



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Additional support for learning in Scotland

What we found out from our inquiry



Easy read booklet

Who we are

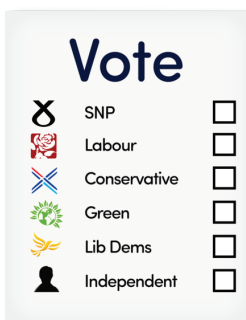


The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

We are the **Education, Children and Young People Committee** of the **Scottish Parliament**.



A **committee** is a small group of people who are **Members of the Scottish Parliament**, also called **MSPs**.



The Scottish people decide who is an MSP by voting for them in elections.



The **Scottish Parliament** makes **laws** in Scotland.



Laws are rules that tell people what they can or cannot do.



They protect people and make sure everyone is treated in a good and fair way.



The Scottish Parliament also checks what the **Scottish Government** is doing.



© The Scottish Government

The **Scottish Government** decides how to run the country.



The Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament are separate organisations.

What this booklet is about



We did an **inquiry** into **additional support for learning**.



An **inquiry** is when we find out information about something.



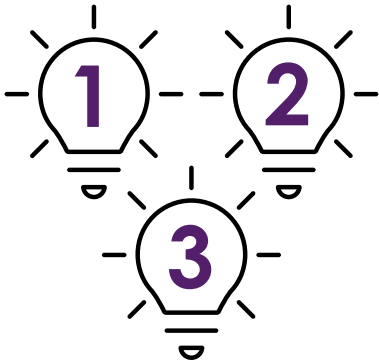
Additional support for learning is support that is different from the support children and young people of the same age would usually get in nurseries, pre-schools and schools.



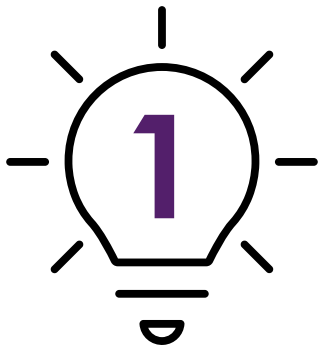
This booklet tells you

- what we found out from the inquiry
- what we think should happen to make things better.

What the inquiry was about



The inquiry was about **3** main ideas.



The **presumption of mainstreaming**



The **presumption of mainstreaming** is a rule in Scotland that says children and young people who need additional support for learning can go to a **mainstream** school. They do not have to go to a **special school**.

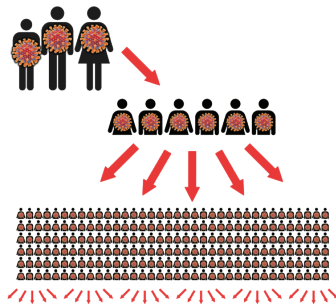


Mainstream schools are general types of schools.

Special schools are schools for children and young people who need additional support for learning.



How the Covid-19 **pandemic** affected additional support for learning



A **pandemic** is when an illness spreads and affects people all over the world.



The different ways people can try to sort out problems

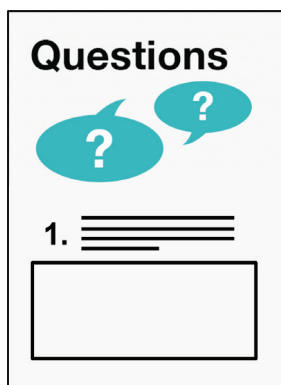


This might be things like when people do not agree about the type of additional support a child or young person should get.

What we did for the inquiry



We looked at a law called the **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004** to find out if it works well.



We did a survey that asked questions about the 3 main ideas of the inquiry. 620 people completed the survey.



We had meetings in February and March 2024. At the meetings we talked to lots of different people, including people with **experience** of additional support for learning.



Experience means something that has happened in your life or that you have been a part of.



We talked to

- young people
- parents
- carers
- teachers
- **Inclusion Ambassadors.**



Inclusion Ambassadors are a group of young people from Scotland who have different types of additional support needs.



