



Shetland Islands Council

Transitions, Admissions and Placing Requests

Under the *Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004, amended 2009*, we have a duty to provide additional support to children and young people at transition who have additional support needs. Our policy is to give information to receiving schools and arrange transition within legislative guidelines for all children and young people with additional support needs, who meet one of more of the following legislative criteria.

They:

- *have a co-ordinated support plan*
- *are in a specialist placement such as a specialist unit or a day or residential special school*
- *have additional support needs arising from a disability within the meaning of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995*
- *are otherwise at risk of not making a successful transition*

We recognise that children/young people with additional support needs may need transition arrangements that are additional to those made for their peers. If pupils with additional support needs are transferring to a new school outwith usual transition times, the Head Teacher will call an admissions meeting before the pupil begins to attend, inviting a member of the central service, in order to agree the appropriate placement and support to meet the young person's needs. Where a child/young person is being fostered or adopted into the authority, their Social Worker will also be invited to the meeting.

Please note that Looked After Children are considered to have additional support needs in Shetland and should therefore have a transition in accordance with the *Additional Support for Learning Act (Scotland) 2009*.

If there is a proposal that a child's entry into schooling is deferred because of their additional support needs, a member of the Children's Service (Schools) or Education Psychology Service must be able to attend the meeting.

Please see additional information under Placing Requests, below, for parents/carers who wish to access a place in the special Additional Support Needs departments attached to Bells Brae School and Anderson High School.

The following are legislative timescales for transition. However, legislation recognises that there may be some circumstances which will lead to difficulties in meeting the timescales. In these cases, the authority will take action as soon as possible.



Nursery into Primary

Information about children with additional support needs transferring into school will be passed to the receiving school no later than 6 months before their proposed start date. A meeting will be arranged in the same timescale and any professional staff working with the child, members of the receiving school, a member of the Children's Service and parents/carers invited.

Primary into Secondary

Information about children with additional support needs transferring into school will be passed to the receiving school no later than 12 months before their proposed start date. A meeting will be arranged in the same timescale and any professional staff working with the child, members of the receiving school, a member of the Schools Service and parents/carers invited. If pupils have had special equipment purchased centrally for their use, this will transfer with them.

Junior High Schools into High Schools

The same process as that detailed above for Primary into Secondary should take place.

Moving out of Secondary Education

The process of liaising with and taking account of information from an appropriate agency or agencies in order to consider options for subsequent support in adult life for young people with additional support needs will be planned from no later than 12 months before their expected leaving date. The school will ensure that appropriate consents to share information are in place. Information to appropriate agencies should be passed on no later than 6 months before their expected leaving date. **Transition meetings should involve professionals currently involved with the young person's transition and a professional from Adult Services, if appropriate. Consideration of whether a With You For You assessment is required should be discussed at a meeting. More information about this assessment is available at:**

http://www.shetland.gov.uk/community_care/with_you_for_you.asp

If the school becomes aware that a young person may leave school before their expected leaving date they must pass on information as soon as is reasonably practical.

There is further information about transition out of secondary on this web page.

Placing Requests

The majority of children attend the school in their catchment area - schools in Shetland cater for a wide range of needs. Shetland has a 'presumption of



mainstreaming' in relation to pupils with additional support needs, as outlined in the *Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000*. All schools must provide education to all children in mainstream schools and pre-school settings unless

- the school is not suited to the ability or aptitude of the child;
- the provision is incompatible with the provision of efficient education to those with whom the child is educated;
- the placing of the child would result in unreasonable public expenditure being incurred that would not ordinarily be incurred.

(Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000)

However, all parents/carers have the right to request that their child attends a school other than the local school and this is called a Placing Request.

The parent writes to the Director of Children's Services, who will generally give approval if there is sufficient capacity in the school, provided the parent pays for any additional travel costs.

In the case of a child/young person with additional support needs, a parent may wish their child to attend another school in Shetland because the school can offer access to specialist provision (e.g. Bell's Brae Primary School ASN Department, or the Anderson High School). Such requests should ideally emerge from review meetings, where central service staff (e.g. Education Support Officer (Additional Support Needs) and/or an Education Psychologist) have been involved in the transition planning discussion and all agree that this is the most appropriate placement to request. The request will be taken to the Additional Support Needs Management Team for an authority decision. If the authority agrees this is the only appropriate placement, then the Director of Children's Service will agree that the authority funds all associated travel costs.

If a placement request is made outwith the local catchment area for a pupil with additional support needs, the proposed receiving school will hold an admissions meeting to which a member of central service staff (e.g. Education Support Officer (Additional Support Needs) and/or a psychologist) is invited, before the pupil can start attending the school. Where a parent makes a request which has not been supported by Children's Service staff, the Director of Service may approve, but it is unlikely that transport will be funded.

Parents may also wish their child/young person to attend an independent special school or a grant aided special school in Scotland - or to a school in/outwith the UK which provides support wholly or mainly for children with additional support needs. Before doing so, parents must ensure that the managers of the school they wish their child to



attend are willing to admit their child. In this case parents make a request to the Director of Children's Service, and a Joint Funding Group will consider the request.

PLEASE NOTE that when a child/young person with additional support needs arrives in Shetland and parents request for him/her to attend their local school, the Head Teacher will call an admissions meeting, inviting a member of the central service (Quality Improvement Officer or Education Support Officer), in order to agree the appropriate placement and support to meet the child/young person's needs. Where a child/young person is being fostered or adopted into the authority, their Social Worker will also be invited.

For more information about legislative duties around Placing Requests, here is a link to a leaflet published by Enquire, the information service for additional support needs supported by the Scottish Government:

<http://enquire.org.uk/20100622/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/placing-requests.pdf>

If you have further queries, please contact the school, or the Education Support Officer (Additional Support Needs), Children's Service, Hayfield House, Hayfield Lane, Lerwick, Shetland ZE1 0QD Tel: 01595 744000