

The Right Help at the Right time in the right place

**Scotland's Ten Year Strategy for the
Learning Provision for Children and
Young People with Complex Additional
Support Needs**

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Foreword – A message from Margaret Orr, Chairperson of the Doran National Commissioning Group



On behalf of the National Commissioning Group I have great pleasure in sharing the updated strategy which has developed as a direct consequence of the responses to the national consultation.

The responses which we received reflected the keen interest of all stakeholders in supporting developments which will impact on the provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

We have sought to ensure that the updated strategy reflects both the priorities identified by the respondents and takes into account related national developments which have evolved in the period since the publication of the consultation document.

The Doran review recommended that national provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs should be strategically commissioned. Children and young people with complex additional support needs should have access to early integrated assessment, that services offered are responsive to changing needs, lead to the best possible outcomes and are delivered where possible with the home community. The review also aspires that there is a presumption of entitlement to the highest quality of services and that local and national provision are complementary and operate with coherence.

We have aligned the strategy to the priority areas of the National Improvement Framework (NIF). The NIF vision for education is clear that we want to develop with our partners an empowered and collaborative system, where everyone's contribution is heard and valued and improving children and young people's outcomes is at the heart of everything we do.

This vision supports the recommendations of the Doran review which focused on how we can continue to develop capacity within the whole system of services and supports upon which children and young people and their families rely. Capacity is more than buildings and expensive resources; it is also about the expertise, values and attitudes that make a real difference to the experiences and outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

I trust that you will find the updated strategy to be a focussed document against which we can all benchmark the achievement of the stated priorities and our collective responsibility needed to realise the strategic vision which attracted full endorsement from all the respondents.

Introduction

Scotland’s Ten Year Strategy for the Learning Provision for Children and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs 2017-2026 was published on the 5 June 2017 for public consultation. This document has been updated following consideration of the responses to the consultation¹.

The document outlines our vision in Scotland for the education of children and young people with complex additional support needs. Our ten year strategy sits within the context of other policies and strategies to improve the learning outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs living in Scotland.

The Scottish vision for inclusive education, which applies to all settings, is set out below:

‘Inclusive education in Scotland starts from the belief that education is a human right and the foundation for a more just society. An inclusive approach which recognises diversity and holds the ambition that all children and young people are enabled to achieve to their fullest potential is the cornerstone to achieve equity and excellence in education for all of our children and young people².’

Inclusive practice is important whatever the setting, whether it be within a mainstream or special school. There are four key features of inclusion which can be used to set expectations and evaluate inclusive practice in schools and early learning and childcare settings. These are present, participating, achieving and supported. Together these four features support the delivery of inclusive learning environments for all children and young people that enable them to reach their full potential.



¹ [Consultation Report](#)

² [This definition builds on research by Professors Mel Ainscow and Susie Miles](#)

Our vision

The vision for education in Scotland is described in the National Improvement Framework: (<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/01/8314>)

- **Excellence through raising attainment:** ensuring that every child achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, set out within Curriculum for Excellence levels, and the right range of skills, qualifications and achievements to allow them to succeed; and
- **Achieving equity:** ensuring every child has the same opportunity to succeed, with a particular focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap.

We need Scottish education to deliver both excellence in terms of ensuring children and young people acquire a broad range of skills and capacities at the highest levels, whilst also delivering equity so that every child and young person should thrive and have the best opportunity to succeed regardless of their social circumstances or additional needs.

The vision and priorities for Scottish education have been agreed across the system, and the national improvement activity that needs to be undertaken to help deliver those key priorities. This complements the ongoing implementation of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), Getting it Right for Every Child, and Developing the Young Workforce (DYW), which are the three supporting pillars of the Scottish education system.

Getting it right for every child supports families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people. The aim is to help them to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.

The Getting it right for every child approach is based on values and principles³ which support children's and parents' rights.

The National Improvement Framework envisions “a Scotland in which **all** children and young people can realise their potential, regardless of their social background or learning needs, thereby developing the knowledge, skills and attributes they will need to flourish in life, learning and work.”



³ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/principles-and-values/>

Aim

To improve outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs through strategic commissioning of services; with a particular focus on the provision of education. While this strategy also recognises the critical role played by social services and health in supporting educational outcomes the strategy is set within the context of [The Additional Support for Learning Act 2004](#).