The meetings helped us

- find out about problems that happen with additional support for learning
- find out what needs to happen to make things better.

What we found out from the inquiry



In this part of this booklet, we tell you

- what **we found out** from the inquiry
- what **we want** to happen to make things better.



We found out that children and young people who need additional support for learning do not always get the support they need in mainstream schools.



We also found out that children and young people who choose to go to a special school might have to travel a long way to get there.



We want the Scottish Government and an organisation called **COSLA** to update important documents about additional support for learning.



COSLA is short for **Convention of Scottish Local Authorities**. They speak up for Scottish councils.



The documents need to have the right information to help all children and young people get the support they need.



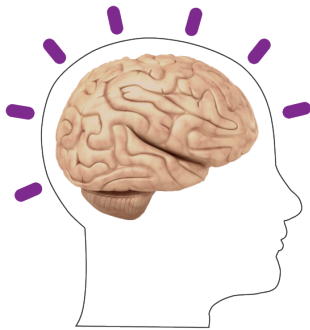
We want children and young people to be able to go to a special school near their home, where this is needed.



We found out that the way some schools are planned makes it harder for some children and young people to learn.



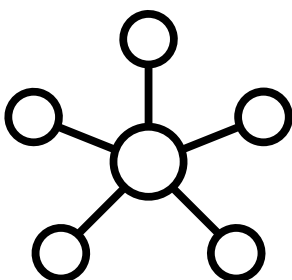
This might be things like having big open spaces and lots of noise. These things can affect **neurodivergent** children or young people.



Neurodivergent means your brain works in a different way from other people. Neurodivergent conditions include autism and ADHD.



We want the Scottish Government and an organisation called **SFT** to help councils plan schools in a way that is good for all children and young people.



SFT is short for **Scottish Futures Trust**. They do work to support important systems and services in Scotland.



We want the Scottish Government to think about changing the law so it includes information about how new schools should be planned.



We want new **guidance** for all schools about what they can do to make schools better and more **inclusive** for all children and young people.



Guidance means useful information about how to do something.



Inclusive means everyone is included, and no one is left out.

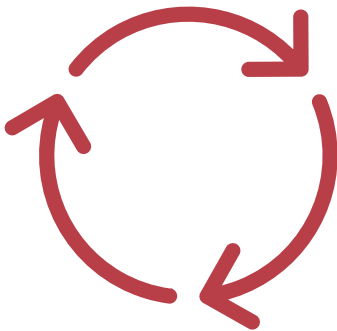


We found out it is important for teachers and support workers to get the right training so they can do a good job.



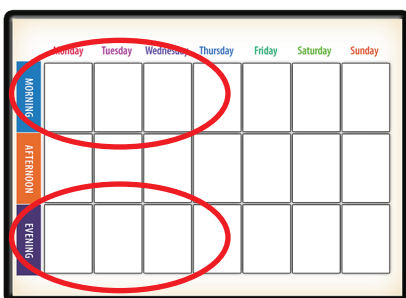
We want teachers and support workers to

- get training often
- get enough time to do training
- get training about different types of additional support needs.



We found out additional support for learning could be more **flexible**.

Flexible means something that can change to match people's needs.



We want additional support for learning to be more flexible. This might mean doing things like part-time timetables or giving lessons in a different way.



We found out that children, young people and their parents do not know how to speak out about problems with additional support for learning.



We want it to be easy for people to speak out or complain about problems with additional support for learning.



We want the Scottish Government to think about changing the law, so it is easier for people to

- know what they can speak out about
- speak out if they do not agree with a decision about additional support for learning, like the type of support their child is getting.



We found out that lots of different people give additional support for learning services, like

- teachers
- mental health support workers
- people who help with speech and language.



We want these people to work together better.



This will help them use money for additional support for learning in a better way.

How to contact the Scottish Parliament



If you want to contact us

- call this telephone number
0800 092 7500
- send an email to this address
info@parliament.scot
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If you want information in other languages or in British Sign Language (BSL) please just ask us.