EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SPORT COMMITTEE

AGENDA

19th Meeting, 2000 (Session 1)

Tuesday 30 May 2000

The Committee will meet at 9.30 am in Committee Room 2

1. **Item to be taken in private:** The Convener will move that item 5 be taken in private.

2. **Special Educational Needs Inquiry:** The Committee will take evidence from the Scottish Executive Education Department —
   
   Ms Joan Fraser (Head of Pupil Support Division)
   
   Mr David Miller (Head of SEN Branch)
   
   Mr John Bissett (SEN Policy Officer)
   
   Dr Mike Gibson (HMI)

   and from the Association of Principal Educational Psychologists—
   
   Mr Ian Liddle (Chair, ASPEP)
   
   Mr Ian Kirkcaldy (Principal Psychologist)

   and from the Greater Glasgow Health Board —
   
   Dr Linda De Caestecker (Consultant in Public Health Medicine)
   
   Mrs Lynda Hamilton (General Manager, Child Health and Psychiatry)
   
   Ms Pauline Bierne (Yorkhill NHS Trust)

3. **Children's Commissioner:** The Committee will discuss a memorandum from the Scottish Executive on the case for a Children's Commissioner.

4. **Update on Committee business:** The Committee will be updated on business in its current work programme.
5. **Budget Process:** The Committee will discuss its report on the Executive’s Budget proposals.

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Gillian Baxendine  
Clerk to the Committee  
Room 2.7 Committee Chambers  
Ext. 85204  
Email gillian.baxendine@scottish.parliament.uk

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The following papers are attached for this meeting—

Note by the Clerk on written evidence  
(Agenda item 1) (Private Paper)

**Scottish Executive’s written evidence to SEN Inquiry**  
(Agenda item 1) ED/00/19/1

**Association of Principal Educational Psychologists written evidence to SEN Inquiry**  
(Agenda item 1) ED/00/19/2

**Greater Glasgow Health Board’s written evidence to SEN Inquiry**  
(Agenda item 1) ED/00/19/3

Note by the Clerk on draft Budget Report  
(Agenda item 4) (Private Paper)

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The following papers are issued for information—

**Memorandum from Executive on publication of the McCrone report**

**Save the Children “Plan and Prepare Toolkit” and covering letter**
### Education, Culture and Sport Committee

**Meeting – Tuesday 23 May 2000**

#### Papers circulated

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

OVERVIEW OF POLICY ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Inclusion

Scottish Ministers are committed to promoting and developing an inclusive society where every person has the opportunity to develop their skills and to participate in society to the fullest possible extent. Our commitment applies fully to children and young people with special educational needs.

In recent years there has been much debate about what inclusive policies mean in relation to children with special educational needs. The debate includes a range of opinion from those who argue that all children should be educated in “mainstream” schools to those who argue that the requirements of children with particular needs are best met in a specialist setting. Some members of the disability lobby argue that education in a special school excludes children from inclusion in the wider community. Others, including many from within the deaf community, believe that integration into the mainstream can prove to be an exclusive experience for some children, particularly those with hearing impairments, who may benefit from the support that the presence of other deaf children within a special school can provide. In addition, current practice amongst education authorities suggests that it is easier to include some groups of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools than is the case with others. For instance, those with a physical or a sensory impairment are more likely to be educated in mainstream than those with severe learning difficulties, multiple difficulties or social and emotional behavioural difficulties.

Against this background, the Scottish Executive has expressed a clear commitment to inclusive education in the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Etc. Bill. Wherever possible, we consider that this should take place within a mainstream school setting. We have said that we will bring forward a provision at the Committee stage of the Bill to include a presumption in favour of mainstream education for all children and young people in Scotland. Our commitment to developing inclusion in mainstream is underpinned by funding from April 2000 of a £12 million Inclusion Programme, under our schools Excellence Fund to assist local authorities to include children with special educational needs in mainstream provision.

