

(vi) Mr A Jarvie

To the Chair of the Education Committee

‘How many children in the Highlands with Additional Support Needs have a PSA or ASN Teacher resource and how many of these received that support in the Highlands before a formal diagnosis?’

There are 203 schools across 29 associated school groups with a pupil population of 34,852 in the Highland Council area. There are 2,990 pupils with level 3 and 4 needs. These are pupils with the most significant additional support needs. They are supported primarily by their class teachers, who take responsibility for planning and delivering learning and teaching within the classroom with input and partnership working at times from other agencies and professionals. In addition to class teachers, there are 1,313 pupil support assistants and 213 additional support teachers working in schools and specialist centres.

Staffing allocations are calculated on school roll, type of school, and levels of needs. Staff are not allocated specifically to any one child centrally but are deployed flexibly by the head teacher in discussion with school staff to meet the needs of the children in the school. Pupils receive support for learning and other needs identified through the child’s plan within the Highland practice model. There is no requirement for a formal diagnosis in order that children receive additional support as most children will at some time in their school careers need support with aspects of their learning although clearly, when a diagnosis is made, it does help direct the type and amount of support a pupil will receive.

Whatever we do in terms of supporting pupils with ASN needs to be fit for purpose and the authority is heavily involved in working with the Scottish Government in terms of the national ASL review and this work is ongoing. Clearly the importance of digital support is also now high on the agenda and as an example, The Read & Write resource has been made available to every pupil and staff member in Highland on any device if they use their Highland G-Suite for Education account.

This resource helps to meet the needs of different learners, right across the curriculum.