Clackmannanshire Council

Accessibility Strategy

April 2004 - March 2007

CLACKMANNANSHIRE
COUNCIL

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1.0 FOREWORD

1.1 Under the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act, 2002, local authorities are required to prepare a strategy to improve access to education for disabled pupils.

1.2 For the purposes of the Strategy, a person is disabled if: *'He or she has a mental or physical impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.*

1.3 Information from the register of pupils held by the Child Health Department shows that Clackmannanshire has in the region of 400 children and young people who are likely to come under this definition: this equates to approximately 3% of the total child population (0 to 18).

1.4 The Accessibility Strategy details what steps the authority intends to take to:

- increase the extent to which pupils with a disability can participate in school education.
- improve the physical environment of the school
- improve communication with pupils with a disability.

1.5 The Clackmannanshire Accessibility Strategy has been developed in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Executive and drawn up by a working group of parent, education, health and social services representatives, with support from the Disability Rights Commission.

1.6 Drawing up the Accessibility Strategy has provided an exciting opportunity to: -

- reflect upon current provision for disabled pupils;
- consult widely to see where improvements might be made;
- collectively plan for future improvements.

1.7 The working group, which was established to develop the initial Strategy 2003 to 2004, continued to meet to review and monitor its progress. To ensure joined up planning, the group has now amalgamated with the Children's Services Planning Group (Inclusion) and has been responsible for developing this new three year strategy from April 2004.

1.8 The legislative framework which underpins the Accessibility Strategy is detailed in the next section and contains one important addition to that which influenced the first Strategy. This is the bill which is progressing through the Scottish Parliament at the moment and is the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill. The new Strategy takes account of the new duties which this new piece of legislation will require us to develop.

Elaine McPherson

Head of Policy, Planning & Special Educational Needs

March 2004

2.0   SUMMARY

2.1   This document is divided into three main parts.

2.2   Part 1 provides the background to the legislative, policy and service framework in which the Strategy has been developed.

2.3   Part 1 considers in detail:

- the legislative background to the Strategy
- other legal contexts influencing the Strategy
- the policy contexts of the Strategy
- existing initiatives to enhance accessibility
- how the Strategy was developed
- what the priorities of the Strategy are
- how the Strategy will be funded

2.4   Part 2 reviews the progress made with the first Accessibility Strategy

2.5   Part 3 takes each priority in turn and gives details of specific actions that will be taken from April 2004 to March 2007.

PART 1

The Background

3.0   LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGY

3.1   There are two main pieces of legislation which concern the Strategy and they are very closely linked. They came into force in September and October 2002. The first is a new section (Part IV) of the Disability Discrimination Act and the second is the Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil's Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002 .

Disability Discrimination Act (Part IV)

3.2   Until September, 2002 the Disability Discrimination Act did not apply to education authorities but a new section (Part IV) of the Disability Discrimination Act *(also known as the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001)* changed this. The two main duties of this Act to ensure education providers do not discriminate against disabled pupils are:

- not to treat disabled pupils less favourably; and
- to take reasonable steps to avoid putting disabled pupils at a substantial disadvantage.

3.3   The Code of Practice attached to the legislation, which helps interpret the legislation, makes it clear that all aspects of education are covered by the legislation. This includes, therefore, not only education in the classroom but also out of school activities, school trips, breaks and mealtimes, after school clubs and any other part of school life.

Education (Disability Strategies and Pupil's Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002.

3.4 This legislation states that the Strategy must cover how the authority will:

- increase the extent to which pupils can participate in the curriculum
- improve the physical environment of the school in relation to which the strategy is prepared for the purpose of increasing the extent to which pupils with a disability are able to take advantage of education and associated services provided or offered by such school.
- communicate school information to pupils and, in particular, provide information to pupils with a disability:
  - i) within a reasonable timescale and
  - ii) in ways which are determined after taking into account the pupils' needs and any preferences expressed by them or their parents, of information which is provided in writing for pupils.

3.5 To take account of these new duties and responsibilities, we have taken a broader view of what needs to be included in the Strategy than the legislation prescribes and a section is included to address training and education about disability as well as one to specifically look at ways of working together more effectively with other agencies.

4.0 OTHER LEGAL CONTEXTS INFLUENCING THE STRATEGY

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)

4.1 The Convention, which the UK government ratified in 1991, sets out the rights which all children up to the age of 18 should have. The 3 main rights are:

♦ Non-discrimination

♦ Decisions being made in the best interests of the child

♦ Listening to children's views

4.2 Of particular relevance is Article 23 of the convention which states that *"… a child with disabilities has the right to care, education and training to help him or her enjoy a full and decent life in dignity and achieve the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration possible."*

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education 1994

4.3 The Salamanca Statement is a UNESCO statement which says that every child has a basic right to education and which asks governments to give the highest priority to making education systems inclusive, urging them to adopt the principle of inclusive education as a matter of law or policy. More specifically, it states that:

♦ those with special educational needs must have access to regular schools; and

♦ regular schools with an inclusive ethos are the most effective way to combat discriminatory attitudes, create welcoming and inclusive communities and achieve education for all

Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (as amended)

4.4 This sets out the requirement for local authorities to provide school education, including provision for special educational needs. This legislation defines special educational needs and learning difficulties.

Standards In Scotland's Schools' Act 2000

4.5 This piece of legislation builds into statute what has commonly come to be known as the 'presumption of mainstreaming'. The Act states: '*Where an education authority, in carrying out their duty to provide school education to a child of school age, provide that education in a school, they shall provide it in a school other than a special school.*'

4.6 The legislation does recognise that there may be instances where it is more appropriate that a child should be educated in a special school. Such circumstances are that:

♦ a mainstream placement wouldn't be in the best interests of the child;

♦ mainstream placement would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for the children with whom the child would be educated; and

♦ unreasonable public expenditure would be incurred which would not ordinarily be incurred.

National Priorities for Education

4.7 The Standards in Scotland's Schools' Act also gives a commitment to developing national priorities for education. Priority 3 of the national priorities is particularly relevant to special educational needs provision and concerns '*promoting equality and helping every pupil benefit from education, with particular regard paid to pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.*' Priority 4, which promotes values and citizenship, is also important in the development of the curriculum to include education about disability and valuing difference.

4.8 Local authorities are obliged to adopt the national priorities and implement them locally through their Statement of Improvement Objectives. The Clackmannanshire Council Statement of Improvement Objectives was approved in January, 2003.

<u>Children (Scotland) Act 1995</u>

4.9　This Act establishes the fundamental principle that each child has the right to be treated as an individual. It sets out a requirement for local authorities and their partners to draw up Children's Services' Plans for 'children in need'.

4.10　The key principles which underlie this Act are also drivers for the Accessibility Strategy, viz:

- welfare principle – the child's best interests are paramount;
- consultation principle – the child's views should be considered when making decisions about him or her;
- no order principle – interventions should be appropriate.

4.11　**National Care Standards** - early education and childcare up to the age of 16. The national care standards for childcare cover services for children and young people up to the age of 16 years which are regulated under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. They apply equally in the public, private and voluntary sectors, and in domestic or non-domestic premises which provide services for over two hours a day and for 6 days or more each year.

4.12 Education (Additional support for Learning) (Scotland) Bill

This Bill, which is going through the Scottish Parliament at the moment, will change the way in which authorities will support children in their learning. We will be working to develop a system to support children using Coordinated Support Plans and tasks associated with these changes will be included in the Accessibility Strategy. These may need to change when we receive the guidance notes for implementing the bill from the government.

5 0   POLICY BACKGROUND

Learning To Succeed in Clackmannanshire

5.1   Clackmannanshire Council's concept of learning is set out in the vision statement which outlines the Council's views on how to promote the fundamental objectives of education. Key themes in *Learning to Succeed* are:

- combating educational under-achievement is central in the fight against social exclusion

- raising standards of achievement requires effective teaching: it also means tackling barriers to learning

- self-esteem and self-confidence, emotional intelligence and a shared sense of values are essential prerequisites for effective learning and teaching

- the curriculum should be managed to ensure that all pupils have a strong grounding in fundamental transferable skills (literacy and numeracy, thinking and problem-solving, information and communications technology, study and information-handling skills)

- learners have a right to a wide range of enrichment activities and formative experiences

- central to the success of learners are high quality and well-motivated staff

- Learners are more likely to succeed if there is effective partnership with parents and the encouragement of their engagement in the educational process

Clackmannanshire Statement of Improvement Objectives

5.2 The Statement of Improvement Objectives sets out the key priorities for the education authority over a three year period.

5.3 Educational inclusion is a key theme running through the statement of objectives, with the authority committed to implementing the statutory presumption of mainstreaming and to ensuring that those pupils whose needs are best met in alternative educational settings enjoy equal opportunities for curricular access and educational experiences. The implementation of this Strategy is also one of the key tasks with the Statement and its associated Action Plan.

For Scotland's Children

5.4 This document was the product of an Action Team established by the Executive sector to look at how better to integrate children's services, particularly in respect of the most disadvantaged children for whom it is essential that all agencies work together to achieve the best outcomes.

5.5   The main action points emerging from the Action Team were:

      I. Consider children's services as a single service system

      II. Establish a joint children's service plan

      III. Ensure inclusive access to universal services

      IV. Co-ordinate needs assessment

      V. Co-ordinate Intervention

      VI. Target Services

5.6   For Scotland's Children establishes the concept of health (for pre five children) and education (for children over five) as being the 'universal services,' with other, more specialist services providing the additional supports which some children need to enable them to access these universal services.

