

Requesting an Assessment

A Guide for Parents



Introduction

This guide is for the parents/carers of all children and young people in schools that are run by Aberdeenshire Council. When this guide refers to 'Young people', it means 16 or 17 year olds who are still attending school.

This leaflet explains the main elements of the process of requesting an assessment under the terms of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. This Act came into force on 14th November 2005 and has at its core, an acknowledgement that additional support needs can take many different forms and can arise from any one of a diverse range of causes or sources.

The Act aims to ensure that all children and young people receive the additional support that they require to meet their individual needs and to help them to make the most of their education

Making a request for assessment

If Aberdeenshire Education Authority are responsible for the education of your child you can make a request to establish whether your child has additional support needs or requires a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP). You can also request a specific assessment at any time. Any request should be made either in writing or in any other permanent form.

The education authority must comply with this request unless it is unreasonable, but they do not have to provide a specified individual to undertake the assessment. If you make such a request, you should provide some information to explain why you think an assessment is required. You should be notified of the decision about your request as quickly as possible. All such requests should receive a response no later than eight weeks after the request is received.

You may also request assessments other than educational assessments, such as psychological and medical assessments. Psychological assessment will involve an assessment being carried out by an educational psychologist employed by the education authority. Aberdeenshire educational psychologists work within the British Psychological Society's code of conduct and their assessment practice is aligned to national advice from the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologist and Scottish Division of Educational Psychologists.

Assessment is one of an educational psychologist's five core functions, the others being consultation, intervention, training and research. They carry out these tasks with children, young people and families, classes and schools and for the local authority. Further information about Aberdeenshire Educational Psychology Service can be found at aberdeenshire.gov.uk/eps

The NHS Board for the area in which the child or young person's home address will, subject to the consent of the child or young person, arrange for the provision of assessment or examination to be carried out by the relevant health professional(s) such as, medical, nursing, speech and language therapy professionals, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, audiologist or orthoptist. Such assessment or examination should take into account relevant information from other professionals as appropriate.

A Social Work assessment may highlight specific issues in the child's or young person's life which are impacting upon his or her ability to benefit from school education.

Educational assessments are part of everyday practice in schools and the local authority will consider the information that has already been gathered through this process of ongoing assessment when deciding whether a request for further assessment is reasonable. Current assessment information from other agencies will also be considered. Assessment should take a rounded, holistic view of children and young people as well as their circumstances and what they need to grow, to develop and to achieve their potential.

Integrated Assessment Framework

Aberdeenshire Council has produced guidelines for an Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF). This Framework encourages proportionate multi-agency involvement at appropriate times and helps rationalise meetings and free up practitioner time.

Most importantly the IAF involves a standardised approach to assessment, planning and recording across Aberdeenshire helping ensure equity and consistency of services. The IAF requires information to be shared across agencies to promote best practice and it will support professional judgements and decisions.

Assessment should also:

- seek, take account of and note the views of children, parents and young people and involve them fully in the assessment process and in finding solutions
- ensure that parents, children and young people, understand, and are asked to agree to, the aims of any assessment and the purpose of any action proposed
- ensure that assessment is an ongoing, integrated process of gathering evaluating information, planning, providing for, and reviewing, services for the individual
- adopt the least intrusive and most effective course of action affecting the lives of children, young people and families
- take into account issues of diversity and equality and ensure that outcomes do not discriminate against children, young people and their families. This includes not discriminating on grounds of race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion or belief, and age
- work in partnership with, and build the capacity of, parents to secure education for their children and to promote their child's health and well-being, development and welfare.

Further links

Further information about your rights and the duties of local Authorities with regard to Additional Support Needs, Coordinated Support Plans and associated matters can be found at

For further information from the education authority contact:

Additional Support Needs (ASN) Manager
Education Learning and Leisure Service
Woodhill House
Westburn Road
Aberdeen
AB16 5GB
Tel no 01224 664886
Fax no 01224 664615
ELL. Enquiries@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Free Independent advice is available from ENQUIRE Helpline on:

Enquire, Princess House
5 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh EH2 4RG
Helpline: 0845 123 23 03
email: info@enquire.org.uk
www.enquire.org.uk

