

Response ID ANON-UV4K-YUA8-H

Submitted to **Consultation on Excellence and Equity for All: Guidance on the Presumption of Mainstreaming**

Submitted on **2018-02-08 10:58:24**

Section 1 - Introduction

1 Do you agree with the vision for inclusive education in Scotland?

Yes

If you selected yes or no, please explain why you either agree or disagree with this definition. If you disagree, please offer alternative suggestions.:
DSS is the only Scottish charity focused solely on the needs of people with Down's syndrome (Ds) and their family carers. We provide information, support and services for people with Ds, their families, carers and those with a professional interest. We also seek to improve public knowledge and understanding of Ds and to champion the rights of people with Ds.

DSS believes that the focus on education as a human right is key to successful inclusion. We also welcome the reference to inclusion as 'the foundation for a more just society'.

2 Do you agree with these principles?

Yes

If you selected yes or no, please outline why. :

Section 2 – Key features of inclusion – present, participating, achieving and supported

3 Are the expectations set out under each of the 'present, participating, achieving and supported' principles the right ones?

Yes

If you selected yes or no, please explain why. If you have said no, please offer alternative measures.:

Overall the expectations are the right ones but it might be helpful to develop further some of them already in that section (and not only in section 5). Regarding 'Present', it would be useful to describe what is meant by an 'inclusive ethos, culture and values' in schools. As far as 'Participating' is concerned, greater emphasis could be put on the importance of communication – ensuring that all children are able to engage with services (using Makaton, pictures etc as required) and that professionals receive appropriate training to deliver such sessions.

Section 3 – Deciding on the right provision for a child or young person

4 Are the entitlements and options for provision clear?

Yes

If you selected no, please suggest ways in which this section might be improved. Please state the relevant paragraph numbers.:

Section 4 - How and why could the exemptions be applied?

5 Is the commentary and the reflective questions on each of the exceptions helpful?

Yes

If you selected no, please suggest ways in which the commentary and reflective questions might be improved. :

Section 5 – Delivering Inclusion

6 Are there any areas missing, requiring strengthening, or which are not required and could be removed?

Yes

If you selected yes, please suggest ways in which this section might be improved. Please refer to relevant paragraph numbers.:

DSS believes that this section overall needs to be reviewed to provide better information and details about the guidance itself and its implementation.

Paragraph 37 refers to 'inclusion in and outside school', however it is not clear what the guidance means by 'outside school' and how the rest of the section addresses these issues. Very little references are made to outside school and it has to be expanded if it is to be included here.

In the section relating to 'Constructive challenge to attitudes', the content seems to largely focus on children and how inclusion benefit them all. Obviously that is a major component of this however we are of the view that more could be said about how inclusion can also help challenge negative attitudes towards disability among staff for example and the opportunity that it provides for staff to learn about conditions like Ds through training.

The wording in paragraph 48 is questionable and appears to contradict what is said in paragraph 46. Is it not the case for all schools that retaining high expectations can at times be challenging? At present the way it reads suggests that only pupils with ASN can pose challenges which is the kind of assumptions the proposed guidance should actually questioned. Therefore it is not quite clear what the purpose of this paragraph is and/or how the guidance will work towards addressing this.

Paragraphs 49 and 50 would be better under 'Capacity to deliver inclusion'. That part should be developed with greater emphasis on training for staff, what it requires, how it is monitored etc. It should also include more about resources available to staff including support available from third sector organisations for example.

7 Were the case studies helpful?

No

If yes, please say why and if you would like further case studies or are content with the current number. If you selected no, please explain why and what would be helpful instead.:

Overall the case studies are not helpful because they are not detailed enough. Broad, general statements are being made without actually illustrating through concrete examples how the work is done.

The first case study is the most useful with reference to laminated cards, daily staff meeting and collaboration with partners. It is then much easier to share good practice based on that information.

The following case studies all need to be reviewed. For example to illustrate paragraph 45 the case study explains that 'the school works hard to ensure that young people do feel included', but how so? What does the school do differently from others? Why did you choose that school to be in the guidance? Again to illustrate paragraph 52, the guidance says that teachers 'use a wide range of strategies skilfully to ensure that every child is supported and challenged' – so which kind of strategies are we talking about? It goes on arguing that 'children work with their teachers to set themselves targets for their work' – again what does this look like in practice? Similar comments can be made about all the other cases. It is hard to imagine how schools, teachers and practitioners are going to find the guidance helpful if it is not descriptive enough in terms of what works well and which type of good practice might be shared more widely and copied by others across the country.

General

8 Overall, is the guidance helpful?

Not Answered

If you selected no, please explain your answer. If you selected yes, please indicate what was particularly helpful. :

Sections 1-4 are overall quite helpful but we would argue that more work has to be done on section 5 and the case studies.

9 Are there any other comments you would wish to make about the draft guidance on presumption of mainstreaming?

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About You

What is your name?

Name:

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What is your email address?

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Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

Organisation

What is your organisation?

Organisation:

Down's Syndrome Scotland

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

Publish response only (without name)

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Yes

Evaluation

Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)

Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Please enter comments here.:

Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied

Please enter comments here.: