



The Accessibility and Inclusion Service (AIS)

The Accessibility and Inclusion Service has been established in response to the diverse range of additional support needs identified in Dundee. It has been formed from remodelling the Multisensory Support Service; the Bilingual Pupils' Support Service and the Outreach Team (0-18). The AIS provides support within a staged intervention framework to nurseries, schools, families and partner agencies for children and young people with additional support and wellbeing needs on a locality basis. The service works closely with other central, city-wide teams to:

- help implement council policy and relevant guidance;
- support school improvement planning;
- develop and deliver staff development and training in relation to meeting the needs of children with ASN;
- and provide advice in relation to the support and education of children with ASN, which in some cases may include direct targeted support to children and young people.

In doing so, the Accessibility and Inclusion Service aims to achieve the overarching outcome in the Dundee City and Tayside Plans:

Children and young people who experience particular inequalities and disadvantage will achieve health, wellbeing and educational outcomes comparable with all other children and young people.

The AIS is led by two Depute Head Teachers, Barbara Burns and Ruth McConnachie, supported by a team of Principal Teachers, all of whom have specialisms which enable the service to respond to a diverse range of needs as follows:

a) **Social Communication Needs including Autism:**

In-depth advice, consultation, training and practical support to families, nurseries and schools regarding children and young people with social communication needs including Autism. This involves close partnership working with other agencies including allied health professionals.

b) **Visual Impairment & Deafness:**

Working in partnership with parents and colleagues from other agencies, the service offers support to families and to staff in nurseries and schools, including assessment of vision/hearing, adaptation of resources, communication support, direct teaching, training in mobility and independent living skills, use of specialist equipment, advice on adapting the learning environment and/or curriculum.

The service offers tailored awareness-raising packages for staff (individuals, small groups or whole-school) and pupils at all stages. Training and support in the use of specialist equipment is also provided.

In addition, the service provides British Sign Language communication support for deaf parents of hearing children, for school meetings, parents' evenings, etc.

Referrals come mainly from NHS colleagues. Should you wish to discuss anything regarding children/young people with sensory loss, or to request communication support, please call Barbara Burns, Educational Audiologist/Depute Head Teacher on 01382 438055 or e-mail barbara.burns@dundeecity.gov.uk

- c) **Bilingual pupils:** providing support for children and young people for whom English is an additional language. This may include direct teaching, adaptation of mainstream materials, bilingual resources, translation & interpreting services, SQA ESOL examinations, community language exams in a range of languages, bilingual speech and language therapy and advice, consultation and training.
- d) **Home/Hospital Teaching:** for those pupils who are unable to attend school due to prolonged ill health. This is a service which is provided for pupils who are absent for a minimum of three weeks or more for medical reasons, e.g. recovery from surgery, immobility after accidents.
- e) **Elective Home Education (home schooling):** Assessment in relation to whether a request for home education should be agreed or not, is carried out by teachers in the service, along with The Principal Officer (Strategy & Performance Team). Assessment reports are prepared and subsequent recommendations are made to the Executive Director, Children & Families Service for a decision.
- f) **Educational support for Looked After, Care Experienced children and young people:** in consultation with social work colleagues and school staff, short-term, targeted educational support is provided for children and young people whose education and care placement are at risk.
- g) **Traveller* Education:** Support is provided, where possible, in local schools or at the Travellers' site. We also provide parents with practical advice and support and encourage parents to collaborate fully in the educational process.
**please note: the term 'Traveller' is used to refer collectively to those with a mobile lifestyle and/or culture, including, but not exclusively, European Roma, Scottish Gypsy/Travellers and Showpeople or Showmen.*
- h) **School refusal (due to significant emotional/mental health needs):** designated teachers from the service provide educational support to the AIM Programme for young people of secondary age who are unable to attend school due to significant anxiety and social communication needs.
- i) **Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE):** GMPE is an option within Scottish schools that gives children and young people the opportunity to become proficient in both Gaelic and English. Parents of a child who is under school age and has not commenced attendance at a Primary school, have the right to request an assessment of the need for GMPE in Dundee. Initial Assessments are undertaken by AIS. Parents receive a written response within six weeks. If the Initial Assessment finds potential demand, AIS carries out a Full Assessment. Within ten weeks, the Full Assessment report will be completed. The report will set out Dundee City Council's decision; its reasons for reaching the decision and when it intends to commence GMPE, if this decision has been reached.

Contact details:

The Accessibility & Inclusion Service is based at St Paul's RC Academy and St Ninian's RC Primary School.

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