

# Is it Child's Play?

Meeting the Childcare Challenge  
for Children with Special Needs

by **Magdalene Boyd**

Scottish Out of School Care Network



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

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On behalf of the Joint Project Group, The Scottish Out of School Care Network led Is it Child's Play? Meeting the Childcare Challenge for Children with Special Needs research project.

The Joint Project Group is comprised of:  
National Association of Toy & Leisure Libraries (NATLL), National Playbus Association, Play Scotland, Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA), Scottish Independent Nurseries Association (SINA), Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN) and Scottish Pre-school Play Association (SPPA).

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Finally, my thanks go to all the young people, parents/carers and childcare providers who participated in the research. Their views should of course determine future childcare provision, and it is to be hoped that future research will fully audit the increasing call for childcare for children with special needs.

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# Introduction

The last four years have seen major developments in childcare in Scotland. The Childcare Strategy in 1998 outlined proposed action for improving the affordability, quality and access to formal childcare. Childcare Partnerships were set up in each local authority so as to bring together all childcare providers to plan for the integrated expansion of childcare for 0 to 14 year olds. While there is clear evidence of substantial growth in childcare across Scotland, the evidence suggests that provision for children with special needs is disproportionately limited.

This report was produced following research conducted part-time over 10 months. It contains an overview of childcare provision for children with special needs in each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland. As changes are occurring very quickly in this area, only a 'snap-shot' of provision as at September 2002 can be detailed. Every Local Childcare Partnership contributed to the research and each area explained the developments in childcare provision for children with special needs in their area. Several themes emerged from the meetings with both Childcare Partnerships and service providers and these issues are discussed in the Research Findings.

The Local Summaries provide more in depth information relating to childcare provision for children with special needs in each area. All provision that has been developed specifically for children with special needs is listed and support that is given to childcare services looking after children with special needs is also explained. These Summaries reveal that the extent to which children with special needs can access childcare varies greatly across Scottish local authorities as well as within the authority areas. Several authorities stand out as greatly supporting childcare provision for children with special needs and the successes of these areas may be due to the priority that special needs provision is given at the planning stages of the childcare plans. In these areas, support is given to most or all childcare providers looking after children with disabilities, irrespective of their public, private or voluntary nature. The childcare needs of the parents of children with special needs are met following comprehensive childcare audits. The result is that the parents, the service providers and, most importantly, the children themselves, can benefit from quality childcare.

However, this research also reveals that there remain barriers to fully accessible childcare in most areas and in most sectors. These barriers are caused by a number of factors, all of which are detailed below. While most of the barriers to fully inclusive childcare can be overcome through training, advice and changing attitudes, the biggest barrier seems to be the concern for future funding. The extremely high costs that are involved when looking after children with profound and complex needs necessitates reliance on unreliable funding sources, thereby rendering future planning extremely difficult. All areas were in agreement that the lack of dependable funding to support childcare places for children with special needs was their main concern.

In spite of this, many areas in Scotland are making the most of available resources in order to support as many children with special needs as possible in childcare services. It is hoped that this brief report highlights the different initiatives that are in operation across the country supporting childcare for children with disabilities so as to share good practice and provide suggestions for future childcare plans.

# Definitions

## **‘Children’**

This report is limited to the study of provision for children and young people between the ages of 0–14.

## **‘Disability’**

This research has used the ‘social model’ of disability in order to study provision for children with special needs. The terms ‘special needs’ and ‘disability’ are used interchangeably throughout the report. The social model of disability acknowledges the medical impairment, but suggests that the impairment only becomes a disability if society makes it so. If barriers are removed, then medical impairments will become far less disabling.

The definition used in this research differs therefore from the definition of disability used in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). This Act defines ‘disability’ as

‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

As this definition requires the individual to demonstrate that their impairments prevent them from undertaking normal day-to-day activities, this can be described as a ‘medical model’ as it looks at the individual’s impairments rather than their social environment.

As this study is looking into what can be done to remove the social barriers to inclusion, it was considered appropriate to adopt the social rather than medical definition of disability.

## **‘Childcare’**

This research aims to detail all childcare provision for children with special needs in Scotland. The definition of childcare services includes childminders, nurseries, out of school care (OSC) services and holiday playschemes. The services all provide play opportunities in a supervised environment. While this definition does not include nurseries and playgroups which provide only pre-school education, those nurseries which offer extended day care and ‘wrap around’ childcare are included. The term ‘childcare’ is used as it draws a clear distinction between services which are accessible to all children and ‘daycare’ services which are provided by Social Work departments for children ‘in need’ under the terms of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 which is explained below. Such services very often have to ration places amongst the children accessing the service and are focused on the child’s needs as opposed to the whole family’s. Respite care is not included in this research as the report is limited to projects which have been organised to provide play first and foremost, rather than needs-focused respite and therapy. Respite care is often used for emergencies only rather than on a regular basis.



# Relevant Legislation

There is a range of legislation supporting the rights of children with disabilities to play and to services. They include:

## **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Article 31: “Every child is entitled to rest and play and to have the chance to join in a wide range of activities including cultural and artistic activities.”

*All Convention rights apply to all children whatever their race, sex, religion, language, disability, opinion or family background.*

Article 23: “disabled children must be helped to be as independent as possible and to be able to take a full and active part in every day life.”

*Play is an integral part of every day life for children.*

Article 24: “the child’s right to the highest level of health possible.”

## **The Children (Scotland) Act 1995**

Children with and affected by disabilities are ‘children in need’ under the Act. Local authorities have duties towards children in need under section 22 and section 27.

Section 22: Each local authority must provide a range and level of services to:

- safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its area who are ‘in need’
- promote the upbringing of children ‘in need’ by their families.

Section 27: Each local authority must provide day care for children ‘in need’ aged 5 or less, and after-school and holiday care for children ‘in need’

The Act also outlines specific duties towards children with disabilities in Section 23.

Section 23: Services for ‘children in need’ must be designed

- to minimise the effect of the disability on a disabled child
- to minimise the effect of the disability, of a child adversely affected by the disability of another family member
- to give those children ‘the opportunity to lead lives which are as normal as possible’

The Act also requires local authorities to publish information on children’s services in its area (Section 20). There is a specific requirement in this Section for information to be published on services for children affected by a disability.

## **The Disability Discrimination Act 1995**

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) defines disability as a

“physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

The first stage of Part III of the DDA (access to goods, facilities and services) came into force in December 1996. The Act makes it unlawful for service providers to discriminate against people with disabilities by refusing a service or offering a lower standard of service, whether the service is provided free or is charged for. The Act does not cover private clubs or associations and there are separate rules for education and transport providers.

The second stage of Part III came into force in October 1999. Service providers are now required to:

- make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to any policies, practices and procedures that discriminate against disabled people;
- provide auxiliary aids and services to enable or make it easier for disabled people to use the service; and
- make their services available by reasonable alternative methods where a physical feature is a barrier.

The final phase of Part III will be implemented in 2004 when service providers will be required to make permanent physical alterations to their premises. Part III of the Act covers all aspects of services to the public, including private companies, public sector organisations and voluntary and community groups.

The Act covers indoor and outdoor adventure playgrounds, leisure centres, and play areas in public parks, playgroups and some private nurseries. Out of School Care groups will therefore be included also.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001**

This Act amends the DDA so as to make it unlawful for education providers to discriminate against pupils with disabilities in the provision of education and ‘associated services’ in schools. This Act comes into force in September 2002 and from then on, service providers in schools may be prosecuted for discriminating against children with disabilities. While nursery services operating from schools are included within the Act, ‘associated services’ has not been clearly defined. As it is intended to be interpreted widely, it can be assumed that Out of School Care services operating from schools are subject to the Act as from September.

# Methodology

This research was undertaken part-time from November 2001–August 2002. Given the complex nature of the issues involved in this research, it was decided to adopt a qualitative approach to the research based on in-depth interviews with representatives of each Local Childcare Partnership (LCP) in Scotland. Where the person interviewed did not have full knowledge, the contact details of a suitable person were provided in order to complete the research. Following the overviews of provision from each LCP, more detailed desk research was undertaken into each childcare sector to extract views on providing for children with special needs.

It is inevitable that, in a project of this nature and size, many special needs childcare projects may have been missed out. Many projects contacted had ceased to operate, but there were plans to run again next year, funding and staffing permitting. The difficulties involved in ensuring that all the relevant childcare projects are detailed in this research reflect the concerns and problems facing specialist childcare projects. The uncertainties of funding support and staffing as well as the rationing of resources and childcare places have meant that some projects have very short life-spans. Despite this, it is hoped that this research will provide a comprehensive overview of childcare provision in Scotland for children with special needs and will highlight areas of good practice that may assist Childcare Partnerships in their future development of childcare provision.

## **Children with Special Needs**

There is no method by which the exact number of children in Scotland with a disability or a particular need can be established. The most recent study is the OPCS study (Bone and Meltzer, 1989), which estimated that there were 33,800 children with a disability in Scotland. Obtaining accurate statistics has proved to be difficult, partly due to there being no requirement on Scottish local authorities to keep registers of disabled children, as there is in England.

As a result of this difficulty, a variety of sources were used to achieve an approximation of the numbers that may be involved. Research by the former Scottish Office estimates that approximately 3% of children in Scotland have a disability of some kind (Scottish Office, 1995). In 1996 in Scotland, 2,056 children between the ages of 0–15 were registered as blind or partially sighted (RNIB estimates, 1997), 0.2% of this age group. A telephone interview was carried out with a representative from an organisation that works with children with visual impairments to enquire as to what childcare services the children usually access and what support would be required.

The number of children with a Record of Needs in Scotland by each local authority was also examined. The principal difficulties of children with Records of Needs are moderate and severe learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, language and communication disorders and physical disabilities. Approximately 2.2% of school pupils in Scotland have a Record of Needs opened. Caution should be

taken when reading these statistics, which are provided in each local summary, due to the fact that there are widely varying practices across local authorities in Scotland as to when a Record of Needs should be opened.

A growing number of local authorities have set up social work teams dedicated to working with children with disabilities and their families. A review of the literature suggests that at present, many families in Scotland have little or no social work contact and, where they do, parents are often less than satisfied with the service (Stalker et al, 1999). The total number of children with disabilities accessing social work services is not collected in Scotland.

It is estimated that there are around 1,036 children between the ages 0–15 in Scotland with a registered hearing loss (Davis, 1995). Specialists working with children with hearing impairments had pointed out that children who are hearing impaired often experience social isolation even where they are accessing inclusive services. This is due to the fact that, without childcare assistants to sign to them, they will have great difficulty in communicating with others, thus restricting their capacity to be fully included within the service. Due to the particular nature of this disability and the increased difficulties service providers face when looking after children with hearing impairments, it was considered appropriate to seek the views of some children concerned. For this reason, a group of children with hearing impairments were consulted on the types of childcare provision that they access over the holidays, what they like and dislike about the services, and what provision they would like to see more of.

The views of parents of children with special needs were also obtained in the course of this research due to the fact that a large proportion of local special needs organisations are parent-led by parents of children with disabilities. These views have also helped to inform this research.

## **Specialised Provision**

Each LCP representative was asked about specialist childcare provision in their area for children with special needs. These services were contacted by telephone and several were visited as part of the research. All of the relevant details about the service were sought from these discussions, as were views on the longevity of the project, main concerns for the future and funding sources. The views expressed have helped to inform the main body of the report, while the main details of the services are included in the local summaries. All Education and Social Work departments in Scotland were contacted to ask about provision for children with special needs and where relevant to this report, the projects were contacted directly. The major childcare and disability organisations in Scotland were also contacted and asked about service provision for children with special needs so as to ensure that as many projects as possible were detailed. It is unlikely that every childcare project that currently runs for children with special needs has been detailed in this report as many services only run for short periods over the school holiday time. However, it is hoped that almost all childcare projects for children with special needs have been detailed so as to provide an informed overview of specialised childcare services.

## **Childminders**

An in-depth interview with Maggie Simpson from the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) was carried out so as to obtain an overview of childminding in Scotland. Following this interview, a questionnaire was sent out to all the members of the SCMA so as to achieve more detailed information on the views of childminders looking after children with special needs. 6,500 questionnaires were sent out and 216 completed questionnaires were returned, a response rate of just over 3%. As a result of the low response rate, a sample of childminders were contacted in each local authority area and asked their

views on looking after children with special needs. An article about the research was published in the SCMA newsletter which is sent out to 6,500 childminders across the country and a number of childminders contacted me directly to express their views on childminding for children with special needs. The Childminding Development Officers for each area were also contacted (where there was such an Officer in post) and asked for their views on support for childminders looking after children with a disability.

## **Nurseries**

The Education Departments of each local authority were contacted and asked about support for children with special needs in local authority nurseries and in the private and voluntary nurseries. They were asked if the support (be it auxiliary staff or funding) would be provided outwith the pre-school hours when the child was accessing childcare or 'wrap around' care as well as pre-school education. Local authorities were also asked if transport is provided to help children with disabilities access nursery provision.

The findings of a survey carried out by the Scottish Pre-School Play Association were analysed to obtain an overview of the numbers of children with special needs accessing pre-school play services. A questionnaire was also sent out to all the members of the Scottish Independent Nurseries Association (SINA) so as to obtain the views of the private sector nurseries on looking after children with special needs. 134 questionnaires were sent out and 26 were returned, a response rate of 19%. As with childminding (above), this data was supported by contacting a sample of nursery services in each local authority to ask for their views on caring for children with disabilities.

## **Out of School Care (OSC)**

The Local Childcare Partnerships were asked for details of support that can be provided for OSC services looking after children with disabilities. The views of the Partnerships were sought on the main barriers to providing fully inclusive OSC services and on why some services have been successful/unsuccessful in ensuring the inclusion of children with disabilities. The Childcare Partnerships were also asked about their future plans and concerns regarding the inclusion of children with special needs into OSC services in the area.

A questionnaire was sent out to all the member services of the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN), asking for their views on caring for children with special needs in the project. 302 questionnaires were sent out to OSC services, and 57 completed questionnaires were returned, a response rate of around 20%. Samples of OSC services in each local authority were contacted for a telephone interview and several projects were also visited in order to achieve a deeper insight into the views and concerns of the service providers.

## **Holiday Playschemes**

The Childcare Information Services provided details of the OSC services in each area that operated over the school holiday period. The Community Education and Leisure and Recreation or similar departments of each local authority were also contacted to ask if any formal support mechanisms were in place to support children with special needs in the Council-run or Community Playschemes. Efforts were also made to contact all local and national voluntary organisations that ran holiday playschemes for children with special needs in order to obtain contact details for these projects. All projects that were found were contacted and are detailed in the Local Summaries.

# The Need for Childcare for Children with Special Needs and Disabilities

Research from the former Scottish Office suggests that around 3% of children and young people in Scotland with a special need or disability (Scottish Office, 1995). Following this, it is estimated that there are approximately 28,084 children between the ages of 0–14 in Scotland with a disability of some kind. Multiple disability is common and a significant number of families have more than one disabled child. Children who have profound and complex needs, including those who require nursing support, are increasing in number (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999). More than 98% of children with disabilities are cared for at home (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1998). Families in which there is a disabled child experience lower average incomes, increased living costs, greater levels of stress and higher levels of unemployment (Parents at Work, 2000). A substantial number of lone parents (32%) have at least one child with a long term illness or disability (Marsh et al, 2001). Parents of children with special needs and disabilities face up to three times the costs of parents of non-disabled children (Dobson et al, 1998). The higher costs involved in looking after a child with a disability are accompanied by reduced employment opportunities due to the lack of suitable childcare provision (Barnardo's 2002).

Despite the national investments in childcare over the last four years, childcare for children with special needs and disabilities remains limited. Anecdotal evidence from childcare providers suggests that even when providers say that they can take children with disabilities and special needs, there are not necessarily 'real' places available to them either due to inaccessible buildings and appropriate training of staff, or because of the additional support costs that would be involved. This research has revealed that there are very few childminders, Out of School Care groups and private nurseries with appropriate training and expertise in special needs childcare. Short-term care services that are provided for children 'in need' tend to be inflexible to the needs of working parents and do not always operate on a regular basis. The reduced earning power of parents of children with special needs in turn reduces their capacity to pay for special equipment, toys, childcare and transport. These factors combined make social inclusion extremely difficult not only for children with special needs and disabilities, but also for their families.

Research literature has neglected the issues of how parents of children with special needs can combine work and care (Daycare Trust, 2001). While Government initiatives such as the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) and the New Deal are increasing demand for childcare from people seeking a route out of poverty, parents of children with special needs are largely excluded due to the lack of appropriate services. Welfare benefits do not fully compensate for the costs of disability or loss of earnings.

The WFTC can provide up to £94.50 per week for one child and up to £140.00 per week for two or more children to assist with childcare costs. Additional funds to contribute to childcare costs may also be available through the Disability Living Allowance or the Disabled Person's Tax Credit. Data on the take up of childcare tax credit by families with children with disabilities or special needs is currently not collected by the Inland Revenue (Daycare Trust, 2001).

Several parents and professionals in the course of this research have highlighted a difficulty relating to the operation of the WFTC. This is the fact that for many children with special needs, childcare may be required in the child's own home, but if it is not registered childcare then it does not qualify as 'childcare' for the tax credit component of WFTC. Therefore, where families with a child with disabilities cannot access any of the registered childcare services in their locality, they will be unable to benefit from the childcare tax credit. The credit also fails to take into account the additional costs incurred for childcare for a child with disabilities.

Another initiative that assists the provision of childcare in Scotland is the funding received from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). However, until now, 3 year funding is only given to projects operating in selected post-code areas. This research has revealed that many specialised childcare projects for children with special needs operate in a central location (normally a special school) and many of the children attending travel outwith their own locality to access the service. The post-code funding does not support the many children with special needs who live in the selected post-code areas but who have to travel outwith these areas in order to receive specialised childcare.

Several local authorities have carried out comprehensive audits of childcare needs of the parents of children with disabilities. These reveal varying expectations of childcare services and demand for childcare amongst the parents concerned. Parents, particularly mothers, of children with special needs are less likely than other parents to be in employment. There also seems to be an assumption amongst both childcare development officers and service providers that the parents, particularly the mothers, of children with special needs are not or should not be employed. Employment, however, can provide additional sources of satisfaction and self-esteem as well as assisting the economic situation for the families concerned.

When the parents of children with special needs are in employment, it is often poorly paid and insecure employment and they try to work only when the children are in school. This can cause great difficulties during the school holiday times, as the research reveals below. Many families have been greatly assisted through the provision of special needs playschemes that have specialist care and often nursing staff, to help to care for children with highly complex support needs. These services have extremely high operating costs and rely heavily on uncertain funding sources. All of the services interviewed in the course of this research, and indeed almost of the Childcare Partnerships, stated that they would be more able to plan for the future if they could receive substantial and long-term financial commitments from the Scottish Executive that support will be given to provide childcare for children with special needs.

The majority of children with special needs do not require the intensive and costly support that is provided in the specialist services. Parents and professionals have considered that it is in the interests of both the child and of society for mainstream childcare provision to be fully inclusive for children with special needs. Fully inclusive childcare provision is considered in further detail, below.



# Overcoming the Barriers: Inclusive Play and Care

All children, regardless of needs or abilities, should be able to enjoy the right to play, recreation, art and cultural activities. Childcare services operating within a concern for equal opportunities seek to ensure that children with special needs can equally access their rights. Through play, children learn how to negotiate, take risks and overcome obstacles. Play develops self confidence in children and provides opportunities for social interaction with other young people. For all children, play is an integral part of growing up and is vital as a foundation for adulthood.

## **The Social Exclusion of Children with Special Needs**

Children with special needs may be denied opportunities to play and mix with other young children. There is more control from the adult world in their lives through their parents and through professionals. Although there have been major efforts towards inclusion in mainstream education in the past decade, many children with special needs remain segregated in special schools or special units within schools. Such provision takes children with special needs away from their families and local communities.

Furthermore, despite recent legislation clearly such as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, there remain cultural barriers to full inclusion in society. Social exclusion is created by not only physical barriers, but also by attitudinal barriers. Full inclusion can only be reached by breaking down these barriers and adapting and changing society in ways that will encourage the inclusion and participation of children and young people with disabilities.

## **The Principles of Inclusion**

Children in Scotland and Capability Scotland have developed 'Principles of Inclusion for Children' which are accessible from the Children in Scotland website. These principles are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Human Rights Act (1998) and the Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000). The principles highlight the fact that inclusion is about full equality for every child, providing children with a sense of belonging and allowing them to participate as full as possible in life and where necessary obtaining support to do this. The principles set out a clear right to play, and to equal access to leisure and recreational activities and to rest when they are tired.

Full inclusion for children with special needs in childcare services can greatly reduce the social isolation felt by many young children. By the definition of 'disability' used in this report, children are disabled by the attitudes, actions and omissions of society in failing to include them in their natural social environment. Childcare services must therefore adapt to fully include children with special needs, rather than merely creating several 'token places'. Full inclusion requires that all aspects of the provision allow the child to feel included and are given the opportunities to fully participate in the childcare environment.



## The Barriers to Inclusion

There are several barriers that must first be overcome if the full inclusion of children with special needs in childcare services is to be achieved. The difficulties listed in this section have been produced from comments received from Development Officers and childcare providers when asked what they considered to be the main barriers to inclusion. Following this overview, suggestions for overcoming these barriers are outlined.

One of the main barriers to inclusive childcare services seems to be the problem of prevailing attitudes, both of parents of children with disabilities as well as amongst service providers. Parents of children with special needs are naturally more wary of leaving their children in the care of other people and may appear to be overprotective of their children when first doing so. Although their fears may in some cases be justified due to the lack of special needs training that is currently given to most childcare workers, such overprotection can have a disabling impact upon the children.

Childcare staff may have discriminatory attitudes with regard to caring for children with special needs. In some cases, this stems from a lack of training in the area and a lack of awareness as to what is actually required in practice when looking after children with special needs. An example can be given of one OSC service provider who, when asked if their service can provide for children with special needs replied, "No. We can't look after children with disabilities because our club has stairs at the entrance". Not only does this reveal an ignorance of the fact that a very low number of children with disabilities use a wheelchair, but it also reveals an unwillingness to consider ways in which the service could remove that potential barrier through the use of a ramp access. In addition, children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) often experience great difficulty in accessing childcare services due to an unwillingness of childcare workers to fully recognise ADHD as a disability.

Another barrier to the accessibility of services by children with special needs is due to the difficulties in accessing information about projects. Although finding out about childcare has greatly improved as a result of the establishment of Childcare Information Services, the majority of the databases used in Scotland do not have comprehensive details about service provision for children with special needs. Childcare providers who advertise on the Information Services are given the opportunity to state whether or not they provide for children with special needs. While no childcare providers have checked the 'no' box, a small proportion of providers in each area have checked the 'yes' box. Even where this has been checked, there is a lack of detailed information about the types of need that can be cared for and the qualifications of staff members.

The above relates to another major barrier to ensuring the full inclusion of children with special needs; the training and qualifications of childcare workers. While most Childcare Partnerships have organised training in general special needs awareness for some childcare workers, accessing more specialised childcare training can be difficult and costly. However, such training is essential in order to ensure the full inclusion of children with special needs. In particular, for children with communication impairments, specialist training in either Makaton or British Sign Language is vital if the children are to be allowed to fully participate in the project.

Other particular types of need can pose greater barriers to full inclusion than others. A lack of changing areas and toilet space can act as a barrier to children and young people who require toilet assistance. Likewise, children who use a wheelchair or who have mobility difficulties may find access to the service problematic.

Related to this is the costly issue of transport, which can be another major barrier. Adequate transport to childcare projects for those with mobility difficulties or challenging behaviour is essential. Many families do not have the use of a car when needed for childcare services and where public transport is unsuitable, children may not be able to access the service.

## **Overcoming the Barriers to Inclusion**

Through discussions with childcare services which very successfully integrate children with special needs, it would seem that all of the barriers to inclusion can be overcome through an ambition for change on the part of both policy makers and service providers.

Staff can greatly benefit from disability awareness training to help avoiding stereotypes and to develop positive policies on inclusion. If this training leads to more specialised training in particular aspects of special needs, then the attitudes of parents will change as they see the qualifications and experience of the childcare staff. Staff should be trained in the lifting and handling of children with a variety of impairments, and should be given hands-on experience of working with children with special needs. Many national organisations such as the National Autistic Society and the Royal National Institute for the Blind stated that they can provide training for childcare workers. Furthermore, these organisations all pointed out that the necessary training would not take extensive amounts of time or money. Childcare workers need to be informed of the importance of obtaining detailed information about the needs of the child from the parents of the child and, where appropriate, from the child's teacher. This not only builds up confidence in the childcare worker as they find out more about the needs of the child, but it also helps the parents have confidence in the staff member that their child's needs will be met.

Childcare Information Services should be kept up to date on information about childcare for children with special needs in their area. Details of the qualifications and experience of staff members would greatly assist parents in accessing childcare and adequate publicity of welfare entitlements may encourage more parents of children with special needs to consider returning to work as a viable option.

The physical barriers created by the inaccessibility of the childcare premises can often be removed through minor adaptations to the building, such as the installation of disabled toilets and the building of ramps. Toys, equipment and games can all be quite easily altered to ensure their safe use by children with special needs. Where specialist equipment is required, this can normally be hired from local toy and leisure libraries that have toys that provide stimulation and fun for all of the children. It was also pointed out that toys could be adapted so that all children can enjoy them.

Activities and games, if well prepared can be completely inclusive if adapted to meet the needs of all children accessing the service. To ensure complete participation, it has been suggested that the emphasis of such games should be on having fun rather than on winning. Co-operative games help to achieve a stronger sense of involvement amongst all children. One example was given of a football game in which the rules were adapted so that all team members must have at least one kick of the ball before a goal could be scored. This demonstrates the simplicity of ensuring full participation with the use of innovative ideas.

Several childcare workers highlighted two other important issues regarding inclusive play. The first was that the siblings of children with special needs should not be allowed to feel that they are 'in charge' of their brother or sister. Indeed, some services ensured that the siblings were given the chance to spend time away from their disabled family member. Secondly, the experiences of other children in the service also had to be addressed. For many children, they may not have had any direct experience of being with

other children with special needs and may therefore need their questions and concerns addressed in a sensitive manner.

Improving childcare services in order that children with special needs can be fully included will help everyone. Support should be given to all childcare providers so as to ensure greater provision of more affordable and accessible childcare for children with disabilities and special needs.

# Research Findings

## The Local Summaries

The local summaries annexed to this report review childcare provision for children with special needs in each Scottish local authority. The 32 local authorities in Scotland range considerably from large cities such as Glasgow to less populated island councils such as Argyll & Bute. Differences between each local authority in terms of population size, geography, unemployment levels and their effects on service provision are detailed at the start of each summary. Services and organisations in the area that greatly benefit childcare services looking after children with special needs, such as toy libraries with specialised equipment, and mobile projects for more rural areas are also detailed.

## Childminding

The majority of childminders in Scotland (over 80%) are members of the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA). The SCMA has Development Officers working in most authorities and these Officers can provide support and advice to childminders in what is often a particularly isolating career. Support for childminders is also provided through the various childminding networks that have also been developed in local areas. Childminding is one of the most popular forms of formal childcare in Scotland, particularly in the more rural areas. There is a recognised shortage of childminders in almost every local authority, with few childminders having vacancies available. Most Childcare Partnerships and Childminding Development Officers are developing recruitment programmes to encourage more people to consider the career.

### **Daycare and Childcare**

In most areas, the social work departments have a list of registered childminders who can provide daycare as part of their statutory responsibilities under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 to provide daycare for children 'in need'. As explained above, this definition includes children who have a disability. Childminders participating in the daycare link schemes are trained in caring for children with special needs, but are most often used for children in crisis situations where emergency care is required. In some authorities, where there are a larger number of childminders involved in the daycare link scheme, childminders are a source of respite for the carers of children with disabilities. In such cases, the childminders may look after the children for several hours each week or fortnight, depending on the care package that is deemed appropriate for the child. As this is primarily respite care as opposed to

childcare, it must be distinguished from childcare provision that parents access for their children in order to re-enter work or training.

## **Special Needs and Childminding**

Very few Partnerships or Childminding Development Officers had undertaken comprehensive audits of childcare so there is very little available knowledge of the numbers of childminders who currently do look after children with special needs other than those childminders involved in daycare link work. This research included a questionnaire to childminders which asked them if they currently, or have, looked after children with special needs. Although a substantial percentage of respondents (34%) stated that they either did or have looked after children with special needs, these results must be treated with caution. The response rate for the Childminding Survey was disappointingly low (3%) and the responses from childminders may be affected by a heightened interest in a subject which is directly relevant to them. It is suggested that childminders who either currently look after, or have looked after children with special needs may be more likely to respond to the survey than childminders who have never addressed the issue.

Several childminders stated that there were not enough parents of children with special needs approaching childminders in order to obtain childcare. One Childminding Development Worker quoted a parent whose doctor had stated that they would 'never be able to find a childminder willing to look after their child' when in fact this was far from being the case. It was felt that there was not enough awareness raising being carried out on behalf of childminders to encourage parents of children with quite profound needs to consider accessing childminding support.

Upon giving their details to the local Childcare Information Service database, childminders are given the opportunity to state if they are able to provide for children with special needs. However, there is a strong reluctance for childminders to put their details on the Childcare Information Service and, for those who do, this question is a 'yes'/'no' answer that does not provide much information to parents. In the smaller local authorities such as Clackmannanshire, the Information Service personnel know most of the childminders in the area and are therefore able to suggest suitable childminders to parents who decide to contact the Information Service. In the majority of authorities, there is a shortage of childminders overall and so many would not have the available vacancies to accommodate a child who required 1:1 care.

## **Training**

The Scottish Childminding Association do provide some general training for childminders, but they are mainly an information point and can help inform childminders as to where they can obtain the necessary training. The first port of call for most childminders who wished to access specific training would be to their local Development Officer who would try to locate the necessary training in their area. This was often problematic for the Development Workers, many of whom stated that they did not always know where to begin in their search for information and specialist knowledge. It was generally agreed that the Childminding Development Officers would appreciate an information point to contact when first looking into the variety of disabilities which they were asked about. 68% of childminders interviewed said that they did not know if they would be able to receive the necessary training to look after children with particular needs. It was suggested that a Guide detailing where training could be obtained would be very helpful in all areas. Most Childcare Partnerships said that childcare training is open to all childminders and some even went as far as stating that childminders would be financially supported in undertaking

any training that was required in order for them to look after children with particular needs. In such cases, however, it would be the responsibility of the childminders themselves (or their Development Officers) to try to locate the necessary training.

Another difficulty raised by a substantial number of childminders was the unsuitability of the training times. Several childminders commented that most childcare training ran during the day when they were working and therefore could not attend unless crèche support was provided. Even in the cases when crèche support was provided, many childminders felt that they could not put the children in their care into a crèche. Most childminders said that they would prefer training to operate at the weekends or in the evenings.

## **Support for Childminders looking after Children with Special Needs**

In the questionnaires sent to all the members of the SCMA and in the telephone interviews that were carried out with childminders in every local authority, over 60% of childminders reported that they felt that, even if they had the available vacancies in their service, they would not be able to look after children with needs that required 1:1 care due primarily to the reduction in fees that would result from this. The National Care Standards state that the adult:child ratio for children under 12 in domestic circumstances is 1:6, of whom no more than three are not yet attending primary school and of whom no more than one is under 1. Thus, a childminder looking after a child whose needs demanded 1:1 care would face a substantial decrease in potential income. When asked if additional support would be provided to childminders looking after children with special needs, only 5% of childminders stated that support would be provided. Over 90% of childminders stated that they didn't know whether or not any extra support would be given if requested. This was a problem that was common to most of the childcare services interviewed. For the most part, childcare providers were of the view that they had to seek funding sources and support by themselves as they were not kept informed of what funding was available.

The majority of Childcare Partnerships seemed to understand this; there was a general reluctance to state that childminders could apply for support from the Childcare Strategy funds to assist their provision of childcare for children with special needs. Most authorities provided sustainability funding to allow childminders to seek support in order to purchase equipment and resources or to make minor adaptations to the home in order to facilitate access for children with special needs. Over half of the Local Childcare Partnerships suggested that, in principle, childminders would be able to apply for Childcare Strategy funding if required in order to look after a child with special needs but that this would not be advertised to childminders in the area because there were concerns about the number of potential applications for support. As a result, most of these Partnerships had not received any applications for funding in order to subsidise their lower income or to employ another member of staff.

Several childminders stated that, although they had never been asked to look after children with special needs, they would be very interested in doing so despite the reduction in income that might result.

For a particular number of childminders interviewed or surveyed, the issue of money was not important to their work and they were prepared to forego potential earnings in order to provide 1:1 care for a child if they could meet the child's needs. It should be highlighted, however, that such childminders were very much in the minority and it is submitted that Childcare policy should not be developed with a heavy reliance on a small number of individuals who are in a position to accept a decrease in income.

## The Funding Debate

The issue of providing extra financial support to childminders who are looking after children with complex needs is difficult for several reasons. Firstly, as childminders are self-employed small business owners, they can select their own customers and operate their business as they choose. They are entitled to charge their clients whatever fees both parties deem appropriate. Secondly, several Childcare Partnerships suggested that offering subsidising childminding places for children with special needs does not reflect the promotion of inclusion that is Council policy. It was felt that the funding would be more appropriately spent in the development of more inclusive services such as nursery and OSC provision. Thirdly, one in every four childminders interviewed stated that they would charge a higher fee for looking after children whose needs required a reduction in ratios. This was deemed to be justified on the basis that the extra benefits given to the parents of children with special needs and to working parents were designed to meet these extra costs.

However, as outlined above, the Working Families Tax Credit is available to all eligible working parents and is not increased on the basis of the child's disability. The Disability Living Allowance, at a weekly amount of between £14.20 and £53.55, is not enough to subsidise the childminding places of one or two children. Secondly, it was pointed out by several childminders who had experience of looking after children with special needs that children with disabilities are much more easily included in mainstream settings at a young age and in small groups (as are provided through childminding).

In many cases where childminders had worked with children with special needs, they had done so since the child was very young and when their needs were not so pronounced. These childminders said that they were subsequently able to adapt to cope with the child's needs as they became more pronounced. However, for parents who delay going back to work or training after having a child with special needs, finding a suitable childminder when the child's needs are more pronounced would be far more difficult. Most childminders are reluctant to take on this responsibility because of lack of financial support, experience and training.

