

Enquire within

THE SCOTTISH ADVICE SERVICE FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

Welcome to Enquire

This issue of *Enquire within* provides an overview and update of our activities over the past year. Calls to the helpline have increased by 20 per cent over last year, and we have delivered 25 training and outreach events in 14 education authorities. We have also developed some new and exciting resources for young people and have had our poster, service leaflet and young person's guide *Going to secondary school?* translated into five languages.

With the new Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 likely to come into force in the autumn 2005, we have been reviewing and revising all our publications to incorporate the provisions of the new legislation.

Finally, we are delighted to report that our annual national conference – held at Hampden Park in Glasgow on 2 February – was a great success.

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Staff update

We welcome two new Helpline Assistants who joined Enquire at the beginning of February, and are sad to say that Yvonne Cassidy – Enquire Senior Manager – is leaving at the end of the month. We wish Yvonne every success in the future.

Kathryn Hunter, who joined Enquire as Senior Manager (job share) in October, is assuming the position full-time in March.



Enquire
 THE SCOTTISH ADVICE SERVICE FOR
 ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

Does your child need extra help at school?

Do you need advice on support for learning for a child or young person?

Call our helpline on
0845 123 23 03
calls charged at local rates, an interpreter can be provided

Textphone 0131 22 22 439

The Enquire poster is available in Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Cantonese and Hindi

Marketing and publications

As part of our continuing work, we have been promoting and raising awareness of the Enquire service across Scotland. Over the past year, we have conducted information sharing sessions with various agencies in Highland, Glasgow, Edinburgh and the Western Isles.

In order to ensure that Enquire is an accessible service to all we have recently been concentrating on raising awareness of our service to black and minority ethnic groups. We have gathered together a number of contacts and mailed out our newly translated posters and service leaflets to over 400 agencies with the aim of reaching a wider audience. On the advice of the Commission for Racial Equality, our poster, service leaflet and

young person's guide to *Going to secondary school?* have been translated into five different languages and now include: Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Cantonese and Hindi. We aim to have key publications available in alternative formats including Braille and audio CD. The young person's guide *Going to secondary school?* is available in these formats.

The new house style was developed last year and launched in November 2004. In general we have been continuing to mail out our information in various formats. You will now see our new style leaflets and posters displayed in your local schools, libraries, health centres and other locations. We hope to widen our

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network and keep these mailings running throughout the year.

In light of the new legislation being introduced by the Scottish Executive, the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, Enquire is overhauling all of its publications. We plan to review each publication we have produced and update it to reflect the new legislation. We also intend to ensure that all our new publications carry the Clear English Standard Charter Mark. This exercise will be done over the next year and we plan to coordinate the release of new publications with the introduction of the Act, which is expected to be in the autumn 2005.

The first publication to undergo a transformation is the much-used *Parents' guide*. We are currently re-writing this guide and once it gets to draft stage we plan to consult with Enquire callers to gather their views and gain feedback. We also hope to be able to use the website to consult on draft guides and factsheets so look out on www.enquire.org.uk for opportunities to feedback or add your comments on draft publications.

You can download most of our core publications from our website www.enquire.org.uk. Alternatively, if you would like to be involved in any of these consultations or if you would like to receive any of our publications in alternative formats or languages please email Karen Lindsay, klindsay@childreninscotland.org.uk or telephone 0131 222 2424. ■

Tell us what you think

We would like to know your views on the Enquire service.

If you have suggestions for the helpline, publications or website, please get in touch.

info@enquire.org.uk

Training and outreach

Enquire's training and outreach service for parents and practitioners has gone from strength to strength over the past year. So far in 2004/05 we have delivered 25 events ranging from informal talks to small groups of parents to large-scale events consisting of a range of workgroups for parents, educationalists and health and social work practitioners. We have worked in 14 education authorities, as well as some clusters of authority areas, and are aiming to visit every local authority area in Scotland at least once by March 2006.

Outreach

Most of our outreach work involves speaking to groups of parents and practitioners about rights, responsibilities and best practice in the education of children and young people with additional support needs. We are always happy to receive requests to come and talk to your group or organisation, but please be aware that we get booked up quite quickly, so we will need some notice.

Training

Workshops on parent professional partnerships have been very well received, with more than 90 per cent of delegates finding them satisfactory or better. Here are a couple of comments that we have received:

"Fantastic workshop, excited and reassured that there is an outreach/training service. Got lots of factual information to use in own context. Will be in touch in the future! Thanks."

Learning support worker

"A very informative and worthwhile day – please repeat it as I have many colleagues whom I feel would benefit from the wealth of information and awareness gained by myself today."

Teacher

Additional support for learning

With the new Act due to come into force at the end of this year we are working with several local authorities and parent groups to raise awareness of the changes it will bring. This has taken the form of talks, facilitated discussions and interactive workgroup sessions

Working with others

We have been very happy to forge links with other national and local organisations and to ensure our work complements theirs. Recently we have delivered several "Know your rights?" seminars in association with the Disability Rights Commission, and we have worked with carers groups such as Voices of Carers Across the Lothians (VOCAL) and other Princess Royal Carers' Trust groups. We have also developed positive relationships with local authorities working towards implementing the Additional Support for Learning Act. We would like to continue to strengthen our links with organisations across the country.

The future

We anticipate that there will be an ever-increasing demand for training and information about the Additional Support for Learning Act, inclusion and parent professional partnerships, not only because they are important in their own right but because they are likely to remain high on the political agenda for the foreseeable future. Our programme of training and outreach will continue to develop to meet the needs of parents and professionals. ■

Email your details to info@enquire.org.uk for information on future workshops, outreach work with young people, or to join our mailing list.

