



# EASEYS for ASN

Encourage And Support Early Years Skills for Additional Support Needs

Highland Council  
Pre-school Home  
Teaching Service

## 'Supporting Inclusion for ELC Expansion'

**Have you looked here first?** [A BLUEPRINT FOR 2020: THE EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND](#)

**Have you considered the impact of the expansion hours on children with Additional Support Needs (ASN)?**

Some of these questions could apply to all children in your setting but may have more of an impact for children with ASN. What might be a minor inconvenience for some could have a dramatic impact on others. Adjusting your environment and approaches could make all the difference for them.

**What information is already available about children with ASN in your setting (or a new child) and how do you use this information to support them?**

Look at [EASEYS for ASN Meeting Additional Support Needs](#) for further information and ideas.

**Environmental Adjustments, Accessibility and Sensory Needs**

Your Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) space has got to work for all but sometimes we need to make adjustments to the environment to make it work for the needs of some individual children, particularly those with ASN.

**Is the environment supporting my needs?**

The following ideas are not exhaustive or prescriptive but should be personalised to the individual, taking on the recommendations of all partners to the Child's Plan.

**Can I access all areas? Can I explore & move?**

For children with mobility needs we need to consider not only how furniture is arranged to create activity areas and spaces but also other factors which impact on accessibility. Points to consider could include:

- Does the flow of space work? Will I get stuck or bump into things?
- Is there room to turn my buggy or wheelchair?
- Are there bumps, steps or differences in floor levels? Will I need a ramp to get me anywhere?
- Can I reach all the things you put out for us? Are the table heights right for my buggy/ wheelchair?

**Where's that toy I like?**

Is there a clear visual definition of spaces, their purpose and where things are kept

- Are things clearly labelled; objects of reference, photos, pictures, words? What is best for my level of understanding or vision?
- Can I easily find things by looking... reduced visual clutter, things kept in the same place and tidied up regularly? Do you need high contrast presentation of visual signage (e.g. black on white/ yellow) for anyone?

**Are there quiet places?**

Is the hubbub of your setting having an impact on some children's learning? For children with glue ear, language and processing difficulties, mild hearing loss, attention difficulties and children who struggle to listen and look at the same time how much impact does the background noise have? Have you considered simple ways to reduce it? This could include things like:

- bubble wrap liners for storage of construction toys, pencils/crayons etc.
- using soft furnishings, floor coverings or plants to deaden noise levels
- contact [Highland Deaf Education Service](#) for more ideas.

For some children a more dedicated quiet space may be required within the setting to reduce sensory overload e.g. from visual and auditory stimulus, heightened alertness or emotional levels. See [EASEYS for ASN Quiet Time](#) for ideas.

Other related websites:

- [Highland Education Vision Support Service](#)
- [Paediatric Community Physiotherapy](#)
- [Paediatric Occupational Therapy](#)
- [Paediatric and Adult Community Speech and Language Therapy](#)

For more specific advice contact the 'Just Ask' enquiry line on 07785477686. The phone line is open on Tuesdays from 1pm to 4pm. Among the list of professionals usually available are Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychologists and Pre-school Home Visiting Teachers.

**Just Ask**  
This enquiry line is for our parents, carers, children, young people, and those who work with them.

The phone line is open on Tuesdays from 1pm - 4pm

Please call us on:  
07785 477686

Staff usually available are:  
Eduition, Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Primary Mental Health Workers, Speech and Language Therapists, School nurse & Pre-school home visiting teachers.

Logos for Highland Council, NHS Highland, and other partners.



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### My health and wellbeing

Any significant concerns which impact on health, welfare and safety needs should be recorded in a Personal Care Plan. This should to be reviewed as required or at least 6-monthly. Information of this nature may also be found in a Child's Plan.

Some children may require extra support around toileting, sleep, eating/ drinking, sensory and health needs. Protocols should be available, proportionate, tailored to individual needs, and recommendations put in place. Where at all possible, and safe, actions can be put in place to promote independence and progression of skills.

### When I arrive at the setting...

First look at your centre's Settling in Policy or consider creating one. The following is relevant to all children who are new to your setting however for some children with ASN it can be relevant on every single day they attend.

### Who will greet me and settle me in?

Could you have a 'Visual check in'? This is a way of letting parents and children know who is working in the setting that day. Photos of staff could be displayed in the entrance at child height, so the parent can direct their child to them and talk about the relevant key worker/ staff member for their child. Remember, if using this system, it is essential to keep it updated.

Be mindful when talking about tomorrow's staffing arrangements with the child or parents /carers. You can't always be sure who is going to be there tomorrow (illness, etc.) so photos on the door or in the entrance may be more relevant and useful for the child.

Do you have a 'Well-being check in'? A personal handover from a parent/ carer to an Early Years Practitioner (EYP) or other familiar member of staff can be essential for a good start to the session. The child may have a Home ELC Diary or a parent/carers may need to share information that could impact on the child's wellbeing that day.