There are two local authorities in which this is not the case. In South Ayrshire the Childcare Partnership widely advertises the availability of Childcare Strategy funding to childminders who require extra support for any reason, including a promise to subsidise any reduced income from looking after a child with special needs. The application for extra support is analysed by a group of professionals who take into account all of the needs of the child and family. Funding can be applied for in order for the childminder to employ an extra member of staff or for any other reason that will benefit their childcare service. A new scheme has been established in Moray through the Aberlour Childcare Trust whereby a group of childminders are given special needs training and will have their childcare places subsidised when looking after children whose needs require the childminder to reduce ratios. A childminding linkworking scheme has been established for childminders in Dundee. As this is funded through Surestart, the childcare places are limited to children between the ages of 0–3.

At the moment in most other local authorities, only those childminders for whom income generation is not a high priority can afford to look after children with complex needs. Allowing all childminders to access Childcare Strategy funds would encourage more childminders to consider looking after children with special needs as it would then be a financially feasible option. Childminders considering this work might then seek more specific training to obtain experience in looking after children with special needs. This in turn would increase the skills base of childminders in the area, allowing them to be better equipped for daycare work if it is required by the Social Work Department. The importance of a special needs-skilled workforce was highlighted by one childminder who commented that the local Social Work



Department had asked her to look after a child who could only communicate through sign language, despite the fact that neither she nor her husband had any knowledge of sign language.

## Conclusion

It is hoped that more Childcare Partnerships will follow the example of areas such as South Ayrshire and promote the caring for children with special needs to be financially possible for childminders running a business. Doing so would increase the awareness of parents of children with special needs that mainstream childcare services can be accessed, allowing them to return to employment or training.

## Nurseries and Playgroups

All local authorities have services in place that increase the likelihood of children with special needs coming to the attention of the relevant departments at an early stage. PRE-SCAT teams can identify the needs of the children and recommend specialist services that will assist the child's development. Parent and toddler groups are often visited by health professionals who can offer advice and information to parents and many local authorities also have groups that are specifically for the parents of children with special needs. In terms of accessing childcare, the parents of very young children with moderate needs do not have as great a difficulty in accessing mainstream childcare provision as those whose children are 4+. The staffing ratios in the playgroups and nursery services that provide for very young children are small enough to cope with a wide range of needs. As the children get older and their needs become more pronounced, the difficulties in accessing childcare increase. This is problematic because parents of very young children with special needs are less likely to require childcare in order to work than those whose children are slightly older.

Several local authorities have developed assessment centres for very young children with special needs so that their needs can be identified and diagnosed at the earliest stage possible. An example of such provision is demonstrated in Moray's Developmental Playgroups. Children who may have a special need or disability of some kind attend one of the 5 Developmental Playgroups spread throughout the authority where their needs are identified. Specialist advice can then be given as to the suitability or otherwise of nursery provision for the children. All local authorities have special needs nursery services, some of which are part of their special schools and others that are run from special needs units within mainstream schools. Outreach services have been developed from many of the specialist services so as to provide opportunities for inclusion for the children accessing them. In such cases, specialist childcare workers from the special needs nursery units can support the child in placements in mainstream nurseries by providing information and advice to the childcare workers. All local authorities in Scotland have stated that they try to facilitate inclusion as far as possible for children with special needs. In most areas, special educational needs auxiliaries are provided (where required) to support children who need extra assistance. While inclusion is supported for children accessing pre-school education, few authorities have mechanisms in place to assist the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream childcare services.

## Daycare and Childcare

A distinction has to be made between the statutory services provided by Social Work departments as 'daycare' for children 'in need' under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and services that provide



'childcare' for parents accessing employment or training. All local authorities have a duty to provide daycare services for children 'in need' under Section 27 of the Act. The term 'in need' is defined as including children who have a disability (Section 23). All local authorities are therefore legally obliged to provide daycare services for children with a disability of some kind. However, 'daycare' as defined by the Act does not have to be provided on a regular basis. The number of sessions provided will vary considerably depending on the needs of the child and the quantity of services available. In many areas, 'daycare' is only used in crisis situations where there is a family emergency. In addition, research has revealed that a low proportion of children with disabilities are in direct contact with a social worker (Scottish Executive, 2002). For the purposes of this report therefore, these services are separated from childcare which can be accessed by parents in order to allow them to re-enter employment or training. It has been noted that this statutory distinction can cause difficulties in defining services that are available for children with special needs and it is not always clear which services should be paid from which budgets.

## Childcare

The Scottish Pre-School Play Association (SPPA) has developed a 'Special Needs Fund' which all member groups are eligible to apply for. These are small grants which are given to groups providing for or trying to integrate children with special needs. In all cases, the groups must attempt to seek support from the relevant local authority before applying to the SPPA Special Needs Fund.

The majority of local authorities in Scotland are presently developing wrap around childcare in the local authority nursery services. Most nursery classes operate for only 2? hours per session, either morning or afternoon. Money from the Childcare Strategy funds has been used to undertake audits of childcare need and then to develop wrap around care in the nurseries where it is needed. At the moment, there is a definite lack of wrap around childcare provision overall, not just for the parents of children with special needs. As a result of the lack of full-day wrap around childcare in local authority nursery provisions, parents who are in employment or training look to family members, childminders and private/voluntary nurseries for childcare outside the pre-school hours. The difficulties encountered by some parents of children with special needs in accessing childminders to look after their children have been summarised above. Family members are the main source of childcare in Scotland, but many parents of children with special needs have expressed concerns about leaving their children with family members where the child's needs may be more demanding (Beresford, 1995 [in Petrie]).

When full-day or extended hours childcare is provided in the local authority nurseries, support can be provided for children with special needs where such support is essential to meet the child's needs. Such services are scarce, however, and the nurseries in the private or voluntary sector would be relied upon in the majority of cases to provide extended hours nursery care. In the interviews with private nurseries across Scotland, it was revealed that very few parents of children with special needs access private and voluntary sector nursery provision. Although there are instances of children with less profound special needs being supported in private nurseries, in many cases this resulted from the child attending the provision from a very young age before any disabilities were identified. For the most part, nursery provision for children with special needs tends to be limited to the local authority provision.

The lack of children with disabilities accessing private/voluntary sector nursery provision may have a number of causes. Firstly, it could be due to the fact that the parents of children with disabilities are less likely to re-enter the workforce and would therefore not require full-day childcare. Both mothers and fathers who have a child with special needs have a lower rate of participation in the workforce than

other parents (NCH, 1993; Thomas et al, 1994 [Petrie]). This may be due to the second suggested reason for the low numbers of children with disabilities in private/voluntary sector provision: the reluctance of parents to leave their child in the care of another person. The parents may not have the confidence that their child will receive the support that is essential to meet their needs. Several people who were interviewed in the course of this research indicated that many of the parents of children with special needs were very cautious before leaving their child in the care of another person. There is an understandable tendency for parents of children with disabilities to be more protective of their children than other parents because of their child's additional needs and vulnerabilities.

A third suggested reason, and one which this research points towards, is that few children with special needs access full-day private/voluntary sector nursery care because such provision is unavailable for children with special needs. Although all nurseries interviewed had equal opportunities policies in place and were willing to provide for a wide range of needs, the majority of private/voluntary nurseries interviewed stated that they would not be able to provide 1:1 care for a child. While most local authorities stated that they would support children with special needs who were obtaining their pre-school education from a partner provider nursery instead of a local authority nursery, almost all authorities stated that this support would end with the pre-school hours. Thus, the assistance given to partner provider nurseries looking after children with special needs is, for the most part, limited to the core 12 ? pre-school hours each week and does not extend to childcare. It is left to the nursery to try to support the child during the childcare part of their care. The majority of private/voluntary sector nurseries interviewed were concerned about the extra staffing, resources and skills that would be required in order to do this and did not feel that they would receive any extra assistance from the Council. Those nurseries that were more willing to consider looking after children with special needs were voluntary nurseries all of which had had some experience of providing 'daycare' for the Social Work department and were therefore trained in looking after children with special needs. Several private nurseries had successfully integrated children with moderate disabilities without too much difficulty, but were cautious about ensuring that the needs of children accessing the nursery would not stretch the available staffing ratios.

This raises questions about equality of opportunity for parents in selecting childcare provision with which they feel comfortable. The Scottish Executive have encouraged Partnerships to work with the voluntary and private sectors to ensure a comprehensive range of childcare provision (Scottish Executive, 1999). Several Childcare Partnerships have taken this to its logical conclusion by supporting services which provide childcare for children with special needs, irrespective of their private or voluntary nature. Once such example can be found in South Ayrshire where Childcare Strategy money can be given to all childcare providers who require extra funding for staffing, resources, equipment or adaptations. In the majority of local authority areas however, this funding has been restricted to assisting OSC services and holiday playschemes in providing childcare. However, in South Ayrshire, private and voluntary sector nurseries can also apply to the Childcare Partnership for funding assistance. The funding requests are analysed by a team of professionals, including representatives from Education, Health and Social Work and the necessary funds are provided to the childcare provider where required. This model provides full equality of opportunity for parents of children with special needs in accessing childcare where, in other authority areas, there are historical difficulties. However, the main concern with this model is the uncertainty of future funding resources. As mentioned above, the uptake of private/voluntary sector nursery childcare by children with special needs is noticeably low. If more parents are encouraged to consider returning to work or training and seek childcare in order to do so then the Childcare Strategy funds will be stretched amongst the numbers of requests. This may be the main reason why other

Childcare Partnerships are not creating similar provision in their areas. The majority of Partnership representatives expressed strong concerns regarding the creation of provision that would not be sustainable without continued funding. All Childcare Partnerships agreed that they would feel more confident about providing funding resources to childcare services looking after children with special needs if they were given assurance by the Scottish Executive that such funding would continue to be given to Councils for that purpose.

A different model of support for children with special needs in accessing private/voluntary nurseries or playgroups is provided in Fife. Fife Council have a service-level agreement with an organisation called 'Children with Special Needs in Play Services' (CSNIPS). This organisation has a pool of childcare staff (playfriends) that are trained in working with young children with special needs. CSNIPS are funded through the Childcare Strategy funds to provide support for children with special needs in the private/voluntary nurseries and playgroups in the area. CSNIPS in turn provides funding to the services that apply for support and a list of available playfriends are provided to the group. There are approximately 23 playfriends living across Fife, allowing most groups to be able to access the support of a playfriend in their area. The nurseries/playgroups employ the playfriend directly and advice and support is provided by CSNIPS to both the nursery and to the playfriend. This is the only model of its kind in Scotland. While similar services have been developed to facilitate the inclusion of children with special needs in OSC services, no other organisations support children with special needs in accessing nursery or playgroup provision. The main advantage of this model is that it can help to facilitate the inclusion of children with special needs in the future without extra support. Due to the advice and support that can be provided to nursery staff members from CSNIPS, the service providers may develop more confidence in their abilities to look after children with special needs without the extra assistance of the playfriends. The model may be slightly improved, however, if the nurseries and playgroups did not have to employ the playfriends directly, thus allowing the playfriends to go into another nursery service once the child with special needs was fully integrated into the provision.

The majority of Councils were either unable or reluctant to definitively state whether or not transportation would be provided to children with special needs accessing nursery or playgroup services. Generally speaking, transportation would be provided only for children with special needs who are attending a local authority nursery outside of their own catchment area. Other instances when transportation may be provided include the provision of transportation by the social work departments where access to nursery or daycare services are included as part of the child's care package.

## Out of School Care

Out of School Care (OSC) is a term used to refer to 'out of school learning time', 'after school activity clubs', 'homework clubs' and 'breakfast clubs'. Few researchers have offered clear definitions of OSC (Malcolm et al, 2002), but for the purposes of this report, OSC will refer to all childcare settings which provide creative play opportunities to groups of school aged children and young people outwith school hours. This very broad definition encompasses nurseries which provide OSC for school-aged children and the use of the term 'childcare' requires that the OSC facility provides a childcare service for parents. Thus, 'one-off activity groups' and 'sports groups' are excluded from this definition.

The majority of OSC services in Scotland are stand-alone OSC projects which provide childcare immediately after the school day until approximately 18:00. Most run a full-day service during school

holidays and in-service days with the exception of several days over Christmas and New Year. In addition, the majority of services are operated by voluntary management committees who are, on the whole, parents of children accessing the service. As a result of this infrastructure, the management committees can change regularly as their children grow out of the service. The responsibilities that the voluntary committees have are particularly onerous; they employ the staff members, manage the OSC accounts and premises, seek funding support and liaise with parents and schools. In order to assist OSC services, local OSC Networks have been developed in most areas to provide information, advice and support to their member projects.

Several Childcare Partnerships have taken a very pro-active role in supporting OSC services in their area. While some Councils operate several of their own OSC services, other Childcare Partnerships have employed Out of School Care Development Officers to directly support the projects in the area. Despite this support, however, the Childcare Partnerships cannot exercise strong control over their entrance policies. Several Childcare Partnerships have had difficulties with OSC projects in their area that do not have inclusive policies. In one such example the headmistress of the school in which the OSC service ran insisted that only pupils of the school could access the service, thus preventing children living within the catchment area but who had to attend a school further away from accessing the project. Through persuasion from the OSC Development Officer, this rule was changed to allow children with special needs to access the service, but it is an example of the fact that Councils do not have full control over how OSC services in their area operate.

## **Children with Special Needs in Out of School Care**

The benefits of OSC services for children with special needs have been documented in 'Out of School Lives, Out of School Services' (Petrie, 2000). Many of the difficulties experienced by children with disabilities and their families can be redressed through the provision of quality OSC. Firstly, social isolation can be a major problem for children with special needs, particularly when they cannot access mainstream education in their own locality. Being fully included in a local OSC service can lessen this sense of isolation and will help children with special needs to develop friendships with children in their own area. Secondly, parents of children with disabilities have a lower than average level of participation in the workforce (NCH, 1993). Securing good quality and affordable childcare for their children may go some way towards raising these rates of participation. Thirdly, and related to this, accessing employment can reduce the sense of social isolation that can also occur amongst parents of children with special needs. Other aspects of the lives of children with special needs and their siblings such as confinement and limited access to play facilities can also be improved through quality OSC provision.

The numbers of children with special needs currently accessing OSC provision in Scotland is difficult to assess. Several Childcare Partnerships have carried out audits of childcare provision specifically relating to special needs, but the majority of Partnership areas did not have detailed information on the different needs of children accessing the services. In the surveys sent out to all the members of the Scottish Out of School Care Network (SOSCN), 95% of respondents stated that they either do, or have in the past, cared for children with special needs. However, in the telephone interviews with sample OSC groups in each local authority, this percentage dropped to 57%. Thus, the responses to the questionnaire would seem to have been affected by the relevancy of the subject matter to those projects that have looked after children with special needs. Those OSC services that have looked after children with special needs stated that the needs and disabilities of the children were normally not so profound as to require 1:1 staffing ratios. The most frequent types of special need or disability mentioned were Attention Deficit Hyper-Activity Disorder (ADHD), mild autism, visual impairments and hearing impairments. OSC services

that cared for children with more profound needs usually had an extra staff member or support worker to assist the provision.

For 55% of OSC services interviewed, whether or not a child with a disability would be able to attend the project depended upon whether the child's needs could be met within the existing staffing ratios. For the most part, this was usually a ratio of 1:8. This meant that children who could not be adequately cared for within a staffing ratio of eight children to one member of staff would be unable to access the service. In the other services interviewed, provision would be made for children with special needs if required through access to either extra funding with which to employ additional staff, or through the provision of extra support workers with special needs expertise. These OSC clubs were all either supported by the Childcare Partnership in looking after children with special needs, or else they strove to be as inclusive as financially possible due to the strong determination of the service providers. Even these groups, however, felt that not enough was being done to support inclusion in mainstream OSC services. It would seem that the promotion and support for the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream schooling has not been reflected in the OSC sector. However, as this sector rapidly increases in size, the increased supply of OSC services will in turn increase demand. OSC services are faced with the challenge of trying to provide for children whose needs require increased support and skills in a sector which is already facing many difficulties due to lack of resources and staffing. This is also a challenge for Local Childcare Partnerships as they seek to ensure that the Council meets the Childcare Strategy for children with special needs.

## **The Childcare Requirements of Parents of Children with Special Needs**

A starting point in the development of childcare services for children with special needs is to determine the quantity and forms of childcare that parents require. Most Childcare Partnerships in Scotland have developed comprehensive audits of need through surveys of the parents of children with special needs and disabilities. Several Partnerships also included the views of childcare providers in their reports.

In all cases, the issue of the provision of specialised childcare services for children with special needs versus inclusive services received mixed responses from parents. The parents that expressed a strong preference for specialised services tended to be parents of children with more complex and low incidence disabilities. Those who wanted support in mainstream provision were, for the most part, the parents of children with less profound needs. For a substantial number of parents surveyed, childcare was not such an issue for them during term time as the parents had adapted their working arrangements around the needs of the child. They wished to access childcare services primarily for their childrens' best interests as opposed to their own childcare needs. These parents expressed a need for more holiday provision, youth groups and supported access to the local play and leisure amenities.

With regard to the differing views expressed on specialist/inclusive provision, Childcare Partnerships have noted that the parents of children with special needs are understandably more protective of their children than other parents. As a result of this, these parents would have more confidence that their child's physical needs would be met in a non-inclusive environment where the necessary specialist support is provided. Although all Childcare Partnerships have stated that they will try to promote inclusion in childcare wherever possible, they understand the reluctance of some parents to take up inclusive play opportunities in the relatively new OSC sector. For this reason, several Partnerships are developing both specialised and inclusive services so as to meet the childcare needs of parents. However, as will be explained below, some specialist services are being developed which will potentially



become inclusive services for the children once the confidence of the parents, children and staff has grown.

## **Specialised OSC Services for Children with Special Needs**

Detailed in all the Local Summaries are OSC services which have been developed specifically for children with special needs. These services are all heavily reliant on various funding sources as they will never be self-sustaining due to the costs involved in providing childcare for children with complex needs. In most cases, the Childcare Partnership has developed the services in conjunction with major special needs organisations such as Capability Scotland (South Lanarkshire), the National Autistic Society (proposed OSC service in Dundee) and the Royal National Institute for the Blind (Fife). These organisations bring the necessary skills and expertise in providing costly specialised provision. The care needs of the children accessing the services normally require 1:1 staffing ratios, including staff with special needs playcare experience and nursing experience. The costs involved have been estimated as being as high as £250 per week for a child to attend every day after school.<sup>1</sup> As waiting lists for these services are often lengthy, places are sometimes rationed amongst the children accessing the service. In order to cut waiting lists, places are often restricted to children who, as a result of their special needs, would not benefit from attending mainstream OSC services.

## **Specialised OSC Services and Inclusion**

The inclusion of children with special needs is often supported in the specialised services through the organisation of outings and activities with siblings. A new model is currently being developed in both Edinburgh City and Perth & Kinross whereby a specialist OSC service will be developed with the intention of providing inclusive opportunities in the long term. It is felt that once the parents and children develop confidence in the staff members of the specialised service, they may consider accessing a local OSC service if a specialised OSC staff member attends with them. The intention is that, once the child develops confidence and friendships in the new OSC service and the staff members feel able to support the child's needs, the specialist care worker's support can gradually be withdrawn. It is recognised that, for some children, specialist 1:1 support will always be required and in such cases the support would not be withdrawn. This model is therefore a specialist one (meeting the preferences of the parents) but is potentially inclusive if inclusion would be in the child's best interests.

## **Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Mainstream OSC Services**

The above model has not yet been developed in any local authority in Scotland, but it has reached the planning stages of several Partnerships. Other models have been developed in order to assist the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream OSC services, all of which are slightly different depending on the history of the Council and of OSC in the area. All of the models have involved partnership working with local or national childcare organisations in order to provide fully inclusive OSC services.

The Shetland Islands developed their 'Joining In' project from the 'IPOP' programme operating in the London Borough of Brent. North Lanarkshire Council have a service-level agreement with Partners in Play, a specialist childcare organisation that also runs a befriending and an advocacy group for children and young people with special needs. Fife Childcare Partnership work with Enable to assist inclusion in OSC and Dundee City has developed an excellent support service called 'The Inclusion Group'. These services are all detailed in the Local Summaries for each area but what they have in common is that a

pool of childcare staff are trained specifically to work with children with special needs and they support the childcare service in ensuring that the needs of the child are fully met.

The Department for Children and Young People in the Scottish Executive, combining as it does both social work and education, has been reflected in Stirling Council. Stirling now has a director of 'Children's Services' rather than two distinct departments. This example of joint working (as promoted in 'For Scotland's Children') has greatly assisted the provision of services for children with special needs. Children's Services have a service-level agreement with 'Playplus', a local voluntary organisation that specialises in providing inclusive play opportunities for children with special needs. Playplus have a pool of staff that can accompany children into mainstream OSC services or indeed to any club or leisure facility of the child's choosing. In the light of the results of the special needs childcare audits summarised above, this scheme is appropriate for the majority of parents who wanted support for not only formal childcare, but also for all other play and leisure services that their children have difficulty attending. For this reason, the Stirling model is the most appropriate model for fully promoting the Right to Play.<sup>2</sup> The other models are limited to childcare services only due to their being funded through the Childcare Strategy grants and therefore designed to provide childcare for working parents. In these areas, support to access the local park or leisure facilities could only be provided through social work as part of the child's care package. Not only have many children with disabilities and their parents expressed difficulties in obtaining social work support (Scottish Executive, 2002), but even where social work is received it is often very limited.

The main advantages of all of the above services are firstly, that the child's particular needs are fully understood before access to the OSC facility even begins. All of the services require a great deal of preparation time when the project co-ordinator meets with the parents, the child and the OSC service to discuss the child's needs and abilities. The support worker learns from the parents and, in some cases, from the child's school teachers, all about the child and how best to meet his/her needs. Secondly, all the models allow for full inclusion in an OSC service in the child's own area. This develops the child's (and parents') sense of being active participants in the local community, thereby reducing feelings of social isolation. Thirdly, supported inclusion can improve the OSC service as all staff members gain experience in meeting the needs of the children attending. In time, the support may be able to be withdrawn and the staff members will have developed the necessary confidence to take on other children with similar needs without the extra support. Fourthly, and related to this, as the OSC service improves, it increases its ability to be accessed by other services such as the social work department in order to provide respite for carers of children with special needs. It is in the interests of the whole Council that suitable childcare provision is developed for children with special needs. Finally, the other children accessing the service benefit from being in a more inclusive environment where the needs of all children are met and fully respected.

### **Funding Assistance for the Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Mainstream OSC Services**

In most of the other Childcare Partnership areas, financial support can be given to OSC services that require extra funding in order to look after a child with special needs. This is often problematic because many of the OSC services interviewed in these areas were not aware of any funding support that was obtainable and stated that they would be unable to care for children with needs that could not be provided for within the normal staffing ratios. Where funding is given, it normally derives from the Childcare Strategy funds and is applied for on an ad hoc basis by the groups requiring the support. The majority of authorities have devised comprehensive application procedures which require detailed

information on the child's needs and the use of the financial support given. Sometimes these requests will be counter-signed by the child's parent, teacher, or as is the case in Perth & Kinross, by the local OSC Network which oversees the budget.

South Ayrshire Childcare Partnership have expressly informed the OSC services in the area that funding will be provided to all childcare projects to cover all additional costs arising as a result of the particular needs of the children in their care. Similarly, Moray has developed a 'Supported Places Initiative' for OSC by which a grant (average of £3000) is available to every OSC service to be used to include or 'bring in' children/young people who would not otherwise be able to access the service. In all cases, the funding is given directly to the OSC services themselves, rather than to an outside organisation to provide support staff. This has several advantages. Most notably, it reduces the need for a separate organisation to be involved in the delivery of OSC in the area, allowing full autonomy to the OSC services. Partnership work with local and national organisations in the other local authorities has at times been difficult when the Childcare Partnership's agenda does not fully correspond with that of the local or national organisation. The other advantage is that it removes the need for support workers who are not employees of the OSC service they are working in. Although the specialised childcare workers in all the projects outlined in the previous section work alongside the OSC providers, their situation differs from the rest of the staff members due to the fact that the management committee of the project does not employ them. Direct funding to the OSC service, on the other hand, allows the project to employ its own staff members if such support is necessary.

Despite these benefits, however, it would still seem that the previous model whereby a pool of specialised childcare workers are 'matched' with the children requiring support is to be preferred to the direct funding to OSC services. There are at least five reasons suggesting why this is the case, and they are all supported by comments made by OSC services when asked to state any concerns they had regarding supporting children with special needs in OSC. Firstly, as has been pointed out above, the voluntary management committees of OSC services are often working parents with limited time to spend on what may be deemed burdensome application processes. The fundraising responsibilities of OSC services are already onerous enough, some clubs have argued, without having more forms to complete for every child who requires additional support. The initiatives in areas such as North Lanarkshire and Stirling lessen the responsibilities and paperwork of the OSC management committees as the organisations themselves take on these tasks.

Secondly, OSC services may be reluctant to guarantee a place to children with special needs, or even to raise hopes that they may be able to access a place until the necessary support funding is confirmed. The ad hoc nature of the application process means that whether or not support is given to the OSC project will depend upon the amount of Childcare Strategy funds that are available for that financial year. As in most Councils the funding is not ring-fenced for special needs, the Partnership is unable to speculate the number of funding applications that may be received. If they limit the application dates to various times of the year, this may create lengthy waiting times for children with special needs wishing to access OSC.

Thirdly, the majority of OSC services, having little or no experience in the nature of different needs and abilities, may not be able to provide adequate information or advice to parents considering OSC for their children. Special needs organisations, on the other hand, may be able to suggest and highlight the appropriateness or otherwise of certain OSC services in the area for their child.

Fourthly, as the nature of the work in OSC creates a very high turnover of staff, OSC management committees often struggle to maintain the necessary staffing levels to run the service. Most of the



services interviewed in areas which did not provide additional staffing for special needs stated that their main concern when looking after children with special needs would be their capacity to employ an appropriately skilled childcare worker with special needs experience.

Finally, the long-term implications of providing Childcare Strategy funds to OSC groups may be problematic without the guarantee of continued and increased support for children with special needs in the future. As more OSC services develop across Scotland, the increased supply will in turn also create demand for the service from the parents of children with special needs. As more children requiring additional support access OSC services, more money will have to be put into the projects to provide the expert care necessary for the children concerned. In the context of formal education provision, Special Educational Needs auxiliaries are funded to support children who require this additional support. However, many special needs childcare professionals interviewed stated that, for many children with special needs, full inclusion in an OSC environment can be provided at little or no additional cost to the provider. What is essential, however, is that the service fully understands how to cope with the play care needs of the children in their care. Special needs training and experience in working with the children can provide the necessary knowledge and understanding. For this reason, the provision of funding to clubs looking after children with special needs may not be the most cost-effective means of inclusion in the long-term. The other models have the benefit of having an experienced worker who is fully aware of the needs of the child accompanying the child to the service and passing on the necessary knowledge and experience to the rest of the staff. As a result of this, the other staff members are trained in the needs of the child and the service is able to become fully inclusive even without the extra support worker. The support worker's length of stay at the particular OSC service is determined solely by the needs of the child, rather than by any contractual obligation that the worker has to the OSC project.

As the other childcare workers gain knowledge and experience through the support of the specialist worker, it is not possible for the organisations in this report such as Playplus, The Inclusion Group and Partners in Play etc to conclusively state how many children with special needs have been supported in OSC care as a result of the work of the organisations. The effect of facilitating inclusion for one child with special needs in an OSC service may allow that service to consider providing for children with similar needs without extra support. All of the OSC projects which have benefited from the assistance of a specialised worker from one of the organisations have also been given special needs training in inclusive play. As the skills and confidence of the core staff team develop, the service can gradually become fully inclusive with the knowledge that, if a child's care needs are beyond the abilities of the staffing levels of the project, extra support and advice is available.

## **Transport for Children with Special Needs Accessing OSC Services**

Transportation for children with special needs has been highlighted as a major barrier in the development of fully inclusive OSC services. Most OSC projects have several 'feeder schools' located within a radius small enough to allow the children accessing the service to come straight from school, in most cases accompanied by an escort. As children with recognised Special Educational Needs are entitled to education transport, this transportation can sometimes be redirected to the OSC service where it does not divert substantially from the route usually taken. Therefore, children who would normally be transported home from school can be transported to an OSC service within their own locality.

In several areas, however, this was not possible due to complications in the funding of the transport service and in the regulations of the transport insurance schemes used. This frustrated many childcare

professionals and families affected by the difficulties involved and made it difficult for children to access OSC provision. In all cases (with the exception of some of the specialised OSC projects) children with special needs were not transported home at the end of the day as this was seen to be an unnecessary and unfair advantage to these families.

## Conclusion

This brief overview of provision for children with special needs in OSC services across Scotland highlights the benefits for the OSC projects and the children accessing them, of working in partnership with specialist childcare organisations to help to develop fully inclusive provision. The examples of good practice mentioned above are detailed further in the local summaries, but all Partnerships have stated their commitment to aiming for full inclusion in all OSC services in their area. How each Partnership are planning to achieve this varies considerably across Scotland, but even the most cost-effective schemes still require a recognition that the costs of childcare for children with special needs will always need to be subsidised as fully inclusive services for all children will have difficulties in achieving financial sustainability.

## Holiday Provision

It is during the school holidays that most parents experience some concerns regarding childcare for their children. Although local authorities have a duty under Section 27 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 to provide holiday care for school aged children with disabilities, most of the services offered are very limited as to the number of weeks the service runs for and the number of days allocated to each child. This is so despite the fact that the guidance to the Act recommends that such services should be accessible, reliable, and flexible so that they respond to the changing needs of children and families. The guidance also encourages local authorities to work closely with the voluntary and private sectors to develop a mixed economy of provision, and to recognise the importance of voluntary and small-scale provision, particularly in more rural regions. While the Local Summaries do reveal examples of close working with different sectors and different organisations, childcare provision for children with special needs over the holidays is very limited.

While more specialised projects for children with special needs operate over the holidays than during term-time, they are almost all financially unsustainable and therefore heavily dependent on uncertain funding. There still remains a lack of initiatives to support children in mainstream holiday activities, whether in council-run or voluntary playschemes or in recreational holiday projects.

## Specialised Provision

Most local authorities in Scotland have at least one special needs holiday playscheme operating for several weeks over the school summer holidays. Many also run during the Easter holidays and in the October break. Generally, these playschemes provide for a wide range of needs and most of the children attending would have difficulty in accessing a mainstream playscheme without support. Several local authorities work in partnership with national organisations, such as the National Autistic Society and its affiliated branches to manage and run the playschemes.

The playschemes are staffed with very experienced childcare workers and many rely heavily on volunteers. In the case of playschemes for children with profound and complex needs, nursing staff also

support the groups. 1:1 care can normally be provided in most of the playschemes detailed in the Local Summaries. Due to the very high staffing costs to support the playscheme and the high levels of care that the children require, the numbers of children who can attend the special needs playschemes are very limited. In the Local Summaries, the number of places stated is the number of places which the group is registered for. In many cases, the number of children who could actually attend was less than the registered number due to their care needs. In order that as many children as possible can benefit from the playscheme, places are sometimes rationed amongst all the children who wish to attend. In some circumstances, the results of this rationing have meant that children with special needs have attended playschemes for as little as 1 day each week for 5 weeks.

## **Who can attend the Specialised Playschemes?**

In many areas, the Social Work department organises holiday playschemes for children with special needs and can refer children to the playscheme as part of the child's care package. Aberdeen City and Dumfries and Galloway's Social Work departments have both developed several holiday playschemes for children with special needs across the local authority. As most of these playschemes are only open to children who are referred by a social worker, access is therefore limited to children who are in contact with a social worker. In the course of this study, many parents of children with special needs commented that such support was difficult to receive. This also appeared to be the case in a recent Scottish study into children's experiences of disability (Scottish Executive, 2002).

## **Costs and Fees**

As mentioned above, the operation of a special needs holiday project requires very substantial sums of money. While parents cannot be expected to cover the full costs of the service, several Childcare Partnerships have been challenged in the development of specialised holiday projects because of the historical legacy attached to some projects that they would be provided for free. The Childcare Officers in these areas have had to persuade parents that they do not have an entitlement to such free provision, particularly when transportation is provided. Parents were asked to support the projects by being more realistic regarding the level of fees that should be charged. While in some Council areas the Council will pay a subsidy for extra support needs with parents paying a normal fee, in many other projects parents pay very little or nothing at all for their child to access the service.

## **Locations**

Many specialised playschemes operate from special schools. In most cases, the premises are provided as payment in kind by Education Departments and the majority of the children attending the playscheme also attend the school during the year. This has advantages and disadvantages for the children and young people accessing the playscheme. While on the one hand there is consistency for the children who may take some time in adapting to new environments, on the other hand the adjustment back to 'school' after the holiday playscheme ends may be more difficult than if they had attended a different location for the playscheme.

## **Mainstream Holiday Services**

The majority of OSC services operate over the school holiday period, and the issues regarding accessibility to these services by children with special needs is discussed above. It should be noted, however, that transportation to the OSC summer scheme can be more difficult for all children, but

particularly for children with mobility impairments as education transportation would normally not be provided.

Many councils operate community playschemes which invariably operate for around 5 hours each day for most of the summer holidays. In the majority of council-run playschemes, however, while equal opportunities policies suggest that all children can access the services, little or no support is provided to enable children with special needs to attend. Where support is provided it is usually in the form of additional funding to enable the group to take on another member of staff if required. In some of the areas listed which have 'link workers' or 'playfriends' to support children with special needs in mainstream OSC, the workers can also assist children in the local playschemes.

## Planning for the Future

A number of major gaps in childcare provision for children with special needs have been highlighted in the majority of local authorities in Scotland, each of which are briefly summarised below:

### **Childcare for Young People over the age of 12 with Special Needs**

'Childcare' and 'playcare' are inaccurate descriptions of the types of services that are required for young people with special needs in most parts of Scotland. This study examined provision for children between the ages of 0–14, and it was noted that very few OSC groups and mainstream playschemes accommodated young people over the age of 12. While several special needs holiday playschemes do provide for children and young people up to the ages of 16 and 18, 'playschemes' may not be the most appropriate environment for many young people with special needs.

