

**Supporting the Transition of Young People  
with Additional Support Needs**  
Practical Guidance for Education Professionals 2022



**Challenging Perception, Unleashing Potential.**

[www.enableworks.org.uk](http://www.enableworks.org.uk)

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A 'Learning Together'- Equalities and Equities Fund project - supported by the Scottish Government.



# Introduction

**Good career guidance can have a profound impact, as it ensures that each and every young person, whatever their needs, background or ambitions, knows the options open to them to fulfil their potential when they leave school.**

This guidance, and its six recommendations, is a practical resource for all educational practitioners to support and assist children and young people with Additional Support Needs and disabilities to consider future career plans and make the transition from school to employment. The guidance is developed around the six recommendations that were the result of a research study carried out by ENABLE Works and funded by the Scottish Government. This study undertook a comprehensive review of the impact of parents/carers and educational practitioners on the transition of children and young people with additional support needs from school into paid employment.

A statistical release from the Scottish Government in December 2020 reported that the number of pupils with additional support needs in publicly funded primary, secondary and special schools in Scotland has reached a record high of 226,838, which represents 32.3% of the total pupil population. This total figure has nearly doubled since 2012 when the figure was 118,034 (92.2% increase). The figure breaks down as:



With just under a third of all pupils being identified as having an additional support need there is no greater time to ensure they, along with their peers, have every opportunity to explore options to reach their potential as they transition from school into the world of work.

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government (2020) Schools in Scotland – summary statistics: 2020 [online]. Available: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-schools-scotland-2020/pages/5/> [Accessed 19th May 2021]

## Additional Support Needs

### What are additional support needs?

A child or young person is said to have ‘**additional support needs**’ if they need more, or different, support to what is normally provided in educational establishments to children and young people of the same age – this may be to be able to take part in school or get the most from their education.

The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009<sup>2</sup> lists four inter-related factors which may individually or jointly impact on a child or young person's ability to learn:

- **Disability or health** – the child/young person may have a physical disability or sensory impairment; a language or speech disorder; a mental health issue; they could have ME, cancer or another health need; or they may neurodiverse – have an autistic spectrum condition (ASC), ADHD, or live with dyslexia or dyscalculia
- **Learning environment** – the learning environment can create barriers to children and young people because they may be highly able pupils and need support to work ahead of others their age; or English may be a 2nd language to them, and not regularly spoken at home
- **Family circumstances** – the child/young person may be looked after by the local authority, they could be a young carer, have experienced interruptions in their learning, or be from the Travelling community
- **Social and emotional factors** – such as the child/young person experiencing bullying, bereavement, or the child/young person may be displaying disruptive behaviour.

Additional support needs do not just apply to children or young people who have long-term learning difficulties or disabilities. Children and young people may need additional support to make the most of their education for many reasons. Some of these reasons may mean that a child or young person will need additional support all the way through their education; whilst others may only need additional support for a short period of time.

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<sup>2</sup> Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2009. Available: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2009/11/03140104/3> [Accessed 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021]



# Overview of the Research



**ENABLE Scotland was commissioned in December 2019 by the Scottish Government to undertake a comprehensive review of the impact of parents and educational practitioners on the transition of children and young people with additional support needs from school into paid employment.**

The project engaged 102 parents from 15 local authority areas and 47 educational practitioners from across six local authority areas, to analyse the impact of various socioeconomic factors in influencing the transitions of children and young people that have additional support needs. These were then cross-referenced against current transition focused key policies and frameworks with the findings informing key recommendations to support parents and educational practitioners to positively influence transitions.

Of the parents involved in the research, 39.2% (n= 40) live in the 30% most deprived (deciles 1-3) SIMD areas. 18% of parent participants identified as being disabled themselves.

The research found that the relationship parents have with their education provider is inconsistent. Parents want more support to understand future options and earlier access to information.

Education practitioners value the importance of parent participation in pupils' education transition and recognise the barriers preventing some parents from being involved.

When looking forward to plans for employment after leaving education, all responding practitioners working in secondary education responded that they talk to the pupils about employment. However, when including responses from practitioners working in early years and primary education, the overall figure lowers to 50% of practitioner participants. Two-thirds (66.6%) of all responding education practitioners felt that the majority of pupils have high aspirations around future plans when they have left education.