- Have I slept well?
- Might I be hungry?
- Am I too alert – do I need to start off with some quiet time?

### Do I need help 'starting off'?

Some children have difficulty starting to play when there is so much to choose from; it can be overwhelming. They may need some personal help, structure or visuals to help them start to play. Do they have a daily routine or favourite activity or toy they always like to go to first? Can you make it easier for them by offering them a limited choice?

Try building this into a starting routine for them until they are more independent.

This could mean:

- starting me off with some quiet time or a self-regulation activity, if I need it
- taking me to a favourite activity and playing a little to help me get started
- partnering me with a peer who is already engaged in an activity
- offering me choices, verbally or through offering me toys/photos/symbols
- I may also need help when I go outside or move to a different area
- watch out in case I get 'stuck' between activities. I may need support to move on



### Who is looking out for me? Who do I go to?

It's good practice for one member of staff to know a child with ASN well but what if they are not there or the child becomes dependant on that adult. More than one member of staff needs to build a relationship with the child and know how best to support them.

- If my key worker changes during the session how would I know?
- Could you use a personal handover or change the photos with me?

### Which of my friends are here today?

Some children may have difficulty recognising individual children and learning their names, especially in a busy setting. They may learn the adult's names long before they learn the children's names. You could help by:

- walking me round the setting to see what's going on and who is in today
- using children's names, commenting on what they are doing individually
- supporting me to take photos of the other children to help me focus on them
- using photographs to show who is here today. Perhaps we could 'self-check in'





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### Supporting me in the setting...

#### Do you know what I am learning and what help I need?

Some of the children in your setting will have personalised support strategies recommended by their parents/carers and supporting professionals. Are you familiar with what each individual child requires to help develop their communication, play and learning? Do you know how to put that into practice with the child?

- What's in my Profile/ Learning Journey?
- Where does my Developmental Overview show I might need some more help?
- Am I using another document to help support my progress e.g. Play Steps, Developmental Journal, etc.
- Do I have a Child's Plan?
- Are there any protocols to support me?
- Is there a 'Ways You can help Me' sheet with identified targets and strategies to help me?
- Is there an enhanced '[All About Me](#)' booklet? Do you know what upsets me or comforts me?

#### Who is going to keep me safe?

Some children with ASN have a compromised sense of the personal safety of themselves or others. They may not be aware of common dangers or aware of the consequences of their actions. They may display behaviours of much younger children; throwing toys, mouthing, fleeting attention, wandering, etc. As well as providing developmentally appropriate toys and activities staff need to plan, model and support appropriate play experiences for these children.

#### How can I make friends?

It can be difficult for children with ASN to build and maintain friendships. One of the roles of a Key worker is to support relationships.

- Comment on what I am doing and comment on what my peers are doing
- Encourage my attempts at social play
- Support these interactions; be my voice and say what you think I might be wanting to communicate
- Model to my peers how best to play with me. Tell them what I like doing and what I might like them to do

#### Who will have time to play with me?

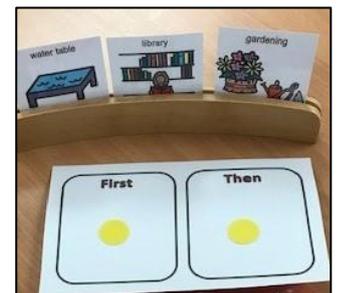
Another role of a Key Worker is to ensure that the learning opportunities a child meets link to their stage of development and interests. Generally staff will promote independence in play but may need to take a more guiding role for children with ASN. Have you read any of these documents which detail different types of support strategies?

- [SELFIE Steps](#)
- [EASEYS for ASN 'Intensive Interaction'](#)
- [EASEYS for ASN Support Strategies Toolbox](#)

#### Can I still choose what I do and when?

Some children may need the support of a visual choosing system. Initially this may offer a restricted choice to make it easier for the child to learn the skill. An individual visual timetable can help some children to start, finish and move between activities especially when mini transitions and daily structure are a challenge for them. Some children may use a Picture Exchange Communication System or similar to make requests. Be guided by the professionals working with them.

- What am I doing next? Can I do this all day?
- When can I have my snack?
- When is my home time?



#### How will my family feel part of my learning?

You will already have processes in place in your setting to communicate with home, carers and families. For some children in your setting an enhanced form of communication could be useful due to the nature of individual needs. You may also need to consider if a child has a split placement how everyone shares information and feels included. The decision as to the communication tool used needs to be flexible and meet the needs of both home and setting/s. See [EASEYS for ASN Communication with Home](#) for some ideas.

#### Moving into, between or on to new settings...

Consider any transition, big or small, from the child's perspective, that of the family and all current and receiving staff. The aim is to make the transition a positive experience for all with effective communication to ensure a seamless process. See [EASEYS for ASN Key Transitions](#) for ideas and supporting documents.