In order to remedy this, several areas have consulted with young people with disabilities to establish what provision kinds of services they would like to access, and have spoken to parents about their childcare needs. Generally, the young people consulted expressed that they wanted to access services that non-disabled young people of their age access on a regular basis. This included activities such as swimming, shopping and going to the cinema. As a result of this, some young people with disabilities have been involved with befriending services so as to reduce the social isolation that they have experienced in the past. Barnardo's works in conjunction with several local authorities to provide a befriending service. Playplus in Stirling also has a similar scheme in operation, where the young people themselves dictate the activities.

### **Establishing the Childcare Needs of Parents**

All Childcare Partnerships were asked if they had carried out audits of childcare needs of the parents of children with special needs. Details of the outcomes of any research undertaken are included within the Local Summaries. It was noted by several local authorities, however, that some parents of children with special needs who are not fully informed of the rights of their child to non-discrimination, express gratitude for any provision that is offered. In several cases, parents had total praise for a holiday playscheme that their children attended, despite the fact that their child could only attend for 5/6 days throughout the whole summer.

In addition to this, several interviewees were of the view that many parents of children with complex needs do not consider a return to work or training as a viable option. Where employment is entered into,

it is usually on a part-time basis and only when the child has started school. While this allows the parent to be the main and only source of childcare for the child, it makes holiday times even more difficult for both the parents and the child. There seems to be a lack of detailed research into the views of parents of children with special needs and it is suggested that this is an area that requires future research at a local level. Parents, when being asked about their childcare needs, should also be informed of their child's right to access services without discrimination.

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1 Estimation by Partners in Play, North Lanarkshire for a child with profound and complex medical needs requiring specialist care and transportation.

2 Article 31, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

# Local Summaries

## Aberdeen City

Aberdeen is the third largest city in Scotland. The most recent population estimate for Aberdeen City, for June 2000, reveals a population of 211,250.<sup>1</sup> Of that number, 36,144 are aged 0–14 years, 17% of the total population. The city has been built at the mouth of two major Scottish rivers, the Dee and the Don, and covers an area of 184.47 square kilometres. Aberdeen City has a very low level of unemployment – it was ranked number 2 in Scotland in 2001 with 2,229 registered unemployed (1.5% of the population of Aberdeen City), compared with the national unemployment rate of 4.1%). It should be noted, however, that this unemployment level varies considerably between wards from 0.5% to 9.1%. While Aberdeen is a largely affluent city, there are pockets of deprivation. Three postal code areas are in the worst 20% deprivation index and there is one Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) project in the city.

### **Children with Special Needs**

The numbers of children in Aberdeen City who have a particular need or disability cannot be firmly stated. As research from the former Scottish Office in 1995 estimated that approximately 3% of the child population have some kind of disability, it is likely that there are over 1,000 children aged 0–14 with a disability in Aberdeen City. Of this number, a significant amount of children – particularly younger children – may not have had their needs assessed and therefore will not be in contact with service providers. 629 children in Aberdeen have a Record of Needs opened. These cannot be opened unless a child is over 2 and few Records are opened in Aberdeen before school placement is identified. At the time of the School Census in September 2001, there were 407 children attending one of the eleven special schools or units in the city.

### **Childcare for children with Special Needs in Aberdeen City**

Aberdeen Childcare Partnership's Childcare Audit 2001 details comprehensively provision for children with special needs. Most of the information used in this summary was obtained from this audit and through discussions with Sue Barnard, the Special Needs Development Officer and Elaine Herron of the Scottish Childminding Association.

An evaluation of services for children with special needs was published in February 2001. It was based on 147 questionnaire responses from parents of children with special needs. Over two-thirds of respondents were parents whose children attended a special school. They were asked, "How do you feel that services in general recognise and meet your child's needs?" The results were broken down into four categories – Education, Health, Social Work and Leisure. Overall, the results were encouraging, with around two-thirds of responses being either Very Satisfactory or Satisfactory. The evaluation looked closely at holiday provision and this is discussed below along with the November 2001 evaluation of the 'Linkworker Scheme'. This scheme was established in 1999 in order to promote and encourage inclusion opportunities for children with special needs within mainstream registered childcare provision in the City of Aberdeen.

In general, Aberdeen City Council has excellent mechanisms in place to support children with special needs in both mainstream and in specialised childcare services. Childcare strategy funds have been invested in developing the necessary infrastructure to ensure that assistance can be given in order to facilitate full inclusion. Childcare workers benefit from working alongside special needs link workers and are gradually developing the necessary

experience in order to look after some children with disabilities without linkworker support. The annual training programme that is rolled out to all childcare workers also includes elements of special needs training.

### **Childminding**

There are 269 childminders in Aberdeen. A full-time Development Officer for childminders has been employed and a Childminding Network as well as various local groups have been established. As of yet, there are no formal mechanisms in place to support childminders looking after children with special needs. It is not clear whether childminders would be able to receive linkworker support to offer childcare to a child with disabilities. This scheme has not been accessed by childminders in Aberdeen City in the past, but there may be the possibility of developing the linkworker service to provide such support. Childminders can apply to Aberdeen Childcare Partnership for funding if extra financial support is required in order to meet the needs of the child. There is no annual application system, but all funding requests will be considered and funding will be allocated within Partnership priorities.

Social work run a Supported Childminding Scheme which can match a child 'in need' to a specific childminder. This would be designated 'daycare' rather than 'childcare', but the service may be provided for on-going situations. Training is provided for all childcare workers and elements of special needs training are included within this. The numbers of childminders who attend such training however, is usually disappointingly low. Several childminders commented that, as they were not presently looking after a child with special needs, such training may be irrelevant to their work and would only seek to undertake special needs training when required to do so. Others suggested that, if they were confident that they would receive the necessary support and training required to look after a child with special needs, they would be more willing to undertake special needs training.

There is also a sitter-service which is available, but this is limited to respite care and not childcare for working families.

### **Nursery and Playgroup Provision**

The majority of children with Special Educational Needs can attend mainstream nursery provision with support. There are several centres which have specialist staff to help in the development of the child's needs. The Raeden Centre is jointly run by the local authority and the Health Service as an assessment centre for pre-school children with special needs. The nursery at the Centre is managed by the Aberdeen City Council's Education Department and frequently has joint childcare placements with mainstream local authority and partner provider nurseries so as to encourage inclusion. A crèche is run through Surestart funding in Aberdeen City for children aged 0-3 with special needs. However, it only operates for 2 sessions each week and, as only around 6/8 children can attend each session, the parents have to phone in advance to book a place for their child.

The Hearing Impairment Unit at Sunnybank School has full-day places for children with a hearing impairment. In the morning session the children are included within the mainstream nursery provision and in the afternoon session only the children with hearing impairments remain.

Special Educational Needs Auxiliaries may be provided where required to support children with special needs in the 53 local authority nurseries. However, there is no wraparound childcare at all in any of the local authority nurseries in Aberdeen City. There are 7 nurseries providing 'full-day' care, 2.5 hours in the morning and 2.5 hours in the afternoon, but none provide wraparound care above these hours. This is to be a focus for development in the immediate future for the Aberdeen Childcare Partnership, with 3 wrap around childcare projects potentially being developed by the end of this year.

Aberdeen City Council is in partnership with around 50 registered pre-school centres in the independent, private and voluntary sector. These nurseries do not receive auxiliary support. It is unclear whether the same support could be accessed as it is not something that the Childcare Partnership or Council have yet addressed. It is assumed that normally, the parents of a child with special needs would try to access something more specialist and such provision is normally found in the local authority provision. However, it has been noted that none of the local authority nursery services provided full-day wraparound care.

St John's Nursery in the Camphill Rudolf Steiner School has places set aside for children affected by autism.



Transport is available for children accessing Raeden Nursery and Assessment Centre. Education transport is not available at the moment for nursery-aged children. However, arrangements may be made for particular children in special cases.

## Out of School Care Services

### *Specialised Out of School Care*

Hazelwood Out of School Care is a new OSC service that has began operation this term. It is specifically for children with special needs and it is based at Hazelwood School.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Hazelwood OSC	Hazelwood School, Aberdeen	Mon–Fri. 15.15–17.30	5–16	25 in total (8 per day)	Wide range of disabilities	Transportation is not provided at the moment	NOF

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are currently 30 after-school clubs in Aberdeen. There is an average of 30 places in each club. All of the after school clubs operate from Monday to Friday. The hours range from 14:30 to 18:00. All OSC services in Aberdeen City practice anti-discriminatory policies and consider the needs of every child on an individual basis whatever the needs are.

The Linkworker Scheme was set up in 1999 to encourage the inclusion of children with special needs within Out of School Care and other childcare provision. The Scheme is managed by Voluntary Service Aberdeen which employs a pool of 37 workers who work on a casual 'as required' basis. The Linkworkers all have considerable experience of working with children with special needs and will support a child intensively in the short term. The Linkworker works in partnership with the provider to continue to offer childcare in the long term with the gradual reduction of Linkworker support. Aberdeen City Childcare Partnership pays for the Linkworker's salary and parents pay the nominal fee for the child's attendance at the club. The Scheme is available to parents of children aged 0–16 who have special needs and who are in, or who are considering a return to employment or further education.

The Out of School Care services in Aberdeen City have been informed of the Linkworker Scheme through Grampian Out of School Care Network meetings and mailings. Referrals to the Scheme have come equally from parent/carers, after school services and the Social Work Department. An evaluation of the Linkworker Scheme was carried out in November 2001 and in that year, Linkworker support had been provided to 7 children to enable them to access a regular Out of School Care Service, and to 22 children to enable them to attend a holiday playscheme facility. A further 12 children were matched with a linkworker as part of a 1:1 arrangement with Social Work. It was noted that the Linkworker Scheme developed slowly as it was at first quite challenging for the organisation to win the confidence of the parents of children with special needs and to raise awareness of equal opportunities amongst the Clubs. It is now quite firmly established and, as the recent evaluation reveals, successful.

As part of the recent evaluation process, evaluation forms were sent out to linkworkers, after school clubs and parents/carers. Responses were returned from 17 out of 36 parent/carers. Their comments were very positive, expressing the benefits of the Scheme for the children and for the whole family. 6 out of 10 responses were returned from after school clubs and playschemes and these also demonstrated that the Scheme was generally successful, though concerns were expressed regarding both the length of time it takes to get a linkworker and the lack of communication that then exists between the parents and the childcare staff.

One of the main benefits of the Linkworker Scheme is that the linkworker, while responsible for the child with special needs, also becomes part of the staff team. The Linkworker will only remain in the provision until such time as the rest of the staff feel able to cope with the child themselves. This allows the rest of the staff time to develop their confidence and experience of working with the child before doing so without the extra support.

The Linkworker Service does not provide support for children with special needs in accessing the uniformed services or leisure activities. It is limited to after school care services and holiday playschemes. Many parents have



requested leisure and recreation activity support by the linkworker scheme as OSC services are not always the first choice or even a viable option for some working parents. An expansion of the Linkworker Scheme to accommodate this demand would also go some way towards remedying the previous point as, in a sample survey of 11–14 year olds in Aberdeen City, sports and social activities were the preferred out-of-school choices.<sup>2</sup> Another difficulty with the expansion of the Linkworker Service to narrow this gap is that the present scheme is funded by the Childcare Strategy Fund in order to enable parents to get out to work. It is not set up in order for children with special needs to access recreational services even though this may be a direct benefit of 'childcare'.

Aberdeen Childcare Partnership also runs an OSC subsidy scheme which clubs can apply to on an annual basis. This funding can support, among other things, the funding to employ an additional worker to enhance staff ratios. The Partnership are currently funding 3 clubs through this mechanism.

## **Holiday Provision**

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Hazelwood Out of School Care, the specialised OSC service, ran a holiday service for the first time this year. It is the only specialised all day holiday childcare service for children with special needs. The Social Work Department provide funding for several holiday playschemes for children with special needs, though most of these require a social work referral in order to attend and the high demand for services means that places are often rationed amongst the children.

In the summer time, between 50% and 70% of families affected by a disability use the social work services. In the evaluation of services for children with special needs that was published in February 2001, slightly fewer than half of the 147 respondents indicated that their child attended a playscheme or summer activity, and almost all were happy with the service they were offered. In most cases, the children went to one of the above schemes. One of the main drawbacks of the schemes was found to be that the parents were offered fewer days than they would have liked – 2/3 days per week rather than 3 or more.

### *Mainstream Holiday Provision*

Linkworker support can also be placed into the 18 out of school care services that run over the holidays and into the playschemes run by Community Education, Leisure and Recreation. There are 40 holiday playschemes in Aberdeen offering 2,094 places. These playschemes cater mainly for 5–14 year olds. In delivering the Playscheme Grants to holiday projects, the formula used for calculating the sum given takes into account the numbers of children who will be attending who have Special Educational Needs. Mainstream playschemes where children with special needs and disabilities will be attending will therefore be entitled to a larger grant to pay for any extra costs that are incurred as a result of the child's needs.

36 children with special needs accessed mainstream holiday playschemes in Aberdeen with linkworker support in 2002.

## **Other Provision**

### *Specialised Services*

The Saturday Fun Club runs every Saturday for children with special needs at Beechwood School. A choice is made between one of the two sessions: 12:00–14:00 or 14:30–16:30. 25 children attend each session and parents can pay a 50p donation.

### *Mainstream Services*

Aberdeen City Council's Arts and Recreation Department offer a number of services through its sports, dance, libraries and museums services. Although such services all have equal opportunities policies, in practice, parents have reported problems in achieving access. In the evaluation of services for children with special needs, many of the respondents stated that their children had interests and hobbies that they would like to attend during out of school hours but they were prevented from doing so for several reasons. The main reasons for non-participation in such activities were:

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Duration	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Hazelwood Playscheme	Hazelwood School	8.00–17.45	5 weeks in summer	5+	25 max	Wide range of disabilities	No	NOF
The Holiday Fun Club	Beechwood School	10.00–15.30	6 weeks in the summer	5–12	25	Wide range of disabilities	Social Work provide transport for their referrals	Social Work fund the Club
Under 8's <i>Social Work</i>		09.30–15.30	5 weeks in the summer	Under 8	8	Profound and complex	Provided	Only open to social work referrals
Jigsaw <i>Grampian Autistic Society</i>	Cornerhill Hospital	09.30–15.30	7 weeks each year	4–16	12	Autism/social and communicative impairments		Social Work and G.A.S.
Woodlands <i>Cornerstone Community Care</i>	Woodlands Special School	08.30–15.30	Open only to pupils of Woodlands School in the summer. At Easter and Autumn breaks, it is open to all schools	4.5–18	10	Wide range of complex needs	Transportation provided to and from the project	Social Work and parental contribution of £3 per day
Youth Activity Scheme <i>Partnership</i>	Community Education Centre	10.00–15.00	6 weeks in the summer, 4 days each week	12–18	10	Autism, communication difficulties, behavioural difficulties	Transportation provided to and from the project	All Social Work funding
Summer Activity Group <i>Partnership</i>	No premises – purely activity based	10.00–15.00 approx	6 weeks in the summer, 4 days each week	8–12	6	Mainly ADHD	Transportation provided	All Social Work funding
Rudolf Steiner Scheme	Camphill School	School hours	Summer holidays	School age	20	Open to children from the school only	Residential	All social work funding
Sure-Start Playscheme	Ashgrove Family Centre	2 x p.m. sessions and 1 x a.m. session	4 weeks during July	0–5	Varies	Mainly for respite and to give the children something to do		Sure-Start Funded

- No helper with knowledge of special needs being available
- Too difficult to organise
- Tried but didn't work out successfully
- Club/group unwilling to accept a child with special needs
- Little or no opportunity to spend time out-with home

The Linkworker Scheme cannot be expanded to enable children to access other leisure services and facilities as it is limited to providing 'childcare' in the traditional sense to children with special needs so as to enable their parents to access work or employment. There are concerns that allowing Linkworkers to accompany children to the swimming pool or to the brownies will 'open the floodgates' to requests for linkworker support, thereby reducing the number of working parents who can use the service for more traditional childcare arrangements.

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- 1 This is the mid-year population estimate carried out by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS).
  - 2 Consultation exercise carried out on behalf of the Aberdeen Childcare Partnership. Questionnaire sent to 10% pupils in the first 2 years at 5 of Aberdeen's 13 secondary schools. 120 responses were received.

# Aberdeenshire

The most recent population estimate for Aberdeenshire, for June 2000, reveals a population estimate of 227, 440. Of that number 44,323 are aged 0–14 years, 19.5% of the total population. Most people in Aberdeenshire live in small towns of under 6,000 people and a few larger settlements ranging from 10,000 to 18,000 people, mainly located around the coast. In certain areas there are falling school rolls and families moving out of communities to areas where there is employment and better services. In contrast there are a significant number of dormitory towns experiencing growing school rolls, which has led to increasing demands for both pre-school education and childcare in these areas.<sup>1</sup> Although overall Aberdeenshire is ranked third in Scotland for its unemployment rate, with only 1.9% unemployment, in certain parts of Aberdeenshire there is a lack of economic growth and as a result in these locations there is a lack of available employment and training opportunities.

## Children with Special Needs

The estimation that 3% of the child population nationally have some kind of disability provides the approximation of 1,329 children in Aberdeenshire having a disability. 692 children in Aberdeenshire currently have a Record of Needs opened. In total, 2,687 children have Special Educational Needs and 320 children attend either a special school or special needs unit.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Aberdeenshire

An audit of childcare for children with special needs was recently carried out by the Childcare Partnership which encompassed both childcare providers and the parents of children with special needs. At the moment, childcare providers can apply for sustainability funding to cover the additional operational costs that may arise when looking after a child with special needs. Support provided to childcare providers is therefore given in the way of grants as opposed to additional physical support, though the grants can be used to employ extra members of staff.

The childcare providers in the audit suggested that it would be more helpful for them if they could receive support through physical assistance, such as specialist support workers coming in to the projects to support the providers in delivering their services. It is hoped that a 'linkworker' model may be developed by the Childcare Partnership in the near future. Potentially, this support could be given to all out of school care services and full-day childcare providers.

In terms of workforce training, there is a rolling programme of training which includes elements of special needs training. The 'Including Everybody' training by Kidsactive provides disability awareness training set within the context of play, pre-school and out of school activities for children and young people.

A major difficulty in the development of childcare provision for children with special needs in Aberdeenshire is the issue of transportation. Public transport is limited and as many as a third of those living in some rural localities do not have access to a car. For this reason, there are very few services that have been established specifically for children with special needs and the focus has recently moved to ensuring that all providers are able to cope with looking after children with disabilities. Children with lower incidence disabilities are transported through to Aberdeen City to access specialist provision there.

## Childminding

There are approximately 566 registered childminders in Aberdeenshire. This is a very common source of childcare, particularly in the more rural areas. A grant scheme has been set up to assist childminders who are caring for children with special needs. After a disappointingly low level of funding requests from childminders, the fund was given to the Scottish Childminding Association to administer. Childminders are informed of the support funds and can apply to receive up to £500 in order to purchase specialist equipment or toys, or to make minor adaptations to their home where this is required to meet the child's needs. If a larger sum of money than £500 is required, it would still be considered by the SCMA. Although the scheme is advertised to all childminders, so far only 6 grants have been administered.

The low take-up of the support funds has surprised SCMA, who have promoted the scheme and had expected greater requests for funding. The most obvious reason may be that very few childminders are currently looking after children with special needs who would require this extra money. There is no funding available for childminders in Aberdeenshire to subsidise their income where they are looking after a child who requires 1:1 support. Therefore when childminders are looking after a child whose needs require greater attention than other children, they may expect a great drop in income.

The annual training programme does include elements of special needs training, but it is not clear how many childminders attend these events. If a childminder required training in a particular area because of the needs of the children they were caring for, this would be provided.

Social work offer respite care through both childminders and the 'Take a Break' scheme which is a Sitter Service whereby the carer goes into the child's home to offer the respite care.

### **Nursery and Playgroup Provision**

There are around 10 Developmental nurseries in Aberdeenshire for children with more complex needs. These nurseries are geographically spread around the authority and allow specialised resources to be centralised. Children accessing these nurseries are entitled to the same 5 x 2½ pre-school hours. There is also a Developmental Playgroup in Huntley for young children with special needs. It operates for 2 sessions per week. Wraparound childcare is not provided in any of these nurseries.

Support will be given to local authority nurseries where it is requested and required. Only one local authority nursery provides wraparound care (Laurencekirk). If necessary for the child's needs, a Support for Learning (SFL) auxiliary can go into the nursery to support the service. Where the child has more complex needs, or has a developmental delay in more than one area, the child would be referred to a Developmental Nursery (above).

Aberdeenshire Council is in partnership with 24 private nurseries and there is another 1 day nursery which is not in partnership. The private sector have been given money to enhance provision for children with special needs. This money is to be spent mainly on equipment and adaptation of premises. SFL auxiliaries can also go into the partnership nurseries where needed to allow the child to access pre-school education. This would normally only be the case when the child has accessed the nursery from infancy, before the developmental difficulties were prevalent. The support provided is restricted to the set pre-school hours only and not for the childcare hours. The social work department would consider supplementing the nursery to support extra staffing if necessary for the childcare hours if there was a recognised need for the child. In the majority of circumstances, however, this care has only been provided within the home and social work have not yet been asked to support children in nursery provision.

### **Out of School Care**

The Local Childcare Partnership undertook research into Out of School Care and sought the views of parents whose children attended two of the special schools as part of the research. This research sought their responses on, inter alia, the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream childcare settings. The response from the parents of children with special needs was a very mixed one. While some parents were in favour of their child attending a mainstream childcare setting with support, other parents were of the view that a specialised service for children with special needs would be more appropriate for their child. It was noted, however, that the establishment of such a service in one of the special schools may result in some logistical problems. Many of the special schools are drawing from a very large geographical area. Transport difficulties would emerge if some of the children were remaining behind after school but whose homes were further away. In such circumstances inclusion would be beneficial, as transportation could be redirected to an OSC in their own locality. Sustainability money can be used where a lot of the project's money is being drained away from the services due to high transport costs.

#### *Specialised Services*

There are no OSC services specifically for children with special needs. There are plans to establish such a service in Carronhill School in the coming year. This is to be developed in conjunction with the Grampian Autistic Society and will create 12 OSC places each day.

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 23 Out of School Care projects in Aberdeenshire. A number of these projects have designated places for children with special needs. The decision to allocate a set number of places to children with special needs has come from the providers themselves. Most of the providers stated that the decision stemmed mainly from location (for example, if they are based in the same locality as a special school) and from parent committee members who actively promoted the inclusion of children with special needs into their service. There are a large number of providers who currently make such provision and who currently do have children with special needs attending the service.

The Childcare Partnership is no longer encouraging OSC services to have a set quota of children with special needs. Instead, they are trying to support the services through the use of the sustainability funding. The OSC services apply to the Childcare Partnership where extra funding is required, whether the money is needed due to special needs or for some other cost. This sustainability funding can be used to make minor adaptations to the premises, to purchase suitable equipment or to employ an extra member of staff. As mentioned above, there are plans to develop a 'Linkworker' service to support children with special needs in accessing OSC services in the area. This service would be of great benefit to the OSC projects in the area, several of which regarded special needs provision as an on-going concern. One particular service had to exclude a child from the project as the child's needs could not be adequately dealt with at the service. This OSC service noted that this puts the projects in a very difficult position as childcare providers and would definitely appreciate more specialised people coming into the clubs to support the other workers. The linkworker project is still in its very early stages.

Social Work has placed children with special needs into Out of School services and have provided extra staffing support. Special Assistants have worked in several of the OSC services in Aberdeenshire. The Special Assistants are employed by the OSC and the money is given to the OSC from the Childcare Strategy Funds.

## **Holiday Provision**

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

As mentioned above, there are no specialised OSC services. However, the proposed Carronhill OSC will run over the holiday period.

The Social Work Department organise several holiday projects for children with special needs. While these are mainly respite care schemes, they do provide elements of play for the purpose of the mapping exercise. However, the care is not full-time as the places have to be rationed amongst the children attending. The projects are therefore unsuitable as a form of childcare for working parents. A small fee of around £3.00 is charged for these projects. No transportation is provided.

<b>Name of service</b>	<b>Days and times</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>Types of disability</b>
Take-A-Break Respite Care Holiday Playscheme	Summer holidays 9.30–15.30 Mon	3–6	Each child receives one session per week. Various activities and events are carried out. Short-term respite care for carers. The children do not require a social work referral in order to attend the service. It is funded jointly by Social Work and the Health Board
	Tue	6–10	
	Thurs	10–16	
Gordon Rural Action Holiday Playscheme	Summer, Easter and Oct holiday 10.00–15.00 1 session	5–16	Gordon Rural Action have a service-level agreement with the Social Work Department to run holiday provision over the school holidays. Around 60 children in total benefit from the service. This is held in Huntley School for one session each week
	3 sessions	3–16	This is held in Inverurie School for 3 sessions each week
	2 sessions	5–16	This is held in Ellen School for 2 sessions each week

*Mainstream Holiday Services*

19 OSC services operate over the school holiday period and there are several other community playschemes.

**Other Provision**

The Social Work Department operate 3 'D.I.Y. Activity Clubs' on a Saturday for older children and young people with special needs. There are 5 Clubs based in 3 locations and the young people aged between 12 and 16 can attend once every 2 weeks. One of the groups is based in Huntley school, two are based in Inverurie and a further two are based in Ellen school. A range of in-house activities are offered as well as outings. As the emphasis is on the encouragement of independence, the young people are encouraged to plan their own trips and activities. The cost of attending this project is £2 per session.

'Take a Break' respite care scheme run a 'Saturday Fun Day' club on Saturday mornings from 9.30–1.30 during term time for ages 3–8. Games and activities are organised at a cost of £2.50 for the session.

A parent group set up their own special needs playcare facility providing mainly respite care. 'The Butterfly Trust' runs its 'Butterfly For-rest' service once every fortnight. It is funded mainly through Children In Need funding and provides for 12 children aged 0–7, though normally the children attending are over age 2. They employ nursery nurses to co-ordinate the service and the activities are mainly arts and crafts and play.

Aberdeenshire Social Work can also buy into the services that are offered by Aberdeen Social Work where there are places remaining.

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1 Aberdeenshire Childcare and Pre-School Education Plan, 2001 Review.



# Angus

The most recent population estimate for Angus reveals a population of 108,636. Of that number 21,076 are aged 0–15 years, around 20% of the total population. Most of the population of Angus live within one of the seven burghs of Arbroath, Brechin, Carnoustie, Forfar, Kirriemuir, Monifieth and Montrose. The economy of Angus is closely linked to agriculture and associated industries and the unemployment rate for Angus is similar to that the rest of Scotland (4.1% of the population).

## Children with Special Needs

Many children experience a learning difficulty which means they experience significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children their age. In terms of the current legislation, the special needs of approximately 2% of children are so profound, complex or long term that a Record of Needs is opened for them. In Angus there are at present 307 full Records of Needs open, many for children who attend schools in other areas either as day pupils or on a residential basis.

It is usually reckoned that, in addition to the group of children who have Records of Needs opened, up to 20% of the school population will have learning difficulties at some time. These may relate to a wide range of factors from, for example, a difficulty with Speech and Language to a physical disability such as Cerebral Palsy.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Angus

Angus Childcare Partnership in conjunction with Angus College, offers free accredited special needs training to all childcare staff accessing rural services. (Module: The Child with Special Needs; An Introduction)

The Angus Rural Transport Project, the first of its kind in Scotland, offers subsidised transport costs and can be accessed by all childcare providers.

The Childcare Partnership provides funding for additional resources, minor alterations to premises and staff training.

The Angus Toy Library provides access to and delivery of toys and equipment suitable for children with special needs.

## Childminding

There are 226 registered childminders in Angus, 157 of whom have provided their details to the Childcare Information Service. 75 have indicated they would consider providing a service for children with special needs.

Angus Childcare Partnership provides support to childminders through subsidised training and Start-Up Grants for the purchase of safety equipment.

The Social Work Department commission specially trained Community Childminders to provide daycare for Children in Need. An hourly flat rate is paid, with an increase when commissioning such a service for children with special needs. The Family Support Teams (mentioned below) have a budget to commission such services.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are three Local Authority nursery classes which provide for children with special needs. Transportation is provided where it is required.

There are 51 Local Authority nurseries which children can attend on a part-time basis, either mornings or afternoons. Support, such as ongoing training for staff and resources has been provided through Childcare Strategy funding

There are three Family Support Teams in Angus. One of the teams is based within a Child and Family Centre in Arbroath which is open from 9.30–4.00. and offers up to 5 sessions per week for children aged 0–5 years. Attendance at the Child and Family Centre is free and transport can be provided if required. The two other Family

Support Teams are rural, peripatetic teams offering a range of services within local communities to vulnerable children under three years of age.

There are 45 private and voluntary childcare groups in Angus. There are 13 day nurseries in the private sector, 8 of which provide full-time places. The remaining five provide a range of part day places.

There are 31 playgroups offering part-time places. SPPA member groups can apply to the Special Needs Fund for a grant. In Angus this has been used to employ extra staff, or purchase resources to support children with special needs.

Children with special needs who access local authority nursery education may then go on to a childminder or private nursery for the rest of the day. The majority of private nurseries in the area have stated that they would be unable to support a child with profound needs or disabilities due to financial constraints and the need for specialised training.

## **Out of School Care**

### *Specialised Services*

Angus Special Playscheme provides childcare for children with special needs during school holidays. This is a voluntary organisation run by a management committee of parents and which has a manager, a volunteer coordinator and an administrator. The group is funded by Angus Childcare Partnership, Angus Council, Trust Funds and by fundraising activities.

Angus Special Playscheme has developed its own training programme. All of the 100 volunteers undertake training in Moving and Handling with new leaders also undertaking first aid training.

Angus Special Playscheme also operates 2 special needs youth clubs and a Saturday Club.

An information pack encouraging the inclusion of children with special needs within other childcare provision was sent to parents of children with special needs by the Angus Special Playscheme. The number of children with special needs currently attending other out of school care clubs is low.

### *Mainstream Services*

There are 17 Out of School Care Clubs in Angus. Most of the services operate from 15.30 to 18.00 can accommodate children from 5–12 years and are run by parent led management committees. One club stated that children up to the age of 14 can be catered for.

While promoting a policy of inclusion in Out of School Care, Angus does not offer specific guidance for staff or parents. The needs of individual children are taken in to account when considering inclusion. Each case is approached dependant upon these needs. As a result of this approach several OSC clubs have managed to fully accommodate children with a wide variety of needs into their settings. Others indicated that they would have concerns about agreeing to look after children with more profound needs. They would prefer a carer with special needs experience to support a child in their setting. Some clubs indicated that recruitment of specialist staff could be problematic. One club indicated their willingness to look after a child with special needs however to date they have not been approached.

## Holiday Provision

### Specialised Holiday Services

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Angus Special Play-schemes	Lochside Primary School, Montrose	2 wks at Easter. 4 wks in Summer. 2 days in October.	5–12	12 places approx at each play-scheme	Wide range of needs	Minibus is provided	Service-level agreement with Angus Council.  Trust Funds.  Fees £5/day.  Childcare Strategy
	Community Wing, Forfar Academy, Forfar					Transport is hired	
	Carlogie Primary School, Carnoustie	3 days within each of these weeks. 10.00–15.00				Minibus is provided	
One-to-One Club	Angus College	Every Tue and Fri over the school holidays 10.00–15.00	5–18	10 approx	Profound special needs. Requiring 1:1 care	Special transport is hired	As above
Youth Scheme	Arbroath High School	Mon, Wed, Fri 10.00–15.00	12–18	The two groups meet week about	Wide range of disabilities	Provided if required	As above
		Tue, Thurs 10.00–15.00					

### Mainstream Holiday Services

Of the 17 OSC clubs in Angus, 16 operate a service over the holiday period. Children with special needs attending these clubs can therefore access full day care. The numbers attending these clubs are very few as parental choice is for attendance at the Special Playschemes.

Angus Council has employed a Sports Development Officer for adults and children with Special Needs. This post has helped to ensure the summer sports camps are more inclusive by the provision of relevant activities. These camps are based in 5 different areas of Angus and run one day each week for the 6 weeks of the summer holidays. The Leisure and Recreation Department has organised Activity Days and Activity Groups, which run over the holidays as well as after school.

### Other Provision

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Youth Club	Education premises, Brechin	Tuesdays, 19.00–20.30	12–18	12 approx	Wide range of disabilities	Minibus	As above
Youth Club	Saltire Leisure Centre, Arbroath	Tuesdays, 19.00–20.30	12–18	12 approx	Wide range of disabilities	Minibus	As above
Wendy House Saturday Club	Wendy House Nursery, Angle Rd, North Muir, Kirriemuir	Every Saturday including holidays 9.30–16.00	3–8	New service  4 at present	Wide range of disabilities	Hoping to obtain a grant to purchase a mini-bus	Parents will pay for the cost of this service, with childcare strategy funding awarded this year

**Befriending Service:** There is a befriending scheme which has been set up for teenagers (aged 12–18) with special needs living within the Angus area. 5 young people are 'matched up' within this scheme and there are a further 6 young people on the waiting list. This service is offered by Angus Special Playscheme.

Befrienders meet with young people for a few hours once every fortnight and undertake an activity of the young person's choosing. There are no additional charges for this service. Befrienders are volunteers and are mainly young people aged 16 and over.

The Befriending service is only provided to over 12s as it is felt that this is where the greatest need is at present.

# Argyll and Bute

Argyll and Bute has a population of 88,790. Of this number, 14,583 are aged between 0 and 14, 16.4% of the total. The area covered by the Argyll and Bute Council is very large; 6,930 square kilometres. There are 26 inhabited islands and 3,000 miles of coastline. It is the third most sparsely populated authority in Scotland and has a wide contrast of living environments from isolated settlements of less than 1,000 people, to large urban towns on the outskirts of Glasgow.

Unemployment in Argyll and Bute is at 4.3%, close to the Scottish average of 4.1% and the area's unemployment level is ranked 17th in Scotland.

## Children with Special Needs

The estimation that 3% of the child population nationally have some kind of disability provides the approximation of 438 children between the ages 0–14 in Argyll and Bute having a disability. There are 3 special schools or special needs units in the area with 61 children attending one of these services. 977 pupils in all school sectors have a Special Educational Need and, of this number, 204 pupils have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Argyll and Bute

The vastness of the area and the number of people living in remote locations in Argyll & Bute can present particular challenges when providing services. The geography of the authority makes it more difficult for parents to find employment and, where employment is found, it is often low paid and seasonal. Public transport can be restricted in the region, and return visits to some islands can take up to 3 days. As a result of these transportation difficulties, it is far more problematic and more expensive to provide specialised services.

