




Assessment of additional support needs 2010

Education & Skills



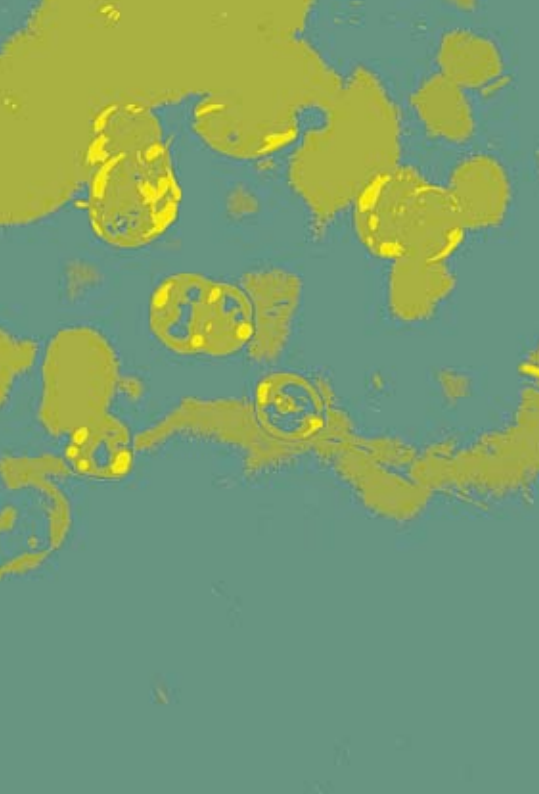
NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL



This leaflet is part of the Information for Parents Pack provided by North Ayrshire Council Educational & Skills relating to the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, 2009 and the “Supporting Children’s Learning: Code of Practice.

North Ayrshire Council has procedures in place for identifying learners who may need some additional support to assist their learning and for assessing their needs.





What does assessment involve?

The Code of Practice explains what is meant by assessment.

Assessment is an ongoing process of gathering, structuring and making sense of information about a child or young person and their learning in order to plan more carefully for what happens next.





Who might be involved?

Assessment is about bringing together all available information about a child's progress within school or nursery. This process will involve discussion – with the child or young person, with parents, other teachers and classroom assistants. It may also involve discussions with other professionals where this is appropriate.

What will the school do?

Assessment should not be seen as something that is separate from the normal day-to-day learning activities. For this reason, schools will gather information from their existing school records and documentation. Teachers have a great deal of information about a child's progress. This information is used to track progress. Teachers may also observe your child and discuss with them any difficulties they might be having. For some learners, there may be an educational test that could be completed. All of the information will be used together to build up a clear picture of what needs your child may have and what kinds of help might be useful for them.

The purpose of any assessment is to help identify what your child needs to help them to make the most of their education.

All of the information will be discussed with your child and with yourself.





What might my role be in this process?

You know your own child better than anyone. The school will ask you to share your knowledge of your child with them. This is likely to take place in an informal discussion with appropriate school staff. You also have a very important role in working with the professionals who are supporting your child.

In many cases, an educational plan will contain things that you can do to support your child.

Will I receive any support to help me to participate in this process?

You have a right to take a supporter with you to any meeting about your child's additional support needs: this could be a friend or a relative. The school and the Council will also provide you with whatever support and encouragement they can.






If you have any concerns about your child's progress in school, you have the right to ask for a process of assessment to be undertaken. This request must be made to your child's school, in writing or in some other permanent form – for example, you could make a tape of your request and send this to the school. (A sample letter is provided at the end of this leaflet.) You can make a request for assessment at any time, even if it is already agreed that your child has additional support needs.

Who can ask for assessment to be carried out?

The school can also ask for assessment to be undertaken. If staff have concerns about your child's progress, they will inform you. You will also be informed of their wish to undertake more detailed assessment to help them understand better how



As we have already said, assessment is about gathering information so that needs can be identified in order to put appropriate support in place.

to improve learning.

What about the results of the assessment?

Once all the information has been gathered, you will be invited to discuss the findings. This will be the discussion that will determine whether your child has additional support needs and what Stage of Intervention is required to meet the needs identified. It is possible that no additional needs are identified. Even if this is the case, the process of assessment will have given the school staff much more information about your child's learning.

If additional support needs are identified, the nursery or the school will also suggest what support might be most helpful for your child. A plan will be developed: This will include dates for reviewing progress.

Once the planned strategies have had time to take effect, both you and the school should be able to see whether progress is being made. The strategies might need to be reviewed two or three times to ensure that your child is receiving the right kinds of support.



What if I am unhappy about what the school is doing for my child?

If you feel that the school is not listening to your concerns, or is not doing enough to support your child, there are procedures that you can follow to register your concerns. Parent guidance on resolving disagreements is available from your child's school office.

Enquire has a booklet for parents that gives very good information about assessment (pages 19 to 27). This guide can be requested by telephoning the Enquire Helpline on 0845 123 2303. You can also download the guide and other leaflets from Enquire's website www.enquire.org.uk



Suggested letter to request assessment:

If you would like to request an assessment to determine whether your child has additional support needs, you can use the following outline to help you submit your request in writing. Please send the finished letter to the Head Teacher of your child's school.

Dear Head Teacher,

Request for assessment under Additional Support for Learning

I am requesting that my child, (name and date of birth of your child to be inserted here), be assessed to find out if they have additional support needs and require some additional help and support in school.

I am asking for this assessment because ... (here you need to tell the school why you believe your child is having difficulties in the school. It will help the school if you offer as much detail as you can.)

I understand that you will let me know within 10 days if you have agreed to carry out this assessment. If you have not agreed to this request, I also understand that you will tell me how I can appeal against this decision.

Yours sincerely,

Enquire - the Scottish advice service for Additional Support for Learning



Operated by **Children in Scotland, Enquire** offers independent, confidential advice and information on additional support for learning through:

A telephone helpline	0845 123 2303
An email enquiry service	info@enquire.org.uk
An online enquiry service	
two websites	www.enquire.org.uk (for parents / carers & practitioners) www.enquire.org.uk/yp (for children & young people)

Enquire also provides a range of clear and easy-to-read guides and factsheets explaining everything from 'additional support in the early years' to 'what planning should take place for moving on from school'.



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