Objectives

1. To ensure the four key priorities set out within Scotland's National Improvement Framework – raising attainment, achieving equity, improving health and wellbeing, and developing skills for learning, life and work; for children and young people with complex additional support needs – are central to the outcomes anticipated in the 10 Year Strategy.
2. To frame the Strategy in the six key drivers for improvement within the National Improvement Framework: school leadership; teacher professionalism; parental engagement; assessment of children's progress; school improvement; performance information all reflecting a particular relevance to provision for complex additional support needs. With appropriate customisation to reflect the context which the Strategy is addressing. These drivers are customised in the strategy to reflect the multi-dimensional factors which impact on improvement of services for children and young people with complex additional support needs.
3. To ensure that the impact of any service commissioned results in capacity building across local authorities as well as at a national level.
4. To provide an evidence base, which will include the voice of parents, children and young people, for decisions around national commissioning that drive improvements which benefit children and young people with complex additional support needs.

10 Year Strategy

Our aim is that by 2026 Scotland will be a world leader in relation to providing the highest quality education to children and young people with complex additional support needs. An outcome review in 2026 should be expected to evidence a well-developed history of proactive collaborative working between national government, local authorities, independent providers (3rd Sector), national and international training providers (Universities, Education Scotland, SCEL etc). The central objective will be to secure enhanced and sustained attainment and achievement outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs. The enhanced provision will be developed by a process of robust commissioning.

The Doran Review

The [Doran Review](#) of Learning Provision for Children and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs⁴, published in November 2012, was conducted to identify ways of improving educational outcomes for children with complex additional support needs. The review found variations in all aspects of services that children and families receive across the country and noted a need for better joined-up working across agencies. The review noted the team around a child or young person needs to be highly trained and experienced, and raised concerns regarding the availability of professional training in both breadth and depth. Parents and professionals reported difficulties in obtaining information about resources available.

Parental engagement was a key component of the Doran review . The consultation process engaged fully with the National Parents Forum for Scotland to ensure that the perspective of parents was presented. In addition, as part of the 2nd phase of the review a range of parental events were arranged by Children in Scotland on behalf of the review to enable parents of children and young people with additional support needs to express their views. Further parental engagement was conducted for the Doran Needs Analysis⁵ research through discussion groups and individual 1-2-1 interviews with children with complex additional support needs and their parents or carers. A parent/carer route map⁶ was also published.

The Doran Review made 21 recommendations aimed at providing better outcomes and experiences for children and young people with complex additional support needs. The Review aspires:

- That children and young people, supported by their parents and/or carers, have an easily accessible route to early integrated assessment of, and provision for their complex additional support needs from the earliest stage of development.
- That services offered are responsive to changing needs, lead to the best possible outcomes and are delivered where possible within the home community.
- That there is a presumption of entitlement to the highest quality of services which should be inclusive, efficient, equitable and effective in meeting the assessed needs and promote optimum inclusion in society.
- That local and national provision are complementary and operate with coherence.

The recommendations were to Scottish Government, Education Scotland, local authorities, health boards, GTCS, training providers, independent and [Grant-Aided Special Schools \(GASS\)](#), and the three National Centres ([CALL Scotland](#), [Enquire](#) and

⁴ [The Doran Review](#): The Right Help at the right time in the right place: Strategic Review of Learning Provision for Children and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs. November 2012.

⁵ [Doran Needs Analysis Report](#)

⁶ [Doran Parent/Carer Route Map](#)

the [Scottish Sensory Centre](#)) supporting children and young people that are currently funded by Scottish Government. The [Scottish Government response](#)⁷ set out the Scottish Government's action to take the recommendations forward.

What are “complex additional support needs”?

Complex additional support needs may arise as result of:

- the severity of one or more factors resulting in need, and/or
- the combined impact of a number of separate factors, one or more of which may be severe.

A rigorous, clearly bounded and universally accepted definition is extremely difficult to formulate because of the multiplicity of factors and the impact of specific contexts in different local authorities. For that reason the National Strategic Commissioning Group (NSCG) is using a working **description** rather than a definition of children and young people with complex additional support needs:

1. Those in receipt of a Co-ordinated Support Plan as defined in the [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#), i.e. where: -
 - a. an education authority are responsible for the school education of the child or young person,
 - b. the child or young person has additional support needs arising from-
 - i. one or more complex factors, or
 - ii. multiple factors,
 - c. those needs are likely to continue for more than a year, and
 - d. those needs require significant additional support to be provided-
 - i. by the education authority in the exercise of any of their other functions as well as in the exercise of their functions relating to education, or
 - ii. by one or more appropriate agencies (within the meaning of section 23(2)) as well as by the education authority themselves.
2. Children and young people aged 3-18 who do not have a co-ordinated support plan but who have been assessed as stage 3 or 4 by a local authority under a staged intervention model as recommended by the [Supporting Children's Learning Code of Practice](#).
3. Children and young people aged 3-18 who attend a grant aided or independent special school.

