

Enquire within

THE SCOTTISH ADVICE SERVICE FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

CONTENTS

- Page 1 New guides from Enquire
 Page 2 Parents' guide consultations
 Education (ASL) Act 2004
 Page 3 Update on the helpline
 Page 4 Noticeboard
 Annual conference 2006



The parents' guide to additional support for learning

Enquire
 THE SCOTTISH ADVICE SERVICE FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

New guides from Enquire includes information on the ASL Act

Enquire is pleased to announce that the **Parents' guide to additional support for learning** is now available. It replaces the popular *Parents' guide to special educational needs*, and reflects changes brought by the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. The guide was developed with the help of a focus group of parents and representative agencies, and the valuable comments and suggestions from participants at nine consultation events, which were held across Scotland in September.

The new guide includes a contacts page, so parents can record personal information, as well as a list of useful organisations and contact details for each local authority.

Guides for children and young people
 Enquire has produced four pocket-size booklets and two online factsheets for children and young people aged 11-18 years that incorporate information about the Act. The new guides are full colour and feature original illustrations. The information in the four booklets is also available on audio CD, read by young people.

What are additional support needs? explains the meaning of this new term. **Round the table** contains tips to help children and young people get involved in meetings.

People who can help explains the roles of adults who support children and young people in and outside school.

What's the plan? is a guide to personal learning planning, individualised educational programmes and co-ordinated support plans. The online factsheets give information about getting extra help with exams and getting ready to leave school. These publications replace the 3-part guide *Life at school and choices at 16+* and the *People at school* factsheet.

Enquire consulted widely on draft versions of the guides. Children and young people gave their views through workshops and a web questionnaire. Enquire also visited the Scottish Youth Parliament with the drafts and carried out a written survey of the opinions of representative organisations and education professionals. We would like to thank everyone who gave their input to the guides.

Contact us

Copies of the new **Parents' guide to additional support for learning** and the guides for young people are available free of charge from Enquire. Please call 0131 222 2425 to order copies. The guides may also be downloaded from www.enquire.org.uk

Moving to Additional Support for Learning – Enquire factsheet 14

Enquire is updating all its factsheets in light of the Act, and this new one replaces *Enquire factsheet 1* (Record of Needs). It explains arrangements for changing to the new system for children and young people who had Records of Needs when the Act came into force, which includes information about appeals. It also provides guidance about children who received support but were not recorded.

Please contact Enquire for copies of any of our publications.

Tell us what you think

We always like to hear your views on the Enquire service. If you have suggestions for the helpline, publications or website, please get in touch: info@enquire.org.uk

Report on Parents' guide consultations now available

Many of our readers will be familiar with the *Parents' guide to special educational needs*. We send out thousands of copies of this popular guide every year. In light of the ASL Act, Enquire has rewritten the guide to reflect the changes brought by the new legislation. Enquire wanted to ensure that the people who will use the guide were involved in its development and, to achieve this, facilitated nine consultation events across Scotland during September.

Consultation events

Over 246 people took part in the consultations. Of these, 45 percent were parents, 25 percent were from the voluntary sector and the remaining 31 percent from statutory agencies. Feedback from the events was excellent. Of the 137 participants who completed the evaluation forms, 84 percent found the consultations very satisfactory or excellent.

Professionals pointed out that listening to the views of parents would improve their own practice

Participants commented that the events were useful as a means of increasing their awareness of the Act, as well as providing an opportunity to be involved in the development of the guide. An additional benefit for participants was the opportunity to

discuss issues with other parents and professionals, which increased their knowledge of the system and the changes brought by the Act.

Many participants also found it extremely useful to find out about Enquire's services. Some parents mentioned that, as a result of the events, they felt better informed and this would result in them becoming more involved in their children's education. Some of the professionals attending the consultations pointed out that listening to the views of parents would improve their own practice in the delivery of information and advice.

Programme and feedback

At the consultations the participants examined and discussed the content, design and layout of the guide. Enquire received many helpful comments and suggestions. Although it has not been possible to make all the suggested changes due to resources, Enquire has made every effort to address them in other ways. Enquire would like to thank all the participants for their valuable input and feedback.

A copy of the full report on the consultations can be ordered by calling Enquire on 0131 222 2425. Copies of the report may also be downloaded from our website at www.enquire.org.uk



The Education (Add

The ASL Act became law on 14 November, 2005. The legislation introduces new duties on education authorities which will benefit children, young people and parents. The old system was based on the assessment and recording of children and young people who had special educational needs, but this has been replaced by a new framework based on the idea of additional support needs.