# Recommendations from the Research

As a result of the ENABLE Works research, the report makes the following six recommendations:

- **Information about future options is needed earlier**
- **Employer engagement is needed earlier**
- **Role models are needed to inspire young people and parents**
- **Education professionals need specialist input and training**
- **Parent and carers need specialist support**
- **Ongoing support is needed after leaving school**

Feedback from stakeholders, has been that these recommendations reflect current knowledge and policy, reflecting the *Seven Principles of Good Transition*<sup>3</sup>. This guidance document is based on the recommendations from the research and is supported by the Seven Principles of Good Transition. As with many strategies and frameworks, the recommendations in this document require a multi-agency approach.

## Guidance

The aim of this guidance is to aid educational practitioners to better support children and young people with additional support needs to help them transition and prepare them for the world of work when they leave school.

Not all of the above recommendations, or the *Seven Good Principles of Transition* are within the remit of educational practitioners working within Scottish schools, but there are parts to play to ensure that children and young people can gain the skills, knowledge and experience they need to successfully transition from school to further education and the world of work.

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<sup>3</sup> Scottish Transitions Forum/ARC Scotland (2019) Principles of Good Transition 3 [online]. Available <https://scottishtransitions.org.uk/summary-download/> [Accessed 11th May 2021]

# Recommendation 1 – Information about future options is needed earlier

This recommendation aligns with two of the Seven Principles of Good Transition – Planning should start early and continue to age 25, with young people; and parents having access to all information that they need. This recommendation leads to a question – when should you start talking to children and young people about careers and the types of job they want when they grow up? In 2018, UK charity **Education and Employers** published research that included the views of education practitioners on when the world of work should be introduced to children and young people. The research found that 47% (n=114) of responding practitioners believed that children should learn about the world of work from the age of 5 years and under, with a further 21% (n=50) of respondents feel it should start from the age of 5-7 years – this reflects the guidance from Developing the Young Workforce in Scotland. Their 2015 publication '**Career Education Standard (3-18)**' advocates that the journey of preparing children and young people for the world of work starts in early years education, continuing throughout a young person's education, with the requirement of appropriate support and guidance as they progress.<sup>5</sup>

The focus through primary school should not be on careers advice, but on career-related learning – broadening horizons and raising aspirations whilst giving children a wide range of experiences of the world including the world of work. It is about opening doors, showing children the vast range of possibilities open to them and helping to keep their options open for as long as possible. And there is a range of attributes, skills, and behaviours that can be encouraged in this early stage of a child's life that will leave them in the best possible position as they begin their transitions to secondary education and to future life. Tools such as DYW's '*I Can*' statements, or *Animal Me and Skills Builder* from My World of Work/Skills Development Scotland are all key in helping children to both gain and identify their skills, interests and understanding.

So, what about children and young people with additional support needs? Nothing should be different. It is vitally important that children and young people with additional support needs are included in all career-related learning, providing them the same experiences and allowing them to identify and build their skills alongside their peers and friends. In order to facilitate this, it is important that all education practitioners – teachers, Pupil Support Assistants (PSAs) and teaching assistants – liaise with and work closely with each other to ensure they understand what the plans are for class activities, and pupils are properly supported. It may also be necessary to:

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<sup>4</sup>Kashefpakdel, E. (2018) Introducing primary children to the world of work [online]. Available: <https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Introducing-children-to-the-world-of-work-FINAL.pdf> [Accessed: 19th May 2021]

<sup>5</sup>Education Scotland (2015) Developing the Young Workforce – Career Education Standard (3-18) [online]. Available <https://education.gov.scot/Documents/dyw2-career-education-standard-0915.pdf> [18th May 2021]

- Help with digital devices and information on the internet to enable children and young people to access this from school or home.
- Ensure you know how any specialist equipment works, or know who to contact if there are any issues.
- Allow extra time, resources or access to technology to enable children with additional support needs to complete tasks.
- If organising a trip out of the school, ensure you liaise with the venue/organisation being visited to ensure that any accessibility needs can be met, and consider specialist transport, such as a taxi.

By allowing all children and young people to explore as much as they can before entering their transition to secondary school, and/or through the group session that is part of their transition day to secondary school, or held early in the first year of secondary means they are better prepared and already have an understanding of and started to develop career management skills.