6.0 EXISTING INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE ACCESSIBILITY

6.1 Clackmannanshire Council and its partners welcome the duty to develop an Accessibility Strategy and have used the process of its development to review existing levels of accessibility.

6.2 Much progress has already be made in terms of curricular and physical accessibility and some recent improvements are listed in the paragraphs which follow.

6.3 <u>Curricular Access</u>

- the Pre Five support service has developed intensive work, both individual and group, with children who have a range of learning difficulties, including those with autistic spectrum disorders. This work is leading to successful inclusion in mainstream primary schools.

- intensive home based applied behaviour analysis has been developed for children with significant autistic spectrum disorders.

- the Inclusion Support Service has been developed over the past five years from a base in Lochies School. This has enabled both teacher and supervisory assistant support for the pupils involved and both pupils and receiving schools have found this to be an invaluable service. This service will continue to develop taking the pupils from primary 4 into primary 5 in the coming year.

- developing links between Fairfield school, Alloa Academy and Alva Academy and Clackmannan College have been and continue to be useful in furthering curricular opportunities and development.

- recent developments have enabled all primary schools to have access to information technology through a networked service. This can be adapted for individual need as required. Specialist software has recently been developed and is available to assist pupils with their learning

- a Service Level Agreement is now in its fourth year with the CALL Centre in Edinburgh which can be called on for specialist assessment and advice for disabled pupils. Information technology equipment is supplied to those disabled pupils who require this individual help with their written communication. The CALL centre has been carrying out staff development with staff in Lochies and Fairfield schools and Alva Academy This work is set to include the staff in the inclusion support team and will be developed further over the next three years.

6.4   <u>Physical Access</u>

There are still physical barriers for disabled pupils in our schools, but year-by-year these barriers are being removed. Adaptations carried out to accommodate individual pupils have also been planned to accommodate as wide a range of need as possible. In addition to this, new builds or major refurbishments already take account of access issues wherever possible.

The authority now has a duty to plan in a more strategic way and there is a need to ensure that all briefs for major work are as comprehensive as possible. The development of the secondary school estate will offer great opportunities for creating barrier free schools.

The new development of the new Alloa Academy will include brand new provision for all pupils including those with significant levels of additional support needs.

Multi-Agency & Partnership Working

6.4   To ensure a co-ordinated service for disabled pupils in education, plans must be drawn up involving everyone who can make a contribution to the plan with parents and the pupils themselves playing a central role. Disabled pupils often have many different people involved in their care and the input of all is essential to ensure successful inclusion. The working group acknowledges the need to improve the way we link with others as a priority. Current areas of good practice in partnership working include:

- the Council's joint partnership with Capability Scotland is developing the post of Parent and Children's Services Network Coordinator to develop partnership working with families

- the Visual Impairment Support Services for children in the community in developing close and effective partnership working with all involved through the development of joint clinics and training

- the Hearing Impairment service in also developing a joint service on similar lines

- the Clackmannanshire Early Assessment Team has been developed to offer a multi-agency co-ordinated assessment of pre five children with complex health or learning needs

- the School's Support Service, along with individual schools, helping to coordinate the input for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in providing the most inclusive, appropriate school experience possible.

- Work is starting to develop integrated assessment

Training

6.5 There continues to be a significant investment in staff training, most recently:

- a pilot is underway to introduce new material about disability into the curriculum of four schools. This material is being evaluated for

its effectiveness in changing attitudes in both pupils and staff. If successful, this will be further developed

- disability equality training has been further developed for whole school staff and is being included in school development plans as a priority.

- training from the school doctor in medical conditions and procedures for school staff.

- communicating with pupils with diverse needs from Speech and Language Therapy including the use of 'talking mats' and the recent development of including pupils much more effectively in their school plans by the use of person centred planning.

- developing Individualised Educational Programmes for children with additional support needs in the pre 5 establishments.

- coping with challenging behaviour

- access Audits of buildings for staff from education and property services.

6.6   An evaluation of these existing levels of accessibility was a key part of developing the Accessibility Strategy and more details of the consultation process are provided in the next section.

7.0 DEVELOPING THE ACCESSIBILITY STRATEGY

7.1 An initial audit was carried out by sending out a questionnaire to every school in the authority. This questionnaire was based on a format with which schools are already familiar (How Good is our School' and, for pre-five provision, 'The Child at the Centre'). Schools were asked how good they judged themselves to be at offering equal opportunities for pupils with disabilities to take part in every aspect of the school life. This included break times, after school clubs, school trips as well as work in the classrooms. The schools were also asked to give three priorities for improving access within their school and also to give information about good practice.

7.2 An outline physical audit of each school was undertaken some years ago and this is available for every school in the authority. This audit concerned physical access to buildings and gives an outline of the major issues which need to be tackled in planning priorities. It is clearly recognised that this is only the beginning of the audit process in terms of everything that happens within school. It can be seen from the tasks which the working group have recommended that more detailed audits are to be undertaken in some areas as a priority.

7.3 Parents are involved in the working group and the Parent Network Co-ordinator has undertaken an extensive consultation exercise with parents to assist with this process. A few of the common themes are included here.

7.4 Parents reported some good experiences of their children being included in mainstream primary schools, especially where the inclusion support team have been involved. They are keen that this level of support and ability to adapt the curriculum is developed in mainstream secondary schools so that this inclusion can continue in the same way.

7.5 Other priorities for parents which emerged during the consultation process include:

- having one member of school staff identified as a contact person and coordinator of plans and support to ensure smooth lines of communication. This is also one element of the new education Bill that our planning will address this issue.
- 'transition' planning to include the move from one school year to the next, with appropriate training for new staff firmly in place. These concerns have been addressed and a new staff structure includes the creation of three principal teachers who will have responsibility for coordinating pupils' transitions. See Appendix 1 for the new structure.

7.6 Pupils were consulted on the Strategy via some pupil councils and via meetings with disabled pupils and their classmates. Some of the views of pupils include:

- the need to include all pupils in playground games
- ensuring all pupils feel a part of a school community and not like a separate part of the school

- a great willingness among all pupils to assist their disabled classmates to be able to carry out everyday routines.

7.7 Work is underway to establish a group of pupils with disabilities so that their views can be sought in a meaningful way for future strategies and other planning processes.

8.0 PRIORITIES

8.1 The priorities, objectives and tasks which have arisen from the development of this Strategy have been drawn from the consultations and the Council's local priorities.

8.2 There are four priorities, with associated objectives, as follows:

Priority 1 - **To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments**

Objectives

- To ensure that children attend their local school whenever possible
- To develop training material for schools to ensure all staff have knowledge of their duties
- To incorporate disability equality into the curriculum

Priority 2 - To improve access to the physical school environment

Objectives

- To create a strategic improvement plan working towards barrier free schools.
- To continue to plan and implement adaptations to schools for the next three years including ensuring that the Lochies/Deerpark campus can be fully inclusive as a priority.

Priority 3 - To improve access to the curriculum

Objectives

- To ensure efficient and appropriate use of information and communication technology for disabled pupils
- To enhance appropriate support for learning in Primary Schools
- To increase the range of options available to disabled pupils in secondary schools
- To improve communication with pupils

Priority 4 - To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.

Objectives

- To maintain regular consultation with parents of disabled children
- To establish a consultative framework with pupils

8.3   Each of these priorities has a range of detailed tasks which are set out in Part 3 of this Strategy.

9.0   RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

9.1   Much good work can be undertaken within existing resources: the drawing up of the Strategy is an example of this.
Some issues related to accessibility can be cultural and attitudinal and changing these often takes time rather than resources.

9.2   That said, some aspects of improving access can be very costly, in particular, implementing plans to improve the physical school environment. Realistically, there is not enough money, either locally or nationally, to achieve the removal of all physical barriers in the life of this Strategy; but what the Strategy offers is a way to make improvements in a planned and strategic way.

9.3   To assist in the implementation funds have been allocated by the Scottish Executive to assist in the implementation of Accessibility Strategies. Nationally, this will be £17 million for 2004/5 and for 2005/6. Locally, around £160,000 has been included within the Council's grant aided expenditure.

9.4   In addition to this funding, there are other programmes which may be used to support the implementation of this Strategy:

- *Special Educational Needs Specific Grant - t*his grant is for training and some of this will be used in relation to the Strategy.

- *Changing Children's Services Fund -* this funding is being used to support new developments which are run on an interagency basis and encourage integrated working by health, local authority and voluntary agencies and planned within the context of the Children's Services Plan. Support for the Accessibility Strategy may be possible through application to the fund.

- *National Priorities Action Fund (Inclusion Programme) -* this money supports provision for children with special educational needs and includes provision for improving accessibility.

- *Discipline Task Group Funding –* resources have been allocated to promote positive systems in school to allow pupils who experience social, emotional and behavioural difficulties greater access to mainstream education and a more inclusive educational experience.

PART 2

Review of Accessibility Strategy 2003 to 2004

10.0 Clackmannanshire 's first accessibility strategy was produced to run from April 2003 until the end of March 2004. The working party which met to develop the strategy divided into three separate smaller working groups. The aim of the smaller working groups were to ensure that the key tasks were developed and completed wherever possible. Three separate smaller working groups were:

- Accessibility Strategy – Physical Access.
- Accessibility Strategy - Curriculum development group.
- Accessibility Strategy - Communication sub group.

10.1 **Accessibility Strategy – Physical Access**

This group met four times and has covered a considerable amount of ground over the year. The development of the PPP initiative for replacing or renewing the three secondary schools created extra impetus to ensure that a sound inclusive school design brief was developed as quickly as possible.