At the same time, we recognise that there is a wide spectrum of special educational needs and that to meet these needs requires diversity of provision. This is particularly important for children whose needs are complex or severe and who require support from a range of specialist services. Our overriding principle is that we want our children and young people to experience an education which meets their needs and we acknowledge that this can be provided both in mainstream schools and in special units and special schools. For some pupils special schools may provide a more appropriate and inclusive educational experience than is available in mainstream schools. What is important is the quality of education which pupils receive. The inclusion of a presumption of mainstream schooling will not therefore hold if this is not in the best interests of the child. Decisions about mainstreaming will also take into account the interests of the other children with whom the child would be educated, and whether mainstreaming could be achieved without disproportionate costs.
Policy reviews

Since 1998 there have been two major policy statements and reviews. In May 1998 the Scottish Office discussion paper on special educational needs stimulated debate throughout Scotland on how to improve provision for children with special educational needs. A series of measures were announced in November 1998 by the then Minister for Education, Helen Liddell, and these are listed at Annex A. Particular measures included substantial increases in funding for SEN staff development and training and for speech and language therapy provision for children with Records of Needs.

In September 1999 Scottish Ministers welcomed the recommendations in the report of the Riddell Committee into educational provision in Scotland for children with severe low incidence disabilities. The Riddell Report made 22 recommendations, including a call for better inter-agency and inter-authority working. The Scottish Executive response to the Riddell Report was set out in the document *Improving Our Schools: Special Educational Needs* also published in September 1999. This response welcomed the report’s recommendations and both the Riddell Report and the Executive’s response to it were issued for public consultation which ended on 30 November. A summary on the consultation responses and the Executive’s proposals will be published in April.

Guidance

Scottish Executive policy on special educational needs is underpinned by national guidance provided to the local authorities who have statutory responsibility for ensuring adequate and efficient educational provision in their area. A list of the various guidance sources is provided at Annex C. Key documents include the Department’s Circular 4/96 on assessment and recording of children and young people with special educational needs. This is an area which the new Advisory Forum is likely to consider with a view to identifying how the assessment process might be streamlined and improved.

Specific issues

Attached at Annex D is a list of measures which we propose to take in response to the Riddell Report. These cover a wide range of special educational needs issues including clarification of existing statutory provisions towards children who are too ill to attend school; the need to consider the views of children and young people; review of speech and language therapy provision; the length of the school week in special schools, and staff development and training.

National SEN Advisory Forum

The Riddell Committee recommended that there should be a National SEN Advisory Forum where special educational needs issues could be discussed at a strategic level between all those in the education, health, social work and voluntary sectors with a relevant interest in this area.

The first meeting of the new National SEN Advisory Committee, to be chaired by Peter Peacock, Deputy Minister for Children and Education, will take place on the 28th March. The Forum will comprise 19 members, supported by departmental officials, covering a range of interests including statutory agencies, teaching, learning support and educational psychology, parents, independent and voluntary sectors, training providers and academic interests.
The draft remit and method of operation for the Forum is attached at Annex B. In taking its work forward, the Forum will wish to give careful consideration to the outcome of the Education Committee’s enquiry on special educational needs.

**Raising Standards in SEN Schools**

Raising standards of attainment is at the heart of the Executive’s education strategy, and this objective is as important in SEN as in any other area of educational provision. Children with SEN should have the opportunity to develop their skills as far as possible, to achieve their full potential and to have their achievements recognised. Given the range of different forms of provision for SEN, however, there has been no standard method of drawing together accurate information on the attainments of children with SEN, and it has been difficult to assess the overall quality of provision.

To address these difficulties, the Executive’s “Raising Standards-Setting Targets” initiative includes SEN guidance for education authorities, schools and teachers. An SEN support pack was published in November 1999. It aims to provide a focus for staff development, to help professionals develop their processes in setting targets for SEN pupils at all levels and to identify areas for improvement.

