

Dear Councillor Laing and Councillor Lumsden,

We are writing to raise with you the importance of Additional Support Needs (ASN) provision and urge your local authority to maintain ASN funding.

ASN provision is vital to ensuring that children and young people have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. Without access to specialist support teachers and sufficient numbers of pupil support assistants, pupils with Additional Support Needs in mainstream education will not get equal access to education as their peers without any additional support needs.

Money spent on ASN is an investment. With proper support young people can be best prepared to achieve their full potential and move onto positive destinations. ASN in its most basic form allows the pupil to access the core curriculum but in practice it does so much more than that. ASN can equip pupils to engage with their peers, take part in activities that they may otherwise be excluded from and grow their confidence and independent living skills.

We would like to know:

1. How much money is being allocated this year by your local authority to Additional Support Needs provision, and how does that compare to last financial year?
2. How many full time equivalent specialist support teachers and pupil support assistants does your local authority employ, and how does this compare to the numbers of specialist support teachers and pupil support assistants your local authority employed last year?
3. How many pupils do you currently regard as having Additional Support Needs in your local authority?

We urge your local authority to protect the funding of additional support needs provision and ensure that every child has the opportunity to get the most out of their education.

Yours sincerely,

James Adams, Director of RNIB Scotland

Rory Gaffney, Interim CEO of Down's Syndrome Scotland

Ian Welsh OBE, CEO of The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland

Emma Whitelock, CEO of Lead Scotland

Alasdair O'Hara, Head of Policy and Influencing, National Deaf Children's Society

Charlene Tait, Deputy CEO of Scottish Autism