10.2 **Accessibility Strategy curriculum development group.**

Developments in the secondary school have continued alongside the special educational needs division plan which was drawn up also from April 2003. Further developments of curricular material have made considerable progress and access courses at levels 3,2 and 1 are now available in an ever growing range of subjects. These developments are continuing. Teacher training in the delivering of a new material has also continued and nine members of secondary school teaching staff have taken part in a special educational needs training module.

A new support for learning staff structure encompasses learning support across all sectors and one of the key tasks for development in the primary sector will

be taken up by the staff under the new structure when they are in post by summer 2004,. See appendix 2 for details of the new support for learning staff structure.

10.3 **Accessibility Strategy communication sub group.**

This group met on three occasions with the purpose of auditing what information schools distribute to pupils, what information is displayed around school buildings, and also what information is sent home from schools for pupils and their families. Guidance notes to alert schools to their new duties under the Disability Discrimination Act have been completed and distributed to schools. The working group was acutely aware that the way schools communicate with pupils has a great impact on how pupils can access the curriculum so that it has been decided for the next strategy that how schools communicate with disabled pupils will be a key task for further development.

10.4 **Training** to help create a more inclusive ethos in all education establishments has undergone considerable development in the year and a programme of innovative and effective training has been delivered on five occasions by Dynamix. The feedback from this training has been very positive and is leading to further developments in schools developing their own inclusive school policies. It is hoped that this development can continue over the next 2 or 3 years so that all schools can take advantage of this initiative.

10.5.1 **Improving communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies** has also developed over the year. The Parent and

Children's Services Network Coordination initiative has proved invaluable in creating links with parents and other agencies and the joint training initiatives that have been organised by the coordinator have been very effective in improving communication between everyone.

10.5.2   Communication with pupils has also been further strongly developed by the introduction of personal person centred planning. This is a consultation process which can include pupils who have considerable communication difficulties but has been a very successful initiative. This initiative will develop further over the next two to three years. Consultation with pupils has been developed by the setting up of a small group of youngsters who meet together on a regular basis. This has greatly increased their confidence and they are now happy to express their points of view and opinions quite readily. Further developments in consultation with disabled pupils and their non disabled peers is required and this will be included in next years strategy when it is hoped to bring in an outside agency to support his initiative.

10.5.3   Consultation with other agencies has been maintained. To ensure that the authority's plans are well coordinated the Accessibility Strategy Working Group has joined the Children's Service Planning (inclusion) Group.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 1 : **To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments**

Objective 1 : **Ensure that children attend their local school whenever possible except when it is not in their best interests.**

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Ensure that all children have the opportunity to enrol in their local mainstream school. Review of Record of Needs procedures to ensure this happens.	Procedures to be developed in response to the new legislation and Coordinated Support Plans. This will be a priority development for the children's services planning group
2. Ensure that if children attend a school other than their local mainstream school, their experience of education is as close as possible to a mainstream experience.	As Above
3. Ensure that children attending a school other than their local school link with their local MS school if it is within their best interests.	As Above

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 1 : **To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments.**
Objective 2 : **Develop training material for schools to use to ensure all staff have knowledge of the new duties and are aware of disability equality.**

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Representative staff members who attended disability equality training day in March are provided with appropriate training material.	Training material provided and information also passed to them about staff training being developed and available for whole school staff for session 2003/4. Schools aware that this is a priority for their school development plans.
2. Schools to include whole staff training on disability equality and the new legislation in their school Development plans as priority.	Disability equality training has been taken up by 6 schools who have involved all their staff in this training. Other schools have been asked for their views as to their further training needs. Plan for the next 3 years will be developed from this information.
3. Disability equality and specific knowledge of new duties to be offered as induction for all staff and as part of C.P.D.	Still to be structured for new staff. Training of all probationary teachers (18) was undertaken in March 2004.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 1 : To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments.
Objective 3: Incorporate disability equality into the curriculum as part of an equal opportunities framework.

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Working group to examine results of playback pilot in the 4 schools and develop proposals for future curricular developments.	Final report produced by Playback. Liz Duguid produced paper about the pilot including further developments in the pilot schools. Short life working group to be set up to prepare further developments.
2. Provide training in the use of appropriate equality material.	Material has been given to all primary schools for the citizenship curriculum. Training to be developed as part of the remit of the working group – see above in Task 1 and included as a new key task in the next accessibility strategy.
3. Establish contact with pupil councils of the schools in the Playback project regarding equality issues plus two other schools	Contact has been established with two pupil councils. Two other pupil councils will be contacted in the next term and information from the pupil councils given to the working group described above.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 2 : To improve access to the physical school environment

Objective 1 : Ensure appropriate brief is in place for all school alterations, refurbishments, new build and re-decoration.

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Agree appropriate standards for use in design and property.	Appropriate standards have been agreed between Access Officer and Design Team. Clackmannanshire now has a comprehensive inclusive school design brief which will be used to maintain high and equal standards of design across all the council's educational buildings.
2. Develop guidance notes for all education premises to enable managers to comply with all disability access issues.	Guidance about Disability Discrimination Act requirements in relation to redecoration is complete and has been distributed to all schools. Guidance notes about accessible for secondary school has been developed and distributed to each secondary school. Guidance notes to help schools ensure that all their communications with pupils and families take account of disability has also been produced and distributed. Further guidance notes will be developed after discussion with headteachers about the findings of the access audits.
3. Agree standard information to be passed to outside contractors working in schools to ensure compliance with access requirements.	Agreement has been reached about the inclusive school design brief which will be used by all contractors working in schools.
4. Consult with wheelchair service to ensure their standards are incorporated into all access briefs.	Consultation has taken place with the manager of the wheelchair service guidance notes have been included in the inclusive school design brief to try to ensure the safe use of wheelchairs in all our schools.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 2 : To improve access to the physical school environment

Objective 2 : Plan and implement adaptations to schools for year 2003/4.

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Carry out a full access audit on all schools, excluding the three secondary schools, including estimated costs for improvements.	Full audit completed on one school and process agreed Other audits to be completed by August 2004
2. Continue to plan adaptations to schools for individual pupil requirements.	Ongoing List complete for 2004/5.
3. Plan for access improvements to Lochies/Deerpark Campus as a priority	Plans for adaptation for Lochies School have been completed and will be carried out in the summer holidays. Plans to improve access at Deerpark to be finalised by end June 2004.
4. Agree standards to the contractor responsible for Not For Profit developments of the 3 secondary schools (if approved).	The inclusive school design brief noted above is being used to inform the fully access standards for the new secondary schools.
5. Project to remove barriers to Clackmannan Primary School to be undertaken.	First stage complete, second stage to be developed.
6. Procedure detailing pupils' access requirements and the timescales for ensuring compliance to be written up and distributed to all relevant parties.	Procedure and paper work completed and now in use. Copies of paper work held by the Access Officer, by the design team with copies to parents and the schools involved.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 3 : To improve access to the curriculum.

Objective 2 : Develop appropriate support for learning with Primary Schools

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Learning support coordinator to establish group meetings and training programme for support for learning teachers.	Restructuring of learning support as detailed in paper in the promoted post structure in special education has been approved and will be implemented by summer 2004. Key tasks 1. 2 and 3 will be undertaken by the key members of staff once in post. See details of the new structure in appendix 2.
2. Working party to draw up guidelines of best practice for primary schools in their support for learning implementation.	Initial meeting of relevant staff convened to start the process of drawing up a Handbook of Additional Support for use by class teachers in primary schools. Project to be completed by August 2005
3. Working party to establish procedures for quality assurance in relation to support for learning.	Advisor in additional support needs was newly appointed in January 2004, has remit for quality assurance and will be developing this in 2004. .
4. Plan to appoint additional member of staff to the Outreach Service to support pre-five and primary school staff in providing an appropriate curriculum for children with severe movement and communication needs.	One member of staff has been appointed and further teacher time is also being developed to ensure that this group of children have the skilled input they require.
5. Set up a playground consultation group to develop inclusive play guidance.	Group of children now meeting. Consultation has taken place re new secondary school (see appendix 3) Playground consultation to take place before June 2004
6. Continue the close information sharing and training between inclusion support staff and primary school teachers, developing this for other teachers.	Close cooperation between inclusion team and the main stream teaching staff continues. Staff development is taking place on a regular basis and an interchange of skills and ideas is now an integral part of the outreach support service.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 3 : To improve access to the curriculum

Objective 3 : Increase the range of options available to disabled pupils in secondary schools.

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Further development of Access level courses at levels I, II, and III in core subjects to be available for secondary schools.	Further work has achieved more progress with Access level courses and Access level 3 courses have been developed in Biology, Physics, Chemistry, PE, Access level 3 and 2 in PSE English, Science, and levels 1.2 and 3 in Home Economics, maths has been developed at level 1 and 2 Quality assurance officers for additional support needs and for secondary schools will be involved in further developments in 2004
2. Training to be developed for mainstream staff to enable them to include pupils with a wider range of need. Implementation of this training to be included in the school's Development plan as a priority.	Disability equality training carried out with all staff in one secondary school. Further training planned. 11 Secondary school staff members attended a 9 session training in learning support
3. Further develop links between Alva Academy and Clackmannan college.	Ongoing. Audit of link work between colleges and secondary schools as completed in March 2004. Findings to inform further developments.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 4 : To improve communication with disabled pupils
Objective 1 : Carry out an audit of current procedures of how schools communicate with pupils.