What are additional support needs?

The new legislation recognises that many young people and children, for a wide variety of reasons, can experience barriers to learning and therefore might need extra support to help them achieve their full potential. Additional support may be required by children who are being bullied, have been bereaved, are

Update on the helpline service

During July-September 2005 we received 539 calls. Of these, 290 were helpline enquiries. As in the past, the topic which generated the most enquiries was *SEN Provision – Support for Learning*. This accounted for 16.2 percent of the 290 enquiries. This was followed by queries relating to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 which generated 12.5 percent of enquiries.

Another 72 calls were requests for publications; 39 calls were for information, and 28 calls related to referrals. The remainder were a mix of administrative and advertising calls.

Increasing numbers of people use the internet to access our service. Online enquiries accounted for eight percent of the helpline enquiries, and all Enquire's publications are available for downloading from the website. There has been an increase in the pages viewed on the website from the previous quarter, although parents and practitioners have been waiting for new guides and factsheets to be prepared in light of the Act. The increase in activity on the pages for children and young people is from the IMAP – an on-line directory of services and projects for young people – which has been very popular during school holidays.

	April to June	July to Sept
Parents and practitioners page views	6356	7289
Children and young people page views	7965	10592
Publications downloaded	4176	3642

Table 1: Page views and publications downloaded from www.enquire.org.uk

Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

gifted or have behavioural or learning difficulties. Additional support needs may be short or long term.

Mediation

Other changes include the duty on education authorities to provide an independent mediation service. This has to be provided free of charge to all parents of children and young people with additional support needs, or the young person themselves if they are over 16, who are involved in disagreements relating to the exercise of the authority's functions under the Act. The mediator does not offer advice or make recommendations, but helps the parties concerned find mutually agreed solutions which lead to the fair resolution of the problem. More information on mediation can be found in *Enquire factsheet 9*.

Additional Support Needs Tribunals

The Additional Support Needs Tribunals will hear references relating to all aspects of Co-ordinated Support Plans. One of the aims of the tribunals is to provide independent and expert adjudication, operating impartially, efficiently and effectively in accordance with the Act. Legal aid will be available for those who qualify, for legal advice before and after a tribunal but not during a hearing.

Independent adjudication

Disagreements relating to the way the authority is exercising its functions under the ASL Act cannot be referred to the Additional Support Needs Tribunals, so the Act also introduces dispute resolution by independent adjudication. This involves cases being formally reviewed by an independent third

party, external to the local authority concerned, who will look into the circumstances and then make a report with recommendations for all parties concerned. Again, this has to be free of charge. More information on resolving disagreements can be found in *Enquire factsheet 13*.

Code of practice

Supporting children's learning: Code of practice can be found on Scottish Executive website:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/08/15105817/58193

The Code explains the new duties on education authorities and other agencies to support learning for children and young people, and provides guidance on the implementation of the Act.

NOTICEBOARD



Children in Scotland
Training and conference guide
January to June 2006

To order a copy, please contact
Steve Glover on 0131 222 2426,
sglover@childreninscotland.org.uk

Available now!

Growing Up in Rural Scotland annual conference



Arts for all?
Meeting the needs of the
whole child in rural Scotland

in association with Angus Childcare Partnership and Angus Council

This major one-day conference on 10 March 2006, preceded by an afternoon of study sessions and visits, will consider how arts and cultural activities can contribute to children's learning and well-being in Scotland. It will also consider access and use of the arts for young children with additional support needs.

For more information contact Radha Singh, conference co-ordinator on 0131 222 2438, rsingh@childreninscotland.org.uk

Making partnership work: effective practice to support children's learning

Enquire annual conference 2006

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 promotes collaborative working among those involved in supporting children's learning to help them achieve their full potential. In practice, this requires effective partnership working between agencies and with parents, children and young people.

This conference will be held on 23-24 March 2006 at Crieff Hydro, and will look at partnership working from the perspectives of young people, parents and professionals. There will be a programme of speakers, presentations and interactive workshops that will explore issues, solutions and best practice in partnership working.

For more information or to book a place, please contact

Radha Singh, conference co-ordinator, on 0131 222 2438, rsingh@childreninscotland.org.uk

	residential places	non-residential places
Small voluntary organisations/ Individuals	£290	£190
Large voluntary organisations/ Statutory bodies	£315	£215

There are a limited number of subsidised places for parents.

For more information, please contact Charlotte Richards on 0131 222 2422

Copies of the report from Enquire's successful annual conference in 2005, *Making mainstreaming work*, are available from the Enquire office, telephone 0131 222 2425.