A Special Educational Needs Officer sits on the Local Childcare Partnership and that individual will highlight issues that have been raised to them by parents and providers.

As part of a joint initiative with Dumbarton Enterprise, a training and development programme has been established in the Helensburgh and Lomond area of Argyll and Bute. Out of school projects are the focus of this training and development as well as childminders. It is hoped that the upskilling of staff in this area can then be cascaded to other areas of the council. The Lomond Early Stimulation Association (LESA) provide training in special needs to childcare workers. Achievement Bute also provide training in special needs and they also have a representative on the Childcare Partnership.

## Childminding

Childminders continue to provide a much-needed childcare service in Argyll and Bute with 172 currently registered, 83 of whom have their details on the Childcare Information Service. There is a Community Childminding Scheme in operation (short term intervention for around 6 weeks) 12–14 registered childminders are working on this scheme. Generic training is available for childminders through the Workforce Development Funds.

So far, there have been no requests from childminders for extra financial support from the childcare partnership. If such a request was made, the support given would depend very much on the particular needs of the child – they have to treat each instance with caution as they could not afford to open the floodgates of providing financial support to every childminder who looked after children with special needs.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Children with special educational needs are generally accommodated within one of the 44 local authority nursery services. There are three nursery services with extra resources and staffing to provide pre-school education to children with special needs. These are based at Drumore Learning Centre in Oban and Whitegates Learning Centre in Lochgilphead. However, no local authority nurseries provide full-day wrap around care. Children with special needs can access Area Network Support Team teacher input and in some instances additional adult support and extra sessions in the nursery.

Where local authority provision is not available, partnerships are established with one of the providers in the voluntary, private and independent sectors which meet the needs of families and when necessary support can be provided to these establishments also. However, the extra support will be limited to the set pre-school hours, although the local authority may fund for additional sessions if this is deemed necessary for the child. The Council is in partnership with 10 private and 28 voluntary nurseries.

Many of the private nurseries that were interviewed in Argyll & Bute were not aware of support being made available to enable them to look after children with special needs. Several pointed out that it was often left to the nursery to search for funding support themselves rather than being kept informed by the authority.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

There are no OSC services that are specifically for children with special needs. Achievement Bute runs several after school activity groups which are detailed under 'Other Provision', below.

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are currently 9 out of school providers registered with Argyll and Bute, providing childcare for children aged 5 to 12 years. A steering group has been set up in the Childcare Partnership and part of the group's remit is to try to extend the provision of out of school care for children with special needs. The steering group comprises representatives from education, social work and the health board.

The Childcare Partnership is cautious of creating a dependency culture amongst OSC services in the area. There is a reluctance to give out too much in the way of funding for children with special needs when services require extra support in case this discourages groups from looking at other sources of income generation. For this reason, the Childcare Partnership now asks OSC services to match the funds that are being provided to them through the Council.

Very few of the services interviewed were currently looking after children with special needs. They were also quite concerned about how they may be expected to be able to remain sustainable if several parents whose children required increased levels of support approached them.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Achievement Bute organises activity days throughout the school holidays for children with special needs and their families and friends. It is a fully inclusive play and care service and it is funded by various grants (mainly the Community Fund) as well as some funding from the Social Work Department. Achievement Bute has also produced a directory of activities and days out that can be accessed by children with special needs throughout the summer holidays. This directory is called 'The Fun Detective' and is a useful resource for parents of children with special needs in the area.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
CLASP Play-scheme	Dunoon Primary School, Dunoon	3/4 weeks in summer, 1 wk Oct and 1 wk Easter. Mon, Wed and Fri 10.00–16.00	5–19	20	Wide range of needs	No transport is provided due to lack of funding	Grants from Educ, Soc Wk, Children in Need
Achievement Bute	Bute	3 weeks in summer, 1 wk Easter and 1 wk Oct. Play events – times vary	5–13	Depends on events	Inclusive service	Provided for SEN children	Community Fund and other grants and Council

*Mainstream Holiday Services*

7 of the OSC services provide a full-day service over the holiday period. There are also currently 5 holiday playschemes. The West of Scotland Playscheme Association assists with the holiday playschemes. The accessibility of the playschemes for children with special needs vary widely. Whether the individual clubs can accommodate children with special needs will depend on a variety of factors, including the particular needs of the child, the experience and training of staff members and the types of activities that the group participate in. No audit has been carried out of the numbers of children with special needs who access the holiday childcare provision.

**Other Provision**

There are several clubs that operate once each week or less that are specifically for children with special needs and are run by the same organisations that operate the specialised summer activities

<b>Name of service</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Days and times</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>No. of places</b>	<b>Types of disability</b>	<b>Transport</b>	<b>Funding</b>
CLASP Saturday Club	Dunoon Primary School, Dunoon	1 Saturday each month 10.00–16.00	5–19	20	Wide range of needs	No	Fundraising and several grants
The In Crowd	Achievement Bute, Bute	Wednesdays during term, 16.00–17.30	5–10	Varies	Wide range of needs	Yes	Fundraising and grants
Right Fit Club	Achievement Bute, Bute	Saturdays 10.00–12.00	5–10	Varies	Wide range of needs	Yes	Fund-raising and grants
		13.00–14.30	11+	Varies	Wide range of needs	Yes	Fund-raising and grants



## Clackmannanshire

Clackmannanshire is a compact mixed rural and urban area. It is the smallest mainland authority in terms of population size; the population estimate in the year 2000 was 48,460, of which 9,419 people were aged between 0–14. The majority of the population are concentrated in Alloa, Sauchie and Tullibody. Pockets of severe deprivation exist, particularly in South and East Alloa and Tullibody and there is one Social Inclusion Partnership area. Unemployment is at 7.3%, which is 3% higher than the national average.

One of the benefits of a small geographical area is that access to services is good. Resources tend to be locally based.

### Children with Special Needs

There are 2 Special Needs schools in Clackmannanshire. Lochies School is for primary aged children with special needs and Fairfields School is for secondary aged pupils with special needs. A total of 55 pupils attended the special schools in 2001. 166 school pupils have a record of needs opened. On the estimation that 3% of the child population have a disability, it can be assumed that 283 children aged between 0–14 have a disability of some kind.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Clackmannanshire

The Local Authority's education and social services departments have merged together into the new 'Services to People' Department. As a result of the fully integrated services, funding can be used in quite a flexible manner by the Council so as to ensure that a broad range of services is offered to children and young people. For example, where a family of a child with special needs require respite care, it may be that the child would attend an OSC or youth club with Special Attendant support several evenings each week and this could be paid for by Services to People.

Childcare Strategy funding is used to provide children with Special Attendant 1:1 support where this is necessary to meet the needs of the child. The Council provides training for the Special Attendants. These Special Attendants are a pool of OSC staff who are registered with the Authority, rather than to a particular OSC Service.

The Psychological Services in Clackmannanshire works closely with staff in nursery schools, classes, family centres and OSC Services in supporting children with special needs. A parent of a child with special needs sits on the Childcare Partnership and there is also now a 'Special Needs Subgroup' of the Childcare Partnership which liaises with the parents of children with special needs.

All childcare staff are included in the training of workers plan. Training sessions have included sessions on challenging behaviour, principles of inclusion and working with children with ADHD.

There is a toy library from which parents and carers can borrow equipment and toys.

### Childminding

There are 75 registered childminders in Clackmannanshire. Only 2/3 of these childminders have expressed a particular interest in working with children with special needs. The Childcare Partnership are aware that there is a lack of childminders in the area, not just of those interested in working with children with special needs. The Childcare Information Service has identified 4 childminders who have expressed a particular interest in looking after children with special needs and would be able to put families in contact with these childminders.

No financial subsidy is provided to childminders who have to reduce their numbers due to looking after children with particular needs and Special Attendant support is not provided to childminders.

Childminders can access extra toys and equipment from the family centres and training is provided through the Childcare Partnership. Childminders can approach the Partnership directly to state the particular training that they require.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Social Inclusion Partnership money has been used to develop pre-5 services for children with special needs. A full-time support worker to co-ordinate services for children with special needs has been employed. Children with particular needs would most likely be picked up at an early age through the Clackmannanshire Early Assessment Team (CEAT), which would then recommend the most suitable nursery provision.

There are 2 Child and Family Centres and 2 Family (Support) Centres. Children with special needs can be supported in these Centres by care workers. The Family Support Centre detailed below is specifically for children with Special Needs.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Special needs details
Family Support Centre	15 Mar Street, Alloa	Mon 10.00–11.30; Tue–Fri 9.30–11.30, 13.30–15.30	All children attending have special needs. Run by Psychological Services

There are 14 nursery schools/classes in Clackmannanshire and all of them can receive Special Attendant support where necessary. 5 nursery schools also have 'wrap around' childcare places, making a total of 64 wrap around places in local authority nursery establishments. An assessment would be made to see if the child requires support in the nursery. Where children are referred as requiring support beyond the core pre-school hours then this would also be funded through the Special Attendant budget.

5 children with special needs are currently being supported in the partner provider nurseries. Three partnership nurseries provide 'wrap around' childcare, making a total of 77 wrap around places in the partnership providers. The extra support is provided by Educational Psychologists, but it is limited to the core pre-school education part. The nurseries will have to make their own arrangements for caring for children with special needs for the remainder of the day.

Taking the local authorities and the independent nurseries together, there are 141 wraparound childcare places in Clackmannanshire's nursery establishments.

## Out of School Care

All 6 OSC services in Clackmannanshire have equal opportunities policies and funding can be given from the Childcare Strategy funds to support children with special needs attending mainstream OSC. Currently, in one of the Clubs (a local authority OSC service) there are children who attend for 2 evenings each week as part of their social integration programme. In another club there is one child with special needs who attends daily with a Special Attendant and during the school holidays another child joins this Service with the Special Attendant continuing in post. In total, 5 children have benefited from Special Attendants in Out of School Care.

Whether a Special Attendant would be put in place to support a child attending a mainstream OSC service would depend firstly on the needs child and secondly on the funding resources from the Childcare Strategy money. The money spent on supporting children with special needs in mainstream services is not ring-fenced and so additional support and or equipment may not be able to be purchased if the funding has been spent elsewhere.

Transport – money has been invested in Support for Transport initiatives in the OSC area so as to ensure that children can access the services. This has included a full examination of the school bus service so as to highlight the full range of services that can transport children to the service of their choice.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Play Alloa is a voluntary organisation for children with special needs. They run a specialised holiday service for several weeks during the school holidays, and have also supported the inclusion of children with special needs into mainstream playschemes.

Through the Childcare Strategy Fund, an additional £8,000 was made available to appoint a part-time project manager for Play Alloa. Drivers, escorts and volunteer playworkers receive a small daily payment. It is noted that this service does not as yet cover the full school holidays and is therefore not suitable as a form of childcare for working parents.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Play Alloa	29 Primrose Street, Alloa	Easter (4 days); Summer (15 days) and October (5 days). 9.00–16.00 (pick-up times)	5–12 12–18	30 approx	All types of disability	Children are transported to and from the service	Service-level agreement with Clackmannanshire Council

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Each of the 6 OSC Services operates over the school holidays and Special Attendant support can remain where required. Special Attendants can also be provided for extra support in the summer playschemes where this is deemed necessary. There are 45 different playscheme activities in total in Clackmannanshire, meaning that the child could attend an activity based in their own area. Transport support would also be given where this is necessary for the child's needs.

A pilot integration programme ran this summer through Play Alloa whereby 3 children were integrated into mainstream playschemes. It is hoped to expand and develop this service in future playschemes. Playscheme staff will undergo additional training in the future in order to be more aware of the needs of the children attending. The children in the playschemes will also be prepared so as to help them adjust to having children with disabilities playing with them in the playscheme.

The Playscheme Budget has been used to support children with special needs in playschemes, but this budget is very limited and it is hoped that social services may look to supporting children with special needs in mainstream playschemes and OSC settings.

### **Other Provision**

There are also several Youth Clubs in Clackmannanshire that are run by Youth and Community Teams. Childcare Strategy money has been used to employ a co-ordinator for these Clubs and they are open to children with special needs. However, several of the Clubs have expressed some difficulty in ensuring that the activities carried out at the Clubs are appropriate for children with special needs. At the moment, Special Attendant support cannot be provided to these Clubs. It is hoped that the necessary funding can be located in the near future to allow this support to go into these activities. The Childcare Partnership are currently looking to Capability Scotland for funding sources to do so.

A scheme similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme has been set up in Clackmannanshire specifically for children with disabilities. This scheme is called 'The Caledonia Award' and the children and young people taking part in the scheme participate in various play activities and events to earn the award.

Clackmannanshire Leisure Trust operate a gymnastic club called 'The Leisurebug Club' on a Monday evening for children with special needs. There is a Special Needs Dance Project for children with special needs, whereby the tutor travels around to different projects to do creative dance with children with a disability. Forth and Valley Disability Sport co-ordinate and support events and clubs which are affiliated to them. Events are held in local schools, sports halls and leisure centres.

# Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Eilean Siar embraces the Outer Hebrides, which includes 11 inhabited islands. The population is 27,180, of which 4,978 are aged between 0–14, which represents approx 18%, of the total population. The unemployment rate is 6.4%, ranked 27th in Scotland. The islands economy is heavily reliant on the public sector and dependent on the vulnerable industries of fishing, fish farming and processing and Harris Tweed.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation of 3% of the population having a disability, it can be assumed that 150 children aged between 0–14 have a disability of some kind. 125 school pupils have a record of needs opened. The very low numbers involved means that there are very few specialised services for children with special needs, but it also means that provision for particular children can be organised on a very individualistic basis.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

Family networks are the main source of childcare in the Western Isles. This is followed by childminders and nursery care. The very remote geographical areas and the small numbers involved make the sustainability of any scheme very difficult. If integration of children with special needs is not possible or inadequately supported, parents will struggle to find childcare for their children. In such areas, families of children with special needs are heavy reliant on other family members.

The Childcare Partnership encourages all childcare providers to provide spaces for children with special needs. Childcare providers can receive grants for one to one support, equipment and adaptation.

During term-time, transport is provided if necessary for children to access pre-school education. Childcare providers can apply to the Childcare Partnership to receive funding for transport for children attending childcare.

## Childminding

There are 66 childminders in Eilean Siar. Childminders can apply to the Childcare Partnership for one to one support and equipment. Although a number of childminders have received Partnership grants, no one has applied for a child with special needs. The local Childcare Information Service can identify those childminders that have expressed a particular interest in looking after children with special needs. A new Childminding Development Officer is assisting childminders in the development of policies and is trying to encourage more childminders throughout the Islands to provide a service for children with special needs.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 33 Voluntary Pre-school providers and 4 all-day nurseries in Eilean Siar, three of which are based in Stornoway and one in Uist. All four Nurseries provide for children with special needs. Saoghal Beag Nursery, based in North Uist, is open from 8.00–18.00 and is the only all day nursery within the Southern Isles. Little Teddies Nursery is a workplace nursery for the Western Isles Health Board and Comhairle Staff, based in Stornoway and open from 7.00–18.00. Sandstreet Nursery, also based in Stornoway provides all day care for pre-school children and An Cotan Nursery based at Lews Castle College, Stornoway, has some commercial places although the majority of places are set aside for the children of students attending the college.

In addition to providing a service for children under 5, Saoghal Beag and Little Teddies Nursery provide afterschool and holiday care for Primary school aged children and An Cotan provides holiday care.

The Childcare Partnership funds 1:1 support where required. The funds come from Education, Sure Start and the Childcare Strategy, depending on the child in receipt of the extra support.

## Out of School Care

There are 6 OSC services in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. 3 services are based in the nursery facilities, one is based in Laxdale Primary School, one is based in Leverburgh School and one in Stornoway Primary School. All 3 services

provided within schools only cater for the children attending that school. The most relevant OSC service in terms of special needs is the OSC service in Stornoway Primary School as this school has a special needs unit. However, this service does not run over the school holidays.

OSC services looking after children with special needs can apply to the Childcare Partnership for funding for one to one staffing, equipment and for adaptations to buildings. Each grant is assessed on an individual basis and subject to budget restraints.

### **Holiday Provision**

The very low numbers of children in the authority and the rurality of the region renders it very difficult to establish specialised provision. NCH had planned to run a holiday playscheme in Stornoway this year, but due to staff reductions, they have decided to put the money towards encouraging inclusion and providing 1:1 support in mainstream holiday provision.

4 OSC services run over the holiday period. Support for children with special needs can be provided within these projects.

Community Education and Sport and Health run summer activities and outdoor activities for young people up to age 16. In Partnership with the Childcare Partnership they produce leaflets entitled 'Motiv8', copies of which are given to every young person to inform them of the sports and leisure activities that are available.

Young people with special needs have access to all of the provision listed in the brochures. Young people with special needs are issued with consent forms which requires details of special needs, medication etc. These needs are then dealt with by the most appropriate member of staff and advice sought if required.

### **Other Provision**

The Open Sesame Project are starting a buddying scheme whereby volunteers and youth workers are recruited and trained in order to 'buddy' a child or young person with special needs aged between 8 and 18. This will assist inclusion in clubs and activities such as the Brownies and Scouts. It is hoped that this project will begin in September 2002 and will be a free service to the children and teenagers benefiting from it. The Childcare Partnership provided financial support to assist the training of the youth workers.

NCH (a multi-agency group) sometimes run several activity groups and clubs, but such services are only open to the families that they are involved with. This would mainly be in order to provide respite care and therapy, and it is therefore needs-focused as opposed to play provision. Included in some of NCH's projects is a crèche, called Rounnagan, for children with specific needs. This is run in Stornoway on a Monday for 4 hours.

The voluntary run Western Isles Disability Sport Association was founded approximately 2 years ago, in partnership with the local authority and the governing organisation, and receives continued support from the two local sports councils. The Association provides training and equipment for children and adults to increase their participation in sports and sports related activities.

The Uist and Barra Sports Council has utilised its own funding mechanisms and accessed external funds to provide the Uist Community Riding School with the resources to offer children with special needs horse-riding sessions. These activities have been of great benefit to the users. The Sport and Health Section, the Education Department and local businesses have worked in partnership with the Sports Council and Riding School to provide more opportunities for the pupils to access the tuition.

# Dumfries and Galloway

Dumfries and Galloway is a predominantly rural area. The population estimate is 145,800, of which 25,959 are aged between 0–14. Most people live in small country towns, with a scattering of population in more remote inland areas and on an extensive coastline.

At 3.9%, the unemployment is slightly lower than the Scottish average. There are pockets of particularly high unemployment (as high as 16.3%). There are no Social Inclusion Partnership areas.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population have a disability of some kind, approximately 779 children between 0–14 have a disability. There are 3 special schools or units in Dumfries and Galloway, attended by a total of 51 pupils. 515 pupils have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Dumfries and Galloway

Dumfries and Galloway have submitted a bid against the Changing Children's Services Fund. Included within this bid is the post of Children's Disability Commissioning/Development Officer. This post has been designed to co-ordinate the wide range of organisations and agencies that provide services for children with special needs.

Dumfries and Galloway have allowed a flexible approach to the funding of services that provide for children with special needs. All childcare providers are informed of their ability to apply for Childcare Strategy funds in order to facilitate the access of children with special needs to their services. The funds can be used for extra resources or additional staff in order to meet the needs of the child in their care. There are concerns, however, as to the continuation of this funding and of the potential uptake of the funds by more childcare providers than currently are applying. At the moment, very few childcare providers have applied for the funds, with the result that most requests can be met. If this need increases, however, the necessary funding may not be available.

Training Challenge Funding has been used to provide training for childcare workers by Special Educational Needs Advisors. The issue of transportation of children with special needs is problematic within Dumfries and Galloway given the rurality of the area.

## Childminding

There are approximately 157 childminders in Dumfries and Galloway. The Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) have been allocated lottery funding in order to buy special needs equipment and toys that can be used by childminders in the area who are looking after children with special needs.

Childminders who are approached by the parents of children with particular needs would have to consider the financial implications of looking after a child whose needs demanded increased attention. No extra subsidy is provided to childminders who care for children whose needs require 1:1 care. Despite this, questionnaires to childminders in the area revealed that 94% childminders would consider looking after a child with special needs if they were asked, and 5% childminders had looked after children with special needs.

Funding can be given to childminders from the Childcare Strategy funds where required in order to adequately look after children with special needs, for example to provide transportation or to make adaptations to the home. However, concern was expressed regarding the problems that childminders have in trying to obtain information about particular disabilities, there being no single point of information.

Childminders in Dumfries and Galloway have highlighted the difficulties that are faced by childminders trying to attend specialist childcare training. Training courses are normally provided during the day, when most childminders are working. Few courses provide crèche facilities and even where such a facility is provided, many childminders are reluctant to put children in their care over to the care of a crèche. Parental permission would have to be sought in these circumstances and adds to the difficulties that prevent childminders from taking up the training opportunities that are offered to other childcare workers.



The childminding networks in Dumfries and Galloway have built up strong links with special needs health visitors and could access informal training and support in this way.

### **Nursery and Playgroup Provision**

There are 42 local authority nurseries, none of which provide wraparound childcare. Support staff can be placed into local authority nurseries where this is necessary to meet the needs of the child. 18 independent nurseries provide wraparound childcare. Support can be put into private centres where necessary. Therefore, no distinction is made between support provided to the Council's own establishments and the private/voluntary sector.

A fund managed by Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Scottish Pre-School Play Association (SPPA) allocates additional funding to assist the integration of children with special needs into pre-school play settings. This fund can support the pre-school education of children with special needs. In terms of support for 0–5 childcare, funding can be provided from the Childcare Strategy to support children with special needs in any childcare setting. The childcare funds can be used by the service providers for anything that meets the child's needs, whether it be for transport costs, additional resources or for the employment of staff. The allocation of funds must pass by a committee made up of representatives of Education, Health, SPPA and Social Services.

### **Out of School Care**

There have been plans to develop two OSC services for children with special needs in Dumfries in Galloway. One provision could not go ahead due to lack of funding and the second service, which was to be run in conjunction with Quarriers, has had start-up difficulties due to no suitable premises being available.

There are 21 OSC services in Dumfries and Galloway, 19 of which have expressly stated that they can accommodate children with special needs within their service. Childcare strategy funding can go to those groups who state the reasons for requiring extra financial support. Although support can be provided, it will be limited depending on the numbers of services that have to access the childcare strategy funds. It has operated successfully this year, but there have been noticeably low numbers of children with special needs accessing OSC provision. There are concerns that, as more children with special needs attend OSC services, the funds will eventually be scarce.

### **Holiday Provision**

Dumfries and Galloway has a great deal of specialist provision for children with special needs throughout the school summer holidays. An evaluation of the Special Needs Summer Activity Schemes was recently carried out and it revealed that the Schemes were greatly appreciated by the children and parents who benefited from the provision.

The Activity Schemes only operate in the summer holidays and they are organised by a multi-agency planning group which provides support and funding to the individual groups. They run several of the Schemes where the voluntary management committees and parent groups are no longer able to commit their time to the projects.

The decision to set up the special needs playschemes in Dumfries and Galloway took into account the issues of centralisation and best value. It was highlighted that it is not in the interests of children with special needs to spend inappropriate amounts of time travelling to centralised services. For this reason, the various groups are located in different areas of the authority. The popularity of the Schemes has meant that places have to be rationed amongst the children and young people attending.



Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Stranraer Play-scheme	Stranraer	2 afternoons each week for 6 weeks during summer holidays. Each afternoon session lasts for 3 hours	4–17	Varies depending on staffing levels and on the needs of the children	Severe and complex needs	Provided if necessary	Social Work and Education
Stranraer Play-scheme	Stranraer						
Dumfries Play-scheme	Dumfries						
Dumfries Play-scheme	Dumfries						
Upper Nithsdale Play-scheme	Upper Nithsdale						
Annan Play-scheme	Annan						
Castle Douglas Play-scheme	Castle Douglas						
Newton Stewart	Newton Stewart				Moderate Disabilities		
Autism Friendly Scheme	Wigtownshire	Autistic spectrum disorders					

20 of the OSC services operate over the summer holiday period. Childcare Strategy funds can therefore go into these services to support children with special needs who require extra support or resources. All childcare services can benefit from this funding so any childcare provision that provides a form of childcare over the holidays would be able to apply for extra support to the funding committee.

### Other Provision

The Social Work department have established a youth club for young people with special needs on Saturday afternoons. A referral from social work is required to access this service.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Saturday Club	Athletics Centre, Dumfries	Saturdays during term-time. 12.00–15.00	12–17	14	Social work referrals	If necessary	Social Work run this service

There is also a small youth group based in Upper Nithsdale that is operated by parents of children with special needs. It does not run throughout the year, however, so it is not possible to obtain the actual details of the service.

## Dundee

Dundee is the fourth largest city in Scotland, covering an area of 26 square miles. However, it is also geographically the smallest local authority in Scotland. There is a population of 142,700. Of this number, 25,460 are aged between 0–14.

Recent regeneration in industry and re-developments in housing and local amenities are contrasted with the number of manufacturing industries that have been lost. As the economy has grown in recent years total employment has increased but at 7.1%, Dundee's unemployment rate is the fifth highest in Scotland and is 4% above the national average. There are 4 Social Inclusion Partnership (S.I.P.) areas.

### Children with Special Needs

There is one special needs school, King's Park, in Dundee. 150 children attend this school. There is also a specialised nursery school for children with special needs (the Francis Wright Pre-School Centre). On the estimation that 3% of the child population have a disability, it can be assumed that around 764 children aged between 0–14 have a disability of some kind. 527 school pupils in Dundee City have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Dundee City

The Dundee City Childcare Partnership was established in January 1999. Seven local childcare networks have been established across the City. The Partnership recently considered establishing a specialised OSC provision for children with special needs. Parents of children with special needs were asked what sort of childcare provision they wanted for their children. The Council received a mixture of responses, with some parents favouring inclusive services and others preferring specialised services. As a result, a project co-ordinator from the National Autistic Society is now working in conjunction with the 'Inclusion Group' to look at the potential development of a specialised OSC service. At the same time, support will be given for children with special needs to attend mainstream services through the 'Inclusion Group'.

The Dundee Early Years and Childcare Training Strategy incorporate elements of Special Needs Training into its rolling programme of training. One of the key aims of the Childcare Partnership is to 'promote and support the needs and interests of children with Special Educational Needs within OSC clubs.' The Partnership aims that, by 2004, up to 50 children with SEN will be supported into OSC services or holiday playschemes.

The Council works closely with several organisations to support childcare provision for children with special needs. These organisations include the 'Inclusion Group', Barnardo's, One Parent Families, Scotland and the National Autistic Society.

### Childminding

There are 168 registered childminders in Dundee City. Recently, a Linked Childminding Scheme was introduced to provide childcare to families of children aged 0–3 on low incomes or in need of support. This pilot was set up by the Social Work Department and runs through the Happy Hillock Family Centre in Midcraigie, using Sure-Start funding. There are hopes for its expansion so that it will be available from 6 Child and Family Centres by 2003.

Any parent of a child 'in need' aged between 0–3 can access this service. The service is means-tested in accordance with the parent's income. The amount to be paid by the parent will vary from the proposed maximum of £20.00 per day (£2.00 per hour) to no charge. Children with a disability are prioritised in allocation of places. There are currently around 5 childminders involved in the Scheme, which was established in order to support parents going into work or training. The childminders recruited into the Scheme undertake a training programme in order to prepare them for looking after a child of a family that applies or is referred to the Scheme. This training programme focuses on, inter alia, supporting children with special needs.

The role of Dundee City Council is to facilitate access and provide ongoing support as and when required. The Childminders themselves are self-employed rather than being employed by the Council. Any place secured through the Scheme is established on the basis of a contract, principally between the parent and the childminder. The Local Authority funds the Scottish Childminding Association to administer the payment element of the Scheme. The

standard rate per child in sociable hours is £3.00–£3.50 depending upon the child's needs. It is noted that this difference in 50p where the child's needs are greater will not fully compensate for the loss of places where the child requires 1:1 care.

One Parent Families, Scotland, co-ordinate the Dundee Sitter Service. This is available for children aged between 0–14. There are 9 Sitters involved in the Service, and a further 24 sessional Sitters. The Service is designed to fit around when other childcare services do not operate and so it is therefore useful for parents who work shift patterns. The Sitter Service is funded through the Social Work and Education Departments as well as the National Lottery. The cost of the service to parents is means tested. Currently, at least 125 children each month benefit from the service, including children who have special needs.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There is one specialist nursery for children with special needs:

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Francis Wright Pre-School Centre	Gen Caird Avenue, Dundee	Mon–Fri Term-time 8.15–17.00	3 and 4	30	Moderate and complex needs	Provided	Education Dept

There is also an assessment centre, provided by Tayside Health Board, Armistead Child Development Centre. This offers a nursery provision for children with complex medical needs.

There is a commitment to placing pre-school children in mainstream settings wherever possible. The Pre School Home Visiting Service supports these placements and offers expert guidance to staff.

Currently, 13 local authority nursery schools and classes provide full-day extended hours childcare. These places are provided free of charge to children in need. The names of these nurseries are:

- Bellfield
- Cotton Road
- Fintry
- Woodlea\*
- Jessie Porter
- Kirkton\*
- Law
- Longhaugh
- Menzieshill
- Park Place
- Wallacetown
- Whitfield Early Years Centre

The other nursery is the specialised nursery mentioned above.

\*Groups of children with SEN have been placed in these nurseries and staff trained in specialist childcare. Support is given to nurseries looking after children with special needs. This support is provided by the Childcare Partnership on an as required basis. The nurseries have stated that they have not experienced any difficulties in accessing additional support for children with special needs. Support can also be provided outwith the core pre-school hours where this is required for the child's needs.

All of the nursery schools provide transportation where required.

There are also 3 Early Intervention Projects for children with less profound needs. These are run jointly by Social Work and Education and are funded by Sure Start in order to assist 'vulnerable' children prior to going to school. Approximately 60 children are involved in the projects. The schemes aim to focus on education, care health, emotional and social well-being. Many of the children access a full time place because of their needs, and so for these children there are elements of childcare involved in the service.

There are 9 Child and Family Centres in Dundee City, located primarily within areas characterised, amongst other statistics, by higher than average numbers of low-income households. They provide a range of family support services to children in need aged 0–12 and their families.

There are currently 21 private nurseries and playgroups in Dundee of which 19 have commissioning agreements with the Council for the provision of part time pre-school education places. In addition 1 playgroup is a commissioned partner provider. Most nurseries are open from 7.30–18.00 throughout the year.

No additional staff members or auxiliary support have been provided to private nurseries as yet, but contact is maintained with children with SEN in this sector. The Pre School Home Visiting Service provides expert advice and guidance to all partner providers. It is thought that, in the majority of cases, children with special needs would access the mainstream provision where full-day places can be provided for free where this is needed for the child.

## **Out of School Care**

At the time of print, the National Autistic Society have a project co-ordinator working with the Inclusion Group to develop OSC for children with autistic spectrum disorders in Dundee. The potential OSC that may be developed will provide for young people up to the age of 16. This is important because the Inclusion Group can facilitate the access of children with special needs into mainstream services, but most of these services only provide for children aged between 5–12. As with most other local authority areas, there is a noticeable lack of provision for older children and teenagers.

There are 15 Out of School Care services in Dundee City. The Inclusion Group is an OSC pilot project that employs playworkers to care for children with special needs in mainstream OSC settings. Currently, there are 4 paid Inclusion Facilitators or playworkers as well as additional voluntary support.

After the co-ordinator has made initial contact with the family to discuss the project, a meeting is arranged with the playworker and all relevant information concerning the child is taken. The worker then spends time with the child, their family and the school to draw together all the information needed to complete the child's 'Me, Myself, I' document. In order to assess the appropriateness of a particular OSC service for the child, the worker would visit the Club in advance to get to know the staff, children and environment.

The trained playworker then becomes part of the main staff team so as to encourage full inclusion in the group. The long-term aim is to have all of the staff members and children fully incorporating the child with special needs into the service so that the trained playworker can leave to 'pair up' with another child. In some circumstances of course, the child may always need the extra support.

The Inclusion Group also carry out training with the Club staff, as do the Early Years and Childcare Partnership. The Inclusion Group project works in partnership with local clubs to provide support, training and advice to allow them to become confident in ensuring meaningful inclusion.

Currently, 8 OSC clubs in Dundee have signed up to the project. Two clubs have approached the inclusion group to help them with existing children at risk of exclusion. Each placement is reviewed every 3 months to ensure that everyone is satisfied with how it is progressing and to provide a forum where problems/concerns can be aired.

The National Autistic Society is also working in partnership with the Inclusion Group in Dundee City along with other specialised groups so as to encourage the inclusion of children and young people on the autistic spectrum into mainstream playcare activities. This service will be individually tailored to meet the needs of the child and will extend to the age of 16. It is currently in its very early stages of development but it is hoped that the service will allow children and young people to access the uniformed services and other mainstream activities of their choosing, and not just Out of School Care.

In terms of transportation to the OSC services, where the child is receiving transportation home from school through the Education Department, this transport can be redirected to the OSC service.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

There are 4 specialised holiday playschemes, and they are not restricted to working parents. Transportation provision will depend upon the individual needs of the child.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Barnardo's Holiday Play-scheme	Barnardo's Project Building, Dundee	2 wks Easter, 2 wks October. Mon–Fri 09.30–15.30	Different age groups	50	Wide range of needs and disabilities	Transport provided (mini-bus)	Dundee Family Support Team
		5 wks Summer		73			
		4 days at Christmas		20			
The Spectrum Project	Francis Wright Pre-School Centre	1 wk Easter, 4 weeks in Summer and 1 wk in October. Mon–Fri 10.00–14.00	3–7	Up to 20	Autistic spectrum disorders		N.O.F.
'Youth Link' – 'Kids' Unlimited'	Barnardo's Project Building, Dundee	Twice weekly during summer. Sun and Wed	9–11 one day; 11–13 other		Children affected by a disability		Variety of funding sources
Dundee Society for the Blind		School holidays: 2 days per week		30	Visual impairments. Siblings also attend		Fundraising. No financial support from Council

Barnardo's run a summer programme of Activity Days. Places on these Activity Days are allocated to those children and young people who are offered little else. Through liaising with other organisations, Barnardo's ensures that provision for children with special needs is shared amongst all the children who wish to access the services, so that as many children benefit as possible.

