

Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills  
Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Foghlam agus Sgilean  
Jenny Gilruth MSP  
Jenny NicGilleRuaidh BPA



T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Sue Webber MSP  
Convener  
Education, Children and Young People  
Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

By email: [ecyp.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:ecyp.committee@parliament.scot)

19 September 2023

Dear Convener,

## RESEARCH PUBLICATION: COMPLEX ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS PROVISION IN SCHOOLS

I am writing to inform the committee of today's publication of a social research report into current education provision for children and young people with complex additional support needs. The published report, and an easy read version, can be found [here](#).

The research report was commissioned by the Doran Review's [National Strategic Commissioning Group](#) to inform the next steps with the implementation of the long-term recommendations of the Doran Review and its associated [10 Year Strategy](#). This work aims to improve the learning experiences of children and young people with complex additional support needs in school.

The research contractors employed qualitative research methods and undertook in person fieldwork during the winter of 2022-23 at a range of educational settings, including mainstream schools with and without a specialist unit, special schools, independent special schools, and grant-aided special schools. The research explored the themes of policy, practice, partnerships and the perspectives of parents, carers, children and young people in Scotland to explore the ways in which pupils are currently supported. The key areas of interest to emerge from all enquiry areas include resources, staffing, placements and training. The findings provide a valuable insight into the successes and challenges of current provision and will inform our next steps with the implementation of the Doran Review.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™  
We invest in people Silver



The next steps are currently being considered and may include action in the areas of professional learning, the process of placing requests, and parental support and communication. The research findings will also inform the delivery of our existing commitments within the Additional Support for Learning Action Plan.

I know this is an area of continuing interest to the committee. Progress with the next steps with this work can be followed via the published minutes of the National Strategic Commissioning Group - [National Strategic Commissioning Group \(additional support needs\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

Yours sincerely

**JENNY GILRUTH**

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See [www.lobbying.scot](http://www.lobbying.scot)

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE™**  
We invest in people Silver