The initiative will provide more information about attainment at school and local authority level, and may also provide opportunities for individual establishments to identify others which are similar in important respects to their own, and to compare performance and practices. To help with this process, HMI has made available information about achievement in special schools. The result of all these activities will be a more accurate and detailed national picture on which to base future strategies.

**The Grant-aided SEN Schools**

As the Committee is aware, seven special schools currently receive part of their funding from the Scottish Executive. In the past, grant-aid for the schools has been justified in the belief that the needs of children with specialist, complex or low-incidence special educational needs should best be met on a national basis. The Riddell Advisory Committee, as part of its lengthy, wide-ranging and comprehensive review of special educational needs provision in Scotland, examined this rationale and in so doing considered the pattern of placing of pupils from across Scotland in the seven grant-aided special schools.

The Riddell Committee concluded that the grant-aided schools in general drew their school population predominantly from nearby education authorities and few, if any, could be said to operate as national centres. This finding is consistent with the move, in recent years, away from national residential provision to the education of children with special educational needs as close to home as possible, in line with the wishes of parents. This has led some of the grant-aided schools to look at new areas of development and in some cases to seek local partnership agreements with home and neighbouring authorities. The Riddell Committee also reported that some of the schools themselves are now providing a more family-focused service which relies on localised provision rather than remote residential placements.

Ministers gave careful consideration to the views of the Riddell Committee and also considered how far the funding of seven schools for children with particular disabilities or impairments fitted with our policies for social inclusion. They considered the tension between subsidising provision at a small number of schools on a national basis, the benefits of which were shared in some instances
only by pupils from a relatively small number of authorities, and the increasing preference amongst parents, children and educational and social work professionals to make provision for children as close to home as possible. After giving the matter careful consideration, Ministers have decided that the current grant-aid for national centres should be re-allocated to local authorities to allow children from all local authorities to benefit from a system which supports families and encourages the spread and development of best practice in special educational needs schools.

This decision does not diminish the existing rights of children already attending the schools nor does it compromise the rights of parents in future to exercise a choice for one of these schools. Ministers are confident that if the schools continue to make high quality provision then local authorities will continue to use their services.

In order to ensure a smooth transition to new funding arrangements it was proposed that, initially for 3 years, re-allocation of funding would be based on the numbers of pupils the authorities had attending the schools. This transition period was to allow schools and local authorities to adjust to a new fees structure and safeguard the interests of children at the schools. Responses received during period of consultation on the Riddell report indicated general support for the arguments behind re-allocation of grant-aid. During consultation meetings with Executive officials, however, representatives from the schools expressed concern that the timescale for introducing the new arrangements was too short.

As a result, the Minister for Children and Education announced on 20 December 1999 that, while the principle of reallocation to the Local Authorities remained firmly in place, grant-aid would continue for one more year to allow more time for discussion to plan the transition to new arrangements.

Executive officials conducted a series of meetings during February and March with representatives of the schools, and also sought the views of CoSLA. In light of these discussions, Ministers are now considering a number of proposals for revised transitional arrangements, and hope to inform the schools of their intentions as quickly as possible.

Transitions

The Education, Culture and Sport Committee has indicated an interest in the effectiveness of transitional arrangements for special needs pupils at each stage in the school education system. It is important to ensure that services to meet the needs of children are brought into play as seamlessly as possible throughout a child’s school career. Our policies for pre-school education and early intervention at primary school will help improve early identification, assessment and intervention to ensure that the needs of young children are picked up and addressed as early as possible. The Manual of Good Practice issued to schools in December 1999 encourages the use of Individualised Educational Programmes to ensure that children’s short term and long term needs while at school are addressed and that the requirements of a Record of Needs or of a Future Needs Assessment report, where these are in place, are incorporated into teaching plans.