⁷ [Meeting the needs of Scotland's children and young people with complex additional support needs](#). The Scottish Government's response to the Doran Review. November 2012.

Why do we need Strategic Commissioning for Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs?

The National Improvement Framework and Curriculum for Excellence apply to all children and young people including those with complex additional support needs. Given that these needs are of relatively low incidence⁸ and attract a high level of resourcing and require specialist input, Scottish education requires a particular strategy to ensure that the needs of this group are met. This Strategy sets out how this will be addressed over the next decade.

This Strategy addresses the current **key priorities** for the National Improvement Framework, which are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing; and
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school leaver destinations for all young people

National Strategic Commissioning

Six of the 21 Doran recommendations concern funding for, and the commissioning of services, including national services. A [Strategic Commissioning Project](#), supported by a [Project Board](#) and five [workstreams](#), was established to address these specific recommendations.

For there to be an appropriate strategic approach it is important that all those involved in the process: children, parents, providers, purchasers and representative organisations, should agree on what we are trying to achieve in the long term for children and young people with complex additional support needs. A [National Strategic Commissioning Group](#) (NSCG) with membership drawn from all the groups above was established and subsequently developed the initial Strategy which was the subject of the national consultation.

The national profile of complex additional support needs requires the maintenance and on-going development of a range of provision, underpinned by appropriate research and professional learning.

The provision includes education within local authority managed provision (mainstream and special); direct access to peripatetic specialist services managed or contracted by local authorities and other providers; and placement at independent day and residential special schools.

⁸Report to Parliament: **Supporting Children's Learning Implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act**
https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Education/Inquiries/20190326In_report_on_Implementation_pf_AS_L.pdf

The decision as to the most appropriate interventions and placement lies with the home education authority⁹ acting within the national legislative and policy context.

In taking the decision to place¹⁰ a child or young person in the independent sector or to require input from independent specialist services to assist with assessment and on-going support, the residential authority is recognising that there are some complex additional support needs which require highly customised responses in terms of assessment, direct intervention and physical learning and care environments.

The National Commissioning Process will provide funding, on a cyclical basis, to address the scope of services as outlined below. It is anticipated that there will continue to be a range of education provision, (schools and services) under independent and local authority management, which will be focused on meeting the range of complex additional support needs as defined on Page 9 of this paper. It is essential therefore that funding provided at a national level is seen to focus on building the capacity of providers across the spectrum: specifically in areas where there are shared benefit which can then be adopted and developed at direct provider level to meet the personalised needs of learners with complex additional support needs.

In recognition of this the current grant aid of approximately £11m/annum that is currently allocated to seven Grant-Aided Special Schools (GASS) and three National Centres is being reviewed to ensure that it is targeted on supporting the key areas identified by the Doran Project Board – described in more detail on page 12.

The NSCG are developing an Operational Commissioning Strategy, which will provide a timeline and action plan for commissioning. The Operational Commissioning Strategy will compliment this document and will be published in late 2019. We have however, provided in Annex A an illustration of how possible strategic commissioning cycles could operate from 2019-2026. The illustration shows how potential cycles of strategic commissioning would run. We note that cycle 3 would begin within the scope of this ten year strategy but would not be completed until 2028.

Scope of Services to be commissioned

The Strategic Commissioning Project Board (SCPB), informed by the work of the Doran Workstreams and [Needs Analysis](#)¹¹ identified that the following services are all within the scope to be commissioned.

Direct education, care and health services for children and young people with complex additional support needs;

⁹ Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice, Chapter 3, paragraph 1, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-childrens-learning-statutory-guidance-education-additional-support-learning-scotland/pages/4/>

¹⁰ Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice, Chapter 4, paragraph 5, <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/348208/0116022.pdf>

¹¹ [The Needs Analysis for Strategic Commissioning of Services for Children and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs](#),

Research related to children and young people with complex additional support needs that provides a sound evidence base, alongside other sources of evidence to support national policy development and service provision to improve educational outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs;

Sustainable, child and young person focused learning and development for those supporting children and young people with complex additional support needs aligned to a mechanism for sharing practice; and,

Broader services which support the education of children and young people with complex additional support needs including services provided across a number of authority areas, provided by local authorities or voluntary organisations which taken across Scotland may constitute a national need.

The Commissioning Process

The commissioning process for national services will be:

- Inclusive – involving service users, purchasers and providers.
- Transparent – decisions and processes will be open to scrutiny and made in ways that are easily understood, whilst respecting the need for commercial confidentiality.
- Innovative – creating an environment that supports good ideas and values evidence based innovation where it leads to service improvement.
- Focused on Excellence - aspiring to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism in the provision of educational and related services to children with complex additional support needs.