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Sub-group of the working party to carry out audit across the council.	Sub group met on three occasion from April 2003 – November 2003. The audit is complete and information has also be collated on how schools can produce information in the most accessible way and also how they can have their information produced in different formats if required. These recommendations have been written up into guidance notes and distributed to all schools.
2. Work with schools to develop and improve the way they communicate with pupils.	Procedures including guidance notes on best practice to be completed as part of the school access audit.. Further work on ensuring that schools communicate clearly with disabled pupils and that pupils are not put at a disadvantage will continue. This will be included as a key task included in the section on improving access to the curriculum in the next accessibility strategy 2004 – 2007.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 5 : To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.

Objective 1 : Maintain regular consultation with parents of disabled children

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Establish routine of consultation about the Accessibility Strategy.	Links have been created with the help of the parent network coordinator. The parents forum has been consulted about the review and the further developments of the next strategy. A questionnaire has been distributed to the parents forum about the strategy to ensure that the priorities set down a year ago are still relevant and appropriate.
2. Use the same links to inform the Children's Service Plan.	The accessibility strategy working group has been integrated into the children service planning working group for children with additional support needs. This has enabled both processes to run very closely together ensuring good communication and interchange of ideas..
3. Ensure all parents know which member of staff has responsibility for ensuring the coordination of support plans and who they should consult in the first instance.	This will be included in the development of Coordinated Support Plans

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 5 : To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.

Objective 2 : Establish consultative framework with pupils

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Set up out of school activity group for disabled pupils to facilitate effective consultation.	This group has been set up very successfully and running for ten months. The pupils who attend are now very confident and able to express their views and have given very valuable opinions about what they want for their new secondary schools, see appendix 3.
2. Develop links with Play Alloa and the Eagle Project for consultation.	They are to be involved in the process of developing the next Strategy.
3. Consult on access issues in individual schools with the pupils.	This has been included in the links with school councils in the school that have been part of the play back project.

Clackmannanshire Council Accessibility Strategy

Priority 5 : To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.

Objective 3. Consult with outside agencies to exchange knowledge and expertise

Key Tasks	Position at end of March 2004
1. Set up discussion with Speech and Language Therapy Service re possibility of consultation service in nursery schools.	Changing Children's Services Funded post of Speech and Language Therapist has developed the consultative approach to service delivery.
2. Develop regular interagency discussions to plan and coordinate support for pre 5 children with complex needs.	Inter-agency discussions now take place on a regular and coordinated basis and this has improved communication between all the agencies considerably. Children Children's Service's fund is being used to support the organisation of this regular meeting.
3. Maintain and develop links with parents and other agencies in the staged intervention procedures.	The Parent and Children's Services Network Coordinator has been invaluable in ensuring that parents are well informed about staged intervention. These important links with parents will be developed further in the planning of the implementation of coordinated support plans.
4. Establish close links with Children's Service Planning process to explore developing framework of interagency working.	Accessibility Strategy working group has now combined with the Children's Services Planning group..

PART 3

Action Plan April 2004 to March 2007

Priority 1 : **To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments**				
Objective 1 : **Ensure that children attend their local school whenever possible except when it is not in their best interests.**				
Task	**Target**	**Resources**	**Responsibility**	**Evaluation**
1. Ensure that all children have the opportunity to enrol in their local mainstream school.	Children enrolled in their local school in all but exceptional circumstances.	Within existing resources.	Headteachers Principal Psychologist	Parent Network Co-ordinator. Principal Psychologist.
2. Ensure that if children attend a school other than their local mainstream school, their experience of education is as close as possible to a mainstream experience.	Children's support plan includes mainstream experience wherever possible.	Within existing resources.	Headteacher	Monitored though IEP reviews and reviews of the Coordinated Support Plan.
3. Ensure that children attending a school other than their local school link with their local MS school if it is within their best interests.	Planning includes this as part of the child's support plan.	Within existing resources.	Headteacher	Monitored though IEP reviews and reviews of the Coordinated Support Plan.
4. Develop the implementation of Coordinated Support Plans procedures to ensure implementation of 1 to 3.	Framework planned to ensure tasks 1 to 3 are undertaken	Within existing resources.	CSP implementation team.	CSP implementation team

Priority 1 : To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments.				
Objective 2 : **Develop training material for schools to use to ensure all staff have knowledge of the new duties and are aware of disability equality.**				
Task	**Target**	**Resources**	**Responsibility**	**Evaluation**
1. Programme of schools including whole staff training on disability equality and the new legislation in their school Development plans as priority will continue.	All school staff receive training by March 2007.	£23,000 over 3 years from ASN specific training grant	Headteachers Access Officer	Evaluation process started for the Playback Project to be developed.
2. Disability equality and specific knowledge of new duties to be offered as induction for all staff and as part of C.P.D.	All new staff have this input as routine by end 2007.	From existing resources.	Headteachers C.P.D. Co-ordinator	As above.
3. Programme of awareness raising specifically designed for staff at Alloa Academy to prepare for the development of enhanced provision in the new school	All staff receive awareness training by 2005/6	Accessibility Strategy fund	Headteacher/Access Officer	

Priority 1 : To create an inclusive ethos in all educational establishments.

Objective 3: Incorporate disability equality into the curriculum as part of an equal opportunities framework.

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Short term curricular development working group to draw up plan to incorporate disability and equality issues into the curriculum in primary and secondary schools.	Programme drawn up by Oct 2004.	£1,500.Accessibility Strategy Funding	Working Group	
2. Curricular development plan implemented	Teaching material put into place by 2006.	Material funded from Accessibility grant. £1,000	Working Group	Continuation of the evaluation process used for the Playback pilot
3 Provide training in the use of appropriate equality material.	Staff training put in place.	ASN specific grant - £2,000.	Working group	Feedback from the trainees. Q aire after curricular material has been used.
4. Establish contact with pupil councils of the schools in the Playback project regarding equality issues.	Contact maintained	From existing resources	Access Officer	

Priority 2 : To improve access to the physical school environment

Objective 1 : Ensure appropriate brief is in place for all school alterations, refurbishments, new build and re-decoration.

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Collate and further develop guidance notes for education premises to enable managers to comply with all disability access issues.	All school managers in possession of appropriate procedures by Dec 2004.	Within existing resources.	Access Officer, Support Services Manager, Property Manager.	Monitoring process by access officer and design and property service.
2. Complete audits on all primary and nursery schools.	June 2004	Within existing resources.	Access Officer,	
3. Develop training package re DDA requirements for school building management as required	Training available by September 2004	Within existing resources.	Access Officer,	Q'aire to headteachers
4. Develop plan of prioritising school access improvements	By end 2004	Within existing resources	Access Officer	

Priority 2 : To improve access to the physical school environment

Objective 2 : Plan and implement adaptations to schools for year 2003/4.

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Continue to plan adaptations to schools for individual pupil requirements.	Plans for 2005/6 completed by end Dec 2004	In the region of £70,000. from accessibility strategy fund	Access Officer, Property and Design Managers.	Access audit satisfactory.
2. Work to make Lochies accessible.	Work complete by August 2004.	£75,000 from capital and school estates strategy fund	Property and Design Managers	
3. Plans for access improvements to the Lochies/Deerpark campus to be completed	Plans complete and approved by June 2004.		Access Officer, headteachers, Property and Design Managers	Adaptations completed satisfactorily.
4. Deerpark/Lochies campus becomes barrier free.	August 2005			
5. Continue input to the PPP process which is developing the 3 secondary schools to ensure barrier free buildings.	2007/8	To be determined	Access Officer	Adaptations completed satisfactorily.
6. Ensure that the provision at Alloa Academy is designed to accommodate pupils with a wide range of ASN	2007	To be determined	Access Officer/HT Lochies/Fairfield	
7. Procedure detailing pupils' physical access requirements, with timescales for ensuring compliance, to be included in review of Coordinated Support Plans	Included in planning for coordinated support plans	From existing resources	Access Officer	

Priority 3 : To improve access to the curriculum.

Objective 1 : Ensure efficient and appropriate use of information and communication technology for disabled pupils.

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Renew Service Level Agreement with the CALL centre (communication and language) in Edinburgh.	Service Level Agreement renewed.	£8,100.	Quality assurance officer(ASN)	As part of quality assurance developments.
2. Set up short term working group to plan to develop IT for pupils with ASN in secondary schools.	Plan in place by October 2004	From existing resources. £600 for CALL centre advice and training	Access Officer.	
3. Implement plan as developed in Task 2.	Improved provision of IT for pupils with ASN in 2005 to 7	£10,000 from accessibility strategy fund	Access Officer,	As part of quality assurance developments
4. Continue developments in support for pupils with severe communication and movement difficulties	Pupils well supported in their local mainstream schools	From existing resources. .	Head of Lochies/Fairfield	As part of quality assurance developments ..

Priority 3 : To improve access to the curriculum.

Objective 2 : Develop appropriate support for learning with Primary Schools

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Working party to draw up guidelines of best practice for primary schools in their support for learning implementation.	Guidelines in place.	Within existing resources.	Head of Lochies / Fairfield	As above
2. Working party to establish procedures for quality assurance in relation to support for learning.	Guidelines in place.	Within existing resources.	Quality assurance officer(ASN)	As above
3. Consult with established group of disabled pupils re playground to develop inclusive play guidance.	Guidelines produced and Playtime is as inclusive as possible.	Within existing resources	Access Officer,	Disabled pupils consulted.
4. Continue the close information sharing and training between inclusion support staff and primary school teachers, developing this for other teachers.	Training for inclusion to continue to have high priority in the additional support needs training plan for 2004 through to 2007.	ASN specific grant	Training working group.	Quality assurance framework for Additional support needs

Priority 3 : To improve access to the curriculum

Objective 3 : Increase the range of options available to disabled pupils in secondary schools.