Concerns around the transition from school to post-school provision were commented on by the Riddell Report and featured significantly in the recent report of the Beattie Committee, *Implementing Inclusiveness: Realising Potential* which was set up to review the range of needs among young people who require additional support to make the transition to post-school education and training or employment. Scottish Ministers will be considering the report’s recommendations soon. We also
expect to receive shortly the report of the review of services for children and adults with learning disabilities.
Disability Discrimination

The UK Disability Rights in Education Bill will take forward the education recommendations of the Disability Rights Task Force. Consultation on the proposals to be contained in the Bill is currently underway. Legislation on disability matters is reserved to the UK Parliament. Officials in the Scottish Executive Education Department are liaising closely with the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) to ensure that Scottish interests are fully addressed as the draft Bill is prepared. It is intended that the Bill will be introduced in Westminster this session. It will place duties on education providers not to discriminate unfairly against children and students with disabilities; to make reasonable adjustments to policies and premises where existing arrangements discriminate against such children and students; and to provide appropriate alternatives where such changes are not possible. The separate duty to plan to improve provision for the disabled is devolved and will be taken forward by Scottish Ministers in due course.

SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
MEASURES ANNOUNCED BY HELEN LIDDELL ON 23 NOVEMBER 1998 IN RESPONSE TO SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN SCOTLAND: A DISCUSSION PAPER

Summary of action to be taken in light of consultation exercise:

The Government will:

- Set up an independent national SEN advice service to provide information and advice to parents and children and young persons [Implemented September 1999].

- Double the resources available for in-service staff development and training by making available to authorities an additional £2.5 million per year. [Implemented April 1999]

- Extend to March 2000 The Scottish Office funded National SEN Co-ordination Project to work with local authorities on priorities for staff development and training. [Now extended to March 2001]

- Double the provision available to authorities for speech and language therapy for recorded pupils to £6.5 million per year. [Implemented April 1999]

- Create a grant scheme (£6 million over 3 years) to support voluntary and non-statutory organisations in SEN area. [21 organisations awarded £1.3 million in grants for 33 projects in first round of programme in 1999-2000]

- Issue a Good Practice Manual for staff and professionals involved with children and young people with SEN [Issued to all schools in January 1999]

- Identify mechanisms with local authority and non-statutory sectors to take forward special educational needs issues of concern across sectors [Inter-agency issues considered by Riddell Committee]

- Give further consideration to the issue of specialist qualifications for teachers of children with special educational needs. [Will be considered as part of a wider review of 1956 Schools Code – consultation document to issue March 2000]

- Provide guidance on role and responsibilities of education authorities in relation to children with chronic illness. [Amendment on local authority’s statutory duty included in Standards in Scotland's Schools Etc. Bill. Circular and guidance to be issued to all local authorities in autumn 2000]

- Consider and respond to recommendations of the Riddell Advisory Committee on Educational Provision for Severe Low Incidence Disabilities. [Scottish Ministers’ response, Improving Our Schools: Special Educational Needs, published September 1999]
ANNEX B

DRAFT REMIT FOR SEN NATIONAL ADVISORY FORUM

To advise Scottish Ministers on the development and implementation of policies to improve standards of provision for special educational needs and their consistent application throughout Scotland;

To monitor the implications, for provision of special educational needs, of national policies for improving standards and promoting social inclusion in schools;

To review progress in the development of approaches for the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream provision; and

To keep Scottish Ministers and other interested parties informed of best practice in provision for special educational needs.

Method of operation

The Forum will:

• Be chaired by Peter Peacock, deputy Minister for Children and Education

• Comprise 19 members, supported by departmental officials, covering a range of interests including statutory agencies, teaching, learning support and educational psychology, parents, independent and voluntary sectors, training providers and academic interests.

• Meet 2-3 times per year for 3 years

• Consider issues of strategic importance in SEN area – first meeting on 28 March will consider priority areas

• Call on individuals and organisations for views on specific issues and commission views of children and young people on SEN issues
ANNEX C

GUIDANCE ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The Scottish Executive provides a framework of guidance focusing on provision for children and young persons with special educational needs. The framework consists of four inter-related documents.