The Inclusion group can work during the holiday period in OSC services. Some OSC services that are not part of the consortium due to their term-time numbers, are more than willing for a placement during the school holidays.

All 15 OSC services operate over the holiday period. In addition, the Leisure and Recreation Department run several holiday playschemes that are open to all children. There have not been any issues regarding the accessibility of these playschemes by children with special needs, though it is not known how many children with special needs currently do attend the mainstream holiday playschemes.

### Other Provision

The Dundee Society for the Blind run an After School Club for children with visual impairments aged between 5–11 on a Tuesday night. They also run a Teenage Club called 'The Weekenders' on a Friday night. The Council do not fund this service and so they rely heavily on fundraising.

'Youth Link', is an organisation that is funded by the Council to support children living in a family with problems. They have a 1:1 befriending service and are a weekly support group for the families that are referred or self-referred to the organisation.

Dundee City Council is in partnership with Barnardo's for the provision of several respite services, most of which have substantial elements of playcare for children with special needs. For further information on any of these projects, visit [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk) or e-mail [dundee.familysupport@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:dundee.familysupport@barnardos.org.uk). The Leisure and Recreation Department also organise 'Active Sport' event days over the summer holiday period for children with special needs. During term-time, there are swimming lessons and horse-riding lessons for children with special needs.

## East Ayrshire

East Ayrshire has a population of approximately 120,630 people living within a geographic area of 190 square miles. Of this number 22,816 are aged between 0–14. East Ayrshire is partly urban and partly rural, with several isolated communities inland. The majority of the population reside in Kilmarnock and the Irvine Valley. The main settlement in the south of the authority is Cumnock. The area has suffered from the loss of traditional industries and, at 8%, the area's unemployment level is 3.9% above the Scottish average.

There are many areas of deprivation in the area; one postcode area is within the most deprived 10% in Scotland and there is one Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) area. In addition, Better Neighbourhood Services Funding has been allocated to a Pathfinder area in Kilmarnock.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population in Scotland has a disability, around 684 children in East Ayrshire will have a disability of some kind. There are 4 special schools and units and 365 pupils have a Record of Needs opened East Ayrshire.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in East Ayrshire

Due to the rurality of much of the area in East Ayrshire and the high levels of unemployment, many young children are cared for within the family. This is expected to be even more so the case with regard to children with special needs. Very few childcare services interviewed had experienced being asked to provide childcare for children with complex needs.

The Health Board have employed a 'Children and Young Person's Special Needs Play and Leisure Facilitator'. The Facilitator's remit is to promote the provision and access of appropriate play and leisure opportunities for all disabled children and young people within Ayrshire. A database is currently being created which will detail all play and leisure opportunities for disabled children and young people in Ayrshire.

Where childcare workers are providing services in partnership with the Council, such as daycare or pre-school education, they can access in-service training. Childminders and nursery staff may therefore benefit from the in-service training provided. Childcare workers involved in projects, which are not in partnership with the Council, do not have the same access.

Transport links in the area are often poor and these can be problematic for children with mobility impairment who wish to access childcare services. To help resolve some of the difficulties that the issues of rurality and poor transportation create, the Childcare Partnership is thinking of developing a mobile service for children with special needs.

### Childminding

There are approximately 210 registered childminders in East Ayrshire. No subsidy is provided by the Council to childminders where their ratios have to be reduced as a result of the child's needs.

The Department of Educational and Social Services operate an Early Years Day Care service in East Ayrshire, whereby a pool of registered childminders become day carers of children 'in need'. In most circumstances the day carers are used for crisis and family breakdown situations where emergency care is required. The service is primarily aimed at supporting vulnerable young children, aged 0–3 years. However, funding through the Better Neighbourhood Services Fund has extended this service to older children. 29 childminders have been approved as Day Carers through the Department.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

In most circumstances, children with special needs would be supported in mainstream local authority nursery provision. There are 3 community nurseries in East Ayrshire providing full-day care and a further one planned.

There are 33 local authority nurseries. 6 of these provide wrap-around childcare, 3 of which are in the pathfinder areas. The parents of the children attending the nurseries were asked what hours were most convenient for them and the wrap-around childcare was developed to accommodate their needs. In East Ayrshire, most of the wrap-around nursery establishments are open from 8.30 to 16.30.

There are 11 peripatetic nursery nurses employed by East Ayrshire Council to go into the local authority nurseries to support children with special needs. Additional Special Educational Needs Auxiliary support can also be provided where necessary in local authority provision. This support can remain outwith the set pre-school hours where this is necessary to meet the child's needs.

If the Educational Psychologist recommends that transportation is required to meet the needs of the child then transport would also be provided.

There are 28 private and voluntary nurseries in East Ayrshire Council. The issue of extra support for the childcare hours has not yet arisen. There is a full-time Pre School Partnership Link Officer who supports the partner providers and a Pre School Resource Worker who supports the voluntary committees. All partner providers can access the Educational Psychologist service and a referral process has been established for them to do so. Due to the nature of the PRE-SCAT, children with special needs would normally reach the attention of the local authority at an early age and the parents would be informed of suitable provision.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

Park School runs an after school club in the school premises 3 evenings each week. This service is only open to the pupils of Park School (a special school). There are also several new clubs that have been set up specifically for children with special needs across East Ayrshire. They are organised by Play and Recreation and the children can attend these groups one evening each week. They are detailed in 'other provision', below.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Park School OSC	Park School, Grassyards Road, Kilmarnock	3 evenings each week 15.30–17.00	12–18	For Park pupils only	Pupils of school only	Yes	School-based activities

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 14 OSC projects in East Ayrshire. All of the projects have equal opportunities policies in place and are open to children with special needs. The Childcare Partnership have supported children with disabilities in many of the OSC services through the appointment of additional staff where required in order to meet the child's needs. In total, 19 childcare workers have been placed in OSC services to support children with special needs.

In order to develop provision for children with special needs in OSC services for the future, the Childcare Partnership are considering an application to NOF for a group of peripatetic playleaders to assist OSC services in facilitating for children with special needs. It has been suggested that the peripatetic playleaders would be employed by a well-established childcare service in East Ayrshire and would carry out outreach work with other OSC services as and when required to support the service. These plans are still in the very early stages of discussion with the Childcare Partnership.



## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Hillside School	Dalglish Ave, Cumnock	Mon–Fri for 5 weeks over summer 9.30–15.00	5–18	Varies	Profound and complex needs	No	Educ with soc work referrals
Woodstock and Witchill	Kilmarnock	Mon–Fri for 5 weeks over summer 9.30–15.00	5–18	Varies	Profound and complex needs	No	Educ with soc work referrals
Crosshouse	Crosshouse Unit, Crosshouse Primary	3 days/week for 4 weeks over summer. Easter: 3 days 9.30–15.00	5–12	Varies	Autistic Spectrum	Transport is provided	Educ, soc wk and NAS

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

10 OSC services operate over the holiday period and the same support can go to these services as is provided during term-time. The Community Services Department provide a wide range of summer activities which are detailed in a guide each year. These are open to all children and young people in the area, although obtaining additional support where required for children with special needs may be difficult due to funding constraints and staffing levels.

## Other Provision

The Play and Recreation Department has recently began operating youth clubs for children and young people with special needs across the East Ayrshire region. All of the clubs provide for a wide range of disabilities and the numbers of children and young people that can attend varies according to the needs of those accessing the club. CHAMPS (Challenging Activities in Health, Arts, Movement, Play and Sports for children with special needs) run clubs in 4 different locations over the summer holidays on different days throughout the week. These can be accessed by children and young people aged between 6–16 and the opening times are usually for an hour or two for one afternoon each week. They therefore do not constitute 'childcare' as such.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	Funding
Champs	Catrine Games Hall	Thursday 17.00–18.00	6–16	Council
Champs	Hunter Centre	Monday 18.00–19.00	6–16	
Champs	Patna Games Hall	Thursday 18.00–19.00	6–16	
Champs	Yipworld. Com, Cumnock	Tuesday 18.00–19.00	6–16	

Bellsbank Adventure Playground can be accessed by children with special needs. They operate an after school service from 13.10–17.00 and a holiday club during the school holidays from 10.00–12.30.

Older children and young people have access to a cybercafe called Yipworld.com.in the Cumnock area. This cybercafe also operates as an OSC service after school and they run various youth clubs and activities during the week and at weekends. The service is fully accessible by children with a wide range of needs.

## East Dunbartonshire

East Dunbartonshire has a population of 110,760, of which 19,109 are aged between 0–14. East Dunbartonshire has a large commuter population looking to Glasgow; the area has the second highest wage earning population in Scotland. In direct contrast to this, however, as the local economy is related to agriculture, East Dunbartonshire has the second lowest local wage economy.

East Dunbartonshire is an area of economic contrasts, with areas of significant wealth and other areas of disadvantage. Overall, unemployment is low, at a rate of 3.5%.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% children in Scotland have a disability of some kind, it can be assumed that there are 573 children with a disability in East Dunbartonshire. There are 8 special needs schools and units in East Dunbartonshire and 213 pupils have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in East Dunbartonshire

Childcare development for children with special needs in East Dunbartonshire has greatly benefited from the overlap of the education and social work departments within the Council. Funding from both Social Services and Childcare Strategy funds has been used to conduct research and development into childcare provision for children with special needs. The Childcare Partnership are currently working with Enable Scotland to examine the potential development of more strategic measures to assist childcare providers when looking after children with special needs. Following a major consultation exercise with parents of children with special needs, the Partnership is developing childcare services in accordance with the expressed wishes of parents. This may result in the creation of both inclusive and specialist childcare services. The National Autistic Society (NAS) has carried out training with childcare staff in the area.

The Council with their Childcare Partnership provided financial support to childcare providers caring for children with special educational needs for adaptations to their premises, the purchase of new equipment and for training and staff development

The Childcare Partnership is now in the process of devising an allocation model for Project Support Funds which gives a priority to groups caring for children with additional support needs. This will enable groups to develop the accessibility, quality and affordability of their services.

One of the main difficulties in accessing childcare provision in East Dunbartonshire, in the views of service providers, are the poor transport links that operate in the area. Accessing services in general can be difficult, and so these problems are confounded when transportation is essential for children with mobility impairments.

### Childminding

There are 171 registered childminders in East Dunbartonshire. There is no childminding development worker, but it is hoped that a new development worker for childminders will be in post in the near future. At the moment, no additional support is provided for childminders in the area where they are looking after children who have disabilities. It is thought that the majority of children with special needs who would normally access a childminder would instead be redirected to OSC, where more developments are happening regarding special needs provision. The childminding surveys and interviews revealed strong concerns regarding special needs provision from childminders in the area. Although several expressed an interest in providing childcare for children with special needs, comments were raised about the lack of training that is available, the expense of specialised equipment and the reduced income that would result from reducing ratios.

Social Inclusion and Community Development operate a Daycare Childminding Service 22 to support vulnerable families. There are no formal mechanisms in place to support childminders who are providing a childcare service for children with special needs. No financial subsidy is given to childminders who are caring for children whose needs require 1:1 care.

## **Nursery and Playgroup Provision**

Campsie View special school has a specialised nursery for children with special needs. Children can attend for an extended period of time, but the time allocation will depend on the needs of the child rather than on the childcare requirements of the parents.

The aim of this specialised nursery is to work with the children so as to enable them to attend mainstream nursery provision wherever possible. In most cases, this would involve a transition period during which staff from Campsie View nursery would provide support to the children in the mainstream settings. The split placement would end once the mainstream nursery feels fully equipped to cope with the needs of the child. There is also a language and communication unit at Twecker which children may access for part of their pre-school education where required.

There are 17 local authority nursery classes in East Dunbartonshire and only 1 nursery school (Hillhead Nursery). Although the nursery school has extended hours, it does not provide full-day care. Sure-start funding has been used to increase the number of nursery places for children with special needs but little investment has been made in order to provide childcare places for young children with special needs.

Because of the lack of wrap around childcare provision, the majority of parents who required this service would use one of the 39 partner providers of pre-school education in the private, voluntary and independent sectors. Another option would be to access a childminder to look after the children around the pre-school education hours. If transportation for the child were required this would be organised following a needs assessment.

Of the 39 partner providers of pre-school education in the private, voluntary and independent sectors, 11 provide wrap around childcare.

The issue of support for children with SEN in the private and voluntary nurseries has not yet been raised to the Childcare Partnership. SEN auxiliary support is restricted to the local authority nurseries and cannot go into the private and voluntary sector nurseries. The Partnership representatives were unable to speculate as to whether SEN support may be extended to the private sector nurseries if requested.

## **Out of School Care**

### *Specialised Services*

There is an after school club run by 'Children at Play' on a Tuesday evening during term-time which is specifically for children with special needs. This is detailed under 'other provision' as it does not operate on a daily basis. There used to be another specialised OSC group based at St Joseph's school in Milngavie that was operated by a group of parents. However, this project recently ceased operation.

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 22 OSC services in East Dunbartonshire. Service providers caring for children with special needs can apply for funding in order to pay for adaptations to their premises, purchasing new equipment or for training and staff development.

The Childcare Partnership and social services are currently working closely with Enable to develop OSC, leisure and recreational services in East Dunbartonshire so as to make them more accessible for children with special needs. This is only at the consultation stages at the moment, but there are hopes that this research will produce a new strategy to further the provision of inclusive childcare services in the area.

The Partnership is also currently developing the provision of OSC services for children post 11 years of age as currently most services only go up to the age of 11 or, in some cases, 12 years.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Castle Hill Play scheme	Castle Hill School	Wed, Thur and Fri for 4 weeks in summer, 2 wks Easter and 1 wk Oct. 10.00–15.00	4–15	15 children access 5 days each	Autistic spectrum	Yes: playscheme bus	Council and NAS
Campsie View Play-scheme	Campsie View	3 weeks summer. Each child receives up to 10 sessions	5–19	25/day. 45 attend in total	Severe and complex needs	Yes	Council
Merckland Play-scheme	Merckland School, Kirkintilloch	Mon and Tue for 4 weeks in summer, 2 wks Easter and 1 wk Oct. 10.00–15.00	4–15	15 children access 5 days each	Wide range of needs	Yes	Council

Education and Leisure Services provide 3 full day-care playschemes specifically for children with additional support needs. These operate for four weeks out of the six weeks of the summer holidays and during the Easter and October holiday period. Additional support is provided by operating primarily with a one adult to one child ratio and providing transport for every child to and from the service.

18 of the OSC services continue to operate over the summer holidays. OSC providers operating over the school holiday period are able to apply for additional funding when looking after children with special needs as a result of the additional care costs involved when allocating full-time places.

### **Other Provision**

The Social Work department offer some befriending opportunities for children with special needs. They also run a respite service for families with children with disabilities in the carer's home.

Sense Scotland operate an 'Out and About' project for children and young people with special needs. A social work referral is required in order for children to access this service.

An after school group for young people with special needs is run by the staff of Campsie View school (Children at Play). This is run for young people aged between 12–19 with profound and complex needs on Tuesday nights during term time.

## East Lothian

East Lothian has a population of 91,280, of which 17,003 are aged between 0–14. Almost 25% of the population live in small rural communities. The authority is a growth area and the population is set to increase by 10% over the next 14 years. This increase includes the number of children under five.<sup>1</sup>

At 2.8%, unemployment levels are ranked 8th lowest in Scotland. Poverty indicators are also low but there is one Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) area.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population have a disability of some kind, there will be around 510 children in East Lothian with a disability. Although 428 school pupils in the area are recognised as having a Special Educational Need, only 89 pupils have a Record of Needs opened. This amounts to 0.7% of the total number of pupils in the area, well below the average of 2.2% in Scottish local authorities. This is an example of the diverging practices across local authorities in Scotland in the assessment as to when a Record of Needs should be opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in East Lothian

A comprehensive questionnaire was sent out to the parents of children with special needs in East Lothian by the Childcare Partnership in order to inform the childcare and pre-school education services plan. This questionnaire allowed for comments from parents regarding the provision at present as well as provision that they would like to see developed in the future. The Special Needs Playscheme Management Committee also helped to inform the consultation process in the drafting of the children's Services Plan.

Childcare workers can access equipment for looking after children with special needs through the East Lothian Resource Base. Childcare Strategy money has been used to purchase specialised equipment. This equipment can go out to any of the childcare providers in East Lothian on loan so as to ensure the effective distribution of resources. The Resource Base was set up in conjunction with a local recycling project and the toys and equipment can be delivered out to the service providers.

Money from both the Childcare Strategy and Surestart has been combined to create a 'Small Grants' system for all childcare organisations in East Lothian. The Grants are organised through the Childcare Partnership Funding Sub-group, Small Business Gateway and all childcare providers, including childminders, are made aware through advertisements in childcare bulletins of the application process.

Detailed research has been carried out which looks at children affected by a disability in one of the Social Inclusion Partnership areas of East Lothian. This research highlighted some of the main areas of concern for these families and it also incorporated the views of children with special needs.

### Childminding

There are around 170 registered childminders in East Lothian. The Childcare Partnership has put some mechanisms in place in order to encourage childminders to think about looking after children with special needs. Funding was provided to allow 10 childminders in the area to undertake a National Certificate module in special needs. On completion of this module, the childminders would be entitled to a grant for adaptations to their house so as to ensure accessibility for children with special needs. The response rate for this training was relatively low, with only around 6 childminders currently undertaking the course by distance learning. No subsidy is provided to childminders who have to reduce their ratios as a result of the needs of the children in their care and this might partly explain the low uptake in special needs training. Childminders who have undergone Special Needs training would have this detail flagged on the Childcare Information Service so as to highlight their capacity to look after children with special needs.

In general, the sample of childminders in East Lothian that participated in this research felt that they would be able to access funding for training where that was necessary to meet the needs of the children in their care. They did not feel confident, however, that training would be offered at appropriate times for childminders. Several childminders did comment, however, that the ability to access available equipment was very useful.

The Social Work department have a pool of registered childminders to provide a daycare service for children 'in need'.

### **Nursery and Playgroup Provision**

There is one Child and Family centre in East Lothian, Olivebank Child and Family Centre. This centre will provide specific places for children 'in need', which includes children with special needs but it does not provide full-day wraparound care and children are limited as to how many sessions they can attend each week.

There are 29 local authority nursery establishments in East Lothian. Of this number, 3 provide wraparound childcare. The East Lothian Council provides support for children with special needs for the pre-school education hours. Sure-start and education money can be used to provide additional members of staff over the lunch time period. Each request for support is considered on its own merit.

Some nurseries have developed a particular specialism in looking after children with special needs (Haddington Infants and The Borough Nursery).

There are 9 private sector day nurseries and nursery schools and voluntary sector day nurseries. There is also 1 nursery attached to an independent school. Support will be provided for children with special needs where necessary for the pre-school education part of their care. The education department has paid for special educational needs auxiliaries to support children with special needs in the partner providers. From now on, the Partnership have stated that the auxiliaries will be employed by the Council, rather than giving funding to the partner providers to employ an auxiliary. Generally, most nurseries interviewed felt that they would be adequately supported when looking after children with special needs and also thought that if it was necessary for the child, auxiliary support would remain outwith the set pre-school hours.

### **Out of School Care**

The East Lothian Out of School Care Network (ELOSCN) is a charitable organisation that brings together representatives from each of the OSC projects operating across the area. The Network has recently developed a consortium bid to the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) to expand the provision for children with special needs in mainstream OSC services. It is hoped that, if this bid is successful, there will be enough money to encourage all 15 OSC services in East Lothian to provide a minimum of 5 places each to children with special needs.

Childcare Strategy money has been used to fund several OSC project in East Lothian to look after children with special needs. One such service, which currently cares for 6 children with special needs, successfully applied to the Childcare Partnership for additional funding for an extra member of staff because of the needs of the children accessing the service. Staff training in special needs has been provided to several OSC services and most of the projects interviewed were very positive about the successful inclusion of children with special needs in their projects. The main concern expressed was the need for continued funding support for special needs provision.

The Social Work Department offer a befriending service to children 'in need' and children with special needs have been accompanied by befrienders to mainstream OSC services in East Lothian. Although this is not to provide childcare for working parents, it may help to build up the confidence of the child, the parents and of the OSC service to consider looking after the child on a more permanent basis without the befriender's support.

### **Holiday Provision**

#### *Specialised Holiday Services*

The two specialised holiday services listed below are organised by North Berwick Community Clubs. For both holiday schemes, most of the children attending will have been referred to the projects through the Health or Social Work Departments. None of the children are self-referred. The projects are funded by Education, Social Work and Community Services Departments.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
East Lothian Special Needs Play scheme	North Berwick Community Centre, North Berwick	4 weeks in summer, 1 wk Oct and 1 wk Easter. Mon, Tue, Thur and Fri 9.00–15.30	5–17	35	Wide range of needs	Provided by the Council	Council
Prestonpans Play-scheme	Prestonpans Primary School, Musselburgh	4 weeks in summer, 1 wk Oct and 1 wk Easter. Mon, Tue, Thur and Fri 9.00–15.30	5–17	20, to be increased to 35	Wide range of needs	Provided by the Council	Council

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

The East Lothian Playscheme Association co-ordinates 9 holiday playschemes. Support can be provided for children with special needs to access these playschemes if required. The Community Development Department can provide special auxiliaries for the mainstream holiday playschemes where extra help support is required to fully include the child. The auxiliary would be employed by the Council, rather than giving funding for the playscheme to recruit an extra member of staff. In most circumstances, the employee would be a SEN auxiliary.

The Health Promotion Department examined inclusive services and sports facilities for children and young people to access over the school holidays. A co-ordinator of services has been employed by the Health Promotion Department to raise the profile of inclusion and to make opportunities available for children with special needs during the holidays as well as throughout the year. All playschemes have access to adapted equipment that assists children with special needs in participating in games and activities.

The mainstream holiday playschemes can access childcare staff training, Childcare Partnership funding for training and auxiliary support.

### **Other Provision**

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Special needs details
The Star Youth Club	North Berwick	Tuesday Evening	This youth club meets every week to provide social opportunities for young people with special needs. Transport can be provided if required by educ and soc work. Parents pay a contribution of £10/wk

There is a parents support group called the 'East Lothian Association of Parents of Special Needs Children' and they organise family days and weekend outings for parents and children in the area. This group have organised a special needs playgroup 'Special Kids in Play' in Loretto Church Hall, Newbigging, Musselburgh. This cannot be classed as childcare however as the parents remain. It does operate as an effective support group for the parents of children with special needs.

There are several activity groups that have been set up specifically for children with special needs and these groups have increased in the past year. There is a Sports Club for children with special needs and there is also an Archery Club that runs one evening each week.

1 General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) 1998 based population projections.



## East Renfrewshire

East Renfrewshire has a population of 89,790, of which 16,814 are aged between 0–14. The population is expected to rise considerably over the next 14 years, including a rise in the number of children under the age of 5. East Renfrewshire is an area of strong economic contrasts; there are areas of great wealth but there is also concentrated deprivation in the Barrhead area of the authority.

The unemployment rate is 4.5%, slightly above the Scottish average of 4.1%. One postal area (with 3% of the East Renfrewshire population) is within the 10% most deprived areas in Scotland.

### Children with Special Needs

As estimates suggest that 3% of the child population in East Renfrewshire have a disability of some kind, there are approximately 504 children in East Renfrewshire with a disability. There are 2 special needs schools and units in East Renfrewshire, attended by 78 pupils. 214 pupils have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in East Renfrewshire

A parent of a child with special needs sits on the Childcare Partnership and helps to ensure that plans and developments are always formed with a view towards inclusion.

The Childcare Partnership offer training programmes for childcare workers and payment for childcare qualifications.

Transportation can be provided for children with special needs to access OSC services where they are normally transported home from school and the OSC service is only slightly in excess of the usual journey. 2 buses are provided to transport children with special needs to and from nursery establishments. Although many children with special needs are being well supported in formal childcare services, difficulties in accessing leisure and recreational services have been highlighted.

### Childminding

There are approximately 155 registered childminders in East Renfrewshire. The combination of the early intervention for the PRE-SCAT examinations as well as the wrap-around care service that is offered in all local authority nursery establishments has resulted in very few childminders being asked provide a service for children with special needs.

Where childminders are looking after children with special needs, they could receive funding from the Childcare Strategy budget for minor adaptations to the house, training and monitoring costs. Payment to childminders participating in daycare work for children with special needs is increased according to the needs of the child.

Concern was expressed in several of the interviews with childminders in the area about the lack of support that they can currently receive from the Council due to the move of the Early Years Officers to the Care Commission. It was also mentioned that many childminders feel that they would not have a suitable contact with expertise and knowledge to advise them when looking after children with special needs. This was considered to be particularly problematic when the children were very young and the parents may be reluctant to recognise a difficulty in their child's development. Childminders may not feel that they have the necessary expertise to perhaps unduly concern the parent, but there was no central body to whom they could turn for extra discretionary advice.

Training is in place through the Childcare Partnership and through the Special Educational Needs Officer of the council.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Children who are suspected of having a special need will undergo a PRE-SCAT examination and if it is found that the child does have a particular need, they will have priority of place in a local authority nursery.

There are 2 Family Centres in East Renfrewshire; Glen Family Centre and Barrhead Family Centre. These provide services for children 'In Need' and they also have their own transport. The hours that the child can attend for will depend upon the needs of the child rather than upon the parents' childcare needs.

There are 14 local authority nurseries in East Renfrewshire and all of these provide wrap around care. The Council have a policy of trying to provide extended hours nursery care and so they can ensure that the needs of most working parents can be provided for in the local authority establishments. Most of the local authority nurseries begin at around 08.45 or 09.00 and break for an hour at 12.00 before the after noon session which commonly runs until 15.30. Specialist support can be provided to children in all of the local authority establishments where this is required.

As children with special needs have a priority of places at local authority nurseries, it was felt that few children with special needs would be accessing nurseries in the private or voluntary sector. The sample interviews with private and voluntary sector nursery establishments in East Renfrewshire indicated that this was indeed the case, perhaps due to the fact that, through the PRE-SCAT system which is in place in the council, parents are involved at a very early time with the local authority.

Where parents do choose to have their children attend a private or voluntary sector nursery, the partner providers would receive support from Psychological services, including training of staff. The Partnership have not yet addressed the issue of whether financial support could be provided to a private childcare provider to employ an additional member of staff to meet the needs of the child. This has been identified by the Partnership and a bid has been made to the Scottish Executive for funding to overtake this.

### **Out of School Care**

There are 21 OSC services in East Renfrewshire. The recent Children's Services Plan has advised that more professionals should go into OSC services to train staff to work with children with special needs.

There are several OSC services in East Renfrewshire that have built up an excellent track record of providing a fully inclusive service for children with special needs. One such service takes referrals from social work to provide respite care for families with a disabled child. The successes of inclusion in these services are examples of how effectively inclusion can operate when the childcare staff are committed to providing a fully inclusive service. Discussions with the manager of several of these OSC services have helped to inform the section in the main report which deals with overcoming barriers to inclusion.

A Developmental Grant can be given to an OSC service either as part of a network or on an individual basis. This Developmental Grant emanates from the Childcare Strategy funds and one of the criteria that the service must meet in order to benefit from the grant is that they can provide for children with special needs.

### **Holiday Provision**

Following the last children's Services Plan, a post has been made for an individual to organise the summer playschemes. Links have been made with the National Autistic Society, the Scottish Downs Syndrome Association and Quarriers to develop and run the holiday playschemes.

A Playscheme Co-ordinator has been employed, funded by both education and social work. The co-ordinator's remit is to develop OSC and holiday provision for children with special needs.

*Specialised Holiday Services*

<b>Name of service</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Days and times</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>No. of places</b>	<b>Types of disability</b>	<b>Transport</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Quarriers Play-scheme	Chevy Down, Mearns Rd, Newton Mearns	Summer and Easter holidays. Tue, Wed and Thur 9.30–3.00		12	Wide range of learning and physical disabilities	Council provides transport	Social Work
NAS Play-scheme	Carlibar Primary School, Main St, Barrhead	Mon–Fri 10.00–15.00	5–12	10	Autistic spectrum disorders		Social Work
Cosgrove Care Summer Play-scheme	Calderwood Lodge, 28 Calderwood Road	Mon–Fri over the school holidays and 1wk Easter and Oct 8.30–16.30	3+	30 approx	Wide range of needs. Very mixed. Siblings also	Depends on need	Registered charity. Trusts and Social work
East Renfrewshire Play-scheme	St Ninian's School, Eastwood	10 days over the summer holidays. 2 days at October and Easter	3+	25 per day. Each child receives 5 days approx	Wide range of needs	Provided if required	Social Work referrals only

The Social Work Department run a holiday club for children with special needs. It should be noted that children have to be referred to this service, as they cannot admit self-referrals. The Glen Family Centre is open as a specialised holiday service.

*Mainstream Holiday Services*

Most of the OSC services in East Renfrewshire operate over the school holiday period, including the group of OSC services noted for their successes in achieving full inclusion. The Council do not run any mainstream holiday playschemes. Social work may in the future develop more holiday provision for children with special needs.

There are playschemes in both the New Community Schools projects which make provision for children with special needs. The Glen and Barrhead Family Centres also both run mainstream holiday services.

Several of the voluntary organisations running specialised holiday playschemes have stated that they would consider developing integrated holiday provision if they could obtain the necessary funding to do so.

**Other Provision**

There is a 'log-in' café in one of the Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) areas of East Renfrewshire that is fully accessible for children with special needs.

'Spark of Genius' Limited are contracted to provide a holiday computer club for children with Asperger Syndrome and also undertake a Saturday morning computer club.

There are two Equestrian Centres which can provide specially adapted horse riding lessons for people with special needs; Linn Park Equestrian Centre and Busby Equestrian Centre.

Cosgrove Care (noted above) run after school groups for primary aged children with special needs on a Wednesday from 16.30–18.00. They also run a weekend club on a Sunday afternoon on a fortnightly basis.

There is an after school club run on Tuesday evenings for children with complex and severe disabilities in Isobel Mair School.

## Edinburgh City

Scotland's capital has a thriving economy, with a strong financial and commercial sector. There is a population of 453,430, of which 73,506 (16%) are aged 0–14. At a rate of 2.1%, unemployment levels are relatively low and Edinburgh ranks fourth lowest for unemployment in Scotland. Although Edinburgh is affluent, there is deprivation for some; the number of children who are in receipt of free school meals is above average and there are three area based Social Inclusion Partnership Projects and a thematic Edinburgh Youth SIP.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that approximately 3% of the child population have a disability, it can be assumed that there are around 2,200 children aged 0–14 in Edinburgh with a disability of some kind. 1,325 school pupils have a Record of Needs opened. There are 16 special needs schools and units in Edinburgh City, being accessed by 973 children.

765 children with a disability received a social work service in the year from 1st April 2001 to 31st March 2002.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Edinburgh City

Edinburgh City Council is committed to a policy of inclusion where inclusion is possible in childcare. In order to achieve this policy aim, the Council have employed a Co-ordinator for play, care and learning opportunities for children of school age with special needs within the Childcare Partnership staff team.

This post is to promote new inclusive opportunities for children and young people and to co-ordinate the delivery of services across the voluntary, private and public sectors for children and young people with a disability. The remit cuts across play, care, leisure and out of school learning.

The Childcare Partnership has assisted childcare providers in creating fully inclusive services by providing funding for extra support staff. This has supported 20 children. The money is given directly to the childcare provider to recruit additional staff, train staff and purchase resources/adaptations where this is appropriate. All registered childcare providers receive applications forms for this. A new project (PLC) will be developed in 2002 under the Changing Children's Services plan which will support the acquisition of an inclusive culture, training and support in play, leisure and care settings

Partner providers have access to all local authority training, which has included inclusive play workshops and general special needs training. Services can also receive grants for access to training, for example, where the staff group need to receive specialist training from an organisation.

### Childminding

There are 479 registered childminders in Edinburgh City, 330 of which have their details on the Childcare Information Service. Childminders can access Assisted Funding from the Childcare Partnership for specialist equipment where this is required, and also for adaptations to the house where this is necessary in order to meet the needs of the child. Childminders in Edinburgh do not have free access to all local authority training sessions. There has been no specialised training for childminders in terms of looking after children with special needs.

Of this number there are 80 Day Carers who are childminders recruited and trained by the Social Work Department to care for children in need who are referred with social, emotional, behavioural or developmental difficulties. A significant number also mind for working parents too.

The majority of childminders sampled stated that, if they were looking after children whose needs require greater support, they would probably increase their charges to the parents so as to subsidise their loss of income. Although the Childcare Partnership funds can be accessed by childminders none has applied to date.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

### *Local Authority: Universal pre-school education*

There are 81 nursery classes and 18 nursery schools. 55 of these provide extended hours care (from 9.00–15.00). This is free to children 'in need', which includes children with special needs. Children with special needs are also more likely to be able to receive a full-time place where this is desired due to the priority accorded to children 'in need'. Parents can also buy additional hours in nursery over and above the free part-time place. There are 6 wraparound hours nurseries catering for children from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Local authority nurseries can receive auxiliary support for children with special needs subject to an audit of the child's needs.

### *Local Authority: Specialist Resources*

Several of the Local Authority nurseries have developed strong expertise in caring for children with special needs. In two such nurseries (Abbeyfield and Westfield Court), spaces are kept aside to be allocated to children with special educational needs.

There are 12 Child and Family Centres in Edinburgh run by Social Work and are referral based catering for a range of children with special needs.

Several of the special needs schools are open to children from the age of 3 providing care and education within the school day.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Westerlea Early Education Centre and Capability Scotland	Westerlea School, Edinburgh	Mon–Fri during term-time. Early Years Playcare	0–5yrs	20	Wide range of special educational needs	Provided where necessary	Free for children under 3. Local authority funds 3–5 yrs

There are several other units that provide specific services for children with particular needs and abilities. These do not provide full-day childcare.

The Westerlea Early Education Centre has developed an outreach service whereby staff members work with the staff in a Child and Family Centre and have supported children in private and voluntary settings.

### *Partner Providers*

There are 104 partner providers in Edinburgh City. These providers are not able to access auxiliary support through the education department but there are 12 children supported through the childcare strategy funds previously mentioned where the parent is accessing work or training.

Over 80% of the partner providers offer full-day care. There are 16 playgroups, 10 independent schools and 2 voluntary sector all-day providers in SIP areas. All partner providers do receive extra support from the therapeutic and educational psychologists. They can access the additional funding where that is requested. Transportation can also be provided where this is necessary in order to meet the child's needs.