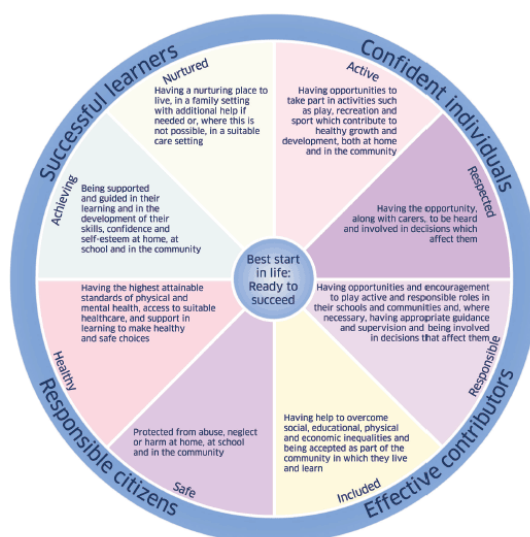
The package of nationally commissioned services will be:

- based on assessed need;
- based on the principle of provision being locally provided wherever possible and inclusive in nature;
- able to support parents and carers;
- able to capitalise on the expertise and experience developed by partners, building services and capacity locally and centrally which best meet children and young people's needs;
- able to provide a mix of long-term services of learning and support and short-term focused support to meet particular needs;
- located equitably across Scotland;
- able to ensure regional support to ensure equality of access to centralised services;
- co-ordinated to prevent duplication, and thereby improve efficiency and effectiveness.

It is anticipated that the third sector will take a lead in applying for funding and delivering services through the new commissioning process in recognition that they currently act as agents of local authorities to address the most complex additional support needs as defined by child or young person's residential authority. Other organisations or partnerships may also apply for funding.

In applying for funding, service providers will be required to provide information on:

- Rationale for proposed area of focus (Direct education, care and health services; Research; professional learning and development; and/or broader services which support the education of children and young people with complex additional support needs).
- Evidence of agreed collaboration with partners and added value to existing local or regional provision.
- Anticipated outcomes on each of the key priorities of the National Improvement Framework: raising attainment, achieving equity, improving health and well-being, developing skills for learning, life and work.
- Anticipated impact on professional learning and capacity building across local authorities as well as at a national level.
- Internal governance and self-evaluation processes that focus on SHANARRI outcomes.



Legislative and policy framework

The Commissioning Process will work within relevant legislation and policy, namely:

- [The Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#)
- [The National Improvement Framework](#)
- [Curriculum for Excellence](#)
- [Getting It Right For Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#)
- [The Children and Young People Act 2014](#)
- [The Education \(Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records\) \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children's Rights and United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)
- [Scottish School \(Parental Involvement\) Act 2006](#)
- [Digital Learning Strategy](#)

National Strategic Commissioning Group

The National Strategic Commissioning group will continue to work collaboratively with local authorities and health boards to establish a common view regarding strategic needs, informed by the Commissioning group's direct engagement with stakeholders and professional analysis, as well as by the local authorities' position as the chief determinants of education provision for their learners. The National Strategic Commissioning group will work collaboratively with the providers of the services it commissions to agree forward plans and strategies. In particular it will work positively with providers and the users of their services at times of anticipated change or transition in the service or the strategy under which the service has been commissioned. The Scottish Government directly and through partner agencies will provide proactive support and scrutiny of the programmes as appropriate.

Resource of c. £11m per annum is being maintained by the Scottish Government to ensure that the key areas identified by the National Strategic Commissioning Group and the Strategic Commissioning Project Board for delivery are supported.

Changes in current grant awards and services will be a focus of engagement with stakeholders and will not prejudice the placements of children or young people who are supported by currently funded services.

The National Strategic Commissioning Group, following ministerial approval, will oversee the implementation of a 3-year cyclical commissioning plan that supports this Strategy. It will follow a cycle of planning, commissioning and review and will support the on-going anticipation of future need in addition to ensuring that services are addressing identified current national need.

The strategy will be framed within the key drivers identified in the NIF but customised to reflect the multi-dimensional themes identified in the Doran Review, particularly in reference to social services and health. For example, the NSCG felt that NIF drivers of School leadership and Teacher Professionalism was too narrow in relation to the lived experience for children and young people with complex needs. The multi-agency and service provision that is often required in complex additional support needs requires recognition that the key drivers need to fit across a range of settings to ensure children and young people with complex additional support needs achieve the best possible outcomes. Given the scope of the strategy it is proposed that it will be addressed in phases over the 10 year period. The first phase would focus on pathfinder activity related to training, development and research.