These are:

1. Effective Provision for Special Educational Needs (SOEID 1994)
   
   *HM Inspectors’ report on provision for special educational needs (EPSEN)*

2. Children and Young Persons with Special educational needs: Assessment and Recording
   SOEID (Circular 4/96)

   *Guidance on the assessment and recording of special educational needs*

3. A Parents Guide to Special Educational Needs (available from Enquire)

   *Booklet offering guidance to parents and Named Persons produced jointly by the Executive and the national advice line, Enquire*

4. Professional Practice in meeting Special Educational Needs (SOEID, 1998)

   *Good Practice Manual offering guidance for developing quality professional practice to meet special educational needs*
This framework is supported by further guidance to local authorities on issues such as setting targets for special schools and by publication of reports arising from regular research projects.
MEASURES ANNOUNCED BY SCOTTISH MINISTERS ON 14 SEPTEMBER 1999
IN RESPONSE TO REPORT OF RIDDLELL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Measures include:

- New national SEN advisory forum to be chaired by Peter Peacock, Deputy Minister for Children and Education  
  [First meeting March 2000]

- £12 million over 2 years from April 2000 for Excellence Fund - Inclusion Programme to assist local authorities to include children with special educational needs in mainstream provision.  
  [Effective from 1 April 2000]

- Proposed amendment to statutory provisions to clarify responsibility of local authorities for the education of children with significant health needs who are unable to attend school  
  [Amendment included in Standards in Scotland’s Schools Etc. Bill]

- Review of funding issues and supply of speech and language therapy and occupational and physiotherapy services  
  [Arrangements under consideration]

- Issue advice to bring school week for pupils attending special schools and units into line with their counterparts in mainstream provision  
  [Under consideration]

- Introduce changes to funding arrangements for seven grant-aided schools.  
  [Ministers agreed principle – delay of one year in implementation announced December 1999 – further discussions taking place with schools over transitional arrangements have now been concluded and revised arrangements will be announced soon.]

Further SEN measures:

- Clause on presumption of mainstream education proposed for inclusion at Committee stage of Education Bill  
  [The terms of the Draft clause have been published and the Advisory Forum is being consulted.]

- Bids invited for second round of voluntary sector Innovation Grants  
  [February 2000]

- Scottish Executive to commission views of children and young people on special educational needs issues  
  [Arrangements to be considered by SEN Advisory Forum]

- Disability –UK Disability (Education) Bill to extend terms of Disability Discrimination Act to schools  
  [Scottish Executive officials liaising with DfEE over implications for education providers schools in Scotland]
Submission to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee of the Scottish Parliament

In response to the request of the Committee for evidence regarding current provision for children with special educational needs, the Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists would like to submit the attached paper "Special, Educational Needs Legislation: time for a change" for consideration by the Committee.

It is the view of the Association that there is a need for fundamental re-thinking of the Records of Needs legislation. Educational psychologists are in the forefront of dealing with children and young people with special needs and the feeling of the profession is that, whilst in the early 1980s recording was seen as a welcome advance on the previous mental handicap legislation, in the current era of educational and social inclusion the recording process has become cumbersome, inequitable, wasteful of resources and contrary to the principles of best value and of the Children (Scotland) Act.

ASPEP have produced a paper suggesting an alternative model which might be of interest. We certainly feel, as COSLA and many other bodies have noted, that the Scottish Executive has missed an opportunity to at least debate this issue. The attached paper has been circulated to the Executive and other relevant bodies in the hope of stimulating such a debate.

