

## Meeting additional support needs

### What are additional support needs?

“All children need support to help them learn. Through good quality learning and teaching, staff in early learning and childcare settings are able to meet a diverse range of needs without additional support. Some children will require support that is additional to, or different from, that received by children of the same age to ensure they benefit from education. Additional support needs can be both long and short-term or can simply refer to the help a child needs in getting through a difficult period. Additional support needs can also arise due to a disability, health, learning environment, family circumstances or social and emotional factor.”

Scottish Government, Parentzone

### First questions

What information is already available about the child and their additional support needs:

- Is there any existing paperwork; Form 1, Developmental Overviews for 2, 3 or 4-year olds?
- If there is a Child's Plan, familiarise yourself with the child's strengths, pressures and any actions for your setting.
- Are there any reports or guidance from professionals working with the child and family?
- Is there a Being Me! My Personal Care Plan?
- Have you met the parents/carers and discussed their main concerns and priorities for their child?
- Make sure you have a clear understanding of the needs of the child and the types of support they require.



Marcus Spiske on Unsplash

“Careful observations form part of building a picture of where a child is in their learning and determining what they need from us and the environment around them to assist further learning.”

**Realising the ambition:  
Being Me**

Education Scotland,  
February 2020

### Initial observations - ongoing assessment

Getting to know a child is one of the most important first steps to meeting their individual needs. If possible, observe the child in your setting before you begin to support them.

As you play and interact with them begin to gather information in the following areas:

- **Level of play skills** – What do they do with toys?
- **Social Skills** - how do they relate to and interact with their peers and adults?
- **Communication skills** –How do they make their needs known? What do they respond to best? Can they follow instructions? Do they use communication supports?
- **Concentration and attention** – how long can they sustain engagement with an activity and are they able to switch between activities by themselves or when prompted?
- **Fine and gross motor skills** – can they access all areas of the setting and activities on offer?
- **Interests and motivators** – which activities do they access most frequently?
- **Emotional development** – how do they cope: with separation; sharing stories/toys/ideas; when something goes wrong; following rules?
- **Problem solving** – do you notice any strategies they are already using?
- **Sensory play skills** – do you notice them avoiding any sensory experiences or engaging in any self-soothing activities?
- **Daily routines** – are they able to join in and follow the familiar routines of your setting? Are they able to move easily from one activity to another through the course of their time in the setting?
- **Daily living skills** – can you tell when they are hungry, tired, need the toilet? What can they do independently?
- **Horizontal transitions** – do they settle well on arriving? Can they move easily between activities? Do they leave happily? Are they attending more than one setting and if so, how do they manage between settings? Do they manage when staff change during the session?

**You may notice something new. Remember to share with parents and feedback to others working with the child.**



# EASEYS for ASN

Encourage And Support Early Years Skills for Additional Support Needs

## Meeting additional support needs

### Being attuned to your learner

Work on building a quality attuned relationship.

- Know the child's state of readiness (alertness level, hunger, tiredness, health needs).
- Accept all attempts to communicate and respond, pitching your communication level appropriately.
- Build in waiting time and be comfortable with it.
- Know the best pace for the child's learning.



### Other sources of information

There may be other sources of information, in addition to that given during enrolment, available in your setting.

Alongside the Being Me! My Personal Care Plan and Profile there may be additional information about the child. This should be stored securely and with confidentiality in mind and may include the following:

- A Child's Plan;
- An Individual Education Plan (IEP);
- Educational assessments, plans and reports;
- Multi-Agency recommendations and reports; and
- Protocols and Risk Assessments (e.g. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), Moving and Handling Plans, Intimate Care, Administration of Medication, Medical Protocol, Positive Behaviour Support Plan, etc.)

### Resources to support developmental progress and learning

#### Milestones

"Education Scotland has produced a set of milestones with accompanying guidance to specifically support learners with complex additional support needs. The aim of the milestones is to support practitioners to identify the progression of learning."

**Education Scotland**

- Foundation Milestones
- Literacy and English Milestones
- Numeracy and Mathematics Milestones



#### Bumps to Bairns

Sometimes children might have an additional support need. Families and professionals can try different approaches to help children learn and develop. Bumps to Bairns has information on some of these approaches. The Just Ask helpline can also provide guidance if you are not sure what help you need. Contact them on 0300 303 1365.



#### Play Steps

Play Steps takes a closer look at different types of play demonstrated by children in activities commonly found in Early Learning and Childcare settings. It provides examples of small observable steps which might help a child to develop play skills in that area. It also suggests play ideas which can add something to an activity to make it more motivating or accessible to a child with an additional support need.



### Useful websites and publications

**The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and as amended 2009**

Parentzone Scotland: **Additional Support**

Education Scotland, Support for all - **Inclusion**

The Highland Council – **Pupil Support Assistant Handbook 2022**

**Enquire** has information and resources for parents, professionals, and young people.