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Further development of Access level courses at levels I, II, and III in subjects to be available for secondary schools.	Further courses developed as appropriate.	Within existing resources.	Secondary schools curriculum working group.	Progress to be monitored by Quality assurance officer(ASN) and Quality assurance officer for secondary schools.
2. Training to continue for mainstream staff to deliver the new material. Implementation of this training to continue to be included in the school development plan as a priority.	Training plan framed by May 2004 for implementation by August 2004. Wide range of need met.	Funding ASN specific grant.	Head of Lochies / Fairfield	Quality assurance framework for Additional support needs
3. Further develop links between Alva Academy and Clackmannan college.	Range of options extended.		PT learning support Alva Academy	
4. Further develop links between Alloa Academy and Fairfield.	Range of opportunities continues to expand for Fairfield children. Exchange of staff expertise.	Within existing resources.	Head of Lochies / Fairfield	
5. Plan to develop the extension of the primary inclusion support service to ensure appropriate provision in secondary schools.	Plan developed by end March 2005		Head of Lochies / Fairfield	
6. Plan implemented by 2006	Appropriate level of support in all three secondary schools in place.		Head of Lochies / Fairfield	

Priority 3 : To improve access to the curriculum

Objective 4 : To improve level of communication with disabled pupils.

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Continued development of Person Centred Planning in helping pupils with significant communication difficulties contribute meaningfully to their school plans.	All pupils to be fully involved in planning their educational programmes in as meaningful a way as possible.	ASN specific grant for further training as appropriate.	Head of Lochies / Fairfield	Quality assurance framework for Additional support needs
2. Development of individual education plans and coordinated support plans to involve pupils and parents in a meaningful way.	All pupils and parents fully involved	Further training ASN specific grant	Principal Psychologist	Quality assurance framework for Additional support needs
3. Plans for joint training on effective communication with disabled pupils in the classroom to be developed.	Interagency training package developed by March 2005.	Further training ASN specific grant	Head of Lochies / Fairfield/head of speech and language therapy	

Priority 4 : To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.

Objective 1 : Maintain regular consultation with parents of disabled children

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Maintain established level of consultation with parents about the Accessibility Strategy.	Parents continue to be well informed about progress from existing resources responsibility.	From existing resources.	Parent network and Access Officer.	Questionnaire to parents and evaluation of the Parent and Children network coordinator.
2. Ensure all parents are thoroughly consulted about the development of coordinated support plans and involved in interagency training about the requirements of the new legislation.	Parents and other agencies thoroughly involved in planning implementation.	From existing resources.	Principal Psychologist.	Questionnaire to parents and evaluation of the Parent and Children network coordinator.
3. Ensure all parents know which member of staff has responsibility for ensuring the coordination of support plans and who they should consult in the first instance.	Parents and schools clear about the communication links.	From existing resources.	Principal Psychologist as part of the development of coordinated support plans	Quality assurance framework for Additional support needs

Priority 4 : To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.

Objective 2 : Establish consultative framework with pupils

Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Continue out of school activity group for disabled pupils.	Pupils continue develop confidence in expressing their views. Their views taken into account.	Within existing resources.	Youth Team Leader and Access Officer.	Questionnaire to pupils
2. Develop links with Play Alloa and the Eagle Project members for consultation.	Effective consultation process becomes established	Within existing resources.	Play Alloa Co-ordinator and Access Officer.	
3. Plan involvement of external agency to set up more effective consultation process with pupils.	Plan in place by Dec 2004	Accessibility Strategy funding.	Access Officer.	

Priority 4 : To improve communication and consultation with parents, pupils and other agencies.
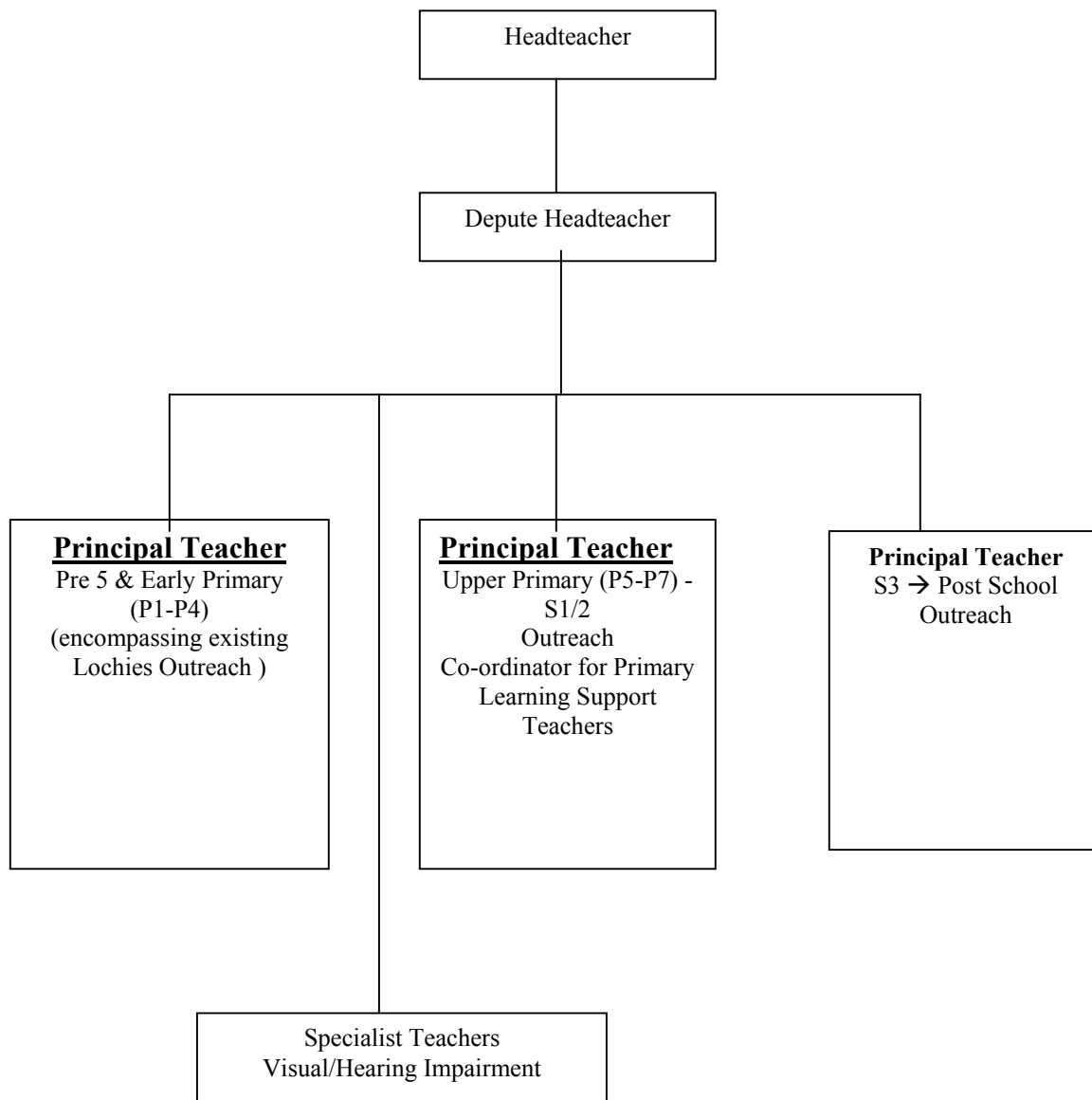
Objective 3. Consult with outside agencies to exchange knowledge and expertise