If the Committee would be interested in further discussion of these proposals please contact the Chair or Secretary of ASPEP as listed below.

ian Liddle
Chair, ASPEP
Special Educational Needs legislation: time for a change

1. Introduction

In the 19 years since the 1980 Education (Scotland) Act was formulated, there have been a number of significant developments in the Scottish social, political and educational context. Some of these developments have caused the special educational needs element of the 1980 Act to become anachronistic. In particular, the Act does not support local authorities’ efforts to deliver best value in the context of a social inclusion agenda. It is time to review and reform the legislative framework which applies to children and young people who have special needs. However, in considering this, it is important to acknowledge and preserve the advances introduced by the 1980 Act and to ensure protection of the interests of these most vulnerable young people within a framework of social inclusion. This paper proposes a universal framework to support social inclusion and best outcomes through comprehensive education.

2. The advances of the 1980 Act

The conceptual advance introduced by the 1980 Act was to replace the historically dominant handicap model (whereby children were classified and educated according to disability categories) with a needs model. The needs model is concerned with assessing an individual’s requirements for support. It focuses on how the school context (e.g., curriculum, staffing, physical) interacts with an individual’s characteristics.

This, in turn, led to an acknowledgement of a continuum of needs in the population of children, and a consequent continuum of resource requirements. This was potentially facilitative of integration and inclusion. However, the Act introduced no new duty on authorities to move towards inclusion, and was implemented without central financial support.

Specific procedural advances of the 1980 Act included:

- parental involvement in assessment and decision-making
- shared written planning and reporting
- needs assessment separated from provision commitment
- structured multi-agency approach to planning at the school stage and at the post-school stage

All of these advances should be preserved and consolidated in legislative reform.
3. The limitations of the 1980 Act

By introducing the relative concept of need the 1980 Act provided for a widening of the population that could be described as having special needs (suggested to be up to 20%). However, it prescribed a procedure of assessment and planning (Record of Needs) derived from the much smaller population (1-2%) that had previously been ascertained as handicapped.

Certain features of that procedure are out of step with a comprehensive and socially-inclusive approach to education provision:

- it occurs at authority level on an individualised basis
- it is dislocated from whole-school approaches
- it undermines equitable resource allocation and planning
- it is not concerned with educational or social outcomes for pupils
- it treats a percentage of the population separately from the community of pupils, and establishes procedures for them exclusively.

A key weakness of the 1980 Act is that it prescribes planning and decision-making without reference to resource allocation methodology. The Act was implemented during a period of consistent financial restraint on local authorities, without financial provision to support the potential for social inclusion facilitated by introducing the concept of need.

Meanwhile, the socio-political perspective on disability has shifted, from the patronising ideology of needs, to an entitlement/responsibilities perspective. This means, for example, that the 1980 Education Act is inconsistent with the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 in fundamental terms.

Particular consequences have followed from the above. This broader population of pupils who have special needs has remained marginalised in the school system. Parents and professional agencies are encouraged to approach the question of assessment and provision planning in an individualised way. Resources are sought for individuals without reference to the duty of the authority to make adequate and efficient provision for all. This has led to an increasing rate of appeals, for example, by parents of dyslexic pupils who have made placing requests for independent schools. There is a tendency for resources to be skewed to an articulate minority at the expense of the silent many. The responsibility of local authorities to make effective use of scarce resources has therefore been systematically compromised by the legislation. In short, the Act is inconsistent with the requirements of Best Value and it now constrains rather than facilitates best practice in the support of young people who have special educational needs.
4. Features for a new model

4.1 Introduction

The following features would provide a sound foundation for a new legislative framework consistent with empowering local authorities while making them accountable for their performance. Such a model would support well-established trends in Scottish schools towards whole-school approaches and in Scottish local authorities towards socially inclusive communities.

4.2 Conceptual features

- Make the concept of *entitlement* the basis for the model rather than needs; within an equal opportunities framework, this would be consistent with the exercise of children’s rights (and would align education legislation with the Children (Scotland) Act 1995).

- Widen the concept of special educational needs to a universal concept of educational need (arising from factors relating to social, behavioural, linguistic, cognitive, family/care circumstances).