It is important not to disillusion a child about their career plans, even if you think they are unachievable or unreal – if a 5-year-old wheelchair user says they want to be an astronaut, encourage them. Just because it might not be possible now, who knows what will be possible in 20-30 years – remember Facebook only launched in February 2004 (and was live to public in September 2006); Google only launched in 1998 and the iPhone only launched in 2007.

As children and young people get older, you may need to provide a reality check with young people about their career aspirations, but just because they can or cannot be an astronaut does not mean they can't work in a related field. Probably the best-known cosmologist and theoretical physicist was in a wheelchair for over 40 years due to Motor Neurone Disease (*Stephen Hawking*).



## **Recommendation in Practice - Enterprise Academy at Parkhill Secondary School**

Parkhill Secondary School is an Additional Support Needs Secondary School in the East End of Glasgow which seeks to focus on the individual needs of every young person, equipping them with the skills required for life, work and continued learning.

In 2017 Parkhill opened their Enterprise Academy – a vibrant new initiative aimed at supporting young people with Additional Support Needs into positive and sustained destinations. The Enterprise Academy course are currently focused on three key vocational areas, each identified as there is evidence of employment routes for young people with additional support needs:

- Hospitality
- Horticulture
- Customer Service and Administration

In partnership with Hilton Glasgow, several rooms within the school were transformed so there is now a professional kitchen, café area, hotel bedroom and office. A new boot room was also added to the already established Horticulture area at the rear of the school. These areas allow the school to offer realistic work environments where young people can develop skills for life, learning and work. The academy currently offers seven courses across the three vocational areas, with programmes delivered by Parkhill staff in conjunction with staff from City of Glasgow College and Glasgow Kelvin College. The academy also partners with key business partners in the area to assist providing support and real-life experiences for the young people.

**For more details on the Parkhill Enterprise Academy, visit their [website](#).**





*Parkhill Secondary School is an Additional Support Needs Secondary School in the East End of Glasgow which seeks to focus on the individual needs of every young person, equipping them with the skills required for life, work and continued learning.*

# Recommendation 2 – Employer engagement is needed earlier

Gaining work experience whilst in education is not a new idea – the idea of it being a week-long placement taken in S4 comes from the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. Under both Curriculum for Excellence and Developing the Young Workforce, it is now recognised that a standalone week is insufficient in providing a meaningful experience of work and with the development of Developing the Young Workforce, work placements now offer young people ***“a relevant, challenging, enjoyable and appropriate learning experiences within the contemporary workplace.”***<sup>6</sup>

Between the ages of 3-18, there are a number of ways that children and young people can develop skills for life, learning and work. For children and young people with additional support needs it is important to ensure that they will not be excluded from these activities, and any necessary adaptations are made. Activities include but are not limited to:

- Personal skills analysis activities
- Mock interviews
- Employer presentations
- Career events
- Work placement activities
- Site visits
- Learning in simulated work environments.

A key aspect of these activities is to have employers, both local and national, involved, not just for work placement activities but also giving presentations, attending career events and assisting with mock interviews. Another way in which an organisation can engage with young people can be through a competition or challenge. These challenges and competitions can be adapted so that they are age appropriate, and whilst they may be seen to be less job focused, children and young people can develop and enhance a range of soft skills through these activities.<sup>7</sup>

The earlier children and young people can start to engage with employers the more likely they will be work ready when they leave education. For children and young people with additional support needs it needs to be a two-way learning experience. Just as the children and young people learn from organisations, so the organisations must be open to learning from the children and young people about their individual needs and how they affect them on a day-to-day basis and what adaptations (if any) they require so they can engage with the same activities as their peers. Employers engaging with your education establishment should also be encouraged to engage with organisations such as ENABLE Works, who can support employers to feel

confident and understand the benefits of creating a diverse workforce. Support includes advice on accessible recruitment processes, training on diversity and disability in the workplace and specialist support for both employees and managers.<sup>8</sup>



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<sup>6</sup>Education Scotland (2015) Developing the Young Workforce – Work Placement Standards [online]. Available [https://education.gov.scot/media/zkklqepi/dyw\\_workplacementstandard0915.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/media/zkklqepi/dyw_workplacementstandard0915.pdf) [Accessed 18th May 2021]