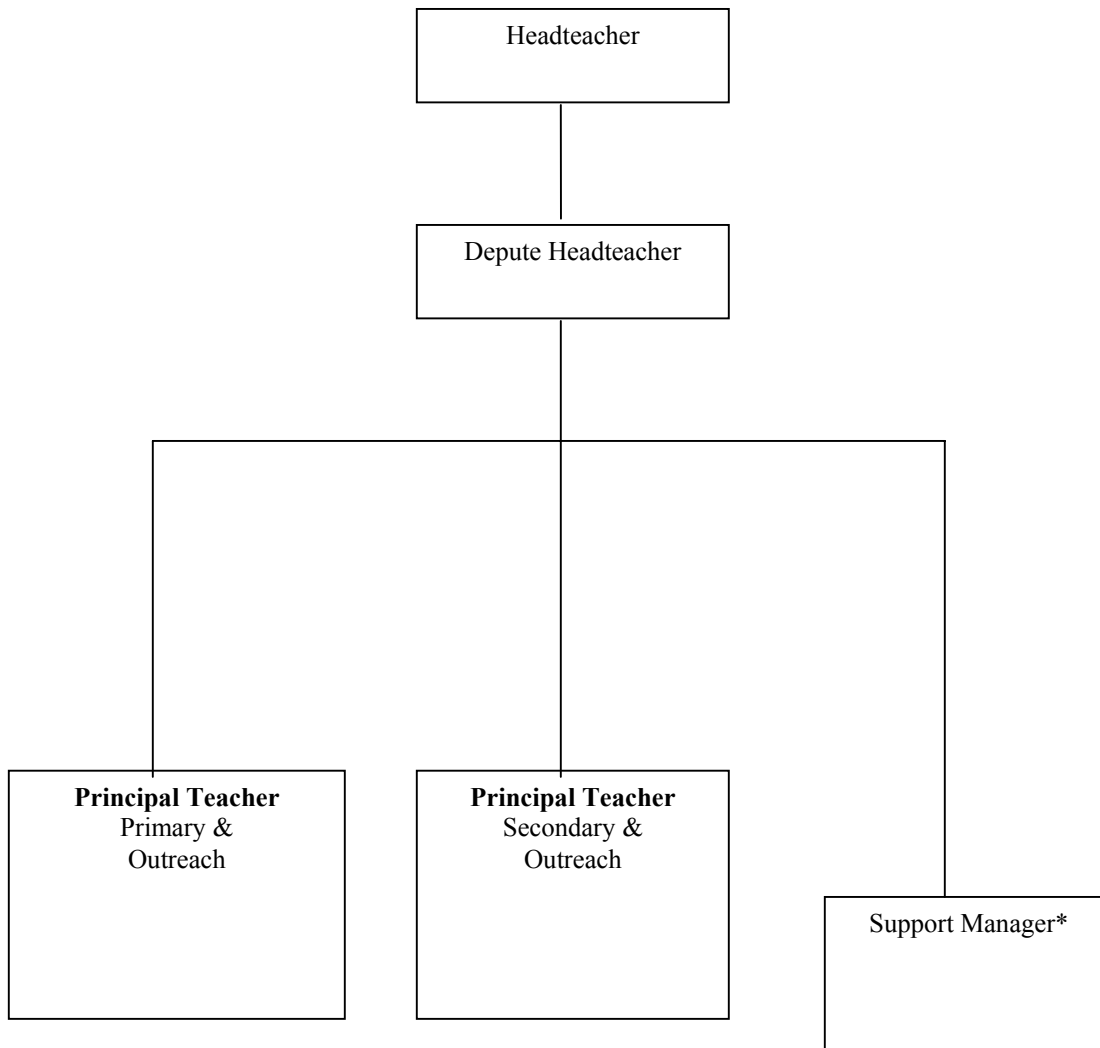| Task	Target	Resources	Responsibility	Evaluation
1. Build on the developments of consultations and information sharing model in pre school of the CHAT project and plan for end of project in March 2005. See appendix 3 for CHAT report	Effective interchange of skills between teachers and therapists.	Changing Children's Service Fund.	Head of speech and language Therapy, Sharon Easton.	As part of CCSF project evaluation
2. Establish interagency group to plan implantation new duties under the education (support for learning) Bill.	All involved agencies are involved and well informed.	From existing resources.	Principal psychologist	Quality assurance officer(ASN)

PART 4

Appendices

**INCLUSION SUPPORT SERVICE PROMOTED POST STRUCTURE
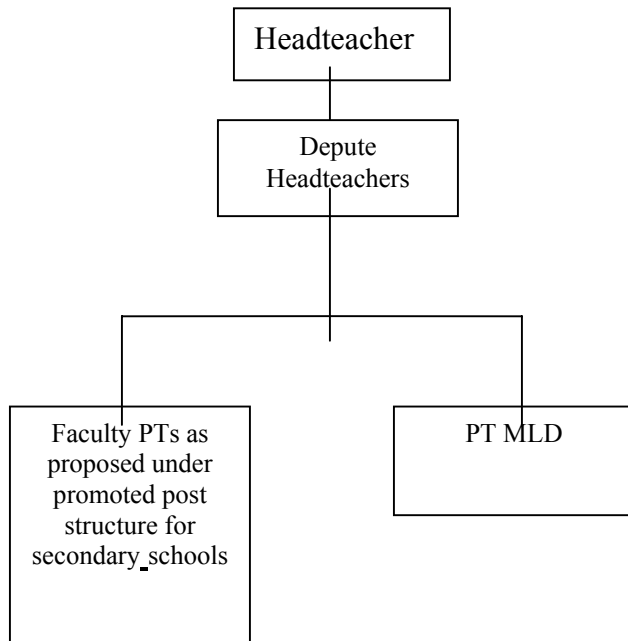(encompassing Lochies & Fairfield Schools)**

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                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │   Headteacher   │
                        └─────────────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │Depute Headteacher│
                        └─────────────────┘
                                 │
        ┌────────────────────────┼────────────────────────┐
        │                        │                        │
┌───────────────┐       ┌───────────────┐       ┌───────────────┐
│Principal Teacher│     │Principal Teacher│     │Principal Teacher│
│Pre 5 & Early   │      │Upper Primary   │      │S3 → Post School│
│Primary         │      │(P5-P7) - S1/2  │      │Outreach        │
│(P1-P4)         │      │Outreach        │      └───────────────┘
│(encompassing   │      │Co-ordinator for │
│existing Lochies│      │Primary Learning │
│Outreach )      │      │Support Teachers │
└───────────────┘       └───────────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │Specialist Teachers│
                        │Visual/Hearing    │
                        │Impairment        │
                        └─────────────────┘
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PUPIL SUPPORT SERVICE
(encompassing PSSS & SSSS)

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┌─────────────────────────┐
│       Headteacher       │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Depute Headteacher    │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
   ┌─────────┼──────────────────────┐
┌──────────────┐  ┌──────────────┐   │
│ **Principal  │  │ **Principal  │   │
│ Teacher**    │  │ Teacher**    │   │
│ Primary &    │  │ Secondary &  │   │
│ Outreach     │  │ Outreach     │   │
│              │  │              │ ┌──────────────────┐
└──────────────┘  └──────────────┘ │ Support Manager* │
                                   └──────────────────┘
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`* This post is not a teaching post and is not covered in the context of *A Teaching Profession For The 21st Century*. It is, however, an important post in the management structure of the service and is included here for completeness.

ALVA ACADEMY

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                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │   Headteacher    │
                    └──────────────────┘
                             │
                    ┌──────────────────┐
                    │     Depute       │
                    │  Headteachers    │
                    └──────────────────┘
                             │
           ┌─────────────────┴─────────────────┐
    ┌──────────────┐                    ┌──────────────┐
    │ Faculty PTs as│                   │    PT MLD     │
    │ proposed under│                   │              │
    │ promoted post │                   │              │
    │  structure for│                   └──────────────┘
    │secondary schools│
    │              │
    └──────────────┘
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Note - reporting relationship of PT MLD to DHT would be determined by HT; the reporting relationship here is for illustrative purposes.
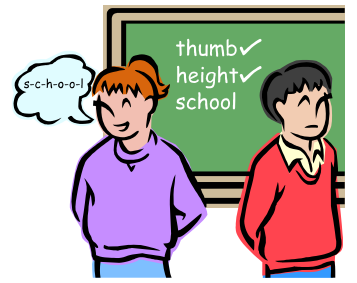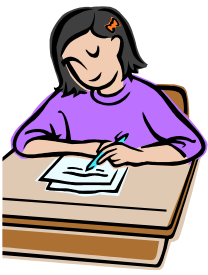
WHAT we want in our

NEW

SCHOOL

THE important

things we will learn are:

- **new information**
- **new skills**
- **how to find things out**
- **new interests and hobbies.**

We will also learn to communicate better, to listen to others, to

discuss things and be
more independent.

We need quiet
places so we can
listen to learn with fish,
calm colours and good
sound insulation.

It needs to be
interesting too with
nice things to look at
including big windows

everyone can see out of.
It needs to be light.

We need a friendly building which gives views even for people who can't stand up. We'd like to get about like everyone else without having to ask people to open doors or reach books off
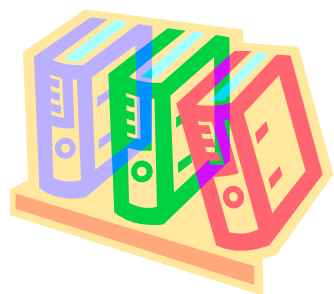
high shelves or other things like that.

'Learning to communicate is very important'.

We'd like a classroom with our own desks or workspace but with alcoves off for discussing in small groups-4 or 5 and with comfortable seats.
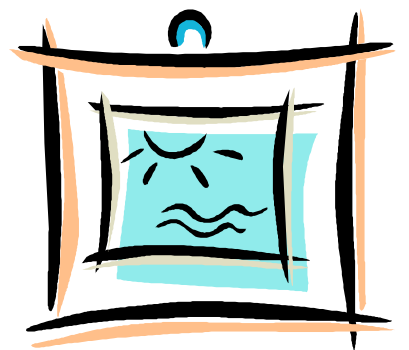
We'd like nice things on the walls…

Making Friends is _REALLY_ important

CAN we have places to meet friends, which are quite small with tables and chairs for about 20 and *NO*

doors. It will be better to have quite a few all over the school rather than one or two big ones.

DINING ROOMS

are usually too noisy for *chatting* and *making friends*.
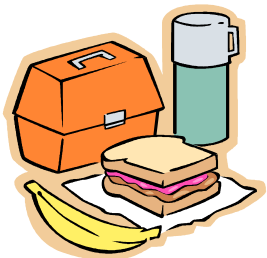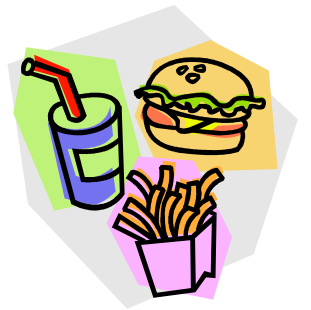
Can we have a dining area which isn't too big and noisy please?