There is therefore not an equality of opportunity for parents with regard to the private sector nursery provision. The parents have to be in work or training to be entitled to any extra support. In general, parents of children with special needs would be advised to access local authority provision, but, for the most part, these hours are restricted to 9.00–15.00. Following a review of Council Early Years Services support for children with special needs under five years will be a focus for development.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

A new OSC service has been developed in St Crispin's school. It is specifically for children with special needs but there are plans that this service may lead to a more inclusive model in the future. It is hoped that, once parents develop confidence in the staff team and consider returning to work or undertaking a training course, they may decide that their child would be able to access mainstream OSC services with support. The staff from St. Crispin's will then be providing an outreach service to other OSC services so as to encourage inclusion and assist the children in attending OSC services in their own locality.

Another new service called "the House" has been developed by Edinburgh Leisure with funding from NOF and the Childcare Partnership to provide a new concept in out of school care for children 11-14. This has been developed as a fully inclusive model attracting young people with and without disabilities.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
St Crispins OSC	St Crispin's School, Edinburgh	Mon-Thur 14.40-17.30 Fri 12.00-17.30	5-16	12 full time places	Wide range of needs, mainly autism	No as children come from the school	LCP and lottery

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 77 Out of School Care services in Edinburgh. The Childcare Partnership has recently been focusing on inclusive play and practice training and this is open to all OSC provision. A training questionnaire was sent around every project and the sessions were developed from the results of this questionnaire. The training is provided for free to all OSC services.

OSC groups can also apply for additional staffing costs where they are looking after children with special needs. The money is provided directly to the Club that would then recruit the new member of staff. Some Clubs reported that they found this aspect of the scheme rather worrying. This was due to the difficulties encountered in trying to find a properly qualified new member of staff who has experience in working with children with particular needs and who would be willing to work the short hours required of Out of School Care. Some of the Clubs suggested that they would rather have either the Council or an outside service select and employ suitable candidates to come in as support workers. The new PLC project starting in 2002 will address this.

It is hoped that, following the development of the OSC service in St Crispin's, an out-reach service into other OSC projects will begin. This will encourage the inclusion of children with special needs into mainstream OSC using trained and skilled workers who will support the children and the service and will pass on skills and expertise to the other staff members.

There is no budget for the Education department to provide transport to take children with special needs to OSC. The practice is that transport is provided where the normal school transport service can be conveniently redirected to the OSC project. Parents have to organise their own transport for collecting their children at the end of the day.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

There are several specialised holiday playschemes for children with special needs, most of which are listed below. Transport is provided to and from home.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
The Action Group Play-scheme	Leith Academy	4 weeks in summer and 2 weeks at Easter. 9.30–15.30 approx	5–8; 9–12	30 approx	All types of learning and physical disabilities	Provided where necessary	Mostly social work referrals, but parents can refer
The Action Group Youth Zone	Youth Café, Victoria Terrace	2 weeks in summer	13–18	20 approx	1:1 support with a member of staff	Provided where necessary	Council
Capability Scotland Play-scheme	Graysmill School	2 weeks in summer and Easter also	5–12; 12–18	12 13	Pupils of the school: very complex needs	Yes	Council
Lothian Autistic Society Playscheme	Donaldsons College	4 weeks summer 9.30–14.30. Runs during Easter holidays if funding available	5–17	30	Autistic Spectrum Disorders	Transport provided	Membership of LAS is essential. Social Work and Education Depts
	Willow Park		5–17	25	Autistic Spectrum Disorders	Transport provided	
PHAB Clubs	Norton Park, Albion Road	2 wks summer, Wed, Thur and Fri 10.30–16.30	8–12	15 approx	Wide range of needs	Yes	Council and Fund-raising
		2 wks summer, Wed, Thur and Fri 10.30–16.30	12–16	15 approx			
Westerlea Play-scheme	Westerlea School, Edinburgh	Easter, summer and Oct	5–18	12 approx	Profound special needs	Transport from social work	Social Work and L.C.P.
Kidzcare Play-scheme	St Crispins School	4 weeks in summer	5–18	30	Wide range of needs	Yes	Council

An external evaluation has recently been completed on these summer activities which has made a number of key recommendations. Broadly they are:

- That a comprehensive year round provision within which there are choices the quality for children, young people and their families
- To improve the quality of children and young people's play and leisure experiences
- Increase training and development opportunities.

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

The Childcare Strategy grants for support staff have recently been extended to cover holiday playschemes too. Funds from social work and education have been combined to assist children with special needs in accessing holiday playschemes. Playscheme groups can seek support funding for specialist support staff to go into the holiday project to assist the child with special needs. It is not clear whether transportation would be provided for children with special needs to access the mainstream playschemes and it is thought that it probably would not be provided. There are also several integrated services that have set numbers of places allocated for children with special needs, or provide support staff for children with special needs where required.



Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	Special needs details
Edinburgh Leisure Activator Camps	Meadowbank, Ainslie Park, Gracemount and Craiglochart	Mon–Fri during school holidays	5–12	There are approx 6 places available at each site which have been allocated for children with special needs. The Camps are funded by the Council
Go4it; Play4it. City of Edinburgh Council	Various venues	Mon–Fri for four weeks during school holidays	8–12; 12–18	These projects are run by Community Education. Support Staff are employed to assist the clubs when children with particular needs attend. Transportation can be provided for children with special needs where required
The Yard Adventure Centre	The Yard, 70 Eyre Place, Edinburgh	Holidays: Mon–Thur 10.00–15.30, Fri 10.00–14.00	5–12 yrs; 12–14 yrs	The Yard is a drop-in park which is used by play-schemes/ parents/carers. They have a large outdoor and indoor play area and toys and specially adapted equipment suitable for children of all needs and abilities

### Other Provision

There are several other groups and activity clubs that run in the special schools that have been set up specifically for the children attending the school. The Royal Blind School in Edinburgh runs a playgroup on Friday mornings and a Youth Group after school one night each week. Activities for children and young people with special needs are also held at The Yard Adventure Centre and at Pilrig Park. The various clubs and activity groups are too many to detail for the purposes of this report.

# Falkirk

Falkirk Council covers several medium sized towns, the largest of which is Falkirk itself. The total population in the area is around 144,320, of which 26,605 are aged between 0–14 years. There is a major petro-chemical complex at Grangemouth and a great deal of light industry in the area. There is also a growing commuter population employed in both Glasgow and Edinburgh.

At 5.4%, the rate of unemployment is ranked 9th highest in Scotland. There is one Social Inclusion Partnership area.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population have a disability of some kind, approximately 798 children in the area will have a disability. There are 7 special needs schools and units in Falkirk, attended by 357 pupils. 536 pupils have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Falkirk

The Social Work Department's 'Children with a Disability Team' organises an Annual Carers' Conference for parents and all who care for a disabled child. The Conference last year focused on the question of inclusion and segregation in play and care services. The views expressed at this conference have helped to inform future childcare plans. The diverging views that were aired at the conference have encouraged the Childcare Partnership to be able to give parents and children the choice as to what type of provision the child would like to attend.

In their provision of support to OSC services and holiday playschemes, the Childcare Partnership tries to make it clear that it is not in the position to be able to provide 1:1 staffing for full-time places for all children who need this. Instead, the Childcare Partnership is focussing on providing a more enhanced staff group so that an extra support worker is not necessary.

Training is provided in Playwork SVQs and all new childcare workers receive an Aberlour Childcare Pack offered as a free night class. The Training Officer drafts the training programme after consulting with the childcare workers to determine their training needs. There is also a freelance trainer who specialises in special needs care.

## Childminding

There are approximately 236 registered childminders in Falkirk. The childminders interviewed in the area were unaware of any grants for alterations to the home or for subsidising income when looking after children with special needs. No direct support is given to childminders from the Childcare Partnership, though they can access specialist equipment where this is required on loan.

The Social Work Department has a small network of childminders for daycare provision. They work alongside the Scottish Childminding Association's representative in the area who reserves registered childminders to carry out this service.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

The Scottish Pre-school Play Association (SPPA) have a contingency fund with Falkirk Council. SPPA provide grants from this fund to groups who need extra support and SPPA then apply to the LCP to have that money reimbursed.

There are 46 local authority nurseries, 6 of which provide full-day wrap around care. Children with special needs can be supported by Special Assistants (SA) to attend these nurseries. The day nurseries themselves manage this pool of staff and divide the SA's hours amongst themselves. The funding for the SA has been supplemented with the Surestart budget.

There are 11 partner providers of pre-school education in the Falkirk region, 3 of which are playgroups. The issue of support for children with special needs in the partner provider nurseries has not yet been raised as most children with special needs would access the day nurseries with SA support.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

There are two youth clubs that operate specifically for children with special needs in the Falkirk region. These are detailed under 'other provision', below, as they are not intended to be childcare services as they only operate weekly or fortnightly.

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 18 OSC projects in Falkirk. All of the clubs have equal opportunities policies in place and, as far as the OSC Development Officer is aware, are of the view that they should be accommodating children with special needs. The Childcare Partnership feel that most children who have needs that require extra support would have a social worker that they can approach to ask about services. The Social Work Department are kept informed of the different projects being run over the local authority. The OSC project can then apply to Education Services for extra support. So far, support has been provided for 3 children with special needs who are known to attend an OSC service in Falkirk. This small number may be more a cause of the reluctance of parents of children with special needs to integrate their children in mainstream services and to realise their potential to go back to work. There are qualified paediatric nurses in two of the OSC services in Falkirk and this has helped to boost the confidence of parents of children with a disability.

Physical access is not a major barrier to the accessibility of OSC services for children with special needs as all of the services are in Council buildings. However, very few places have changing areas that have substantial room and privacy to change an older child where this is required.

Education transport can be redirected to an OSC service where this in their own locality. There is no provision to take the child home at the end of the Club.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

The Children with Disabilities Team operates a holiday playscheme for children with special needs. As around 25 children can attend at any one time, places have to be rationed amongst the 120 children accessing the service. Children are allocated a set number of hours, normally 30 hours over a 7 week period and 1:1 care is almost always provided.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Holiday Play-scheme	Education Centre, Camelon	Easter, Summer and Christmas. Every day. 10.00–16.00	5–12	25 per session	All types of disability	Provided if necessary	Social Work

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Most of the 18 OSC services operate over the school holiday period. Community Education also operates around 8 summer playschemes, each of which run for between 4 and 7 weeks in the summer. The Children with Disabilities Team also provides support to children with special needs accessing mainstream holiday projects. A pilot scheme ran last year whereby the Childcare Partnership 'bought' a number of places for children to access these playschemes. The organisers of the Children with a Disability Team project would talk directly to Club leaders in each of the participating Clubs about the needs of each child. If the leaders needed support, the special needs playscheme leaders would provide assistance. The playschemes that were used were in different geographical regions of Falkirk so as to reduce journey times.

## Other Provision

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	Special needs details
After School Club	Karen Grange School	Every Thurs evening	9–12	Around 7 children can access this service, which caters for a wide range of needs. It is run by the social work department and funded partly by the Prince's Trust funds. Children can be bussed in from their school
Youth Club	Kersiebank Community Project, Grangemouth	Fortnightly on Tuesdays during term. 18.00–21.00	12–18	The social work department operate this youth club for children with a wide range of special needs

There is a new project called the CLASP project which is funded by Surestart and uses childminders to work with the parents of children with special needs. It is therefore not specifically for children with special needs, but it indirectly supports them.

Forth Valley Disability Sport co-ordinate and support events and clubs in the Falkirk area which are affiliated to them. Events are held in local schools, sports halls and leisure centres.

The Children with a Disability Team run a small befriending service for teenagers. Approximately 4 teenagers with a disability currently benefit from this service and they meet with the befriender to undertake an activity of the young person's choice. There is no charge for this service and it is funded by the Social Work department.

## Fife

Fife is the third largest local authority in Scotland. The population is around 350,400, of which 64,935 are aged between 0–14. Fife can be separated into 3 different geographical areas, each of which has quite distinct communities and this affects the provision of services for children. North East Fife is the main farming and fishing area of Fife while heavy industry is concentrated in Central Fife. Although Fife has suffered from a decline in heavy industry (coal mining), light and technology based industries have been attracted into the area

The unemployment rate is relatively high at 5.8%, ranked 8th highest in Scotland.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population in Scotland has a disability of some kind, there are approximately 1,948 children aged between 0–14 with a disability. There are 18 special needs schools and units in the area, attended by 318 pupils. 741 school pupils in Fife have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Fife

The Childcare Partnership has sent questionnaires to the parents of children attending the special needs schools, asking them to provide their views regarding inclusive or specialised childcare services. A Parent Advisory/Consultative Group is also to be established to assist in the development of several new OSC projects specifically for children with special needs.

The questionnaires revealed that the parents of children with more profound and complex needs preferred specialist provision. From this consultative process, 3 new OSC projects for children with special needs are being developed in conjunction with the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).

The Childcare Partnership have developed close links with both RNIB and Enable and work with the two organisations in the provision of childcare services for children with special needs.

There is a resource base of specialised equipment at the RNIB centre. A member of staff manages the database of equipment that can be loaned to all childcare projects as required. Parents can also access this equipment.

Training is provided to childcare workers, particularly those workers involved in CSNIPS and PALS via Lauder College. Fife Childcare Partnership now has a subgroup to examine childcare provision for children with special needs.

### Childminding

There are approximately 662 registered childminders in Fife. Training and resources are provided to childminders where required to help them to meet the needs of the children in their care. No financial help in terms of subsidies or grants is provided directly for childminders who are looking after children with special needs. Most resources and help would probably be received from the family of the child.

Social Work operate a childminding link scheme for children 'in need'.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 129 local authority nursery schools and classes in Fife. 5 nurseries are piloting wraparound childcare and full day places can be provided in these nurseries on the basis of need. SPPA have been funded to develop wrap around care in playgroups.

Auxiliary support can be provided where required to support children with special needs in local authority nurseries and pre-school groups. In the past few years, no child has received more than 12.5 hours of auxiliary support each week. This is not a rigid allocation of hours and it could be extended in exceptional circumstances if the needs of the child and family required more nursery care. In such exceptional circumstances, the Education Department have paid for support during the 'childcare' hours as well as the pre-school hours.

Generally, transport would be provided for children with special needs attending a local authority nursery where they could not access a nursery in their own catchment area.

There are 19 private or voluntary nurseries in Fife. The Education Department do not provide special needs auxiliaries for children accessing a partner provider. To fill this gap in provision, the Childcare Partnership fund a local organisation called 'Children with Special Needs in Playgroups' (CSNIPS) to provide playfriends for children with special needs to allow them to access playgroups and private sector nurseries.

CSNIPS provide funding for the nurseries and playgroups to employ a 'playfriend' so they are employed by the nursery and not by CSNIPS. CSNIPS have a list of approximately 23 playfriends living across Fife. CSNIPS provides advice and support to the nursery and to the playfriend. There are currently 23 children in CSNIPS placements with 2 outstanding referrals. Generally, only 3 sessions per week are funded by CSNIPS. Social work also buys CSNIPS places as part of the child's care package.

Transportation would not be provided for children with special needs accessing private or voluntary sector nurseries.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

Fife Childcare Partnership have worked in conjunction with the Royal National Institute for the Blind to set up the 3 special needs OSC services. A special needs OSC co-ordinator has been employed by Fife Council to co-ordinate the projects.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Special Needs OSC	RNIB Unit, Kirkcaldy	Mon–Fri 15.00–18.00	5–18	20 in each service	Wide range of needs	Will be provided if required through the education department and through the OSC projects	NOF
	Robert Henryson School, Fife						
	Hyndhead School, Buckhaven						

As a result of this NOF grant, 60 new after school and 60 holiday places for children with special needs have been created. 13 local schools are served by these new clubs.

Another bid for funding has been submitted to NOF for an additional four out of school care projects for children with profound specific needs across Fife.

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 30 OSC services Fife managed by the voluntary sector, plus a further 21 projects managed by the Childcare Partnership. The Childcare Partnership has employed 3 OSC development workers, one for each of the 3 geographical areas in Fife: North, Central and West. The Childcare Partnership fund Enable to run the PALS project. The PALS project provides a playfriend for children with special needs to allow them to access mainstream OSC services across Fife. The playfriend liaises with the parents to find out about the child's needs before training and supporting the OSC staff. The overall aim is to work towards the child being fully integrated into the play provision. This could take a few weeks or several months depending on the needs of the child.

Following the increased expenditure on infrastructure last year, most OSC services will be able to accommodate children with special needs with support. There have been some very successful examples of children with complex needs being fully integrated into mainstream OSC services in Fife with the help of a PALS worker. In the interviews with the OSC projects involved, it would seem that the inclusion of the child has worked well when the whole staff team have embraced the idea of working with the child to try to find out as much as they can regarding the child's needs. The Playfriend is to work with the rest of the staff as part of a team rather than being solely concerned with

the one special needs child. There are currently 5 children benefiting from the PALS project in OSC projects Fife, though it is impossible to state how many children have benefited from the PALS project as some children do not require extra support due to the developed skills and experience of the core staff team. Training is offered to at least one more member of staff so as to ensure consistency of provision should the playfriend be unable to attend or fully withdraw support.

In terms of transportation of children with special needs to OSC services, there have been insurance complications with the redirection of transport to the OSC projects. A grant scheme has been set up to allow the OSC services to apply to the childcare partnership for funding where this is required.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Enable have a playscheme co-ordinator in the area who assists in the management 5 holiday playschemes across Fife that are run by voluntary management committees. A 6th playscheme is to be set up next year.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Come Out and Play (COAP)	Dunfermline	2 days/week in summer, 1 day each week Easter and Oct. 10.00–15.30	5–16	25 places max. A waiting list of 10 children is maintained and each play-scheme tries to accommodate the children on the waiting list	Wide range of disabilities can be provided for in all of the play-schemes	Can be provided if required	Enable supported play-scheme. Funding through social work, Changing Children's Services Funding and fund-raising activities
Playscheme Pals	Kirkaldy		5–16				
Just Kids	Lochgelly		5–16				
SNAP	St Andrew's		3½–18				
Kids & Co	Glenrothes	5 days/week in summer	5–16				

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Of the 51 OSC services in Fife, a large number run over the holiday period. Children with special needs can access these services and may receive PALS support if required.

West Fife Community Playschemes provide 1:1 support for children with special needs to access the mainstream playschemes. This summer, 6 children received support to access the holiday playschemes in West Fife. This project is funded by the New Deal Community Development Funds. There have been difficulties in extending this project to the other areas of Fife, mainly due to the constantly changing committees of the projects in East and Central Fife.



# Glasgow City

Glasgow City has a population of 609,370, of which 110,091 are aged between 0–14. Glasgow has suffered a greater loss of population than any other major UK city between the 1981 and 1991 census and the population continues to decline at a greater rate than the Scottish average.

Unemployment is at 4.5%, slightly over the Scottish average of 4.1%. Glasgow is very different in the scale and diversity of its social problems from any other part of Scotland. Poverty indicators are very high; 45% of Glasgow's households rely on income support/job seekers allowance and Glasgow has over half of the most deprived post code areas in Scotland. 60% of the Glasgow population live in these areas. There are 11 Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) areas within the City.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population in Scotland have a disability of some kind, there are around 3,302 children aged between 0–14 with a disability in the Glasgow area. There are 52 special needs schools and units in the authority, attended by 2,403 pupils. 2,460 school pupils in Glasgow City have a Record of Needs opened. This is equivalent of 3.2% of all pupils in the area, which is substantially higher than the Scottish average of 2.2%. This is an example of the differing practices of local authorities when making the decision to open a Record of Needs.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Glasgow

Glasgow City Council promote a policy of inclusion in mainstream childcare where this is possible. They provide extra financial support for specialised equipment or for an extra member of staff where this is necessary in order to make up the ratios. Funds from the Childcare Strategy Funding are ring-fenced for children with special needs and the funding process ensures that the money 'follows the child' to the service providers.

The Childcare Strategy Funding Application Form is sent to all registered provision in the Glasgow Council area. This allows care providers to apply for a sum of money in order to improve their service provision. One section of this form allows OSC service providers to apply for support for children with Special Educational Needs and/or affected by a disability. The child's parent is also invited to make a comment on the application form that will identify any other specific needs that their child may have.

An audit of training needs was recently carried out in Glasgow City, and Training Challenge Money was invested in training childcare workers up to SVQ level. Langside College offers Modular Courses on Special Educational Needs.

## Childminding

There are around 300 registered childminders in Glasgow City, 86% of which have provided their details on the Childcare Information Service. Training is provided to childminders and the training programme has included elements of special needs training. If more specialised training were required to look after the child, childminders would be able to access some of the Training Challenge Funding to help to pay for specific needs training. The majority of childminders in Glasgow felt that they would be able to access the necessary funding for training through their Local Childcare Partnership.

Grants can be accessed via the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) for minor alterations or adaptations that are required in the childminder's home in order to look after a child with special needs.

The Development Officer highlighted the problem that there is no central body that childminders can access for information and support when looking after children with special needs. It was recognised that childminders were lacking one central point of referral where they could find out about special needs in general and how to access training and support.

No subsidy is provided to childminders who have a reduced income as a result of looking after children with special needs. The cost of providing special needs care was one of the central concerns of childminders in the questionnaires.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 123 Local Authority nurseries in Glasgow City, 82 of which provide wrap around childcare. Glasgow City Council provides additional funding to nursery schools to encourage the provision of wrap around childcare where the parents require this service. Special Needs auxiliary support can be provided where this is necessary for the provision of the child's pre-school education. The local authority employs the auxiliaries rather than providing funding to the nurseries to employ their own extra support staff.

Auxiliary support would normally not be provided outwith the set pre-school education hours where the child accesses the nursery for more than 12 hours each week. However, where the needs of the child are such that the extra support would be necessary, extra support might be provided for the childcare part, depending on available resources.

There are 94 nurseries in the private and voluntary sector in Glasgow City. All of these nurseries provide wrap around childcare. Children with special needs in private and voluntary sector nurseries cannot receive auxiliary support, though they can receive assistance from health visitors and other educational specialists. Several private nurseries mentioned that they could not adequately operate their business if several children with severe disabilities were to access the service.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

The Childcare Partnership has provided several organisations below with Funding Allocations towards staffing costs for SEN Childcare Provision. In particular, the Council works closely with the Buddies OSC service, which provides the main source of OSC and holiday care for children with more profound needs in the Glasgow City area. Buddies employs 20 sessional staff who are undertaking various specialist training courses in special needs care.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Buddies	Netherton Community Centre, 358 Netherton Road	Mon–Fri all year 15.00–18.00, Sun 13.00–16.00	5–18	20	Wide range of needs	No, unless arranged through social work	Council and fund-raising

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 112 OSC services in the Glasgow area. All of the services that provide OSC only (and not part of a private nursery service) are entitled to apply for Childcare Strategy Funding when looking after children with special needs. In the financial year 2001/2002, £37,207 was allocated to mainstream OSC services to support the inclusion of children with special educational needs into those services. 16 OSC services received some funding and a total of 20 children with special needs were supported from this money.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

All of the projects listed below operate specifically for children with special needs, although on certain days and for some outings, siblings and friends without a disability can also attend. The normal operating times for most playschemes are 10.00–12.00 and 14.00–16.00, thus not providing a full day of childcare for working parents. Some of the playschemes may be able to make arrangements to provide full-day care where the staffing levels allow, but this will vary from year to year depending on the number of children requiring this service.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	Special needs details
Buddies	Netherton Community Centre, 358 Netherton Road	Summer, Oct and Easter, all weeks Mon–Fri	5–12 and 13–18	A wide range of needs can be cared for at Buddies, with the two age groups separated. The playscheme is funded by the Council, parental fees and fundraising activities
Strathclyde Autistic Society	Middlefield School, 26 Partickhill Road	Summer, Oct and Easter, all weeks Mon–Fri	5–12	For children on the autistic spectrum
Abercorn School	195 Garscube Road, Glasgow	3 weeks in summer. Total of 132 children receiving 2 weeks each	12–18	A wide range of needs, but mainly learning difficulties. Funding from the Childcare Strategy
Greater Easterhouse Special Needs	Provanhall Primary School, 61 Conisborough Road	Mon pm, Wed all day, Fri pm All weeks in Summer, Easter and Oct	5–16	A wide range of disabilities are accommodated at this playscheme. Parent run for children and siblings
Our Kids Play-scheme	Kids Count, Bain Square, Calton	Mon, Wed and Fri all summer 1 wk Oct and 1 wk Easter	5–16	Wide range of needs
S.N.A.P.S.	Cadder Community Hall, Cadder	Mon–Fri All summer, 1wk Oct and 2 wks Easter	0–16	Wide range of needs. Parent run playscheme for children and siblings
Ethnic Minority Carers Group	Napiershall St School, Napiershall Street	Every Tues and Thurs 4 wks in summer, Oct and Easter	0–16	Wide range of needs. Parent run playscheme for children and siblings
Special East End Disabled	Ashcraig Community Centre, 100 Avenuend Road, Ruchazie	Mon–Fri All weeks summer, Easter and Oct	5–12	Wide range of needs. Parent run playscheme for children and siblings
Hampden Playscheme	Hampden School, 80 Ardnahoe Avenue, Toryglen	Tues, Wed, Thurs 3 wks in summer	0–12	Wide range of needs. Sessional staff with some parental involvement
C.O.J.A.C.	COJAC Centre, 39 Arnprior Road	Mon, Wed, Fri All weeks summer, Easter and Oct	8–12	Wide range of needs
Beachcombers Playscheme	Howford School 487 Crookston Road	Mon–Fri All weeks summer Easter and Oct	5–16	Parent run playscheme for children and their families
St Stanislaus Integrated Playscheme	St Stanislaus P.Y.C.A. 35 Muirshiel Crescent	Mon–Fri All weeks summer Easter and Oct		Wide range of needs
Linthaugh Playscheme	Leithland Neighbourhood Hall, 25 Kempsthorn Road	Tues and Thur all summer	5–16	Wide range of needs
Astra Playscheme		Summer, Oct and Easter		
Kelvin School	Kelvin School, Glasgow	2 weeks Summer		Children with visual impairments 0141 339 5835

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Of the 112 OSC services in Glasgow City, 107 of these operate throughout the summer holidays. In addition, many local community groups operate holiday playschemes during the school breaks. Most of these playschemes operate from 10.00–12.00 and then from 14.00–16.00 so they do not provide full-day childcare for working parents.

Funding support that benefits children with special needs in OSC can be provided to care for the child over the summer holiday period, when additional funding may have to be allocated where the child is attending for the full day at the service. There is no scheme in Glasgow City that is funded by the Childcare Strategy money to put staff members into OSC and holiday playservices to support children with special needs in inclusive settings.

## Other Provision

Abercorn School operate an after school club on a Monday afternoon:

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Abercorn School	195 Garscube Road, Glasgow	Mon after school 15.00–16.30	12–18	Varies	Learning Difficulties	On school premises	NOF and Childcare Strategy

Buddies OSC and Sparky can provide training in special needs care. They have been funded to provide this training to staff members of other OSC and holiday childcare services.

The Glasgow and West of Scotland Society for the Blind organised Activity Days for children with visual impairments over the summer holidays. It was noted that there is a lack of facilities for children with visual impairments in the area and, despite the application of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, childcare services in general are not doing enough to be accessible by children with visual impairments. The Glasgow and West of Scotland Society for the Blind can provide training to childcare workers on looking after children with a visual impairment, but have not yet been asked to do so by the local and national childcare organisations.

There are two Adventure Playgrounds in the Glasgow area, both of which offer play opportunities for children with special needs and disabilities.

- Reidvale Adventure Playground  
62 Garfield Street  
Glasgow, G31
- Linn Park Adventure Playground  
145 Netherlee Road  
Clarkston  
Glasgow, G44 3ST

# Highland

Highland occupies one third of the land mass of Scotland, and only 4% of the Scottish population. There are 37,350 residents between the ages of 0–14. While the main population areas are found around Inverness and Easter Ross, there are various large communities scattered across the authority. The economy is largely agricultural, fishing, distilling and associated industries.

At 4.3%, unemployment levels are slightly higher than the Scottish average. There is significant seasonal unemployment. The cost of living is generally higher than in the rest of the country. There are 6 Social Inclusion Partnerships.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, approximately 1120 children between ages 0–14 in the Highlands will have disability. There are 4 special schools and special needs units in the Highlands area, attended by 177 children. 808 pupils have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Highlands

Highland Council adheres to a policy of inclusion and tries to ensure that, wherever possible, children should be included in mainstream provision. However, where mainstream provision is not appropriate to meet the needs of the child, there are several specialised childcare services for children with special needs. There is a relatively high number of specialised childcare services such as OSC services and holiday activities. The majority of these have become quite established and are mostly run by the parents of children with special needs.

As well as the Childcare Information Service, another information service providing details of services for families affected by a disability has been set up. Children in the Highlands Information point (CHIP) is run from Raigmore hospital, funded by health, education, social work and supported by the Childcare Partnership.

The rurality of the Highlands region means that transportation costs to enable children to access childcare services can be very high. A Community Car transport system has been set up whereby a local taxi company provides a heavily subsidised transport service.

Highland and Moray Accredited Training Scheme (HIMATS) train childcare workers to do SVQs. HIMATS offer a wide range of training, including special needs.

## Childminding

There are 605 registered childminders in the Highlands. When looking after children with special needs, childminders can apply to the Childcare Partnership for extra funding in order to purchase specialised equipment or to make minor adaptations to the childminder's home. Extra support might be given where the necessary funds are available, but it is not Council policy to provide financial assistance to subsidise childminders who are looking after children with special needs.

The Social Work Department have a network of childminders for their day care service for children 'in need'.

Several childminders sampled expressed that they were keen to look after children with special needs but felt that they were prevented from doing so because of the reduced income that would be involved where the children required extra support.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 145 local authority nursery establishments in the Highlands, none of which provide wrap around childcare. A fund supported by Highland Council and Highland Health Board enables Highland Pre-School Services (HPS) to administer a Special Needs Carer grant to local playgroups and nurseries that are working with a child with special needs. The application form comes from the group and is counter-signed by a keyworker.

There are 25 full-day nurseries in the Highlands. If they are members of Highland Pre-School Services, they can access funds for the pre-school education hours. They have not been asked as of yet to provide full-day care assisted support, so it is not possible to state whether the funds would be made available for this childcare.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

Highlands has several excellent OSC services that provide reliable childcare opportunities for parents, and valuable play opportunities for children with special needs. Most of these services also try to incorporate elements of inclusion into their projects by meeting with other mainstream OSC projects or having days when siblings attend.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
SNAP	Smithton Free Church, Inverness	Every day after school. Weekend group also. Children attend for different sessions	5–18	Depends on the needs of the children	Wide range of needs	Yes, they have their own bus	Fund-raising, Children in Need and Council
SKIP	Androchan Centre, An Drochaid, Clagan, Fort William	Wed, Thur, Fri during term time. 15.00–17.30	5–12	8	Wide range of needs. Siblings can attend	No	NOF
The Orchard	The Orchard, Inverness	Mon, Thur and Fri during term 15.00–19.00	8–16	8 approx	Wide range of needs	Provided by soc wk where necessary	Social Work funded

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

Children with special needs can attend any of the 6 mainstream OSC services in the Highlands. Financial support would be given from the Childcare Strategy Funds to an OSC service that required it where the necessary funding is available. However, there is no specific grant scheme for OSC services who are looking after children with special needs. Through Changing Children's Services Funding, a team of 4 Childcare Development Officers work with the OSC clubs in each area to find out about the support that is required. These Officers would be the main point of contact for the OSC services in each area.

If an OSC service requires an extra member of staff to support the needs of the children in their care, they may receive the necessary funding to employ another member of staff if the funds can be found from the Childcare Strategy.

Due to complications involving the insurance of children on school transport, the transport cannot be redirected to an OSC in the child's locality.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

As with OSC services above, there are several projects in the Highlands that provide specifically for children with special needs. Most of these groups are parent led and are therefore heavily reliant on voluntary management committees, many of which are run by the parents of children with special needs. The demands placed on these parents weakens the sustainability of the projects as committees find it difficult to find parents who are willing to take over once their own children have outgrown the service.

The operating hours of these projects may be slightly problematic for working parents who work 'regular' hours as most of the projects don't begin until around 10.00 and finish at 15.00 or 15.30.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
SNAP	Inverness	Mon–Fri, 10.30–15.30	5–18	Varies	Wide range of needs	Yes, if necessary	Fund-raising, Council
HAPI (Highland Autistic Play scheme Initiative)	Drummond School, Inverness	Tue, Wed, Thur during summer holidays 10.00–14.00	5–11	Up to 10 at one time	Autistic spectrum disorders	Provided where necessary	Council, Children in Need
SKIP (Special Kids in Play)	Fort William High School, Lochaber	2 weeks at Easter, 6 weeks at summer, 1 week October Mon, Wed, Fri 10.00–15.00	2–13	16	Wide range of needs	Adapted mini-bus and use of Community Car Scheme	Council and fund-raising
FACES Play-scheme	Speyside Trust Badaguish Outdoor Centre, Cairngorms	Sat and Sun of school holidays 10.00–15.00	5–18	12 approx	Wide range of needs	Yes	Council, Children in Need, Grant Aid
Nairn Play and Leisure	Junior World Playgroup, Nairn	6 weeks in summer. Mon, Wed, Fri 9.30–15.30	4–18	15	Wide range of needs	No, unless arranged with Social Work Dept	Council, Fund-raising
The Orchard Pre-5 service	The Orchard, Inverness	3 days each week during school holidays. 10.00–14.00	Pre-5	6	Children with special needs	Social work referrals	All social work referrals
The Orchard Play-scheme	The Orchard, Inverness	3 days each week during school holidays	8–16	8 approx	Wide range of needs	Social work referrals	All social work referrals

The Ross-shire Care Scheme and the Speyside Trust both organise holiday playschemes that run for some of the school summer holidays, funding permitting. Full details on these schemes were not available.

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

There does not seem to be much support given to supporting children with special needs in mainstream holiday childcare services. The same support that they receive during the year if they access mainstream OSC provision will be given (if any support is given at all).

All areas in Highland Council benefit from the Activity Programmes which are run by the Community and Recreation Department. Funding has been provided through these Activity Programmes (most of which are sports-based) to offer extra support to children with special needs.