<sup>7</sup>Education Scotland (2015) Developing the Young Workforce – School/Employer Partnerships: Combined version [online]. Available <https://education.gov.scot/media/i0ajitgd/schoolemployerpartnershipguidance2015.pdf> [Accessed 30th June 2021]

<sup>8</sup>ENABLE Scotland (no date) Support for employers – Leading the way in learning disability. Available <https://www.enableworks.org.uk/service/stepping-up/> [1st July 2021]



*Stepping Up has been delivering success in Scottish schools for over a decade. Delivered by ENABLE Scotland, Stepping Up is an innovative, and award-winning, employment programme for young people aged 14-19 who have learning disabilities. Cited as an example of best practice in 'Education for All – Developing Scotland's Young Workforce', Stepping Up has supported over 2000 young people since its launch in 2009, with 98% of participants having achieved a positive destination, significantly higher than current school leaver statistics for disabled pupils.*

*Stepping Up* is a comprehensive support service, comprising a three-stage model which takes participants from an initial investigation of the world of work, through a process of discovery and planning for their future, to engagement with employers in real workplace settings.

Starting in the Broad General Education stage of secondary school, young people participate in a package of workshops to improve their soft skills, including confidence, motivation and pre-employability skills, along with being supported to undertake a number of work tasters.

As young people progress through the programme, each young person will have a dedicated Employment Co-ordinator who will support the young person to complete a detailed Vocational Profile, which is updated throughout a participant's engagement on Stepping Up. Participants also undergo focused training at this stage,

including Independent Travel Training, using the ENABLE me app; employability skills, including CV building and job searches; and exploration of different options, including employment, modern apprenticeships and further education and training options, with all steps towards paid employment being underpinned by elements of the Scottish Supported Employment Framework.

Since 2009, it has been delivered in 11 Local Authority areas, in partnership with 97 schools, to 2267 young people. It has delivered 625 Jobs, 393 training outcomes and Modern Apprenticeships, 1,012 Further and Education outcomes (of which 60% are mainstream courses), 2,267 supported work placements and 7,431 soft outcomes including independent travel training and an increased ambition to work.

After leaving school, a potential destination for young people with additional needs is to join a supported employment programme. Supported employment is an end-to-end service for people with disabilities or long-term health conditions, delivered by both local authorities and third sector organisations, such as ENABLE Works, on programmes such as Fair Start Scotland. In Scotland, these programmes are delivered through the Five Stage Approach to Supported Employment, which has the aspiration of getting people with disability into employment:

Stage	Aim
Engagement of Supported Employment Services	Helping disabled people most distanced from the labour market to make informed choices on their own future
Vocational Profiling	Identifying skills and preferences for work, giving work experiences that will help the individual make their own vocational choices
Job Finding	Identifying the preferred job through employer engagement, also providing support to the employer
Employer Engagement	Finding out about the workplace environment, co-workers and the 'supports' a person might need
On/Off the Job Support and Aftercare	Providing backup to the employee and their employer, developing independence in the workplace and addressing career progression in due course. <sup>9,10</sup>

There are also a number of businesses in Scotland that are classified as supported businesses – these are social enterprises that seek to integrate both disabled and disadvantaged people both socially and professionally, and at least 30% of their workforce must be disabled or disadvantaged, in line with **EU Directive 2014/24/EU**.<sup>11</sup> More information on these and other organisations providing supported employment can be found on through the **British Association of Supported Employment (BASE)** – <https://www.base-uk.org/> – or the **Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE)** – <https://www.suse.org.uk/>.

SUSE is also currently working as the lead partner in the Disability Employment Gap Public Social Partnership (PSP), commissioned by the Scottish Government and part of the approach of the ambition of the Scottish Government to half the Disability Employment Gap by 2038<sup>12</sup> The aim of the Disability Employment Gap PSP is to achieve a lasting culture change in Scottish workplaces - this will be done by addressing gaps in knowledge and embedding equality and diversity in workplace cultures to allow people with disabilities to take up and sustain paid employment. This work includes a transitions focused workstream, which will partner with an established Third Sector Supported Employment provider to design, implement, and evaluate an inclusive Supported Work Placement programme for young people with disabilities. This will enhance the standard and quantity of quality work placements on offer to young disabled people, ultimately improving the likelihood of paid employment.