Making mainstreaming work: conference success in Glasgow

Our 2004/05 annual conference in association with the Scottish Schools Ethos Network took place on 2 February 2005 at Hampden Park in Glasgow. The topic for the conference was Making mainstreaming work, and it proved to be such a popular theme that we had to turn away about 100 people. Due to such high demand, we are looking for ways of continuing to provide a forum for sharing good practice and ideas, so are considering staging one or more follow-up events over the coming year.

the conference had an overall satisfaction rating of 98 per cent

The conference proved to be a great success, with over 150 people attending. Speakers gave inspirational and moving presentations and delegates participated in workgroup discussions to share good practice and ideas. Over 64 per cent of respondents gave the conference a rating of very satisfactory or excellent and we had an overall satisfaction



Speakers at the conference, from left to right: Kathryn Hunter, Jim Dalziel, Idem Lewis, Grant Douglas

rating of 98 per cent. The main drawback was the lack of time for discussion – something we hope to address in future events.

We will be sending out our conference report to everyone on our mailing list

and anyone else who has expressed an interest. In the meantime we would be interested to hear your suggestions for topics and themes for the next conference. Send your ideas to info@enquire.org.uk. ■

Service for young people – latest news

The November 2004 Bulletin reviewed the service for young people in detail. This article looks at progress since November and future plans.

Publications for young people

Groups of young people are participating in the Children in Scotland and Scottish Executive consultations on the draft Code of Practice. Enquire are asking these groups what they want from future publications with a view to replacing *Life at school and choices at 16+* and the *Roles of professionals* factsheet. Participating groups will be sent draft versions of guides for comment later in the year. We hope to be able to

use the website to invite feedback on draft guides and factsheets. This is part of our ongoing commitment to consulting with young people on the development of the Enquire service.

Person-centred planning conference

Future Plans is a project that uses person-centred planning to give young people who are leaving school a chance to have their say. Enquire

will be running a workshop at the Future Plans conference on 27 April 2005. The Enquire workshop will be designed for a mixed audience of young people, parents, carers and practitioners and will look at opportunities for those leaving school to “have their say” under the new Additional Support for Learning Act. The Noticeboard section (see page 4) has further details on the conference.

Out and about in 2005

We will be approaching schools and out-of-school groups in local authorities that we have not yet visited to set up workshops with young people over the next year. To find out more about this, please contact Katy MacDougall: kmacdougall@childreninScotland.org.uk or telephone 0131 222 2436.

NOTICEBOARD

Free training on the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003

Children in Scotland in association with YouthLink Scotland, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Volunteer Development Scotland and Central Registered Body in Scotland

Children in Scotland is running free seminars on behalf of the Scottish Executive for those in the voluntary sector. The seminars will provide an opportunity to find out about the main provisions of the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 and its implications for voluntary organisations. Sue Wheatley and a representative from CRBS will lead the seminars.

14 April 2005, Glasgow; 5 May 2005, Dundee; 13 May 2005, Borders;
3 June 2005, Stornaway; 8 June 2005, Aberdeen; 20 June 2005, Edinburgh;
23 June 2005, Dumfries

Contact: Kirsty Robb, 0131 222 2438, krobb@childreninscotland.org.uk

Are policies and services working for young children with additional support needs?

An opening doors to learning one-day seminar.

Four seminars for parents and professionals aimed at exploring how current policies and services are meeting the needs of young children with additional support needs. The seminars focus on pre-school and primary school education in particular and will provide an opportunity for parents, carers and professionals to share knowledge, ideas and good practice. The seminar is free to parents.

12 May 2005, Edinburgh; 14 September 2005, Stirling;
7 December 2005, Ayr; 8 March 2006, Inverness

Contact: Catriona Thomson, 0131 222 2445, cthompson@childreninscotland.org.uk

Future Plans conference

This conference for young people, parents, carers and practitioners will share the outcomes of the Edinburgh Development Group's person-centred planning project "Future Plans" and discuss good practice from other parts of Scotland.

27 April 2005, Hibernian FC Stadium, Edinburgh

Contact: Steve Coulson, 0131 476 0522, steve@edg-sco.org

Helpline statistics

Calls to the Enquire helpline this year increased by twenty per cent on the previous year. March was a particularly busy month, mainly due to parents looking for information about placing request appeals.

We deal with most of our enquiries over the phone (92 per cent) but also received enquiries in writing and via email. As is generally the case, the majority of calls to the helpline came from parents; around 70 per cent of callers. We also received a significant proportion of calls from parent advocates and professionals, around seven per cent each.

Four of the most frequently raised issues in the past year are:

- SEN Provision – support for Learning
- Identification/assessment
- Placing request/choosing a school
- Record of Needs

Individuals who use the helpline bring their own experiences and feelings to their particular situation and this continues to make the helpline work rewarding and challenging.

helpline: 0845 123 2303

textphone: 0131 22 22 439

online: www.enquire.org.uk

User evaluation – questionnaire responses

In October 2004 questionnaires were sent to people who had called the Enquire helpline in the previous three months. We received a 25 per cent response rate with all respondents rating the quality of our service as either very good or excellent.

Comments from respondents included:

"Many thanks for the excellent advice and support which I received"

Helpline caller

"The information provided by Enquire was a godsend. It made sure that we as parents were properly informed as to the procedures re: RoN. We can't thank you enough for helping us on the next step of our 'Autistic' journey."

Parent

"Enquire provided an ear and calm advice at a time when as parents we were unsure of our rights with regard to the education of our son."

Parent

We would like to thank all those who responded – your feedback to the Enquire team is greatly appreciated and will be used to improve and develop our service and make it more responsive to your needs.

As part of our service development, we now conduct quality assurance surveys quarterly instead of bi-annually. This means the next set of questionnaires will be sent out in February so if you have contacted us in the past three months, you may get a questionnaire through your letterbox in the near future. ■