10 Year Strategy - First Phase

In light of the responses to the consultation and in keeping with the pathfinder approach advocated in the strategy and welcomed by the respondents, the first phase of implementation will focus on the undernoted areas:

Service Leadership

Leaders at all levels and in all relevant services should evidence on-going professional learning and practice commensurate with their areas of practice and responsibility.

Education Services

This objective will be supported by the development of appropriately differentiated pathways within the leadership development programmes already established within Education Scotland and SCEL Frameworks and reflect collaborative working with Universities and GTCS.

The writing and pilot delivery of these programmes will be commissioned over 2020-2023. Participation in the writing, delivery and involvement in the initial programme will reflect input by senior managers and across all levels and sectors, working collaboratively. Initial and on-going funding to support participation in the programmes will be supported by the Scottish Government through the commissioning process.

As with the expectation on local authorities, providers will be expected to have a rigorous self-evaluation process which monitors the impact of school and service leadership on achieving the optimum outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs. Evidence should reflect collaboration at a senior level with colleagues in the other key services

Internal self-evaluation will be complemented by independent research.

By 2026 there should be a well-established national leadership programme at post-graduate level, which addresses the requirements of effective leadership in the context of schools and services for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Practitioner Professionalism

To support the objectives in the National Improvement Framework the strategy proposes:

- The development of relevant professional learning opportunities at post graduate level for teachers addressing complex additional support needs including, as appropriate, study at Master Level. As with the school leadership programmes they will be developed and trialled on a collaborative basis between school and service staff and providers. Such an approach would meet the expectation within an evolutionary Masters Programme. As with the Leadership programme it would have essential elements of multi-professional collaboration.
- Profiling on a 5 year basis the range of professional learning being undertaken by teachers in both independent and local authority managed provision to address complex additional support needs. In keeping with Teaching Scotland's Future and GTCS Professional Update this would include a range of

CPD activity, including opportunities at establishment or service level as well as post graduate study. This information would be gathered through the Professional Update process but would not compromise the confidentiality of individual practitioners.

[The Independent Panel on Career Pathways has now reported](#)¹² to the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT), and includes a number of recommendations that may have an influence for the career development and professional learning of teachers involved in additional support needs. Specifically recommendations 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

These recommendations were presented to the SNCT with a timescale for agreeing an implementation plan by August 2020. In addition the refresh of the GTCS Professional Standards is ongoing and being taken forward in parallel with the empowering schools and career pathways work to ensure appropriate coherence.

The NSCG recognise that Practitioner Professionalism, in the context of the lived experience of children and young people with complex additional support needs and the team around the child, involves a range of professionals across education, health and social care. The NSCG will explore how learning and development are used to ensure knowledgeable and skilled staff who are enabled to support positive outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs. This will include establishing what partnerships exist to support improved outcomes for children and young people, and how they contribute. Partnerships include with mainstream and special schools, other local authority and children's services, third sector and health and social care partners, independent and grant-aided special schools and regional improvement collaboratives. Through this work the NSCG will look to identify opportunities to support practitioner professionalism for all staff working with children and young people with complex additional support needs.

Parental Engagement

We understand that it is parents who are the primary educator of their children and that working to support the central role of the family, in whatever form that may take, is vital to improving the education and life chances of our children and young people.

In August 2018 the Scottish Government published the 'Learning Together' National Action Plan¹³ on parental involvement, parental engagement, family learning and learning at home. The plan, based on the guiding aim of getting it right for every child, sets out a vision for parental involvement and engagement for the next three years. It covers the journey that a child takes from pre-birth to age 18. It takes account of the

¹² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-panel-career-pathways-teachers-final-report/>

¹³ Learning Together National Action Plan: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/learning-together-scotlands-national-action-plan-parental-involvement-parental-engagement/>

national and international evidence base as well as policy and practice expertise across the Scottish education system. It contains 13 goals and 52 national actions. The plan contains specific actions targeted at parents of children with complex needs and contains specific commitments to:

- Consult on a new resource – Supporting Disabled Children, Young People and their Families¹⁴ – from April 2018 with direct relevance to education, schools and early learning and childcare settings. This will highlight good practice and share information on Rights and Information; Accessibility of Support, and Transitions.
- Work with parent organisations to monitor, review and develop all national policy in relation to Additional Support for Learning (ASL) through its Advisory Group for ASL.
- Promote the National Parent Forum’s ‘Nutshell’ briefing on additional support for learning via a wide range of communication channels.