Some employers also provide specific programmes to help employ, train and support people with additional needs. One example of this is **J.P. Morgan's Autism at Work programme**. It aims to hire, retain and support qualified individuals with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) into meaningful roles across the firm. J.P. Morgan. Alongside this, J.P. Morgan also seek to further improve opportunities for neurodiverse jobseekers by working with other companies to demonstrate the benefits of hiring this under-represented workforce, through collaboration and sharing best practice, educating leaders, and engaging with others at seminars.

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<sup>9</sup>Scottish Government & COSLA (2010) A Working Life for All Disabled People – The Supported Employment Framework for Scotland – Summary Report [online]. Available <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180518150819/http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2010/02/23094107/8> [1st July 2021]

<sup>10</sup>European Union of Supported Employment (2010) European Union of Supported Employment Toolkit [online]. Available <https://www.euse.org/content/supported-employment-toolkit/EUSE-Toolkit-2010.pdf> [1st July 2021]

<sup>11</sup>Scottish Government (no date) Third sector – Social enterprises [online]. Available <https://www.gov.scot/policies/third-sector/social-enterprises/> [1st July 2021]

<sup>12</sup>Scottish Government (2018) A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: employment action plan [online]. Available <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-disabled-people-employment-action-plan/> [1st July 2021]



*J.P Morgan recognised that in order for them to continue to deliver value to their customers and clients, innovate and create a great place to work for their employees, they needed to constantly come up with new and different ways of approaching problems. One step in this process was establishing the Autism at Work programme, with the aim to recruit a neuro-diverse group of employees.*

## **Autism at Work - J.P. Morgan**

J.P. Morgan recognised that in order for them to continue to deliver value to their customers and clients, innovate and create a great place to work for their employees, they needed to constantly come up with new and different ways of approaching problems. One step in this process was establishing the Autism at Work programme, with the aim to recruit a neuro-diverse group of employees.

Through the Autism at Work programme, J.P. Morgan have examined all aspects of their recruitment process, developing candidate pipelines through third sector organisations, social services and educational services. Alongside this, they have built up a wide range of awareness training for managers and colleagues – both classroom and online modules – supporting the entire end-to-end experience of an employee.

This awareness raising has touched all aspects of the recruitment process, from the way job specifications are written; interviewing processes; and the hiring and feedback. The retention and development of neuro-diverse employees has also been examined – new staff have been given a mentor or buddy to help navigate new roles or build better relationships within existing roles by supporting communication between managers and colleagues; and assistive



technology is available too, such as noise cancelling headphones, enabling the individual to block out excessive noise and concentrate on the job at hand. The programme continues to develop, with J.P. Morgan continuously examining the programme, and ensuring support mechanisms that suit individuals are in place to enable the individual to be able to bring their whole self to work.

***Autism at Work*** is fully embedded in all of J.P. Morgan's major UK & Irish sites – Glasgow, Edinburgh, Bournemouth, London and Dublin – along with 40+ other sites in nine different countries. Additionally, the programme is represented across the majority of the firm's lines of business while supporting individuals at all grades, from intern through to managing director.

Gaining experiences does not just have to come from engaging with paid employment opportunities. Employers look for transferable skills and volunteering allows young people to develop and evidence these soft skills whilst exploring roles and employment sectors that may be of interest to them for long-term employment. Along with gaining and developing skills and new experiences, volunteering can help to establish a work routine, whilst offering young people the opportunity to have fun and make new friends whilst helping others in their local communities.

For young people with additional support needs there is now an increasing number of supported volunteering opportunities. These are opportunities that have specific support structures in place that respond to identified support needs, which for some people are the crucial element in making volunteering possible or not. Supported volunteering also offers benefits for the organisations involved. By having supported volunteers, it allows organisations to engage with people from a range of different backgrounds and with different levels of need, which may reflect the needs of the people the organisations work with and support.

Whilst volunteering can play a key role in the acquirement of valuable new skills and experience for young people with disabilities, it is important that they don't get stuck in long-term volunteering cycles, rather than using their skills and experience to gain paid employment.

It is vital for all children and young people that they have the opportunity to engage with employers throughout their educational journey – where employers have experience and programmes for working with people with disabilities, these can offer additional support for children and young people with disabilities and let them see what is possible.

# Recommendation 3 – Role Models are needed to inspire young people and parents

There are many people who can be a role model to young people. These include parents, teachers, other family members, other significant adults (youth group leader, parent of a friend) and of course famous people.



