

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 21st AUGUST 2006

REPORT ON: EDUCATION (ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004 - IMPLEMENTATION PROPOSALS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 490-2006

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report brings forward a set of proposals to support the local implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (henceforth referred to as 'the ASL Act').

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Education Committee is recommended to note and approve the multi-agency ASL Act implementation support proposals as outlined.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 As the proposals are fully funded from within the Scottish Executive ring-fenced funding made available for the implementation of the ASL Act, there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Children and young people whose support will be enabled by means of the multi-agency implementation process will be better prepared to develop the skills, knowledge and information needed to enable them to play a fuller part in society by identifying and addressing individual children's barriers to learning.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The ASL Act has broadened the definition of children and young people in need of support. It has moved away from the previous concept of *special educational needs* to the more inclusive term *additional support needs*. It is the aim of this report to ensure that the educational and social opportunities available to the increasing numbers of children and young people who face challenges under the broad banner of *additional support needs* are improved.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 The ASL Act was passed by the Scottish Parliament in 2004 and came into effect on 14 November 2005. Dundee City Council in partnership with others through the Additional Support Act Dundee Implementation Group (ASADIG) made a significant contribution to the development of the legislation and its associated regulations (Committee Report no.

122-2005 refers). Since October 2004, the multi-agency ASADIG and task-related sub-groups have supported the implementation process in Dundee.

6.2 The ASL Act requires that all children and young people with additional support needs are identified and supported. Dundee City Council responds to the Act by ensuring:

- early identification
- partnership with parents
- developing a range of provision - mainstream, small group, special school
- multi-disciplinary and collaborative work with partner agencies
- staff training and development

6.3 The Scottish Executive provided ring-fenced funding of £221,773 in 2004-05 and £263,356 in 2005-06 to assist with implementation in the initial stages. Funding available for 2006-7 is £346,521. This funding is designed to support all aspects of the multi-agency implementation work undertaken by partners at a local level.

6.4 The Education Department, in consultation with partners and schools, has previously used these funds to:

- second a Development Officer to take responsibility for all operational aspects of implementation
- prepare and disseminate information leaflets to school staff, parents/carers, children and young people, and other professionals on all aspects of the new legislation
- provide necessary training for nursery, school and other agency staff on the ASL Act and its implications for supporting children with additional support needs
- develop joint protocols and planning structures and documentation
- organise and deliver special events for parents/carers
- ensure that schools are accessible to children and young people with support needs.

6.5 A planned, gradual approach to implementation has been developed in order to support this overhaul of legislation for supporting children and young people who have additional support needs.

6.6 The current stage of the implementation process involves moving away from Records of Needs to a new planning document: the co-ordinated support plan.

6.7 The measures proposed in this report are key components in the implementation process. They will improve the capacity of our schools and partner agencies to plan together to address pupils' individual needs through new statutory processes including co-ordinated support planning.

7.0 PROPOSALS

7.1 The following proposals will allow partner agencies and departments to provide essential assistance to nurseries, schools and off-site centres as we approach the deadline of 14 November 2007 for the full transfer from the previous legislative framework to that required by the ASL Act.

- a. To establish a temporary support team comprising an ASL Support Officer, a multi-agency link worker and clerical/administrative support which will liaise with educational establishments and partner agencies to provide practical support in implementing the legislation.

- b. To establish a temporary post of teacher to augment the current Frances Wright Outreach Service the specific focus of whose work will be to support pre-school centres in the local authority, private and voluntary sectors to meet the requirements of the ASL Act, particularly in relation to introducing co-ordinated support plans in the early years sector.
 - c. To provide a fully funded joint training programme for members of Joint Action Teams (JATs) and relevant others. JATs are multi-agency teams through which all schools and nurseries will plan, sustain and review support for pupils.
 - d. To provide information for parents, children and young people through re-printing existing leaflets and booklets and developing new publications in different forms (e.g. CD-ROM, subtitled film, audio tape).
 - e. To support the development of internet-based information with respect to supporting learning in Dundee.
 - f. To provide a school-based, disability awareness-raising and training package for children and young people in primary and secondary schools.
 - g. To fund ICT provision to enable the Education Department to store, retrieve data related to all aspects of supporting children and young people with additional support needs and disabilities in order to monitor and report on the effectiveness of local provision.
 - h. To establish a parent-child homework club for ethnic minority children and parents following parental feedback to the Dundee International Women's Centre.
 - i. To support localised advocacy services for young people with disabilities or who are at risk of exclusion or who exhibit challenging behaviour in school through part-funding of an advocacy worker employed on a temporary contract by Parent to Parent Tayside.
 - j. To establish a temporary 0.2FTE Support for Learning teaching post to work with an inter-agency team to develop a pilot shared assessment and intervention framework for use in mainstream education
 - k. To maintain contingency funding to meet costs associated with formal dispute resolution procedures laid down by the ASL Act.
 - l. To make available remaining funds to nurseries, schools and off-site centres to augment existing support for learning resources.
- 7.2 Key to the potential success of these proposals is the continued excellent partnership working which has characterised the earlier stages of the implementation stage.

8.0 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 This report has been subject to consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Director of Social Work and Director of Leisure & Communities.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 None

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