We also recognise that Parents have a statutory right to be involved in all key decisions made about their children’s education through the Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006. The act places a specific duty on local authorities to consider how their parental involvement strategies make provision for parents of children with complex additional support needs. As such we will ensure that specific guidance in relation to parents of children with additional support needs is included in refreshed statutory guidance which will be published in the 2019/20 school term.

Given that many of the children and young people who attend specialist schools in the independent sector are looked after and accommodated by the home education authority, the strategy underlines the comprehensive definition of parent to include carer and corporate parent.

By 2026 there should be clear evidence of strong partnership working between providers and parents which underpins the achievement of educational outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs.

We will look for opportunities to build on the work of the 2017 The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (The "Alliance) report into the transitions experiences of disabled young people and their families and the Scottish Government guidance¹⁵ on supporting disabled children, young people and their families. The strategy proposes initial action research over 2020-2022 into the key themes of all transitions throughout a child and young persons’ journey to determine the current strengths and challenges

¹⁴ <https://consult.gov.scot/children-and-families/supporting-disabled-children/>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-disabled-children-young-people-and-their-families/pages/transitions/>

which characterise current practice and how each key partner can maximize their contribution.

Assessment of Children's Progress

To support the statement in the National Improvement Framework, "Progress in learning for children with significant additional support needs will be evaluated at an individual level, through agreed plans and next steps, which will be personalised" the strategy proposes:

- Supporting the trialling of a range of assessment models developed specifically to provide frameworks for schools and services to support the assessment process for children and young people with complex additional support needs and evaluate their effectiveness;
- The trial to be funded over two school sessions 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 and to include the full range of complex additional support needs in both the independent sector and local authority managed provision; and
- This action research will complement activity linked to research into transition and positive destinations and will reflect collaborative contributions from all the key agencies.

The strategy recognises that progress in learning of many children and learners with complex additional support is evaluated using collective methods and tools such as the Scottish National Standardised Assessments, and that these and other assessment resources must be accessible for learners with additional support needs.

Service Improvement

In relation to the key theme of direct education care and health, the strategy proposes an initial focus on the quality and impact of the partnerships that are in place to support children and young people with complex additional support needs to allow them to engage as fully as possible in education.

- Action research be commissioned to identify the factors which empower productive inter-agency collaboration and positive outcomes for children and young people with complex additional support needs; and
- The research to look at both at collaboration between education, care and health staff within a localised setting and also the wider local authority scene (Education and Social Work Services).

We will look for opportunities to harness the contribution that the enhanced early learning and childcare¹⁶ (ELC) offer can make for children with complex additional support needs before they start school. The expansion of funded ELC from 600 to 1140 hours for all children from August 2020 and the earlier ELC offer for eligible two-

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/early-education-and-care/early-learning-and-childcare/>

year-olds has the potential to transform outcomes for children with complex needs in the early years.

Performance Information

Performance information would also underline the expectation that proposed areas for funding will be expected to inform practice and improved understanding around the breadth and depth of need in relation to children and young people with complex additional support needs.

All of the above are set against the current international and national legislative frameworks, and national and local authority policies which seek to protect and promote the rights of every child. Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate have key responsibilities in these areas.

By 2026 the National Strategic Commissioning Group will by then have become a trusted, well informed and authoritative voice leading stakeholders toward a consensus around these aspirations, the aspirations of the key drivers.

Early Learning and Childcare

Currently all children aged 3 and 4, and eligible 2 year olds are entitled to 600 hours per year of funded early learning and childcare. The enhanced offer with the expansion of funded ELC from 600 to 1140 hours for all children from August 2020 and the earlier ELC offer for eligible two-year-olds has the potential to transform outcomes for children with complex needs in the early years.

In order to ensure that the funded ELC entitlement is delivered in high quality settings, a Funding Follows the Child approach will be introduced in August 2020 alongside the statutory roll-out of the expanded entitlement. This is underpinned by the National Standard for ELC which sets out the quality criteria which any settings wishing to deliver funded ELC must meet.

As the Funding Follows the Child approach offers more flexibility and increased choice for parents and carers, it is vital to ensure that provision remains accessible for all children. An inclusive approach, with an appreciation of diversity and an ambition for all to achieve their full potential, is essential to getting it right for every child and raising attainment for all. Inclusion is the cornerstone to help us achieve equity and excellence in education for all of our children and young people.

In an ELC setting there are several transitions we expect a child to manage, from: home to the setting; person to person; setting to setting; outdoors to indoors and ultimately from ELC to primary school. It is essential that all of these are handled sensitively, inclusively and positively.

To ensure that ELC practitioners are well placed to help children manage these transitions refreshed national practice guidance (Building the Ambition) will be

published. The refresh will strengthened guidance on how to support the child's transition from home to ELC.