- Combine the principle of equal opportunity for individuals with the obligation of local authorities to make adequate, efficient and improving provision for all pupils.

- Make inclusive education at authority, community and whole-school level for the whole continuum of educational need the organisational basis for
  - strategic planning
  - resource allocation
  - individual assessment

- Build in accountability for individual pupils’ participation and success as part of target setting in schools.

4.3 Practical features of a systemic approach

- Make requirements on local authorities’ strategic planning to support the concepts above, including the development of minimum specifications for:
  - corporate approaches between Council Services (Education, Social Work) and Health Boards in relation to young people who require additional support
  - support for learning policies at authority level and school level which identify responsibilities and aims (monitored as measurable outcomes for all pupils including the population (up to 20%) who require additional consideration (for special needs, social exclusion, or disaffection))
  - organisational structures which integrate learning support, behaviour support and special needs staff with mainstream staff within a support for learning framework
❖ support for learning procedures which include individual planning and record-keeping to minimum specification at school level

❖ resource allocation models which are publicly accountable and transparent, and which demonstrate best value

❖ monitoring and review arrangements which encourage the development of resourceful schools and success for individual pupils (in target setting)

• Reserve authority-level mechanisms for a small minority of families who will seek recourse to formal procedure (which includes appeals within a mediation framework). Monitor authorities’ rates of usage of such mechanisms as a negative indicator of their success in systematic whole-area and whole-school provision.

• Provide strategically targeted central financial allocations of a pump-priming kind to provide incentives to local authorities who propose to redesign patterns of provision or allocation in order to develop an entitlement approach in support of social inclusion.

5. Conclusions

It is evident that the Record of Needs legislation of 1980 is anti-inclusive in a contemporary context. It requires local authorities to treat an expanding population of young people with special need separately from mainstream, whole-school practices. The time is now right to include this population in best school-level practice. This would be based on the concept of a continuity of educational need which encompasses a range of causes of disadvantage which hitherto have been treated separately and in fragmented fashion.

This Association would welcome the opportunity to contribute to a national review of arrangements for pupils who require additional consideration.
Alistair Fleming
Assistant Clerk to the Committee
Education, Culture & Sport Committee
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

Dear Mr Fleming

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS INQUIRY

Thank you for the opportunity to submit evidence to the Education, Culture and Sport Committee inquiry into Special Educational Needs. As stated in your letter, we only received this request late in the process. I am providing a joint Yorkhill NHS Trust and Board response. Please contact me if you would like further information on any of the points made.

- Health, whilst accepting the principle of integrating children with Special Educational Needs into mainstream schools needs to be involved in planning and implementing the proposals to ensure that the health needs of these children can be met. In addition, the Education Departments and Government, need to be aware that the more you integrate children with special needs into mainstream schools, the more difficult it is to provide adequate health care and therapy for them within existing resources. Health care staff have to spend a major amount of time travelling from school to school, therefore diluting the amount of time available for therapy and health care.

- For the reasons above, integration needs to be properly funded.

- In the Greater Glasgow area, the health needs of the school population are provided by one Trust (Yorkhill NHS Trust), which is able to ensure smooth transition arrangements at each of the key stages i.e. nursery to primary school, primary and secondary and through the future needs meetings, leaving secondary school.

- The Board and Trust are trying to meet needs which have been identified e.g. respite care and nursing care at home for these children, support parents and work jointly with Education and Social Work to ensure that the diversity of needs are appropriately met.

Cont’d/......
There is often confusion about which agency should fund support for some children in schools e.g. classroom auxiliaries to support children requiring oxygen therapy, or funding of communication aids. It would be helpful if Health, Education and Social Work could create a joint fund for many of these areas.

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely

S. Dagon

P. DR LINDA DE CAESTECKER
CONSULTANT IN PUBLIC HEALTH MEDICINE

CC: Mr C Spry, Chief Executive, GGHB