

An overview of additional support needs and ICT provision

This checklist provides you with an overview of recent developments in Scotland on additional support needs policy and tells you where to find key documents that relate to the use of ICT.

A checklist for teachers

- 1 Are you familiar with the National Priorities in Education?
- 2 Are you familiar with the key requirements of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (SEN)?
- 3 Do you know what the 5-14 National Guidelines say about inclusion and ICT across the curriculum?
- 4 Do you know about the implications of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 for learners with additional support needs?
- 5 Do you know about Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 and what plans your local authority has to improve accessibility in schools?
- 6 Do you know what ICT can offer learners who have additional support needs?
- 7 Do you know where you can find resources on the web to help you meet the needs of learners who have additional support needs?

1. What are the National Priorities in Education

Five national priorities in education form the backdrop for much of the activities and development currently taking place in 3-16 education across Scotland. The five priorities are shown below together with aims for all pupils and, in the third column, the implications of these aims for pupils with additional support needs.

National Priority	Aim for all pupils	Implications for pupils with additional support needs ¹
Achievement and Attainment	To raise standards of educational attainment for all schools, especially in the core skills of literacy and numeracy, and to achieve better levels in national measures of achievement including examination results.	Schools and local authorities should have clear approaches to promoting the attainment, achievement and personal and social development of pupils with additional support needs. Their progress should be closely monitored.

¹ The implications shown in column 3 are drawn from the report by HM Inspectorate of Education (2004) **Inclusion and Equality, Part 2: Evaluating education for pupils with additional support needs in mainstream schools.**

<p>Framework for Learning</p>	<p>To support and develop the skills of teachers, the self discipline of pupils and to enhance school environments so that they are conducive to learning and teaching.</p>	<p>Appropriate support and training should be provided for staff in schools, members of support services, including those in NHS, and social workers to help them meet the educational, care and social needs of pupils with additional support needs in mainstream educational settings. Accommodation and facilities should fully meet the specifications for accessibility.</p>
<p>Inclusion and Equality</p>	<p>To promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs, and to Gaelic and other lesser-used languages.</p>	<p>Arrangements should be in place to ensure that pupils with additional support needs have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum and the same length of the school week as that of their peers. They should have the additional facilities they need to achieve their fullest potential. Education authorities and schools should demonstrate a clear commitment to ensuring that pupils with additional support needs do not suffer from discrimination or disadvantage if their learning has been 'interrupted' in any way either by illness or exclusion.</p>
<p>Values and Citizenship</p>	<p>To work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society.</p>	<p>Schools, social workers and parents / carers should work together to develop the self-esteem and confidence of pupils with additional support needs to ensure that they have opportunities to exercise responsibility and be fully involved in decisions about their education and schooling.</p>
<p>Learning for Life</p>	<p>To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition</p>	<p>The curriculum, programmes of personal and social development and learning experiences should equip pupils with additional support needs to be as independent as possible and progress, as appropriate, to training, employment, and further and higher education on leaving school.</p>

Where can I find out more?

- Information about the national priorities can be downloaded from various websites. One site is bringing together resources for schools, local authorities, parents and others interested: <http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk>
- In particular the National Priorities website offers a large and growing set of resources covering a wide range of topics relating to inclusion. These have been compiled from interviews with teachers, pupils, parents, HMIE and others. Check them out at <http://www.nationalpriorities.org.uk/resourcesVideo3.html>
- See also information included below (3. *What do the 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines say about inclusion and ICT across the curriculum?*)

2. What are the key requirements of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004?

The Education (ASL) (Scotland) Act sets out arrangements in education for children with additional support needs. The Act will begin to be implemented in 2005 and will introduce radical changes to the special educational needs provisions of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended). ASN is defined as:

A child or young person has additional support needs for the purposes of this Act where, for whatever reason, the child or young person is, or is likely to be, unable without the provision of additional support to benefit from school education provided or to be provided for the child or young person.

Some of the key changes include:

- The term 'Additional Support Needs' replaces special educational needs. The new term will include not only children with what are known now as special educational needs but also children with support needs arising from: having English as an additional language; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; being able or gifted; being gypsy or traveller children; being a refugee or asylum seeker.
- Changes to assessment and intervention: educational, psychological and medical assessments no longer compulsory as they are for Record of Needs.
- Parent & Family Support to be improved.
- Co-ordinated Support Plans (CSP) replace Record of Needs.
- Mediation service and dispute resolution to be introduced.
- Appeals / new Tribunal system.
- Future Needs Assessment ends.
- New Code of Practice to be introduced.