To further help assess if we are meeting the needs of children with additional support needs the Scottish Government are expanding the information routinely collected. The questions in the current ELC annual census on additional support needs have been amended to cover the range of reasons for support; include a question on disability; and collect information on all support plans in place for children with additional support needs. These changes were introduced to the September 2017 census and analysis from this collection was published for the first time in December 2017.

Wider changes being made to the census will go further to help assess the needs of children accessing their ELC entitlement. The Scottish Government will move to an individual child level data collection in 2021, providing a much richer source of data for the sector, including collection characteristics data such as additional support needs. This information will be used to help identify specific groups for targeted support, improve outcomes for children, and reduce inequalities.

Health and Wellbeing

The Scottish approach to inclusion is already world-leading; our legislative and policy commitments are amongst the most extensive in the world. An inclusive approach affords all children and young people the opportunity to be part of a community, boosting their mental health, emotional wellbeing and aiding the development of social skills. Scotland's inclusive approach celebrates diversity and allows children and young people to develop an understanding and recognition of differences, contributing to the development of an increasingly inclusive, empathetic and more just society. We want all children and young people to get the support that they need to reach their full learning potential. We have listened to the experiences of children and families about getting the support they need and will be taking action to secure more positive experiences for those receiving support.

This will include: improving consistency of support across Scotland, through improved guidance; building further capacity to deliver effective additional support; and improving career pathways and professional development, including new free training resources on inclusive practices. These strategic actions seek to support: improved consistency in the delivery of additional support for pupils and the implementation of mainstreaming; further capacity for schools and education authorities to deliver support; improved career paths for those working in additional support for learning; and support for continued professional development.

We know that children's educational outcomes directly affect their opportunities in life, work and society. Support provided to enhance learning outcomes will ensure young people reach their full potential. Supporting children with complex additional support

needs in learning also supports their ability to remain within their own communities in the longer term.

Children's Rights

We want Scotland to be the best place in the World to grow up. To fulfil this ambition we must promote a positive culture for our children. One where they are welcomed, nurtured, listened to, and have their views heard and their rights protected. Children must be given every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

The views of children and young people are central to the support that they receive. All children should have the opportunity to have their views listened to and taken into consideration. Changes to the Additional Support for Learning Act 2004 enshrined in the rights of children aged 12-15 into legislation and provide that they must be given the opportunity to have their voice heard and be involved in decisions about their education.

These rights are balanced by safeguards and supported by a children's service which helps children to access information, advice and support at every stage. The service – My Rights, My Say¹⁷ provides support to children and seeks to create an environment where all children, including those with complex needs can be informed and included in the support that they are receiving to achieve their fullest potential.

Transition Period

At the present time there are seven grant-aided special schools and three education support services that receive recurrent funding from the Scottish Government, from an annual budget that will in 2020 become the resource from which national commissioning will be carried out by the National Strategic Commissioning Group. Scottish Ministers are committed to a carefully managed transition from the existing grant system to the new programme of commissioning that ensures that recommendations do not disadvantage children and young people currently in receipt of services and the organisations currently receiving this grant funding will be supported through the change process.

It is proposed that there be a phased release of funding from the current commitments. This would facilitate a managed transition from the present model without prejudice to children and young people currently attending grant-aided schools or accessing broader services. This reflects a commitment made by the Scottish Government when the National Strategic Commissioning Group was established.

It is proposed that within the 10 year strategy, there will be multiple cycles of commissioning. The cycle will seek to align with the relevant spending review period wherever possible to enable the maximum planning and delivery opportunity for commissioned services. This may mean that in the initial commissioning cycle may be

¹⁷ <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/my-rights-my-say/>

for a shorter period to enable alignment with spending review timeframes. This would also enable the lessons learned to be considered from the initial commissioning cycle.

The National Strategic Commissioning Group will work with its stakeholders to produce a supplement to this plan to set out how it will operate to achieve its vision. This will involve developing a forward funding plan in collaboration with the current school/service grant recipients, which will support the move from the traditional recurrent grant funding model to the strategic commissioning model.

Governance

The Doran Strategic Commissioning Project Board (SCPB) will continue to oversee the implementation of recommendations 7 and 17-21 of the Doran Review, including the work of the National Strategic Commissioning Group.