## Role Model - Hannah

*Hannah works in a nursery – she must ensure that she created a safe environment and enjoys creating activities for the children. Hannah is also undertaking an Enhanced Modern Apprenticeship in childcare, studying and attending training days in the classroom alongside her full-time job.*

Hannah has cerebral palsy and a mild learning disability which means she sometimes needs longer to process new information. Hannah also has a diagnosis of Dystonia, a severe constant leg pain, and she has adapted to using a wheelchair when outside her home.

Being able to pursue her desired career path hasn't been without barriers for Hannah – one such barrier was that many of the local nurseries are based in old buildings, which were not suitable for wheelchair access. Through her Employment Co-ordinator and Training Provider, Hannah found a purpose-built nursery that allowed for accessibility, and she found out the same day as her interview that she had been successful.

Hannah continues to receive additional support to allow her to be both successful in her job and on her Modern Apprenticeship – this includes getting additional support from her tutor and being supported by her Employment Co-ordinator to help her understand new tasks, such as creating mnemonics or memory flip cards to support Hannah to succeed.

For children and young people with additional support needs, and their parents, a role model can show them what is possible. It does not have to be someone famous or a lead in their chosen sector. What is most important is that it is someone that both the young person and their parents can relate to, someone with a shared additional support need, characteristic, or history. For the transition from school into paid employment, the role model should be someone who is working, preferably in a sector or role the young person is interested in, or who has overcome similar perceived barriers, and in receipt of the support and assistance that they need.

**Recommendation 4 –**  
**Education practitioners**  
**would benefit from**  
**relevant bespoke**  
**training and input**

Educational practitioners are not expected to be experts on every challenge they encounter. This is particularly true when working with children and young people with additional support needs. As can be seen from the [descriptor on page 6](#), there are multiple different needs, and the way they manifest themselves will differ between individuals' – young people with dyslexia will all have different levels of need and will need tailored support.

The first step to better knowledge and understanding is undertaking training and making use of guidance documents, such as this one. Practitioners are encouraged to use the time they have for continuous professional development to build their knowledge and understanding. Many charities that support people with additional support needs and disabilities, including ENABLE Scotland, offer training that will help to raise awareness of issues.

However, as was initially said practitioners cannot be an expert on every situation. For this reason, we encourage you to seek input from specialists – this may be someone within the school or education department, someone from a charity or support group, a specialist careers advisor from the local authority, Job Centre Plus, Skills Development Scotland, or someone who is already part of the child/young person's support network including their parents. It could equally be the result of some desktop internet research! Do not be afraid to ask questions and seek guidance if you are uncomfortable with a situation or unsure what to do. Individual specialists and organisations such as ENABLE Scotland are here to help.



# Recommendation 5 – Parents need tailored support

It is widely recognised that it is not only children and young people with additional support needs that need tailored support. Often their parents need support, advice and assistance, with this need recognised by Principle 6 'Families and carers need support' of the Principles of Good Transitions 3.<sup>13</sup>

The research highlighted earlier in this document suggests that the communication that parents have with education providers is inconsistent, with 52.9% of responding parents reporting that communications were bad or very bad, with an additional 11.7% reporting that communications were mixed and dependant on who they spoke to. Whilst educational practitioners recognise the barriers that parents can face, they greatly value the importance of parents participating in pupils' educational transitions. The need for support is also wider than them being involved in discussions about transitions of their child – as recognised in the research the parents of children or young people with additional support needs can sometimes struggle with their own employment. It is recognised by both No One Left Behind and the new delivery plan to tackle child poverty 'Best Start, Bright Futures' that parents being in good sustainable employment will not only improve their life chances but also improve the employability and life chances of their children and future generations<sup>14 15</sup> but this is where parents need a wide circle of support across all aspects of their lives.

One of the key messages coming from the research was that parents feel that there is an inconsistency in communications between them and schools and educational practitioners. In the online survey, 57.6% of parents reported that communications between them and the school either took place occasionally or not at all. The data from the interview stage of the research shows that 52.9% of parents with children in secondary school felt that communications were less than they expected, with a further 11.7% of respondents saying that communications were mixed.

