**The Accessibility and Inclusion Service (AIS)**

The Accessibility & Inclusion Service provides support within a staged intervention framework to nurseries, schools, families and partner agencies for children and young people with additional support and wellbeing needs on a locality basis. The service works closely with other central, city-wide teams to:

* help implement council policy and relevant guidance;
* support school improvement planning;
* develop and deliver staff development and training in relation to meeting the needs of children with ASN;
* and provide advice in relation to the support and education of children with ASN, which in some cases may include direct targeted support to children and young people.

In doing so, the Accessibility and Inclusion Service aims to achieve the overarching outcome in the Dundee City and Tayside Plans:

Children and young people who experience particular inequalities and disadvantage will achieve health, wellbeing and educational outcomes comparable with all other children and young people.

The AIS is led by two depute head teachers, Barbara Burns and Ruth McConnachie, supported by a team of principal teachers, teachers and support staff. All have specialisms which enable the service to respond to a diverse range of needs while working collaboratively with families/carers, colleagues in mainstream settings and partner agencies. All specialisms offer tailored awareness-raising programmes for staff (individuals, small groups or whole-school) and pupils at all stages.

1. **Social Communication Needs including Autism**

This specialism provides in-depth advice, consultation, training and practical support to families, nurseries and schools regarding children and young people with social communication needs including Autism. This involves close partnership working with other agencies including allied health professionals. Support is also provided to ESA 1s, which are Enhanced Support Areas designed to meet the needs of learners with complex autism / social and communication needs.

1. **Deaf Education**

This specialism provides a focus on language needs and communication support direct teaching, assessment of hearing, use of specialist equipment and advice on adapting the learning environment and/or curriculum.

In addition, the service provides British Sign Language communication support for deaf parents of hearing children, for parent/carers’ meetings in early years settings, primary and secondary schools.

1. **Visual Impairment**

This specialism provides assessment of vision, adaptation of resources, direct teaching, training in mobility and independent living skills, use of specialist equipment, advice on adapting the learning environment and/or curriculum.

Training and support in the use of specialist equipment is also provided.

*For both Deaf Education and Visual Impairment, referrals come mainly from NHS colleagues. Should you wish to discuss anything regarding children/young people with sensory loss, or to request communication support, please call Barbara Burns, Educational Audiologist/Depute Head Teacher on 01382 438055 or email barbara.burns@dundeecity.gov.uk*

1. **Pupils for whom English as an Additional Language**

This specialism provides direct teaching; adaptation of mainstream materials; bilingual resources; a translation & interpreting service; SQA ESOL examinations; community language exams in a range of languages; bilingual speech and language therapy and advice; and consultation in early years settings, primary and secondary schools.

1. **Home/Hospital Teaching**

This specialism provides support for those pupils who are unable to attend school due to prolonged physical ill health. This support is available to children/young people who are absent for a minimum of three weeks or more for medical reasons, e.g. recovery from surgery, immobility after accidents.

1. **Elective Home Education (home schooling)**

This specialism provides assessment in relation to whether a request for home education should be agreed or not and is carried out by teachers in the service, along with The Principal Officer (Strategy & Performance Team). Assessment reports are prepared and subsequent recommendations are made to the Executive Director, Children & Families Service for a decision.

1. **Educational support for Looked After, Care Experienced children and young people**

This specialism, in consultation with social work colleagues and school staff, short-term, provides targeted educational support for children and young people whose education and care placement are at risk.

1. **Educational support for children/ young people whose behaviours are impacting on their ability to engage in learning and/or maintain their school placement**

This specialism provides individualised support based on a mentoring methodology. Working collaboratively with schools, social work and Police, the aim is to re-engage young people.

1. **Traveller\* Education**

This specialism provides educational support for Traveller children/young people who are experiencing or have experienced interrupted learning due to their mobile lifestyle. Parents /carers are also provided with practical advice and support.

*\*Please note: the term ‘Traveller’ is used to refer collectively to those with a mobile lifestyle and/or culture, including, but not exclusively, European Roma, Scottish Gypsy/Travellers and Showpeople or Showmen.*

1. **Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA)**

This specialism provides educational support, via the AIM Programme, for young people of secondary age who are unable to attend school due to significant anxiety and social communication needs.

1. **Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE)**

GMPE is an option within Scottish schools that gives children and young people the opportunity to become proficient in both Gaelic and English. Parents of a child who is under school age and has not commenced attendance at a Primary school, have the right to request an assessment of the need for GMPE in Dundee. Initial Assessments are undertaken by AIS. Parents receive a written response within six weeks. If the Initial Assessment finds potential demand, AIS carries out a Full Assessment. Within ten weeks, the Full Assessment report will be completed. The report will set out Dundee City Council’s decision; its reasons for reaching the decision and when it intends to commence GMPE, if this decision has been reached.

**Contact details:**

The Accessibility & Inclusion Service is based at St Paul’s RC Academy & St Ninian’s RC Primary School.

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