### **Other Provision**

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Youth Club	Spectrum Centre	Tue Evening during term time. 19.30–21.00	12+	12 approx	Developmental co-ordination disorders	No	Lloyds TSB, Tesco's, Fundraising
FACES Saturday Club Speyside Trust	Badaguish Outdoor Centre, Cairngorms	Fortnightly on Saturdays during term 10.00–16.00	5–18	11 approx	Wide range of needs	Yes	Children in Need, Lottery, Grant Aid



SNAP also operate an 'Out and About' activity group on Saturday afternoons for children with special needs.

Highland Council's Culture and Leisure Services Department operate a 'Plus One' Scheme for people who require a carer/attendant to access Leisure facilities. People who register for the scheme will gain free access for their carers at participating venues.

# Inverclyde

Inverclyde has a population of around 84,600, of which 16,072 are aged between 0–14. Inverclyde is situated on the Lower Clyde and has a mixture of affluent areas and poorer urban areas with complex and severe social and health problems. With the closures of heavy industry, principally shipbuilding and engineering, Inverclyde has undergone major changes in its economy. Unemployment is slightly over the Scottish average, at a rate of 4.3%.

Almost half of the population of Inverclyde are dependent on or directly in receipt of welfare benefits. 3 of Inverclyde's post code areas are among the most deprived 10% in Scotland. One Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) project covers the whole area and Inverclyde has Priority Partnership Area status.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population have a disability, it can be assumed that there are around 482 children in Inverclyde between ages 0–14 with a disability of some kind. There are 5 special schools and special needs units in the area, attended by 182 pupils. 484 school pupils in Inverclyde have a Record of Needs opened. This number amounts to 3.7% of the total number of pupils in the area, and is the highest percentage in Scotland. Caution should be taken when addressing these statistics, however, due to the varying practices across local authorities when opening Records of Need.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Inverclyde

There are several holiday projects that are specifically for children with special needs, and the council with their childcare partnership are developing the inclusion of children with special needs into holiday care and OSC. It is hoped that these developments will greatly improve childcare provision for children with special needs as, although OSC services in the area all have equal opportunities policies, in practice they cannot accommodate children who require a high level of need. Some childcare staff have been trained in special needs childcare, and there are several special needs organisations with a strong presence in the area who are capable of providing this training. The staff from the Garvel Unit for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired have trained childcare workers in signing. Most special needs training for childcare workers is provided by specialist agencies such as the National Autistic Society and Barnardo's.

There are plans to establish a Resources Library of equipment via the Inverclyde Out of School Care Network and they hope to employ an administrator to organise the dissemination of the equipment from the library.

## Childminding

There are approximately 86 childminders in Inverclyde. Of this number, 23 are employed as 'Day Carers' with the social work department to deliver childcare for 'children in need'. This requires a social work referral, but it is thought that most parents would seek to access this service as opposed to trying to arrange a childminder independently of the Council because of the fact that transportation is provided and also because 'day carers' have free access to specialist equipment.

Barnardo's run a Sitter Service for children with a disability. Through this service, a Sitter can go into the family home on an average of two times each month.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Inverclyde Council have 14 local authority nursery schools/classes and 9 children and family centres. SEN auxiliaries can go into the Council's own nurseries where this support is necessary to deliver the child's pre-school education. Several nurseries have developed a particular specialism for looking after children with special needs, and these nurseries have allocated a set number of places for children with special needs. Three nurseries, Blairmore Nursery, Rainbow Nursery and Ailemill Nursery provide wraparound childcare.

There are 13 private and voluntary sector nurseries in partnership with the Council to deliver pre-school education. SEN auxiliaries cannot go into the partner providers, and parents of young children with special needs would be referred to the Council's own establishments. It is thought that it would be unlikely that children with special

needs would attend a private or voluntary nursery because transport is provided to the local authority nurseries and family centres. This may prove to be problematic, however, in the case of working parents of children with special needs. If the parents need to access full-day childcare, they might not be able to obtain a full-day place in a local authority nursery and would therefore be looking to the private sector or childminders.

### Out of School Care

There are 5 OSC services in Inverclyde, several of which presently care for children with special needs. It is at the discretion of individual projects as to how they cope within their own resources. In theory, OSC services could apply to Social Work or Community and Protective Services for some financial support where required, but no clubs have done this as yet.

The majority of OSC services in the area, while supporting equal opportunities policies, have stated that children must be able to be accommodated on a 1:8 staffing ratio in order to attend these services. As a result, while children with special needs can and do attend mainstream OSC clubs, children whose needs require a greater level of care and attention will not be able to access most of the mainstream services.

Difficulties in establishing full inclusion are currently being addressed by a working group of the childcare partnership. The group is working in collaboration with Capability Scotland with a view to obtaining funding to provide a specialised OSC service as well as a pool of peripatetic staff to support full inclusion in all services.

### Holiday Provision

#### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Three holiday projects have been developed specifically for children with special needs in Inverclyde. However, these projects are limited in hours, duration and numbers of children that can be accommodated, meaning that places are often rationed.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Barnardo's	Lilybank School and Highholm Centre, Port Glasgow	2 weeks at Easter, 3 weeks at summer, 3 days Oct 9.30–3.30	5–14	15/day divided amongst the children	Wide range of needs	Yes	Council and Barnardo's
Able to Play	St Mungo's Primary, Greenock	4 weeks in summer 9.00–16.00	5–12	22 with waiting list	Wide range of needs	Yes	Council
National Autistic Society Play scheme and Enterprise Child-care	Glenburn	3 days/wk for 4 weeks in summer, 2 weeks in Easter and 1 week Oct. 10.00–15.00	5–12	7 approx	Autism/Aspergers	Yes	National Autistic Society and Lottery funding

#### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Most of the OSC services operate full-day services over the school summer holidays. However, at the moment, most of these services can only provide for children whose needs can be accommodated within the 1:8 staffing ratios. No extra subsidy or financial support is currently given to holiday services that are looking after children with special needs. Similarly, the Council-run holiday playschemes cannot provide for children with special needs as the staff are almost always sessional workers who are not experienced in working with children with special needs.

As indicated above under OSC, the inclusion of children with special needs into OSC services is currently being addressed by the childcare partnership.

## Other Provision

Barnardo's run a befriending service during term-time for children and young people aged between 5 and 19 with a disability. The befrienders, who are all volunteers, take the children and young people along to whatever activity they choose.

It would be useful to be able to expand this provision so as to enable Befrienders to take the young people along to mainstream OSC care services where they currently cannot attend due to lack of support staff. This may help some of the parents of children with special needs to consider accessing employment or training as well as providing an inclusive and fun playcare service for the children themselves.

There is an after school Activity Group run by Barnardo's on a Monday during term time from 16.30–18.00 in Highholm Primary School, Port Glasgow.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Special needs details
Activity Group	Highholm Primary School, Port Glasgow	Mondays during term 16.30–18.00	Children with a disability. The children are picked up from their primary school and dropped off home at the end of the session
Youth Club	Highholm School, Port Glasgow	Wednesdays during term after school	For young people with special needs aged between 10–13
		Thursday evenings 18.30–20.30	For young people with special needs 14+

## Midlothian

With a population of only 82,200, Midlothian is the second smallest mainland authority in terms of population size. Approximately 15,324 of these people are aged between 0–14. It is comprised of a number of small towns and a large rural region.

The population of children under the age of 5 is expected to rise by about 8% in the next 14 years. Levels of unemployment are at 3.1%, which is 1% below the Scottish average. It should be noted, however, that a significant proportion of jobs are poorly paid and part-time. Poverty indicators are all low. There are no Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) areas.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that approximately 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there are around 460 children aged between 0–14 with a disability in Midlothian. There are 2 special needs schools and units in the area, attended by 182 pupils. 208 school pupils in Midlothian have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Midlothian

The benefits of having a very small local authority network are demonstrated in the support provided to children with special needs in Midlothian. Many parallels can be drawn with the provision for children with special needs in Clackmannanshire. Due to the size of the authority, childcare decisions can be taken at a faster pace.

As well as the Childcare Partnership, the Midlothian Association of Play (MAP) can encourage developments in playcare opportunities across the authority. MAP have jointly produced a report into play and care provision for children with special needs in the Out of School (OSC) services across the authority. The successes of the implementation of inclusion policies in the OSC services in the area were highlighted, and future recommendations were made.

Among these recommendations was the need for resources. As a result, the Partnership plan to establish a resource base that will provide specialised equipment and toys to childcare services on an as needed basis.

The Childcare Partnership has funded childcare workers through an NC module in Special Needs which is available at Jewel and Esk Valley College.

### Childminding

There are 125 registered childminders in Midlothian. Of the sample of childminders that were interviewed or surveyed in Midlothian, none knew of any extra support that they could receive for looking after children with special needs. There is no set funding grant to provide extra finances to childminders who may have to reduce their income in order to care for a child whose needs required extra attention.

The Social Work Department in Midlothian have a daycarers system for childminders and the childminders involved in this scheme would receive extra training for special needs through them.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There is a Children's Centre in Midlothian which provides playcare opportunities for children with special needs under the age of 5 and pre-school education for eligible children. The Centre is funded by Social Services.

There are 25 local authority nursery classes or schools in Midlothian, 3 of which provide wrap around childcare. Support can be provided to nurseries that are being accessed by children whose needs require extra equipment and/or assistance. The support provided will be determined by the needs of the child, but can include support and advice from the Education Department, visits and discussions with Educational Psychologists and extra staffing where necessary.

It is uncertain as to whether that support could extend to all day wrap around care because this amount of support has not yet been asked of the Council.

There are 14 private and voluntary services in partnership with Midlothian Council. If children with special needs are accessing these nurseries, they will receive the same support as Local Authority nurseries. No difference is made between the Council's own nurseries and the partner providers in terms of support to children with special needs.

## Out of School Care

There are 8 OSC services in Midlothian and all of these are working towards following inclusive policies for children with special needs. A report was carried out for the Midlothian Association of Play and the Midlothian Early Years Childcare Partnership into 'After School Clubs Provision for Children with Special Needs'.

The report highlighted some of the excellent inclusive childcare provision that was being offered in the area for children with special needs. The report recommended that more support should be given to the services to help promote inclusive provision. The identified support needs included financial support in order to employ additional staff where required, as well as support through resources such as special needs equipment and toys that could be shared amongst the groups.

Prior to this report, the Midlothian Association of Play (MAP) was given money to integrate children into Playschemes. This was then followed by a series of grants that allowed this project to be extended to Out of School Care. Substantial financial support was provided to After School Clubs by Community Education for extra staffing. MAP is currently supporting OSC clubs through a New Opportunities Fund grant to integrate the number of children with special needs into their services. Staff are entitled to special needs training which is being funded through a mixture of Childcare Partnership funds, NOF and MAP funding. At the moment, almost all OSC services have at least one child or young person with special needs. Most OSC services operate a trial period with the child when he/she first attends. The provision of transport for children with special needs accessing a mainstream service is something that would have to be negotiated on a case by case basis; there being no set Council policy.

The Social Work department also fund individual children with special needs to attend OSC services as part of their care package.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

There are two specialised holiday playcare services for children with special needs in Midlothian:

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Lothian Autistic Society	Saltergate Primary School, Lugden	5 weeks in summer and 2 weeks at Easter 9.30–14.30	4–17	20 approx	Autistic spectrum disorders		Council and Lothian Autistic Society
Midlothian Special Needs Play-scheme	Saltergate Primary School, Lugden	4 weeks in summer and 2 weeks at Easter 9.00–15.00	5–16	40 approx	Wide range of needs	Yes	MAP and Council and fund-raising

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

All of the OSC Clubs in Midlothian operate a school holiday service. Summer playschemes also run in various communities in Midlothian. Support for children with special needs accessing these mainstream services can be provided in much the same way as the OSC support. The playschemes are given money and support to assist the integration of children with special needs. Midlothian Association of Play has given support to playschemes this summer. Social Work and Education jointly fund any extra support that would be required for a child on an individual basis.

It has been estimated that most of the 5 holiday playschemes would have 1 or 2 children attending who have special needs.

**Other Provision**

'Bright Sparks' in Gorebridge is a Special Needs Playgroup which covers all of Midlothian. It is for children with special needs and their siblings and it is funded by Education and Social Work. The parents remain, however, so it would not be classed as childcare.



# Moray

Moray is situated on the south coast of the Moray Firth and has a population of 84,950. Of this number, 16,561 are aged between 0–14. The 2,200 sq. km of Moray is particularly rural in places, and, although it is the eighth largest unitary authority area in Scotland, it has the fourth lowest population of mainland authorities. The majority of the population lives in and around the towns of Elgin, Forres, Buckie, Keith and Lossiemouth.

There are RAF bases at Kinloss and Lossiemouth, employing 4,100 personnel. Unemployment levels are 10th lowest in Scotland, at a rate of 3%.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there are around 497 children in Moray aged between 0–14 with a disability. 351 school pupils in Moray have a Record of Needs opened. The number of children attending special schools and units in the area was not available.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Moray

Early Years services for children with special needs in Moray greatly benefit from the Developmental Playgroups. These are voluntary groups that are spread around the Moray region and they can recognise developmental difficulties in children at a very early stage. Outreach work can then be provided at a later stage when the children are moving on to mainstream nursery provision.

There are difficulties in accessing childcare provision for young children with special needs due to the lack of wrap around childcare that is available in local authority nursery establishments. Childminding services are undergoing changes at the moment regarding special needs childcare provision, as are OSC services. The Supported Places Initiative has been developed in order to support the service in looking after a child with special needs. Funding can be given in order for the OSC service to purchase the support that is necessary to meet the needs of the child. This initiative is fairly recent and it would seem to be a promising model of providing support to the services in a flexible manner.

Training for childcare workers in Moray is provided by a variety of organisations. Highland and Moray Accredited Training Services (HIMATS) is one such organisation, and they have assisted many childcare workers in obtaining SVQs in childcare. Training can be provided on a wide range of childcare issues, including general special needs training.

## Childminding

There are 165 registered childminders in Moray.

Aberlour Childcare Trust and Enable have been funded by Moray Council to develop a special needs training programme for childminders. 20 childminders accessed this programme and were trained to look after children with special needs. These 20 childminders can receive a subsidy when they are looking after children whose needs require them to reduce their ratios and therefore their income. However, the childminders who were already looking after children with special needs before the launch of this project do not receive such a subsidy. This is an area that the Council hope to develop, particularly as childminders are one of the main sources of childcare in such a rural region. There is a lack of childminders in general, and so it can be difficult for parents to access a childminder when their child's needs require reduced ratios.

The Aberlour project is in its very early stages, but it is a very positive model of how childminders can be trained and properly supported to carry out such an important role for children with special needs.

The Social Work Department in Moray fund some childminders to carry out daycare services for children 'in need'.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 6 Developmental Playgroups which are spread over the Moray area. These are Special Needs playgroups and they are jointly run by Social Work, Education and Health through the Childcare Partnership and Aberlour

Childcare Trust. Children enter the Developmental Playgroups as toddlers and are then referred to the appropriate pre-school, depending upon their needs and progress. These playgroups ensure that all of the support services can be centralised and young children can have any special needs detected at an early stage.

There are no separate nursery provisions for children with special needs. The Council have adopted a policy of inclusion in their nursery services. There are 21 local authority nurseries in Moray, 1 of which provides wrap around childcare. There is a formalised assessment process that children go through to determine if they require auxiliary support in the nursery.

There are 45 partner providers of pre-school education in Moray. It is uncertain as to whether support would be given to children with special needs in the private and voluntary sector nurseries as this issue has not yet been raised. It is suspected that this is due to the fact that most children with special needs would have accessed a Developmental Playgroup at a very young age and would have been referred to the most appropriate provision to meet the child's needs. The local authority services would always be more appropriate as that is where specialist support has been provided in the past and the staff have developed the necessary skills and expertise. Furthermore, children with special needs will have free and prioritised admission to the local authority nursery classes and schools.

An issue would be raised regarding childcare for children with special needs in private or voluntary nursery settings where the parents of children with special needs wished to access employment or training. As there is a lack of wrap around childcare and no full-day childcare in the local authority services, parents requiring childcare over these hours would need to access either private/voluntary nurseries or childminders for support.

## Out of School Care

Due to the rurality of the area and the difficulties of ensuring sustainability of provision, there are very few OSC services in Moray. Currently, there are 7 OSC clubs.

Moray Childcare Partnership has established a 'Supported Places Initiative' by which grants will be given to OSC clubs to be used to include or 'bring in' children or young people who would not otherwise be able to access the service. The grants average around £3,000 and children who have special needs/disability or social, emotional or behavioural issues will be prioritised under the scheme. The money can be used to pay for additional staff, hours or equipment to support the child's needs. All of the OSC services can apply to the Childcare Strategy Funds for extra funding that they may require as a result of looking after children with special needs. The amount of funding provided depends upon the needs of the child and how much money remains to be allocated to OSC clubs from the fund.

There is no set policy regarding transportation for children with special needs in accessing OSC services.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Care at Hand Play-scheme	Kestrall House, Elgin High School, Elgin	Mon, Tue, Thur and Fri for 5 weeks in summer 10.00–15.00	5–12	12–15 approx	Learning Disabilities	No	Aberlour and Fees and Autism in Scotland
Cross-roads Scotland Play-scheme	Kestrall House, Elgin High School, Elgin	Wed for 5 weeks during summer 10.00–15.00	5–12	12–15 approx	Physical Disabilities	No	Cross-roads, Council and Fees

*Mainstream Holiday Services*

Most of the OSC services in Moray operate full day services over the school holidays and can therefore benefit from the same funding that is available to OSC providers. There are also several council-run holiday playschemes which are spread out over Moray and usually operate from 10.00–12.00 and 14.00–16.00. Although these playschemes have equal opportunities policies, there is no available budget for supporting children with special needs who wish to access these playschemes and access may therefore be limited to children with more profound needs.

## North Ayrshire

North Ayrshire is divided between the mainland and two large islands. The population is approximately 138,850, of which 26,172 are aged between 0–14. The area is partly rural, partly industrial, consisting of 5 planning areas. The majority of the towns are on or near the coast. Agriculture is playing a reducing role in the economy of rural areas, whilst tourism is still important to the islands.

The North coast is relatively affluent but there are pockets of deprivation elsewhere. At 8.4%, the unemployment rate is the 2nd highest in Scotland. There is one Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) project covering designated parts of North Ayrshire.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population have a disability of some kind, it can be assumed that there approximately 785 children aged between 0–14 in North Ayrshire with a disability. There are 4 special needs schools and units in the area, attended by 175 children. 344 school pupils within North Ayrshire have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in North Ayrshire

The North Ayrshire Childcare Partnership carried out research into childcare in which the views of the parents of children in the special schools were sought. This research revealed that the majority of the parents surveyed preferred the more integrated model of play and would rather that support was provided for their children to access mainstream childcare provision than that separate provision should be developed for them. As a result, the Partnership are looking to support full inclusion in OSC.

The Childcare Partnership regularly seek the views of the various special needs support groups in the area, including the ADHD Support Group, the Autistic Society, the four special schools and the Special Needs Forum. There is a toy library in North Ayrshire that can be accessed by childcare workers in the area.

The Health Board have employed a 'Children and Young Persons' Special Needs Play and Leisure Facilitator'. The Facilitator's remit is to promote the provision and access of appropriate play and leisure opportunities for all disabled children and young people within Ayrshire. A database is currently being created which will detail all play and leisure opportunities for disabled children and young people in Ayrshire.

### Childminding

There are 142 registered childminders in North Ayrshire. Surestart money is being used at the moment to develop a childminding service for young children with special needs. Childminders will be recruited to this scheme and designated places from these childminders will be purchased to provide childcare for children aged 0–3 with special needs. Meetings are currently underway with childminders and with parents to assess the take-up of this project and it is still in its very early stages of development.

There is no additional support provided to childminders caring for older children with special needs and several childminders in the area commented that they felt extra support should be given, particularly when the needs of the child require ratios and therefore income, to be reduced.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 30 local authority nurseries in the area, 3 of which provide wrap around childcare. Children with special needs are integrated in the mainstream nursery establishments as far as possible, through specialist support workers and staff training. Services can apply for extra support to the Council and an audit of need will be carried out to determine the support that is to be given to the nursery.

There are 35 private and voluntary nurseries in North Ayrshire. It was not known as to whether extra support could be provided to children with special needs in the private/voluntary sector as this issue has not yet been addressed.

Generally, children with special needs would be advised to attend a local authority establishment, though this may be difficult in terms of working parents wishing to access full day care.

There is one playgroup in North Ayrshire, Parkhouse Playgroup, which is specifically for children with special needs.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

There are no full time OSC clubs that have been set up specifically for children with special needs. However, a new service has recently begun in North Ayrshire which is based in two schools and moves location every 6 weeks.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Special Needs OSC	Civic Centre, Ardrossan and Irvine Royal Academy, Irvine	6 week blocks in each location. Tue, Wed, Thur during term 15.15–17.15	5–18	12 max	More profound needs	Provided from 4 special schools and transported home again	NOF Funding

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 32 OSC services in North Ayrshire. The Council has adopted an inclusive approach after research into the childcare needs of parents of children accessing special schools revealed that the integrated model of play was favoured. As there are such a high number of OSC services, a strong OSC network has developed in the area. The Council is of the view that all of the projects are well established to cope with children with special needs.

In the majority of the OSC services sampled (80%), the projects had a positive attitude towards inclusion. The staff members felt confident that they would be able to access funding for necessary training. However, most services did not feel that they would be able to receive funding to pay for an extra member of staff if providing for a child requiring 1:1 care. The Childcare Partnership are currently developing plans to address this issue.

The local ADHD Support Group has supported children with ADHD in mainstream OSC services by providing a worker with ADHD experience into the groups. This was a pilot project that they hope to continue this year.

The Social Work Department have made several referrals to OSC projects as part of a child's care package.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

There are two voluntary sector special needs playschemes, both of which are run in schools during the summer holidays. These playschemes are only open to the children who attend those particular schools. There is also a third specialised scheme which is organised through social services and a voluntary organisation.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Special Needs Playscheme	James McFarlane School, Ardrossan	6 weeks in summer, Mon–Fri. 9.30–15.30	5–18	Most children access around 15 days each	More profound needs	No	Play-scheme Grant
Special Needs Playscheme	Hays Holm School, Irvine	Mon–Fri, 6 weeks in summer 9.30–15.30	5–18	Depends on needs of children	Wide range of needs	Yes – access to school minibus	Play-scheme Grant
'Care Partners' Play-scheme	James Reid School, Saltcoats	3 days/wk. 3 different groups: Tue, Wed, Thur. 9.30–15.30	3–18 different groups	50 children on waiting list	Wide range of needs	If organised through social work	Only open to families referred to 'Care Partners'

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Of the 32 OSC services in North Ayrshire, 26 run over the school holidays. The Council also run holiday playschemes, into which additional 'Play Team' staff can be placed where required to meet the needs of the children accessing the services. The voluntarily run playschemes are separate, however, and children with special needs may not be able to access these playschemes if their needs cannot be accommodated within the staffing ratios.

### **Other Provision**

Care Partners is a befriending organisation for adults and children with disabilities. As well as running the holiday playscheme detailed above, they also provide a befriending service to children to attend services and activities of the child's choice. So far, they have not been asked to assist a child to attend an OSC service. Children with disabilities can access the service following a referral from Social Work.

# North Lanarkshire

North Lanarkshire, with a population of 327,620, is the fourth largest local authority in Scotland. There are 62,931 residents between the ages of 0–14. North Lanarkshire covers an area of 47,358 hectares and has a great diversity of communities from large towns in traditional industrial areas such as Motherwell, Airdrie and Bellshill to the new town of Cumbernauld and from densely populated areas to relatively rural communities.

There is high unemployment in the area, at a rate of 6%. There are 2 Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) areas as well as an authority wide SIP project. 6 postcode areas are within the most deprived 10% in Scotland (almost one fifth of the North Lanarkshire population live in these areas).

## Children with Special Needs

The Children's Services Plan 2001–2004 estimates that there are over 2000 children in North Lanarkshire with a disability. On the estimation that around 3% of the child population have a disability, 1889 children between the ages of 0–14 will have a disability of some kind. There are 12 special needs schools and units in the area, attended by a total of 835 pupils. 930 school pupils in the area have a Record of Needs.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in North Lanarkshire

The North Lanarkshire Childcare Partnership have taken a strategic approach to the development of childcare services for children with special needs across the local authority. OSC services and playschemes in the area are becoming increasingly adept at promoting full inclusion in their services through the work of 'Partners In Play', which is core funded through Social Work and Education through the Childcare Partnership to assist inclusion. Partners in Play has also went on to develop further services, paying particular attention to older children and young people with disabilities and special needs.

The Childcare Partnership has run disability and awareness training for childcare workers through Partners in Play.

## Childminding

There are 282 registered childminders in North Lanarkshire. A mini-conference on childminding for children with special needs was organised this year at which training was provided by Partners in Play. Childminders are able to apply for funding through the Childcare Strategy Funds in order to adapt downstairs areas in the home where this is required.

There is no available funding for childminders to subsidise their income when looking after children whose needs would require them to reduce their ratios. As a result of this, it may be difficult for parents of children with special needs to find a childminder who would not need to charge a far higher rate to look after their child.

The Social Work Department run a shared care scheme, befriending and respite care for children 'in need' who have been referred by a social worker for such a service.

There is a Sitter Service in North Lanarkshire, funded by the childcare partnership and run by One Parent Families Scotland. The Sitters have received training in disability awareness from Partners in Play, thereby enabling children with disabilities to access the service.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 81 local authority nursery schools, classes and centres in North Lanarkshire, only 2 of which provide wrap around childcare. The Council have supported children with special needs in local authority nurseries for the childcare part of their time in the nursery where the PRE-SCAT suggests that such provision is in the needs of the child.

There are 42 partner providers of pre-school education in North Lanarkshire. Special needs support can also be given to the partner providers, although the Council make it clear to the partner providers that it would be preferable for the provision to employ the additional staff member and for the council to provide the salary cost.



This helps to avoid the employment difficulties that can arise when a local authority employee is based in a private establishment.

Transportation for children with special needs accessing nursery services can be provided if necessary and this funding comes from the pre-school grant. Staff members in the nurseries are offered general training on special needs, but several have commented that they require more detailed training on particular needs in order to cope adequately with the wide range of needs that they care for. Partner providers can also access all training that is offered to local authority childcare workers.

### **Out of School Care**

'Partners in Play' is an organisation based in North Lanarkshire that supports the inclusion of children with disabilities into mainstream OSC and other service providers. The organisation was set up in 1996, out of a growing recognition that children with disabilities were not accessing the out of school groups in the area. Partners in Play provides care packages which can be accessed by any one of the 36 OSC services in North Lanarkshire. They now have around 20 sessional workers who have been trained to work with children with special needs and disabilities.

Children are referred to the project on an individual basis and a meeting is organised with the child and the child's family to discuss childcare options. A meeting is then arranged with the chosen OSC service (normally nearest their home, or in the most convenient locality). Once arranged, the child undergoes a 6-week 'probation' at the club following which plans are made for the child to remain independently or with staff support.

So far, children with disabilities have been successfully integrated into 12 OSC groups in the area. Future developments include the creation of 6 fully integrated OSC services across the area. These 6 providers are based in each of the 6 main communities in North Lanarkshire and it is hoped that these groups will in the future become 'Centres of Excellence' for the inclusion of children with special needs. Funding will be provided to these 6 groups over the next 18 months and the staff will receive detailed training in working with children with disabilities. These 6 OSC projects are:

- Cumbernauld YMCA
- Kirkshaws
- Shotts
- Cambusnethan
- Lanarkshire Children's Services
- *To be identified*

### **Holiday Provision**

Around half of the OSC groups in North Lanarkshire continue to operate over the summer holidays. There are also several ad hoc summer playschemes over the region which are run by voluntary groups. Partners in Play run 6 fully inclusive holiday playschemes across North Lanarkshire. Partners in Play also provides support to children with disabilities who are accessing mainstream holiday playschemes.

### **Other Provision**

Partners in Play run two pilot projects for young people over 13 with disabilities as it has been recognised that there is a major deficit in provision for disabled young people in the area. One such group is the 'Funky Blue Smurfs' which is run in partnership by Education, Social Work and Partners in Play. The group involves young mainstream people who act as peer group supporters to the young disabled people. The group meets on a monthly basis to discuss policy and practice issues.

# Orkney

Orkney comprises a number of islands, the largest being Mainland. The population of Orkney is around 19,480, of which 3,688 are aged between 0–14. The majority of the population live in the main towns of Kirkwall and Storness. The local economy depends on tourism, agriculture, fishing and distilling.

At 2.5%, the unemployment rate is the 6th lowest in Scotland and poverty indicators are also low.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there are around 111 children aged between 0–14 with a disability in Orkney. There is only 1 special needs school in the authority, attended by a total of 20 children. 39 school pupils in the area have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Orkney

Due to the very small size of the authority, and the low numbers of children with special needs in the area, the Childcare Partnership is able to adopt a very flexible view of funding support for children with special needs. Provision can be made for children with special needs on an individualistic basis where services meet the needs of the child and of the child's family.

The very low numbers of children and the rurality of the area make the establishment of specialised childcare projects very difficult. There are currently two very successful holiday playschemes that are run for children with special needs, but there is very little offered during term-time. The majority of formal childcare for children with special needs seems to be through childminders, but there is a shortage of childminders in the area so it may be difficult for a family to access a childminder where the child requires 1:1 care as childminders are unlikely to have the available vacancies.

There is a Special Needs Toy Library in Orkney. Equipment is normally purchased for a particular child, but it later goes back to the library so that it can be used again for another child to get the benefits.

## Childminding

As a great area of the Orkney Islands is rural, childminders are high in demand. There are 32 registered childminders. Training is provided to childminders looking after children with special needs. Extra day-care support was provided in the past for a particular child to enable the child's parent to access employment.

The Council would consider providing a childminder with a subsidy if that childminder had to lower his/her ratio to look after the needs of the child.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are currently no nurseries that operate specifically to care for children with special needs. However, if there were a significant number of children with special needs who required such support, the infrastructure is in place to establish a specialist nursery in the special school.

There are approximately 18 local authority nurseries in Orkney, none of which provide wrap around care.

There are 2 private and voluntary partner providers in Orkney, 1 of which provides wrap around care. Additional staffing can be provided where this is needed for the child's pre-school education. Whether or not this staff member could remain for the wrap around childcare hours has not been addressed yet. It is thought that the childcare hours would be supported where that was deemed to be in the child's needs.

## Out of School Care

There are 2 OSC projects in the Orkney Islands. One is parent-managed and the other is run from the Pickaouy Centre. Both projects operate in Kirkwall, although one project has transportation to bring children in from more isolated schools, where they are then collected by their parents at the end of the day. Both projects are accessible

by children with special needs, and extra funding support would be provided by the Council if the necessary funds could be sought in order to look after children with more profound needs. This is one area in which the small numbers involved in the area can be of great benefit: funds can be used in a more flexible manner and any need can be met quickly due to the Partnership having full knowledge of all available services.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

There are two special needs holiday playschemes in Orkney, both of which are organised by New Community Schools.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Holiday Play-scheme	Aurrida House, Kirkwall	Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri in summer 10.00–15.00	5–12	25	More profound needs	Yes	LCP and New Community Schools
Holiday Play-scheme	Pickaquooy Centre, Kirkwall	Mon, Wed, Fri in summer 9.30–15.00	5–12	20 approx	Wide range of needs and inclusion of siblings	Yes	NOF

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

The special needs holiday playschemes detailed above have sessional staff that they hope to be able to place in mainstream holiday playschemes to support children with special needs in an inclusive setting. This initiative, working alongside the New Community Schools, has only just begun this year with one child with special needs accessing a mainstream playscheme with support. They are planning to commission an independent review with recommendations for future provision regarding holiday support for children with special needs in the area.

The two OSC projects both operate as holiday clubs in the school holidays. Funding is also available to local parishes to establish their own holiday playschemes for a period of time over the holidays. Normally, around 17 areas take up this funding. Additional staff can go into the holiday playschemes where required to meet the needs of the children, funded by the Childcare Partnership.

## Other Provision

A playgroup has been established for pre-school children with special needs on a Thursday morning each week. 'Supa group' runs every Thursday morning in Aurrida House in Kirkwall. This is not classed as childcare as the parents remain at the centre.

Orkney Carers Centre have recently expanded their service to work with children with special needs and they may provide a volunteer worker to assist a child with special needs in attending a particular service, whether it is an OSC club or the brownies. Orkney Carers Centre are partly funded by Social Services and such provision could be given to a child with special needs as part of the child's care package. Extra allocations to support children with special needs for activity groups would be funded through the Childcare Partnership.

## Perth and Kinross

Perth and Kinross covers a large rural area and 70% of the population live in rural communities. The population of Perth & Kinross is around 133,620, of which 23,585 are aged between 0–14. The local economy includes light industry, insurance services, distilling and farming and associated activities. Tourism also plays a significant part in the rural areas.

At 2.3%, unemployment is very low. Poverty indicators are also low but poverty and disadvantage do exist and tend to be concentrated in the North of the authority. One postcode sector is within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there will be approximately 708 children aged between 0–14 with a disability in Perth and Kinross. There are 2 special needs schools and units in the area, attended by a total of 58 pupils. 353 school pupils in Perth and Kinross have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Perth and Kinross

The Childcare Partnership have made available two grants for childcare workers who require extra support when looking after children with special needs. These are the 'Children in Need' grant and the 'Sustainability and Development' grant. The former looks at the needs of the child and can pay for an additional staff member or equipment. The second grant can be used to pay for alterations to the building if required.

In addressing childcare issues for children with special needs, the Childcare Partnership are now working closely with Capability Scotland (a representative from this organisation has a seat on the Childcare Partnership). They also have a service-level agreement with SHIP (a voluntary organisation composed of parents of children with special needs). SHIP organise and run several childcare projects which are specifically for children with special needs, including a holiday playscheme.

All childcare workers have access to training and a great deal of focus has been placed on inclusive play. The most recent stream of training included basic special needs awareness. Now, the training has reached the second stage and in this next stream of training, more detailed knowledge of specific needs will be provided.

Transportation can be provided for children with special needs accessing childcare. This is paid for by elements of the Childcare Strategy Funds, Sustainability Funding and Surestart. The Social Work Department co-ordinate volunteer drivers. These drivers can be briefed in terms of the child's needs, thus in some cases reducing the need for escorts.

### Childminding

There are 313 registered childminders in Perth and Kinross. When completing their forms for the Information Service, 63 childminders have said that they offer special needs provision.