It is recognised that across Scotland the level of contact and communication that educational practitioners have with parents differs greatly – whilst some have direct contact, others may only speak directly to parents once a year at parents evening. However, for children and young people with additional support needs the research suggests there is a requirement for a whole system approach of support and communicating with parents is a critical part of this – only through them being fully informed can they make informed decisions for the good of their child and support successful transitions.

It is recommended that for each mainstream educational establishment at least one member of staff should be designated the ASN champion. This champion must be allowed the opportunity to be trained and have the knowledge of suitable support mechanisms, organisations and contacts that can both help the parents and the family





as a whole. The ASN champion must also have the time to be able to engage and communicate with parents on all issues relating to their child, including co-ordinating meetings around transitions and liaising with other partners involved in the support of the child or young person. In case of emergencies and the champion not being available, some key information should always be available, whether through the school office or another suitable mechanism to allow for easy and quick access as and when required.



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<sup>13</sup>Scottish Transitions Forum/ARC Scotland (2019) Principle 6: Families and carers need support [online]. Available <https://scottishtransitions.org.uk/blank/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Principle6-families-carers-need-support.pdf> [11th May 2021]

<sup>14</sup>Scottish Government (2018) No One Left Behind: next steps for employability support [online]. Available <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2018/03/one-left-behind-next-steps-integration-alignment-employability-support-scotland/documents/00533376-pdf/00533376-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00533376.pdf?forceDownload=true>

# Recommendation 6 – Ongoing support is needed after leaving school

The transition from the familiar surroundings of school to the different pressures and demands of further education and the world of work is a time of great stress for everyone. The change in routine, new people and new surroundings will make some young people with and without additional support needs a little uncomfortable.

For young people, regardless of whether they have an additional support need or not, it is vital to do as much to lessen the stress of this transition. This is a view shared by Principle 3 of the *Principles of Good Transition* 'Support should start early and continue to age 25'.<sup>15</sup> In some cases, it was felt by some key stakeholders engaged during this project that support should continue past the age of 25, based on circumstances and level of need.

As with previous recommendations, we recognise that support from educational practitioners through the 3-18 curriculum ends when the young person leaves school. However, there is still a vital part to play to support a successful transition. As part of the person-centred transition, it is vital that all relevant information is shared with the wider support team, including parents, so that the young person receives the support they require, rather than assumptions and decisions being made for them.

Some programmes, such as *Stepping Up*, assist through this transition as it traverses the time that the young person transitions from school into a positive destination or continues to work towards one. Through Stage 3 of the programme, Aftercare, *Stepping Up* not only continues to support the young person, but also supports employers throughout the placement process ensuring they feel fully supported to offer a placement.

## Final Thoughts

If we were to identify one message that runs throughout this guidance it is to ensure that all children and young people have equal access to all activities and opportunities.

Children and young people with additional support needs should have the same opportunities as their peers, along with the right level of support from educational practitioners and other key partners.