Where can I find out more?

A good place to begin is the accompanying Advice document *An overview of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004* which sets out in a lot more detail the various features of the new legislation. Also to be found in that document are website references to supporting literature.

3. What do the 5-14 National Guidelines say about inclusion and ICT across the curriculum?

Section 15 of the Standards in Scotland's Schools (etc.) Act 2000 introduced the presumption that every child would have a mainstream placement. There are particular circumstances where this principle does not apply:

- where the mainstream school would not be suited to the ability or aptitude of the child
- where the provision of education to the child in a mainstream school would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education to those with whom the child would be educated
- where the placing of the child in a mainstream school would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred that would not ordinarily be incurred

The document *Count us in* sets out the progression towards and framework within which inclusive education is developing in Scotland. As well as describing the wider policy context behind inclusive education it presents features of good practice that would be expected in all schools. In this way *Count us in* acts as a bridge between the aspirations behind National Priorities and what all school staff need to consider in making inclusive education work in practice.

Specific examples of good practice and support to schools in supporting pupils with additional support needs include *Success For All*. Funded by the Scottish Executive Education Department, key project aims include providing advice on setting targets for individual pupils using individualised educational programmes (IEPs) and enabling schools to use IEPs to set targets for improvement at a whole-school level.

Other useful documents include *How good is our school?* and, especially HMIE self-evaluation guidance detailed in *Inclusion and Equality, Part 2: Evaluating education for pupils with additional support needs in mainstream schools*.

Funding provided centrally through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) and the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) helped substantially to develop the use of ICT in schools. As well as providing hardware and staff development, NGfL and NOF funding supported developments in online learning, out-of-school learning and encouraged community access to school facilities.

The broad context for using ICT within 5-14 National Guidelines, as seen in *Information and Communications Technology 5-14 National Guidelines*, presents inclusion and the use of ICT in very general terms. With the publication of the aforementioned *Count us in* a clear commitment is given to the use of ICT with pupils who have additional support needs. Examples of this include: self-evaluation criteria on the extent to which the school environment meets the needs of pupils with additional support needs.

Where can I find out more?

- **Circular 3/02:** Standards in Scotland's Schools (etc.) Act 2002 Guidance on Presumption of Mainstream Education, SEED: gives more detailed guidance about the circumstances surrounding mainstream education under the Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000.
- HM Inspectorate of Education (2002) **How good is our school?** 2nd Ed.

- HM Inspectorate of Education (2004) **Inclusion and Equality, Part 2: Evaluating education for pupils with additional support needs in mainstream schools.**
- <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/intheclassroom/index.asp>
- Information and Communications Technology 5-14 National Guidelines, published in 2000 sets out the broad framework for use of ICT within 5-14 curriculum. Find it at <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/5to14/htmlguidelines/ict/intropage1.htm>
- **Moving to mainstream: the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools Main report.** Audit Scotland and HMIE, Auditor General/Accounts Commission 2003, website <http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk>
- HM Inspectorate of Education (2004) **Count us in: Achieving inclusion in Scottish schools**, <http://www.hmie.gov.uk>
- *Success for all* can be found at <http://www.LTScotland.org.uk/inclusiveeducation/publications/successforall.asp>
- CALL Centre, University of Edinburgh has extensive downloadable resources on inclusion and ICT <http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk>

4. What are the implications of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 for learners with special needs?

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 [<http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/20010010.htm>] makes it unlawful for education providers to discriminate against disabled pupils, students and adult learners, or put them at a disadvantage.

The DRC Code of Practice [<http://www.drc-gb.org/drc/InformationAndLegislation/Page34A.asp>] is a useful document about implementing the SEN DDA Act in schools (as well as the Code for post-16 provision). It can be downloaded from the web site of the Disability Rights Commission. Because there are important differences in how the Code applies in Scotland versus in England and Wales it is helpful to know how the different measures apply in Scotland. We have therefore set these out in a separate ICT Advice document *SENDA 2001 in Scotland*.

Where can I find out more?

- **SENDA 2001** <http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/en/2001en10.htm>
- See the accompanying Advice document *SENDA 2001 in Scotland*.
- **DDA Code of Practice** http://www.drc-gb.org/uploaded_files/documents/2008_220_schoolscop2.doc
- BBC (2001) **Production handbook: A BBC guide to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995: Access to goods and services**, London: BBC.

5. What are the implications of the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 for local authorities and schools?