Opinions from:— Lisa McLauchlan
Craigbank Primary school
Sauchie

AMYNAPIER

Jordan campbell
alva academy

Meggan farrell
St mungo's

Communication, Help and Awareness Team

Year One Report – 2003

Index

Foreword

Within the Speech and Language Therapy Service there has been recognition that the existing service model was failing to meet the needs of children from a disadvantaged socio-economic background. Research has indicated that language development is significantly depressed in comparison with other cognitive abilities in early childhood for these children. Research has also indicated that communication difficulties are the most common neuro developmental condition. It is vital that children with communication difficulties receive appropriate intervention as soon as possible. This will give them the opportunity to make progress to the "best of their ability during the optimum time for language acquisition." (1) It was identified that there was a gap in the service for families of children within the 0-3 years age group. An application was, therefore, submitted in August 2002 to the Changing Children's Services Fund for 4.5 WTE Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) posts across Forth Valley to begin to address this.

There were 3 main objectives in the proposal:

➢ Specifically target populations who currently find access to Speech and Language Therapy difficult.
➢ Enhance the collaborative aspect of Speech and Language Therapy across the pre-school population, with specific regard to children with special needs.
➢ Pilot and evaluate a range of models of service delivery including the enskilling of other professionals from other agencies.

It was anticipated that these objectives would be met through close working relationships with other agencies.

Funding was granted for 2 years, for 3 WTE SLTs – 1 for Clackmannanshire, 1 for Falkirk and 1 for Stirling and the therapists began their posts in January 2003. It was recognised that a Forth Valley approach was required and so CHAT (Communication, Help and Awareness Team) was formed. There was also a recognition of the need to be responsive to the priorities of the individual local authorities. A steering group of the Speech and Language Therapy Department's Senior Management Team was formed to ensure this and to guide the project. Monitoring arrangements have been agreed in each local authority.

Please Note:

This report refers to the period January – December 2003. We are aware that some details may have changed since this report was drafted and these will be reflected in future reports.

<u>Introduction</u>

The early years are an important time for the development of children's language and social skills. Many factors affect this development, both within the child's language learning environment, and beyond.

<u>Having recognised this, our overall aim is, therefore, to enable those involved with children in the early years to work together to maximise children's language and social development to promote later literacy and communication skills.</u>

<u>We felt that this aim could be achieved through:</u>

➢ **Preventing –** by raising awareness of 'normal' language development, encouraging joint working and helping parents to enjoy developing their child's language in a fun way, we hope to reduce the numbers of children who require specialist help. This should, therefore, **prevent** difficulties with language and literacy in later years.

➢ **Promoting –** by providing both formal and informal training, in all aspects of communication, to those involved with children in the early years, we hope to **promote** 'best practice'.

➢ **Prioritising –** having provided training, we hope to enable other professionals and parents to effectively **pinpoint** and **prioritise** children requiring specific intervention.

➢ **Providing –** by increasing our accessibility within local communities, we hope to **provide** increased support for parents and other professionals.

➢ **Producing –** we will **produce** relevant, easy to read, leaflets, posters and information packs for community wide distribution. We will also **produce** policies and guidelines for future service provision in the early years

In order to give structure to our working week it was decided to split our sessions into equal time for the 0-3 years population and the 3-5 years population, as well as time for our clinical remit.

It was decided that there should be a 40:60 split between clinical: project time.

We have, therefore, allocated 1 day for 0-3 years, 1 day for 3-5 years, 1 day for training/meetings etc and 2 days for clinical work.

Putting the 5 Ps into Practice

There are 5 main objectives outlined above. There is, however, considerable overlap between them and working on one contributes to/supports the others.

0-3 years

Historically, Speech and Language Therapists receive most of their paediatric referrals for the 3+age range. In order to achieve our goal of **preventing** future communication difficulties, it was realised that it was essential to work with parents and other professionals to:

- help them understand the developmental stages of the communication process
- provide pre-referral information and advice
- make them feel more confident when communicating with their young child
- help them to be good communicative role models
- provide opportunities for informal discussion with Speech and Language Therapists
- provide reassurance and thus reduce parental anxiety.

This is being achieved by:

➢ Drop-in opportunities including parent workshops at:
  - Parent and Toddler Groups
  - Playgroups
  - Baby Clinics
  - Family Centres
  - Teenage Mothers Groups
➢ Production and continued delivery of formal training on all aspects of communication development to:
  - Health Visitors - *'I have been a Health Visitor for 12 years and have not learned as much information re speech and language before'*
  - Family Centre Staff
  - Bright Start Staff
  - Private Nursery Staff
➢ Information sharing on CHAT with:
- Social Workers
- Educational Psychologists
- SPPA Workers
- Childminders
- Library Staff
- Early Years Co-ordinators
- Babies Love Books Workers

- ➢ Production of leaflets:
- Leaflets were designed to be distributed to parents by Speech and Language Therapists and other professionals. These provide them with information on all aspects of "normal" language development, at 6 monthly stages from birth – 5 years.

'I will try these things and pay attention to information on leaflets so my baby will have a 'good learning environment''.
  (Parent)

- ➢ Production of checklists:
  - Checklists were designed for use by other professionals to provide them with information about "normal" speech and language development, and to provide them with a framework for referral to the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

3-5 years

- All work carried out with the 0-3 years population has had an impact on the 3-5 population.
- Leaflets and checklists were designed to be used with children up to the age of 5.

It was felt that the best way to access as many parents as possible, and to meet our 5Ps with this age group, was to build our service around nurseries.

➢ Training
  - 2 day training course offered to all nursery staff within the targeted geographical areas looking at all aspects of speech, language and communication development.
  - To be offered as a rolling programme of training, every 3 months.
  - 2 courses were run in year 1 of the project and 2 more are planned for year 2 (2004).

'All content focussed attention on children's language – raised whole general awareness/understanding'

➢ Nursery Initiative
  This method of accessing nursery children was decided upon following a literature search. Anne Locke's study (1) 'acknowledged the importance of spoken language, they expressed anxiety and lack of knowledge about how best to help the substantial numbers of children coming into nursery with delayed language, some hardly talking at all'. This method of service delivery is being run in the Riverside NHS Trust in London (2). We decided that it would be possible to provide this service to 3 nurseries per area during the course of our project by going into each nursery for 5 months. The Nursery Initiative consists of the following:
  - Small group input for all children within a specified nursery.
  - 1 x weekly Speech and Language Therapy visits for 5 months to jointly plan and run 4 language groups of 5 or 6 children with trained nursery staff (see above).
  - Nursery staff to run groups containing all other children using joint plans before SLTs next visit.
  - Language groups initially planned by SLT but then jointly planned to allow work to focus round nursery topics.
  - Parent groups written by SLT but run within nursery for all parents.
  - It is also hoped that the nursery staff will continue the work once the initial 5 months have been completed.
➢ Drop-in Sessions
  - Drop-in sessions for parents are being offered at some nurseries and family centres to allow parents to access SLTs without being referred to the service, to allow provision of pre-referral advice.

Individual Localities

Introduction

Prior to any of the Speech and Language Therapists taking up their posts, the Senior Management Team identified specific areas within each locality, which met the criteria of the CHAT Team's main aims. The areas were selected because the local clinics all had high failure to attend rates and there were many families from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. A recent study by Anne Locke (Jan 2002) (1) found that children from these backgrounds "demonstrate language delay that was significantly depressed in comparison with other cognitive abilities."

The selected areas were as follows:

- Clackmannanshire – the whole of Clackmannanshire is to be targeted, with the exception of Dollar and Muckhart.
- Falkirk – Bo'ness and Whitecross.
- Stirling – Raploch, Cornton and the Eastern Villages (Fallin, Plean and Cowie).

The decisions about clinical remit were made by the Senior Management Team, and were made based on local priorities and pressures on the SLT Service. Within Falkirk and Stirling, these decisions also had to be made based on the restriction of only 1 WTE SLT compared with the size of the population.

Clinical

The full-time Clackmannanshire post operates as a job-share. From August 1st 2003 until end of March 2004 an extra session was funded to support the CHAT project.

Our clinical remit is centred around two family centres – Alloa Family Centre and Hillfoots Family Centre. There are links to 3 other outreach nurseries; Alva, Ladywell and Claremont to follow up specific children who have failed to attend the clinic including 3 children who have special needs. Good links have been made with these family centres, and work is being carried out in collaboration with their staff.

'CHAT clinical presence in nursery has allowed more children who would usually fail to attend to be seen. Parents gain trust and confidence in speech and language therapy, making weekly consultation more effective.'

Project Time

➢ 0-3 years

Being based at the family centres has allowed us:
- To identify children at risk of language difficulties at a very early stage.
- To work closely with staff in the baby room - many informal discussions take place around the children and pre-referral advice can be given. Staff have found this greatly beneficial.
- To meet parents on a regular basis through contact at Parent and Toddler groups and Drop-in sessions.
- To participate in regular "Baby Talk" meetings.

We have also targeted the following Pre-5 establishments and key workers:
- Parent and Toddler groups including playgroups – 10 out of 17 have been visited, some of who receive monthly visits.
- Sauchie Under-1 – informal talk and opportunity to return.
- Bright Start Initiative – regular monthly meetings to liaise and plan intervention.
- Health Visitors – training and distribution of leaflets.
- Parent Groups – running at Alloa Family Centre, hoping to set up at Hillfoots Family Centre.
- CHAT leaflet "Enjoying Books Together" is included in the Bookstart pack.

We have found that easy access to a Speech and Language Therapist is the key to developing a working partnership with parents - they have appreciated the informality of this service. Many leaflets have been distributed around the community.