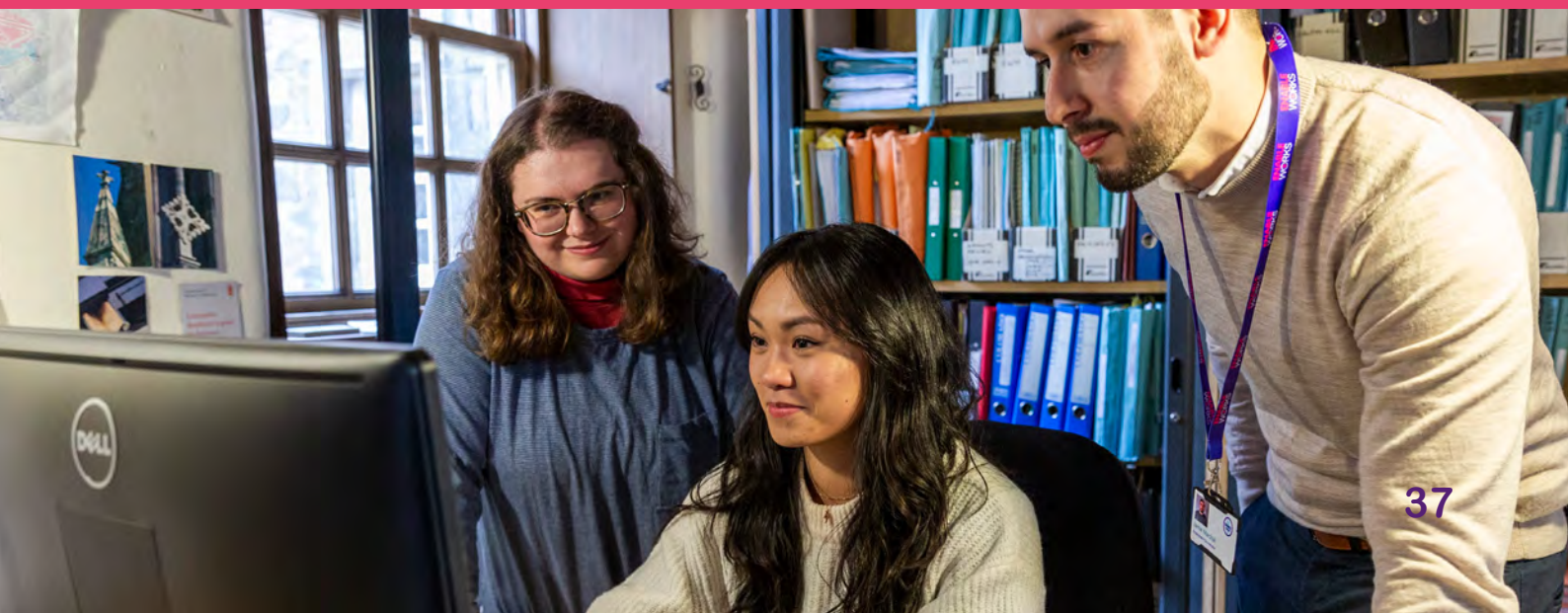
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<sup>15</sup>Scottish Government (2022) Best Start, Bright Futures – Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026 [online]. Available <https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2022/03/best-start-bright-futures-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2022-26/documents/best-start-bright-futures-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2022-2026/best-start-bright-futures-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2022-2026/govscot%3Adocument/best-start-bright-futures-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2022-2026.pdf> [Accessed 20th July 2022]

# Resources

A list of some useful resources that could help you:

- **ENABLE Works** – The ENABLE Works website, with more information about the organisation and the services we offer. More information on ENABLE Works is also available **here** (through the ENABLE Group website).
- **Social Model of Disability** – information on the Social Model of Disability is available on the **Inclusion Scotland** website.
- **Principles of Good Transition** – the third edition of Principles of good Transition can be accessed and downloaded from **Arc Scotland**
- **Education Scotland** – Education Scotland have a range of support and tools for children and young people, parents/carers, and educational practitioners around transitions and career planning, including (but not limited to):
  - **What are transitions?** – overview guide for parents
  - **Planning for transitions** – additional support for parents with children/young with additional support needs
  - **Career Education Standard 3-18:** Suite of learning resources – A suite of tool and resources that have been developed to contribute to professional learning for practitioners at all levels working with children and young people from 3 – 18. They are structured to both inform and to support reflection on existing strengths and areas of development around career education.
- **LEAD Scotland** – LEAD Scotland is a charity supporting disabled people and carers by providing personalised learning, befriending, advice and information services. They have projects across Scotland and a national helpline and information service. Their local services are community and home based, one to one or in small groups so that people have the right support to learn and participate. LEAD Scotland supports people to build a bridge to reach their ambitions of personal development, learning, volunteering and work. At a national level, they provide information and advice on the full range of post-school learning and training opportunities, as well as influencing and informing policy.



- **Skills Development Scotland** – SDS offer a range of tools and support services to pupils, parents and teachers with a comprehensive range of career information advice and guidance (CIAG) services:
  - **My World of Work** – Scotland’s online career information and advice services. Includes personality tools, skills tools to record and understand skills, route maps into different career types, and a CV builder for pupils to use throughout school and beyond.
  - **My Kids Career** – web service for parents and carers to help parents and carers support their children to make career decisions, guided by information on the future world of work
  - **SDS Centres** – through their network of high street centres and community locations nationwide, SDS offer expert career information, advice and guidance to customers of all ages.
- **Scottish Third Sector** – the Scottish Third Sector (charities, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and community groups) delivers a range of essential services, helping to improve people’s wellbeing and contributes to economic growth, both on a local and national level. To find out what organisations and services operate in your area, contact your local **Third Sector Interface (TSI)**





## Get In Touch

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