The Disability Strategies Act describes what planning duties, introduced by SENDA 2001 (see above), need to be carried out by local authorities, independent and grant-aided schools in Scotland – so-called responsible bodies. Each local authority's plans for improving accessibility are known as its 'Accessibility Strategy'. Prepared on a 3-yearly cycle (the first round was submitted in 1 April 2003) – there are three areas of improvement needed in relation to disabled pupils:

- Improving access to the physical environment
- Improving access to the curriculum
- Improving access to communication and delivery of school information.

The duty to plan to improve accessibility covers both the physical environment of the school and access to the curriculum (ie to teaching and facilities for education). These may include, for example, such matters as widening doorways; installing lifts or ramps; installing induction loops; arranging teacher training in sign language; improved colour schemes; sound proofing; the provision of materials on tape or of facilities for allowing teaching material to be converted into Braille; or the provision of specialist furniture or IT equipment, etc.

Where can I find out more?

- See the accompanying ICT Advice Sheet *Strategies to improve accessibility for disabled children and young people: planning and ICT* for more detailed information.
- The Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002: <http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2002/20020012.htm>
- The Scottish Executive: **Guidance on Planning to Improve Access to Education for Pupils with Disabilities: Guidance on Preparing Accessibility Strategies 2002** <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/gpas-00.asp>
- The Scottish Executive: **Report on the First Round of Accessibility Strategies** Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education and Disability Rights Commission (2003) ISBN: 0-7559-4018-0. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/education/gpasr-00.asp>
- **Disability Discrimination Act 1995:** The Disability Rights Commission has produced a range of publications about the provisions of the DDA, most of them posted on its website. Look in particular for the various codes of practice. It has also produced a useful guide for parents on the provisions of the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and the Education (Disability Strategies) (Scotland) Act 2002.
- The CALL Centre has extensive experience of the accessibility issues that need to be addressed in the use of ICT in schools. <http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk>

6. What can ICT offer learners with additional support needs?

ICT can be a motivating learning medium. Many learners are attracted to computers and want to learn through them. Software applications incorporating colour, pictures, animations, sound and humour can build on that interest, creating attractive learning opportunities to engage pupils.

ICT presents information in different ways. Students learn through different channels so information presented in multimedia form gives them more opportunities to connect. Information can be accessed through text, graphics or sound to suit the students' individual learning styles and strengths.

ICT offers an opportunity for social interaction. Students can work together around the computer, focusing on the learning task. Through this medium they can develop their language and social skills as well as learn from one another.

ICT provides a range of assistive technology tools. Hardware and software enable many learners with access difficulties to overcome barriers. Physical, sensory and learning difficulties can be supported by the use of ICT.

See the other ICT Advice Sheets which focus on how ICT can meet the various individual needs of pupils with additional support needs.

7. What can ICT offer teachers of learners with additional support needs?

ICT can be a useful a tool for differentiation.

Why should I do this?	What is there to help me do this?
Many programs can be used at different levels to suit different needs. Teacher can create and save activities, and then adapt them to provide the level of support required by an individual learner.	Software developers often put extra materials on the web for downloading to use with their software (see the accompanying <i>Free Switch Software</i>)

ICT can be used to create relevant teaching materials.

Why should I do this?	What is there to help me do this?
Images taken with a digital camera, recorded voices and appropriate text can all be incorporated into software packages to create resources that learners can relate to through their personal experiences.	Several sites are developing resources that can be checked out and / or downloaded. These include: www.ers.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/ers_services.htm Aberdeenshire Council's: www.wiredshire.org.uk/ http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk/ http://www.ltscotland.org.uk Although targeting the National Curriculum, the Teacher Resource Exchange has a host of resources for teachers to share electronically http://tre.ngfl.gov.uk .

ICT offers access to freely available information and materials.

Why should I do this?	What is there to help me do this?
The Internet is a source for free materials to enhance the curriculum as well as information about a wide range of additional support needs. E-mail and web-based forums are ways for teachers to connect to a wider community and access professional support.	The CALL Centre provides information on using augmentative communication (AAC) and ICT in the curriculum. Downloadable BoardMaker™, Clicker 4 resources and grids, information sheets, contact for Personal Communication Passports, Smart Wheelchair, Consulting Children. http://www.callcentrescotland.org.uk The Inclusion site http://inclusion.ngfl.gov.uk is a catalogue of resources you can use to meet individual needs. It also lists e-mail forums that focus on ASN and inclusion. LT Scotland's site http://www.ltscotland.org.uk provides a gateway into many resources.