation, and definitions of additional support, to be very broad and potentially suitable for amendment in order to ensure support can be tailored according to need.

### Additional Support for Learning Report

Colleges Scotland notes that the report "*How is Additional Support for Learning working in practice?*" covers compulsory education, and our comments build upon this to consider the transition into college. We would like to recommend that recommendation 8 concerning a quality assurance review of mainstreaming of education, is extended to include individuals' experiences in tertiary education, covering the link between school to college. In this way, the needs of the learner will be central, continuity can be assured and the ambition for seamless transitions from school to college, and from college to work or further education, can be realised for all learners. This should be considered in tandem with the 15-24 Learner Journey Review.

Colleges Scotland notes that students are specifically named in the Scottish Government's Mental Health strategy 2017-2027, and welcomes this focus on the needs of our learners. Our colleges service the needs of the local communities in which they are situated, and we are proud of our track record of widening access to students furthest from education or the labour market. With our service provision located disproportionately in deprived areas, and a focus on a seamless learner journey, Colleges Scotland would recommend to the committee that consideration is given to ensure that any action in the area of Additional Support has no unintended consequences for colleges.

### Personal and Social Education Report

Colleges Scotland notes the recommendation in this report that a review of Personal and Social Education should be undertaken, and that this should include the provision of mental health support (recommendations 20 & 21). It is our belief that including the role of pastoral guidance and provision of counselling services in colleges in this review would be beneficial to our young students.

It would be useful to consider specifically the needs of school pupils who are studying at college, and how their personal and social education needs are met. Reflecting on the ambition of the Learner Journey Review, that the learner journey is consistent and seamless, the link between

school and college is of great importance. Colleges Scotland would commend the work of College Development Network (CDN) and believes it has a role to continue playing in sharing best practice through their specific networks.

### **For Further Information**

Colleges Scotland appreciates the opportunity to present our thoughts to the committee. Should you require any further information, please contact Vonnie Sandlan, Senior Policy Officer on Tel: 01786 892062 / 07712 404545 or email [vonnie.sandlan@collegesscotland.ac.uk](mailto:vonnie.sandlan@collegesscotland.ac.uk).

Colleges Scotland  
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