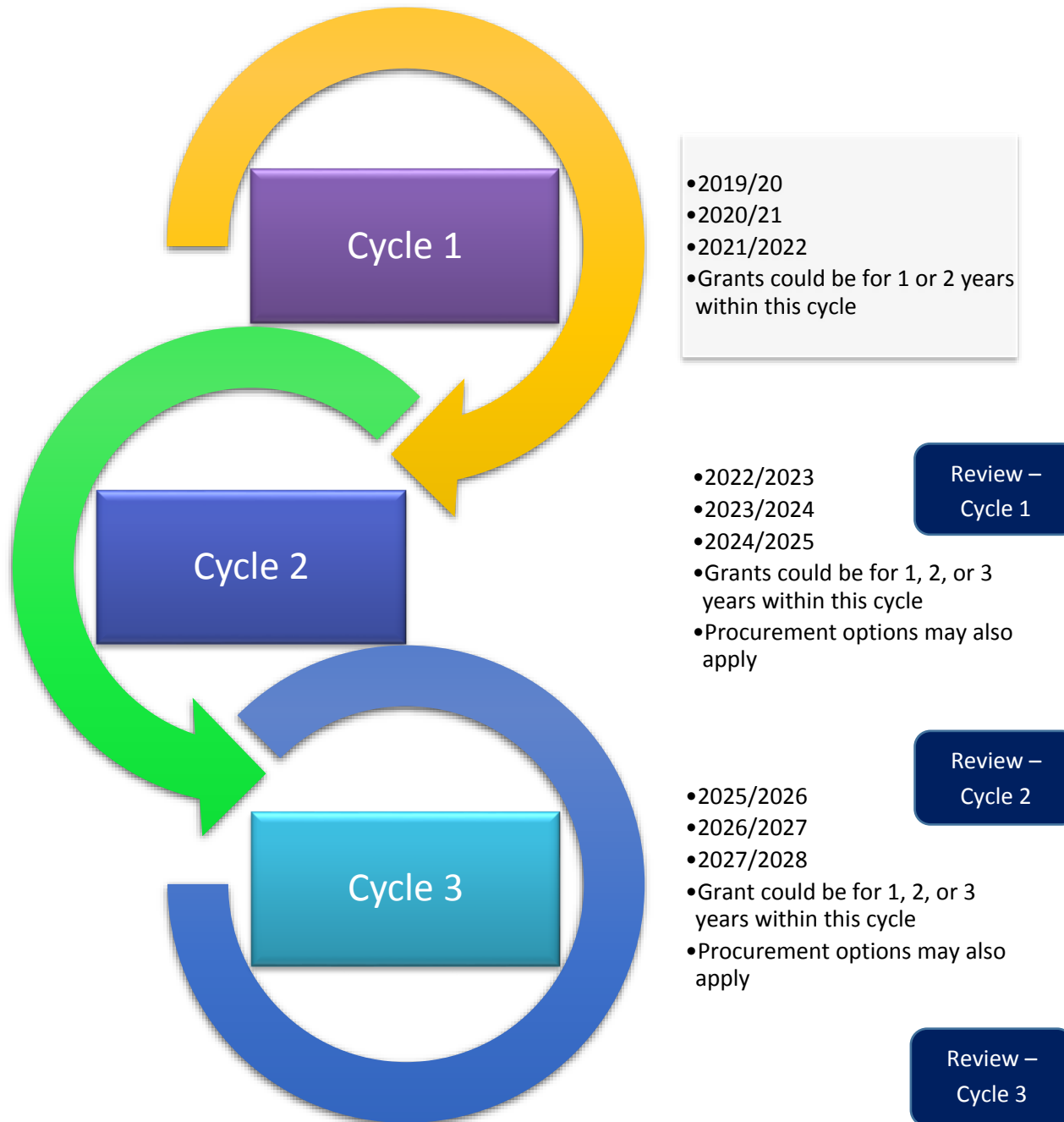
The National Strategic Commissioning Group will submit the updated 10 year strategy and proposals for commissioned services to ministers for approval before implementation. Ministers have appointed a chair to lead the NSCG group and the remit of the National Strategic Commissioning Group will be reviewed as and when the group and/or ministers agree this is needed. Any changes to the remit will require ministerial approval. The Group can determine its own working arrangements including the frequency of meetings and decision making processes. The Scottish Government provides secretariat support to the group. Where expert support, in relation to policy, procurement or legal issues is required these will be sourced through the secretariat.

Whilst it is expected that the group will strive to achieve consensus in recommendations it is recognised that this may not always be possible. Where recommendations do not represent a unanimous view, Ministers will be made aware that this is the case.

Evaluation and planning for improvement

An evaluation framework will be developed following the agreement of this strategy. The NSCG from 2021 will publish an annual report to update on the progress of the work of the group against the evaluation framework.

We also plan to provide a children and families accessible version of the ten year strategy in late 2019.





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