

Additional Support for Learning in Scotland Information for Gypsies/Travellers



This leaflet can be helpful for Scottish Gypsy Travellers, Irish Travellers, English Gypsies and Roma families who want to know about education in Scotland. The term Gypsies/Travellers can mean all the above. The leaflet gives the answers to some commonly asked questions. You might also find it useful to show to schools. The information is also on a DVD and on the following website: www.scottishtravellered.net or from STEP on 0131 651 6444.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT NEED THE ANSWERS TO

1. What is Additional Support for Learning?
2. What are Additional Support Needs?
3. Who should provide this Additional Support?
4. What do I do if I think my child has Additional Support Needs?
5. What will the school do if they think your child has Additional Support Needs?
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7. What kind of extra support might they get?
8. What is a Co-ordinated Support Plan?
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1 | WHAT IS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR LEARNING?

Additional Support for Learning is extra support for children in school.

A new law came into force in Scotland in 2005. This law should make it easier for some Gypsy/Traveller children to get extra help with their education.

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WHAT ARE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS?

Children are seen to have additional support needs when they need extra help with their education. They might need extra help with their education because they have:

- missed a lot of school
- been bullied
- problems at home
- been ill
- medical problems
- behavioural difficulties
- particular difficulties in learning
- a disability

If your children have missed school because you have been travelling then they may need this extra help.

Sometimes they might need help for reasons that are quite short term or they might have additional support needs that last for a number of years.

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WHO SHOULD PROVIDE THIS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT?

If your child is at a local authority school then the support *should* be provided by that local authority. If your child does *not* go to a local authority school that local authority *may* decide to provide them with support but is not obliged to. See question 9 if your children are being home educated.

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WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS?

If your child is at school you have the right to find out whether your child has Additional Support Needs. First you should talk to the school. You also have the right to access free mediation services in your local area or dispute resolution services if you disagree with the local authority's decision to refuse your request.

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WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DO IF THEY THINK YOUR CHILD HAS ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS?

The school can suggest that your child should be assessed to see whether they have Additional Support Needs. The school must inform and consult you and your child about this.

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WHAT IS AN ASSESSMENT?

Assessment means that some professionals such as perhaps a teacher, an educational psychologist, and/or a doctor might look at your child's educational progress and any difficulties that they may be having. They would suggest what additional help your child might need in order to make good educational progress.

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WHAT KIND OF EXTRA SUPPORT MIGHT THEY GET?

In most cases the school, with the help of the support for learning teachers, will be able to make small changes to help your child get on better with their education. For example, if your child has missed school or has made a slow start learning to read, a support for learning teacher might suggest ways of teaching to help the child improve. The school might be able to make some changes to the subjects that your child learns or to the amount of time they spend in a particular class. They might also make special arrangements for your child at playtime or lunchtime if they are worried about how they get on with other children. They might also suggest ways that you can help your child at home.

If your child needs help from professionals outside the school this may be arranged. For example, it may be that your child needs help from a speech and language therapist or a physiotherapist. If your child has a sensory or physical disability they may make adaptations to the school building to help access. In a very small number of cases they may arrange for your child to go to a special school. All this should be discussed fully with you. You and your child's views should be taken into account. The school should have a personal learning plan for your child. If their needs are very complex and long term and they need support from a number of different professionals then they will get a Co-ordinated Support Plan.

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WHAT IS A CO-ORDINATED SUPPORT PLAN?

Most children with Additional Support Needs will not need a Co-ordinated Support Plan (CSP). Children might have a CSP for a lot of different reasons, for example, if they are deaf, or have a visual impairment, a physical disability, are autistic, have severe learning difficulties or they have a lot of problems in their family and different professionals are involved in helping them. The law says that your child should have a CSP if their needs are complex or multiple, likely to last for more than one year and require a high level of support from education and one or more other agencies.

You have the right to ask your child's education authority to find out whether your child requires a CSP and to be asked for you and your child's views and have them taken account in a CSP. You should receive a copy of the CSP. A co-ordinator for the CSP will be appointed to make sure that everyone involved in helping your child keeps in touch and shares the information with you. If you disagree about the plan you can have your case heard by an Additional Support Needs Tribunal. This Tribunal will look at your case and decide what should be done.

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WHAT IF MY CHILD IS HOME EDUCATED?

If you educate your child at home, you have the responsibility to ensure that your child receives an efficient and suitable education. If you think your child has Additional Support Needs you are entitled to ask the education authority for an assessment. The education authority may agree to do this but are not obliged to. They may also offer help and advice about how to meet your child's needs at home. Some education authorities have Traveller Support teachers who may also be able to help and advise you about this.

More detailed information about the new Act and about the rights for parents and children is available in a Parent's Guide available from Enquire on www.enquire.org.uk or 0845 123 2303. You can also phone Enquire for information and advice about Additional Support for Learning.

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ANY OTHER QUESTIONS?

This leaflet has tried to answer important questions. There are some other helpful sources of information on the back of this leaflet.

There are 2 other leaflets available to Gypsy/Traveller parents - EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND, INFORMATION FOR GYPSIES/TRAVELLERS and BEING SAFE IN SCHOOL IN SCOTLAND, INFORMATION FOR GYPSIES/TRAVELLERS. These leaflets can be downloaded from www.scottishtravellered.net or from the DVD, in the Contacts section.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Individual Education Authorities will provide you with phone numbers of schools and Traveller Support Services. You should find the name of the education contact in the local council offices.

Enquire

Advice and information to families of children who need extra help at school
Telephone: 0845 123 2303
www.enquire.org.uk

Schoolhouse Home Education Association

Tel: 01307 463120
www.schoolhouse.org.uk

Education Law Unit at Govan law Centre

Telephone: 0141 445 1955
www.edlaw.org.uk

NATT – National Association of Teachers of Travellers (England)

Telephone: 01865 428 089
www.natt.org.uk

Education Otherwise

Telephone: 0870 7300 074
www.education-otherwise.org

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Network

www.antibullying.net

Parentline

Telephone: 0808 800 2222
www.parentlinescotland.org.uk

Kidscape

Telephone: 0845 120 5204
www.kidscape.org.uk

Save The Children

Telephone: 0131 527 8200
www.savethechildren.org.uk

Scottish Child Law Centre

Telephone Freephone for under 18s:
0800 328 8970 or 0131 667 6333
www.scll.org.uk