➢ 3-5 years

- Family Centres – groups are running for 3 year olds, some of this may be pre-referral work with staff.
- 2 day Nursery Training – of the 2 courses run, 13 staff from Abercromby Nursery, Alloa Family Centre, Bright Start, Coalsnaughton Nursery, Clackmannan Nursery, Hillfoots Family Centre and Sauchie Nursery have attended.
- Nursery Initiative – from August 2003 until January 2004 we have provided small group input in Clackmannan Nursery. 5 nurseries were initially invited to take part in the nursery initiative, and all 5 were interested.
- Parent Workshops – 4 workshops were delivered with 7 parents attending.
- Nursery In-service – half-day training for 40 nursery staff throughout Clackmannanshire.

Feedback from staff at Clackmannan Nursery indicates that they appreciated the pre-referral advice and informal discussions.

'I am much more confident in my own ability to recognise children with speech and language problems. Now I know what to do about it.'

➢ Constraints

- Accommodating the mix of children in the group, due to their age and ability.
- Nursery freeing up staff to work in groups had impact on wider nursery, ideally a supply to cover released staff, would have been helpful.
- Time constraints meant that staff could not run extra groups as planned.
- Flexibility – the project has needed to allocate time in a defined way and this has led to lack of flexibility to accommodate local needs.

Falkirk

<u>Clinical</u>

- 2 days clinical targeting children under 5 who have failed to attend appointments in Bo'ness Health Centre.
- Therapy provided in - Deanburn Nursery, Grange Nursery, Bo'ness Public Nursery and Whitecross Nursery.
- Work is being carried out in collaboration with Nursery Staff and good links have been made, resulting in carryover of therapy work to nursery setting.

<u>Project Time</u>

➤ <u>0-3 years</u>

- Parent and Toddler Groups – contact and monthly visits with 3 out of 7 known groups. *'It was useful to hear what she said about TV and that it doesn't encourage language development. I will also aim to use the dummy less during the day'.*
- Family Centre – strong links made with Bo'ness Family Centre, joint home visits carried out, inclusion in family centre parent groups, regular meetings to discuss specific children, planning of joint groups.
- 0-3 Nursery Provision/Playgroups – regular contact with Deanburn Playgroup – visits for specific children and general information sharing. Contact made with Kids Stop, private nursery.
- Parent Groups – parent groups planned for Jan 04 to be run with Family Centre Staff, based around early communication and signing with babies.
- CLASP (Camelon and Larbert Support to Parents) – contact made re Whitecross area, 2 day training planned for CLASP staff, Feb 04.
- Bounce & Tickle – regular attendance at Bounce & Tickle groups run by the library service in Bo'ness, leading to informal discussion with mums and leaflet distribution.
- Books for Babies - CHAT leaflet "Enjoying Books Together" to be included in the pack.
- Health Visitors – contact made and regular discussions about specific children.

Due to attendance at pre-3 groups, it has been possible to allay parents' concerns about their children's speech and language development and provide pre-referral advice.

- ➢ <u>3-5 years</u>

- • 2 day Nursery Training, of the 6 nurseries, and 1 family centre invited to attend training, only 6 participants have attended to date, from Grange Nursery, Deanburn Nursery, Kinneil Nursery and Bo'ness Family Centre.
- • Nursery Initiative – of the 6 nurseries invited to take part in the nursery initiative, 4 replied to say that they were interested, and it was decided that Grange Nursery would be seen for the first block. Groups were run within the nursery on 6 occasions between the end of August 03 and December 03.
- • Parent Groups – no parent groups have been run for this age group so far, but it is hoped to run groups both within Grange Nursery and Kinneil Nursery in February.
- • Playgroups – links made with Deanburn Playgroup.

- ➢ <u>Constraints</u>

- • Sickness – the nursery teacher with whom I was jointly running and planning groups as part of the nursery initiative, had 2 long term periods of sick leave during the period form August to February. This meant that it was only possible to deliver 6 weeks worth of groups to the children in Grange Nursery.
- • Communication – there was some confusion within Grange Primary School about the nursery groups which led to the groups being left for a few weeks while the possibility of cover was explored.

Staff in nursery regularly comment on the benefits of having regular contact with speech and language therapy - especially with regard to pre-referral support, advice and useful materials

Stirling

<u>Clinical Time</u>

- 2 days clinical - 1 day to target pre-school children with special needs and 1 day to target children who find access to Speech and Language Therapy difficult.
- Therapy provided in – Raploch Nursery, Fallin Nursery, Baker Street Nursery and on a domiciliary basis.
- The majority of individual input is provided in collaboration with nursery staff, specialist pre-school nursery nurses, educational psychologists and parents.

This has proved to be a very effective way of providing therapy to these children, and all agencies, including Speech and Language Therapy, have benefited from it.

Through this method of working, the Early Years support service suggest that there has been an increase in early referral of children with significant special needs to their team and this may have been encouraged by the CHAT presence in all the local areas.

<u>Project Time</u>

➢ <u>0-3 years</u>

- Parent and Toddler Groups – 3 out of 5 known groups have been accessed with growing success.
- Family Centres/0-3 provisions – 4 out of 5 establishments have been accessed.
- Parent Groups – parent groups are being run in Cornton Nursery for families with children who are under 3 with between 5 and 7 parents attending on a weekly basis. It was hoped that groups could be run in Castleview Family Centre but this has not been possible so far.
- Teenage Mums – regular visits have been set up with this group.
- Health Visitors – attendance at monthly meetings, joint home visits to raise profile of SLT with some families (initiated by Health Visitors). *'Continue to increase liaison with other agencies – joint visits when appropriate.'(Health Visitor)*
- Baby Clinics – regular attendance at a variety of baby clinics in the area. *'I will try to get mum to switch TV off more when playing with the wee one'.(Grandmother at baby clinic)*
- Babies Love Books – member of the steering group.

Most parents spoken to report that they now feel happier and more confident while playing with their children and they are more easily able to identify positive changes in their child's speech and language development.

- ➤ 3-5 years

- 2 day Nursery Training – of the 2 courses run, 5 staff, from 3 establishments have attended.
- Nursery Initiative – run in Baker Street Nursery from end of Aug 03 – end of Jan 04. Only 16 weeks were achieved, however, due to the constraints listed below. Baker Street was the 1st of 4 interested nurseries to be chosen.
- Parent Groups are planned for the 3-5 population in Baker Street Nursery for Jan 04.
- 'Language into Literacy – joining together' – a 4 session course was run jointly with Lesley Gibb, Early Years Development Officer, for a multi-disciplinary group. 18 participants attended.

- ➤ Constraints

- Nursery Nurse Industrial Action – it has been very difficult for interested parties to attend the 2 day training course due to the industrial action, and its impact on supply cover. Within Baker Street 4 full days were missed due to strike action and no follow-up work was carried out by the nursery staff due to the impacts of industrial action.
- Time Constraints – the 2 identified members of staff within Baker Street both have constraints on their time – 1 only works part time and the other has managerial duties which take up part of her time - follow-up has, therefore, been difficult.

These constraints have been taken into consideration for the second phase of the Nursery Initiative. Nursery nurse industrial action is, however, ongoing.

Over the **second year** of the project we aim to achieve the following:

- Move into our 2nd Nursery as part of the Nursery Initiative, this will be Sauchie Nursery in Clackmannanshire, Kinneil Nursery in Bo'ness and Raploch Nursery in Stirling.
- Publicise CHAT both within the NHS Trust and in the local press. We hope to have a photo in the NHS newsletter, and photos and articles in local papers.
- Gather more evidence of the work we are doing, particularly photographic and comments/evaluations from staff and parents.
- Consider changes and development to Speech and Language Therapy guidelines with the Senior Speech and Language Therapy Management Team, in relation to the pre-3 population.
- Distribute our leaflets and checklists more widely and make the leaflets into poster format for display in local health centres and public areas to allow wider access to our information.
- Increase the amount of work done with parents, by carrying out more parent workshops.
- Help to organise a SIG (Specific Interest Group) for other SLTs working in similar fields.
- Strengthen links which have been made.
- Continue to be creative in our approach to targeting the 0-3 population and service delivery to the 3-5 population.
- Review our evaluation form for training courses.

Longer Term Aims

- Discuss with appropriate Education Officers the possibility of raising the profile of listening and talking within the nursery curriculum.
- Evaluate the sustainability of the project – how much work is continued within specific nurseries once the project has moved on.
- Investigate why there have been different take up rates of training from different localities.
- Evaluate whether Primary 1 teachers have noticed any difference in the language and communication skills of the children going into their classes.

Summary

We appreciate all the support we have been given, both from within the NHS, and from the local authorities in enabling this project to happen and we would particularly like to thank the following for their time and support:

- Liz Rose, Early Years Development Officer, Falkirk Council.
- Sharon Easton, Manager of pre-5 and after school care, Clackmannanshire Council.
- Lesley Gibb, Early Years Development Officer, Stirling Council.
- Sylvia Tait, Social Work Team Manager, Children with Disabilities Team, Grangemouth
- Speech and Language Therapy CHAT Steering Group – Mary Turnbull, Kate Brodie, Margaret Sibbald, Lois Cameron.

The CHAT Team have enjoyed reaching into the community and accessing a population which would rarely be seen in clinic. Our project has been well received by staff and parents.

As of January 2004, our funding has been extended, and our project will now run until 2006. This will allow the work which has been carried out to be continued and we would like to express our happiness at this welcome news.

Reference List

(1) Anne Locke "Development and disadvantage: implications for the early years and beyond"(2002).

(2) Hammersmith & Fulham Primary Care NHS Trust, Kensington & Chelsea Primary Care NHS Trust, Westminster Primary Care NHS Trust: 'Community Early Years Training Pack'