



# ACCESSIBLE, EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

**Policy 3: Young people with additional support needs in Scotland are not receiving the support they need and therefore, the Scottish Government and Local Authorities should invest in services to support them in schools and other education settings.**

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**Endorsed by:**



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## What's this all about?

Young people have a right to an education that meets their needs and is based on principles of support, dignity, and respect. Young people with additional support needs have told us they want to learn, but the support available in schools is variable. They explained that when they don't get the support they need, it leads to gaps in their education, and they fall behind, making them feel ignored and frustrated.

**"One thing I think should get looked into is that some people aren't able to come into school. For me, this is due to a medical issue that has prevented me from going into school recently. I have had next to no support at all from school, but then I turn around and see that people that are classed as "school refusers" are getting support? I am not. a school refuser. I am just a student who is unable to get to school due to no fault of her own. A medical condition that was treated wrongly at birth that has relapsed. There needs to be more support in place for students like me. I don't want another student feeling as alone as I do in this situation."**

– Young woman aged 14–17, Clackmannanshire

**"My friend's sister is deaf, and my friend has told me that her friend rarely had help to keep up in classes, and even had teachers imply that her lip-reading was creepy in nature, as if my friend's sister**

trying to understand what is happening is romantically motivated or something? I dunno but the fact really annoyed me, because the girl was only trying to understand what's happening."

– Young trans man aged 14-17, Dundee

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## What are young people in Scotland calling for?

- Young people call on the Scottish Government and Local Authorities to increase funding and resourcing for additional support needs education that is independent, holistic, and tailored to their needs.

"They deserve adequate support to be productive in an educational setting. The gap in services can hinder their academic progress, by increasing funding and resources schools are equipped to meet these needs, it also creates an inclusive environment where all students feel valued and supported."

– Young woman aged 14-17, Clackmannanshire

- Young people call on the Scottish Government and Local Authorities to be transparent with funding decisions based on additional support for learning, and to publicly publish data in a way that is understandable for young people and simple to access.

"I am in a wheelchair and need additional help at school [...] However my needs are not always met due to the lack of staff and the amount of other children that need support [...] More funding is needed to give young people with physical and learning disabilities a fulfilling life in school."

– Young woman aged 14-17, East Lothian

- Decision makers must increase funding and resources to support opportunities for youth work as an alternative non-formal education programme, tailored to young people's needs.

"Youth work [...] provides young people with a better chance to succeed especially when given qualifications through youth work rather than traditional education"

– Young man aged 14-17, Inverclyde

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## Evidence and Support

- [Changing our World report on Education and Learning](#) is a report involving Children in Scotland's Children and Young People's Advisory Group aged between 8 and 25 with different backgrounds, experiences and views.
- One young person involved in the group said that schools should give information and ask children and young people what support they actually need. When you don't get the right support, you feel like you aren't valued, and it doesn't validate you.
- In August 2024, the Office of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland [provided evidence to the Education, Children and Young People's Committee at the Scottish Parliament](#), ahead of their consideration of the Bill.
- In preparation for providing evidence, they met with their Young Advisors to discuss wider issues in education. The Young Advisors raised concerns about the provision of support to

children with additional support needs, e.g. children missing out on support and special accommodations due to having no formal diagnosis and extra time in exams being missed.

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## **What has SYP done?**

Previous [SYP consultations](#) include [SYP's response to Scottish Government consultation on developing a Universal Definition of Care Experience \(2025\)](#) and [SYP's response to the Scottish Parliament's Call for Views on the Education \(Scotland\) Bill \(2024\)](#) The [SYP Policy Log](#) includes curriculum and budgetary decisions at schools; measures in mental health and bullying prevention and listening to and supporting young people from seldom heard groups and learners with additional support needs.