There is a supported childminding scheme in conjunction with the Social Work Department in order to support children from vulnerable families. Childminders participating in this scheme can receive extra funding with which to purchase equipment where this is in the child's best interests.

The Childminding Development Worker for Perth and Kinross felt that if a childminder caring for a child with special needs applied for funding, the Childcare Partnership would look this upon favourably. However, it was also mentioned that, due to the lack of childminders in the area, very few childminders would have the places available to care for a child with profound disabilities. As a result of this, incentives have been set up to help childminders come on-stream in the Perth and Kinross area.

Childminders can apply for the 'Children in Need' and 'Sustainability and Development' grants if necessary. These can be used to help to subsidise the costs of 1:1 care. The Childcare Partnership are also planning to have 10 childminders who will be paid an enhanced rate in order to cater for children in need and for emergency childcare. This is to be paid for through 'Children in Need' funding. These childminders are also encouraged to access a range of training opportunities in order to develop services appropriate to the tasks required of them.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Cherrybank School has a specialist unit offering nursery provision to children with complex needs.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	No. of places	Special needs details
Cherrybank School Pre-5 Unit	Cherrybank, Perth	9.30–15.00	10	Complex SEN

This pre-school also has an outreach service where this would be beneficial to individual children. Cherrybank School provide the necessary staffing and resources that will be required to ensure full support to the child attending other nursery establishments.

There are 47 local authority nursery classes in Perth and Kinross. No nursery services offer full day care, but two services do provide extended hours care and they have prioritised places for children with special needs (Friarton Nursery and Crieff Road Pre-School Centre). Accessing either of these nursery services for full time or two year old places would require a support for learning referral. Support for learning places can also be granted in the mainstream services, where 15% of places are free to priority placements. Children with special needs are prioritised in the allocation of places.

There are 32 private/voluntary nurseries in partnership with Perth and Kinross. Due to the fact that support for learning assistants can be provided for children with special needs in the local authority nursery establishments, and due to the priority placements for children with special needs, very few children with special needs attend the private and voluntary provision. Whether the nursery would be able to accommodate their needs will depend on a variety of factors including the particular needs of the child, the experience and training of staff and the type of service offered.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

Until now, there have been no OSC services in Perth and Kinross specifically for children with special needs. 'SHIP', the local support group of parents of children with special needs have been very keen on the creation of an OSC service that is specifically for children with special needs.

Capability Scotland is considering the setting up of a dedicated OSC service that will take staff from the local OSC clubs to work with the children accessing the service. It is hoped that, in the long run, this will help to build up the confidence of the parents, staff members and the children so as to assist inclusion of children with special needs into the mainstream services.

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 19 OSC services in Perth and Kinross, all of which are managed by voluntary committees. When looking after children with special needs, the OSC providers are able to apply for funding from the Childcare Partnership where extra equipment or staffing is required. Two grants are available in order to provide additional support. The 'Children in Need' grant focuses on the particular need that the child has. This funding can pay for an additional member of staff, part-time support, or equipment. The 'Sustainability Development' grant is given for necessary alterations to the building. All of the OSC services are kept informed of the available funding and the application process is on-going. The OSC clubs state the reasons for the finances they require, and they must receive a counter-signature from the Perth and Kinross Out of School Care Network. An evaluation form must be completed at the end of the financial year stating what the money was spent on.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Splash	Earnside House, Hay Street, Perth	6 wks at summer, 1 wk Easter and 1 wk Oct. Mon and Thur 10.00–16.00	5–11	24	Physically disabled	No. This has been a problem due to the rurality of the region	Council, Fund-raising activities, parental fees
		Tue and Fri 10.00–16.00	12–18	24			
Open Minds	Glebe School, Scone, Perth	4 weeks in summer, 2 wks Easter and 1 wk Oct, Mon–Fri 9.30–15.30	5–17	45	Autistic spectrum disorders	Yes. The group have 2 buses	Charitable status, Service-level agreement with Council, Children in Need

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

14 OSC services run over the summer holiday period. In addition, there are several summer playschemes run by Perth and Kinross Leisure. Playschemes also have access to the 'Children in Need' and 'Sustainability Development' funds, though very few applications have been received from holiday-only playschemes.

## Other Provision

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
SHIP Youth Club	Earnside House, Hay Street, Perth	Mon evenings, 19.00–21.00	12–18	12 and waiting list	Physically disabled	No	Fund-raising activities
SHIP Under 5's	Earnside House, Hay Street, Perth	Tue and Fri 13.00–15.00	Under 5	Varies, 6–10	Wide range of needs	No	LCP

## Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire has a population of around 176,970, of which approximately 33,800 are aged between 0–14. It is a mixed urban and rural area and the bulk of the population is concentrated in Renfrew, Paisley and Johnstone. The main sources of employment are in service sector jobs and computer technology related industries. Agriculture is still relatively significant also.

Deprivation and poverty measures are close to the national average but there is significant variation at local level. 6 postcode areas are within the most deprived 10% in Scotland. At 3.9%, the unemployment rate is just below the Scottish average. However, these rates vary considerably throughout the Council's area.

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there will be around 1014 children aged between 0–14 with a disability in Renfrewshire. There are 5 special needs schools and units in the area, attended by a total of 405 pupils. 920 pupils in Renfrewshire have a Record of Needs opened. This total amounts to 3.4% of all the pupils in the area and is 1.2% above the Scottish average. Caution should be taken when interpreting these statistics, however, due to the varying practices across Scottish local authorities in opening a Record of Needs.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Renfrewshire

The Childcare Partnership has a sub-group for Special Needs. This group has organised a Forum at which parents of children with special needs had the opportunity to express their views on childcare. This revealed that most parents wanted specialist summer provision for their children and they would prefer this provision to be consistent with the rest of the year (ie, within the same schools).

Childcare provision for children with special needs has, until now, operated on a needs-led basis, with the Partnership trying to provide support once the parent of a child with special needs has approached the service. The Partnership are currently trying to develop strategies to assist inclusion in a more pro-active manner through building in the costs of providing for children with special needs when calculating funding awards and devising a Peripatetic Service which may operate in the future to support inclusion in OSC.

### Childminding

There are 151 registered childminders in Renfrewshire. Childminders looking after children with special needs do not receive any additional funding or support from the Council for looking after children with special needs, even where this requires ratio reduction. Support to childminders is not available unless the childminding is organised through the social work department as daycare. It was stated that, if the need arose, limited equipment may be accessed by childminders requiring specialised equipment if it was available from the daycare scheme.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

2 nurseries services provide a service specifically for children with special needs. These are Muircroft Family Centre in Renfrew, and Glenfield Nursery in Paisley.

There is a total of 36 local authority nurseries in Renfrewshire, 10 of which provide full-day care. Several local authority nurseries have an enhanced staffing ratio and have developed particular skills and experience in looking after children with special needs. Children with developmental difficulties or disabilities would be referred to one of these services. Springbank Nursery has an autistic unit attached and young children with autistic spectrum disorders may be referred to this nursery service.

Support can be provided to all the local authority nurseries on a needs-led basis.

There are 31 private or voluntary sector nurseries in partnership with Renfrewshire council. The 30 partner providers are entitled to Council training for their staff members. Most of the private nurseries provide full-day wraparound care. If a child is eligible for auxiliary support following a PRE-SCAT assessment, this can be provided



in the partner nurseries, but only for the pre-school hours. The issue of support over the childcare hours has not yet been raised due to the fact that most children with special needs would be in the local authority nurseries. Voluntary sector nurseries can apply for Voluntary Sector Grants.

## Out of School Care

There are 39 OSC services in Renfrewshire. The Childcare Partnership would support inclusion by assisting the Club in collecting as much information and knowledge about the child's needs as possible, but no direct training is provided. The Partnership would be willing to co-ordinate visits by childcare workers to the child's school so as to ensure adequate communication between all those who work closely with the child. The Partnership also provide financial support to Clubs, which can include money for equipment and alterations, but not for staff, due to this being unsustainable in the long term.

As of April 2002, 29 OSC services had applied to the Childcare Partnership for extra funding of some kind. The grants system awards the sums of money to the services on a points basis. The Childcare Partnership plan to alter the points system so as to take account of looking after children with special needs as this had previously not been part of the points system. There is no ring-fenced sum of money for special needs children.

The Childcare Partnership are also thinking of establishing a Peripatetic Service by which there would be a pool of staff who could provide support to children with special needs in mainstream OSC and Playschemes. They hope to begin this service next year, although its operation and costs have not yet been arranged. There are concerns for the future of OSC service provision for children with special needs as there are uncertainties as to the most cost-effective way of providing inclusive services. As more OSC services begin operation, it is undoubtable that the service availability will create demand from the parents of children with special needs.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Renfrewshire Council have formed a service-level agreement with Capability Scotland to provide summer playschemes in the two special needs schools in the area. Approximately 80 children benefited from the service during the summer holidays, with each child receiving at least 6 full days each of the holiday playscheme.

Clippens School also has an extended school year for two weeks into the holidays in which the school runs a 'Fun Fortnight'.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Spingbank Nursery	Snowdrop Unit, Fullerton St, Paisley	2 weeks in summer, Tue–Fri 9.00–15.00	Under 5's	12	Communication disorders	Yes	LCP
Clippens Play-scheme	Clippens School, Brediland Road, Linwood	4 weeks in summer. Mon and Tue 10.00–15.00	5–19	18	Children attending school	Yes	Council and Capability Scotland
Kersland Play-scheme	Kersland School, Ben Nevis Road, Paisley	4 weeks in summer. Wed, Thur and Fri 10.00–15.00	5–19	20	Children attending school	Yes	Council and Capability Scotland
Autistic Play-scheme	Clippens School, Brediland Road, Linwood	12 days in summer, 3 days Easter, 3 days Oct. 9.00–14.30	5–12	12 with long waiting lists	Autistic spectrum disorders	Yes	Social Work referrals only
Wallneuk Play-scheme	Wallneuk Church, Niddry St, Paisley	6 weeks in summer, Tue and Thur 10.00–12.00	7–16	25 with waiting list	Wide range of needs	Yes	Trust Fund and Play-scheme Grants

*Mainstream Holiday Services*

Most of the OSC services in Renfrewshire operate over the summer holiday period. Playschemes can also apply for funding from the Childcare Partnership for extra support where required.

# Scottish Borders

The Scottish Borders is a predominantly rural area with a population of 106,900. Of this number, around 18,929 are aged between 0–14. Scottish Borders has the lowest proportion of 15–24 year olds in Scottish local authorities, partly due to significant out-migration amongst this age group. There is no main town in the area; there are twelve towns, each with a population of more than 1,500 but less than 18,000. Over a third of the population in the Borders live outwith these towns in smaller rural villages.

Unemployment is low in the Scottish Borders, at around 2.7%. However, the average gross weekly earnings of full-time employees in the area are significantly below the rural Scotland average. There is one Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) project.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there are around 568 children aged between 0–14 with disabilities in the Borders area. There are 2 special schools or units in the authority, attended by a total of 34 pupils. 292 pupils in the Scottish Borders have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in the Scottish Borders

With the exception of childminders, most childcare services are provided from the major population centres, therefore requiring some users to travel considerable distances to access childcare. The public transport system is limited and bus services are comparatively infrequent. People who do not have use of or access to a car are at a significant disadvantage, especially people with a disability affecting their mobility.

The Childcare Partnership carried out interviews with the families of around 50 children with a disability. These structured interviews asked the parents for their views on inclusion. It revealed a perception amongst the parents that mainstream provision would not meet the needs of their children. There was a lack of confidence in the mainstream provision and the special needs experience of the staff. Similarly, childcare providers were contacted in the area and these interviews revealed that they felt a lack of confidence in working with children with special needs. The providers stated that they were lacking in resources, equipment, access and knowledge. The comments expressed in these interviews are to inform a new set of recommendations for childcare development for children with special needs in the Borders area. These recommendations are to be available later this year.

In the mean time, a new grant scheme has been developed for childcare services that are providing for children with special needs that may require additional support costs. Money can be allocated from this scheme in order to assist with anything to help special needs childcare provision. This money can therefore be used to allow the service provider to employ an extra staff member where required.

Aberlour Childcare Trust operates several projects specifically for children with special needs, most of which are detailed below.

A childcare course in special needs childcare runs once every year, lasting for four evenings. The course is open to all childcare providers, including childminders, although private providers may have to pay a small fee.

## Childminding

There are 269 registered childminders in the Scottish Borders area, 18 of which have advertised on the Childcare Information Service that they would consider providing care for children with special needs. Due to the rurality of the area, childminding is the main source of formal childcare for many parents. The number of childminders in the Borders varies in different areas and there is a recognised shortage of childminders in the more rural regions. Childminders looking after children with special needs are now entitled to apply for extra support if required to meet the child's needs.

Social services have childminders that they use to provide daycare for children in need. An increased rate is paid by social services to the childminders participating in the daycare provision.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Although there are a number of specialised playgroups in the area, these are primarily parent support groups and the parents do not leave.

There are 47 local authority nurseries in the Scottish Borders. 7 of these nurseries are currently providing wraparound childcare, normally from 9.00–15.00. Children with special needs in nursery services will receive support if, having undergone an assessment by psychological services, they are deemed to require extra support. The support will only be provided for the educational part of the childcare.

There are 40 private/voluntary nurseries in partnership with the Council. Should an assessment be required, this would again be carried out by psychological services.

Children with special needs are a priority group and would therefore be allocated a place in a local authority nursery as a priority. Similarly, children with special needs will have transportation provided where this is required in order for them to access their pre-school education.

## Out of School Care

An after school service has operated in previous years from Wilton School. This school has a special needs unit attached to it and so the specialist resources from this unit can be accessed and many of the children attending are in a familiar environment.

There are 6 OSC services in the Borders area, 2 of which are private nurseries. There are great difficulties involved in setting up OSC projects in the Scottish Borders due to rurality issues. In the recent past, private nurseries and childminders carried out all formal OSC. Developments have encouraged 15 new OSC projects to begin, 2 of which will be based in private nurseries and 1 of which will be an out of school learning business.

Training is provided to the OSC services, mainly with regard to management, accounts and staffing qualifications. All of the OSC services have equal opportunities policies in place and extra funding support can be applied for from the Childcare Partnership's special needs fund. This money could be used to purchase specialist equipment and resources, or to employ an additional member of staff where required to meet the child's needs.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Aberlour Childcare Trust operate three holiday playschemes for children with special needs in three of the main towns in the Scottish Borders. These are run in conjunction with the social work department, but the children could also be referred to the project by their parents. However, there is a waiting list and children who have a social work referral will be given priority. The places are rationed amongst the number of children wishing to attend. Preparation in advance of the project starting allows the project manager to allocate a set amount of days to children by working around their own holiday plans. The siblings of the children accessing the scheme can attend for one of the days when they go out for an activity. Parents are asked to contribute a donation of £4 each day, though this is not vital for attendance.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Aberlour Child-care Trust. Play-scheme	Wilton School, Hawick	Mon–Thurs for 3 wks in summer. 10.00–15.00	8–16	13 max each day. Around 50 total with places rationed	Wide range of needs	Yes	Aberlour Fund and Social Work
	Broomlyn, Kelso						
	Community Wing, St Ronan's, Inverleven						

The Down Syndrome Association also run a summer holiday playscheme for two weeks during the school summer holidays for children with down syndrome.

*Mainstream Holiday Services*

Many of the nursery services in the Borders operate full-day services over the school holidays and the majority of OSC projects also run over the holiday times as well. Until now, no extra support could go into holiday services that were trying to meet the needs of children with disabilities. However, as a result of the new funding that is available to childcare services looking after children with special needs, where holiday childcare projects require support, this can be obtained from the local authority. The application process may prove to be problematic, however, as funding requests have to be received before set deadlines. This will result in holiday childcare services having to know of the needs of children accessing the project during the holidays well in advance of the project's commencement.

## Shetland

Shetland is an island community consisting of a large island called the Mainland and 100 smaller islands, 15 of which are inhabited. With a population of 22,440 Shetland is the second smallest authority in Scotland. Of the total population 4,738 are aged between 0–14 years.

The traditional industries are crofting and fishing, but new industries such as oil, fish farming and information technology have developed over the past twenty years.

Shetland is a comparatively wealthy community benefiting from oil revenue. This can be evidenced in leisure, education and care for the elderly. Shetland is now moving into a post oil era coupled by the demise of the fishing industry. Unemployment is low at 1.3%. There are 8 areas of economic fragility.

### Children with Special Needs

It is estimated that 3% of the child population have a severe disability with around 142 children between the ages of 0–14 years requiring individual planning. There are 87 pupils with a Record of Needs. 5 schools have a special department, the main one being based in one of the two large Lerwick primary schools. 39 children attend this special department.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Shetland

Shetland Childcare Partnership works in partnership with a number of agencies (statutory, private and voluntary) in order to raise standards and support children's services. Through agencies such as Disability Shetland, the partnership has organised training on disability and inclusive play. This training was available to all childcare providers. The partnership has funded several professionals to talk to childcare providers and families thus raising awareness of particular areas of disability.

The partnership has supported individuals to attend conferences and courses to increase their knowledge and understanding of specific disabilities, thus expanding the bank of expertise at a local level.

The partnership introduced the Scottish Executive Rural Transport Initiative. 50% of transport costs are available to voluntary groups such as playgroups and out of school clubs. The partnership through the Association of Shetland Pre-School Play contributes a further 25% with the remaining 25% collected through fundraising.

### Childminding

There are 66 registered childminders in Shetland, 13 of whom are trained in special needs work. Several are currently looking after children with special needs. There is a shortage of childminders to meet identified needs and a publicity campaign is underway to recruit more childminders from all over Shetland.

Social Care has recruited 6 childminders to provide daycare support for children with disabilities following an assessment of need. Up to a maximum of 4 hours per week can be offered. The childminders involved in the scheme are paid at an increased hourly rate for taking on the extra responsibility. Extra training is made available to these childminders.

Social Care frequently supports placements in playgroups and nurseries in the area. Normally this support would be given in the form of financial assistance to the group, but on one occasion, Laburnum House (a respite service run by Social Service) has provided staff to support a child with special needs attending an out of school club. Any provision for children with special needs is based on a detailed assessment.

Social Care Services offer children and families with special needs a detailed Community Care Assessment. Following on from assessment, services can be made available to help. This can include access to special needs childminding, Laburnum House Respite Care Centre, respite foster care or help with funding places in mainstream childcare provision.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There is a Pre-School Home Visiting Service, which consists of a pre-school home visiting teacher and a part-time pre-school visiting nursery nurse. Following referral to the service the Pre-School Home Visiting Teacher contacts the parent and arranges to visit following which a programme of support is prepared. At the moment, the service has a caseload of 23 families.

There are 20 nursery classes, all of which offer sessional care. A pilot project of additional time has been established in one of the nursery classes. The authority commissions places from 8 partner providers. Two of these offer extended hours from 9.00–13.00. One partner provider offers full day care. All welcome children with special needs.

There is a priority admission procedure for nursery classes. A special educational needs auxiliary may be employed if a need is identified. On occasion a grant has been paid to a partner provider to enable them to employ an extra member of staff to support a child with special needs.

## Out of School Care

There are no specialised Out of School Care services in Shetland because children with special needs are encouraged to integrate where possible into existing out of school care. There are currently 7 Out of School Clubs in Shetland; therefore not every area is covered. Securing places for children with special needs depends on staff availability and funding. The Shetland Childcare Partnership supports Out of School Clubs which have children with special needs attending through part funding staff. Staff training has been offered through the Partnership.

Full inclusion is promoted and supported by the Childcare Partnership through such groups as the Joining in Projects and Disability Shetland (see below under 'Other Provision').

## Holiday Provision

3 Summer Playschemes/Clubs operate in Shetland. These are managed by an organisation called "Friends of the Special Needs Summer Playschemes". These playschemes are available to children and young people who attend three of the special departments for all or part of their school week. Very occasionally a child/young person might be included if it is judged that there is a serious concern about how the family might cope during the summer. The staff are a mixture of paid staff and volunteers.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Friends of the Special Needs Summer Playscheme	Anderson High School, Shetland	3 days per week for 5 weeks in Summer 10.00–16.00 Study support in Easter	11–18	9	Range of Special needs  SEN and Social inclusion	Yes if required  No	Charitable Trust/Charities  SEED Action Fund
Friends of the Special Needs Summer Playscheme	Bells Brae Special Unit, Bells Brae Primary School	Mon, Wed and Fri during the holidays 9.30–15.30	4–12	26	Wide range of needs	Yes if required	Charitable Trust/Charities
Friends of the Special Needs Summer Playscheme	Symbister Junior High	Mon–Fri for 5 Weeks during the Summer 10.00–16.00	5–18	6 per day	Wide range of needs	Yes if required	Charitable Trust/Charities

6 Out of School Clubs operate during the summer holidays and applications for additional funding to support children with special needs can be made to the Childcare Partnership. Joining-In Project support workers have accompanied children with special needs to playschemes running over the school holidays. Community Services also provide funding for a support worker in their playschemes. 13 Community Development playschemes ran this summer. The Community Development Department employ all playscheme staff and additional Special Needs support workers can go into the holiday playschemes as and when required.



## Other Provision

### *Joining In Project*

A meeting was called by Shetland Childcare Partnership in response to a number of issues raised by parents of special needs children in relation to the lack of social and recreation opportunities for their children. A Working Group was formed to consult more widely with parents through the use of a questionnaire. This formed the basis of report, which was discussed at the Children and Young People's Forum. The Forum agreed with the principles of the report and developed a pilot project called the Joining In Project, which was to operate for a period of eighteen months.

The Joining In Project started in August 2001 and provides a service for children and young people in the 5–19 age group who have special needs. The child or young person is supported by a worker to an activity of their choice.

The Project employs a co-ordinator and ten support workers. The support workers offer up to 2 hours of supportive opportunities for each child/young person. During the summer holidays the project extended support to enable children/young people to attend the local playschemes or holiday clubs.

The Joining In Project has had 36 enquiries so far and 24 have completed the application forms with 14 having accessed an activity, a number waiting for the activity of their choice to start and one in a position to attend the activity on their own. Two children accessed the holiday programme and two are waiting for preparation meetings to take place between the worker and the activity to ensure that the child gets a quality experience.

The pilot project is in the process of being evaluated and some of the conclusions are:

- Very slow uptake in the early part of the project, took some time for parents/carers to access the project and "trusting" the project.
- Referral system was changed to enable agencies as well as parents/carers to refer children to the project. This increased take up.
- Parents/carers and children not fully aware of the types of provision in the area, which they would be able to access.
- After the initial launch there was a need to update the publicity in general and target key areas and key groups.
- Around half of the children who have accessed the project have been children with autism spectrum disorders. The types of services accessed have included youth clubs, fishing, martial arts, swimming and weight training with the most popular being attending their local youth club.

Parents pay only the cost of the activity. The future of the Joining In Project is dependant on funding. The need for this type of project to continue is evident in the number children accessing activities that they could not access without a support worker.

### *Disability Shetland*

Disability Shetland employs a Development Worker for children and young people with special needs. Funding for this post comes through Children in Need and the National Lottery Community Fund. Since August 2000 the Development Worker has developed two after school activity clubs for children with disabilities and a comprehensive information pack for parents and carers.

The Saturday Special Children's Club offers two hours per week of care in a social youth club type setting. The club provides a wide range of activities ranging from tie dying to baking and archery to organised trips. The club held an exhibition earlier this year to show what the children had been making.

The children are supported on a one-to-one basis by a trained and experience team of volunteers. The club also has a paid project leader. The children are aged between 4 and 16 years. There are currently 14 children with special needs accessing this service. There are places for 20 children. Those children who are over 16 years have now taken on responsibilities as volunteers. This is proving very successful.

Disability Shetland has also completed a pilot study horse-riding project called Happy Trekkers. The project provided children and young people with the opportunity to go horse riding. A total of 24 children took part over the last 6 months. Volunteers and a paid project leader supported these children. It was a huge success and Disability Shetland has started fund raising to re-start the project in the spring of 2003.

# South Ayrshire

South Ayrshire has a population of 113,920, of which 19,778 are aged between 0–14. The majority of the population are concentrated in coastal towns, with the remainder spread amongst inland towns and villages. The area is predominantly rural and the economy of the area depends on a range of engineering, computer technology, transport, farming and tourism.

The unemployment rate in the area is 4.9%, slightly above the Scottish average of 4.1%. The larger coastal towns are relatively prosperous, though there are pockets of deprivation. There are 2 Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) areas in Girvan and North Ayr and one postcode area is within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population in Scotland has a disability, there are approximately 593 children aged between 0–14 with a disability of some kind. There are 4 special schools and 5 special units within the area, attended by a total of 206 pupils. 461 pupils have a Record of Needs.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in South Ayrshire

The Daycare Link scheme has been operating in South Ayrshire for over 4 years. Childcare workers such as childminders, Out of School Care providers and childcare staff are recruited to the scheme and undergo a 6 week training programme for 1 evening each week. A list is then created of childcare providers trained and willing to work with children with a disability. There are currently 34 Daycare Link service providers in South Ayrshire. They are mostly childminders but 5 are childcare providers and 1 is an OSC service.

Grants can be given to any registered childcare provision in South Ayrshire looking after a child with special needs where extra financial support is necessary. There are some concerns with this funding system as there is no upper limit of funding at the moment. The long-term sustainability of this kind of support is doubtful. Where the parent requires the childcare in order to access employment or training, the extra costs are met through the Childcare Strategy funds. This is applied with some flexibility in order to ensure that the parents are confident with the childcare before looking for training courses/work.

Where the parents of the child with special needs are not requiring childcare in order to access work or employment, but wish to have childcare available as a form of respite, the Social Work department would take on the case.

Daycare link provides a training course that all childcare workers can undertake for free.

## Childminding

There are 204 registered childminders in South Ayrshire. Some of these childminders provide daycare for children 'in need' through the Social Work Department. Through the Daycare Link Service, all childminders can access 6 training sessions that are specifically geared towards caring for children with special needs. This is funded by Daycare Link and SureStart and is available to all childminders in South Ayrshire for free.

Childminders looking after children with special needs can also receive a subsidy if they have to reduce their ratios because of the needs of the child they are looking after. The Childcare Partnership can also provide funding to childminders if they would need to pay for an assistant in order to meet the needs of the child.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are several nurseries and schools in South Ayrshire that have specialised units to assist children with particular needs. These are Craigpark School, Ayr; Invergarven, Girvan; Rosebank, Ayr; and Southpark School, Ayr. In addition there are 5 special units operating in Dalmilling Primary, Doonfoot Primary and Mainholm Academy in Ayr, Girvan Primary and Girvan Academy in Girvan. The Council are currently developing services for under 5's with language and communication difficulties. Wherever possible, children with special needs access pre-school education in inclusive nursery settings. There are 31 local authority nurseries in South Ayrshire. Only 1 local

authority nursery provides wrap around care (Cherrytree). Additional staffing, SEN auxiliary support, can be put into all nurseries where the support is required.

There are 18 private/voluntary nurseries in South Ayrshire, all of which provide full day wraparound care. 18 private/voluntary sector nurseries work in partnership with the council to provide pre-school education. The Daycare Link training is open to the private and voluntary sector also. Some of the private nurseries may be providing respite care through the social work daycare link, and this is funded from Sure-start for children aged 0–5 years. However, where children with special needs are accessing childcare because their parents are in work or training, support can be provided to the childcare provider through Childcare Strategy funds. It is estimated that most of the private childcare providers would be looking after children that have a special need on the lighter end of the scale of need. It is unlikely, however, that a child with profound special needs would approach a private provider. They would first of all be referred to Social Work. Psychological services visit the partner providers and the education department also provides SEN auxiliaries into the private and voluntary nursery groups where required.

South Ayrshire stands out in Scotland in its provision of equal opportunities to children with special needs in all sectors of early education and childcare provision: local authority, private and voluntary. The Childcare Partnership have created a level playing field among all the different childcare services, allowing the parents of children with special needs to have full choice of provision.

### **Out of School Care**

A specialised service for children with severe and complex needs is run by Aberlour Childcare Trust at Ardfin. This provides daycare for children and a social work referral is required in order to attend. It is therefore not defined as childcare for working parents, although the hours of the service (from 15.00–19.00) can allow parents to access work or training.

All 16 OSC services in South Ayrshire are able to look after children with special needs. Extra financial support can be provided by the Council to providers who require to take on extra staff in order to meet the needs of the child. The funding is given directly to the OSC clubs to employ the member of staff. This funding is from the 'Special Needs Inclusion' fund allocated from the Local Childcare Partnership, Childcare Strategy funding.

There has not been a great deal of uptake for the daycare link special needs training in the OSC sector; only 1 OSC project is on the list (Childwatch). It is thought that this is due to OSC struggling as it is in the region without broadening their agenda. Examples of good practice operating without huge cost implications might encourage other OSC services to consider undertaking the training. While there are some OSC services that have very successfully integrated children with special needs, it is doubtful whether the majority of OSC services in South Ayrshire could be accessed by children with more profound special needs.

The Council are actively encouraging groups to ensure that their equal opportunities policies are operating in practice. It is hoped that the majority of groups will soon begin to develop the necessary confidence to know that they can look after children with special needs as plenty of support can be provided where required.

### **Holiday Provision**

#### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Most of the specialised holiday childcare services for children with special needs are run by voluntary organisations through the social work department. Children require a social work referral to attend these services. Aberlour Childcare Trust run a play and leisure scheme for children with special needs through the Ardfin respite unit. The children accessing the playscheme are allocated either two full days each week or 3 half days each week. Children from this scheme have also been accompanied by Ardfin staff to local playschemes.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Aberlour Childcare Trust	Ardfin Respite Unit, 49 Ardfin Rd, Prestwick	2 weeks at Easter and 7 weeks in summer 11.00–16.00	5–19	Each child gets 2 days/wk	Severe learning difficulties	No	Social work and Aberlour Childcare Trust.

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Of the 16 OSC services in South Ayrshire, 8 operate a full-day service over the summer holidays. These are fully accessible by children with special needs and extra financial support can be given to the services to employ an additional member of staff where this is required in order to meet the needs of the child.

It is generally considered more difficult to run the holiday playschemes inclusively due to the lack of consistency in the playscheme staff.

### **Other Provision**

The 4 special schools in South Ayrshire run various after school activities and groups. Rosebank School in Ayr is a very small special school for children with very profound special needs. They run a Youth Club on a Wednesday evening and a Sports Club on a Thursday. Health Improvement are also funding a 'Wide Awake' breakfast club at the school.

## South Lanarkshire

South Lanarkshire is a large rural area and it is the fifth largest local authority in terms of population size. There are 307,400 people in South Lanarkshire, of which 57,948 are aged between 0–14. South Lanarkshire has a concentration of communities in the northwest and extensive rural areas in the south.

Following the decline of coal mining and steel making, the local economy is now more dependent on light and hi-tech industry. Farming remains prominent in the rural areas. Unemployment is at 4.2%, which is 0.1% above the Scottish average. Unemployment rates are higher in the urban areas. There are some poverty indicators in the region and four postcode sectors are within the most deprived 10% in Scotland (8% of the South Lanarkshire population live in these areas).

### Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that 3% of the child population has a disability of some kind, there are around 1,738 children aged between 0–14 with a disability in South Lanarkshire. There are 10 special schools or units within the authority and these are attended by a total of 665 pupils. 1,204 school pupils in South Lanarkshire have a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in South Lanarkshire

Childcare providers in South Lanarkshire are supported in looking after children with special needs through funding from the Childcare Partnership to encourage the inclusion of children with special needs. The Childcare Strategy Funding is open to all registered childcare providers. In the scoring criteria for access to these funds, special needs scores higher, and so services looking after children with special needs will be more likely to attain funds. This money can be spent on equipment and alterations to the service, but it is not used to pay for additional members of staff.

There is a lending resource of special needs equipment that has been organised through South Lanarkshire Leisure Trust. This service is open to all registered providers, including childminders. This lending resource now operates from Leisure Centres across the authority, ensuring that childcare providers caring for children with special needs have access to a wide range of play equipment.

Due to the rurality of much of the area of South Lanarkshire, transportation can be a major barrier for accessing childcare services. Children with special needs who are accessing services from the social work department may be entitled to transportation to a childcare facility.

### Childminding

There are 205 registered childminders in South Lanarkshire. Childminders looking after children with special needs are able to access Special Needs Resource Bags for a small fee. These have equipment and games that are suitable for children with a wide range of needs. Mobility equipment such as ramps can also be hired.

The Development Officer pointed out the need for a 'one-stop' information point for childminders to obtain information about particular needs and disabilities. It was felt that, due to the isolated nature of the job, childminders need to have the knowledge and confidence themselves about the needs of the child. It was thought that very few childminders would be willing to take on the responsibility of looking after a child with special needs unless they were certain that they would be able to cope with the child's needs.

The childminders interviewed were not aware of any specific special needs training that is offered to childminders. They felt that training would be provided for them by the SCMA if there was a recognised need within a group of childminders.

No extra financial support is provided to childminders as a result of having to reduce their ratios because they are looking after children with special needs. The Social Work department provide extra support for the childminders that are part of their 'day-carers' scheme.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

Greenburn Nursery in Greenburn School, is run specifically for children with special needs. Children with disabilities have priority access to the Community Nurseries. 3 nurseries in South Lanarkshire have been designated as specialist nurseries and the majority of children with severe and complex needs would attend either of these 3 services; Greenburn, Victoria Park and the Early Learning Unit in Hamilton.

There are 77 local authority nurseries in South Lanarkshire, 17 of which provide wrap around childcare. Support is given to nurseries with children with special needs through Early Years Specialist Support teachers. Special Needs auxiliaries may be appointed to support the establishment. Children with special needs will have priority of place in a local authority nursery establishment.

The Early Years Specialist support teachers can also go into any of the 56 partner providers in South Lanarkshire. Most of the private nurseries also provide full-day care. Auxiliary support has not been provided to the partner nurseries and it is thought that the issue would not be likely to be raised due to the provision of wrap around childcare in the local authority nurseries.

## Out of School Care

### *Specialised Services*

Capability Scotland has been working in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council to develop OSC provision for children with special needs in the area. There is an integrated OSC service in operation between both Greenburn and Maxwellton schools. This provides opportunities for inclusion and operates very successfully. There is also a specialised OSC service specifically for children with profound and complex needs which is based at Stanmore House school in Lanark.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Greenburn OSC	Greenburn Maxwellton Primary, Maxwellton Avenue, East Kilbride	Breakfast Club and OSC every Tue and Wed during term	5–12	Tues: 10 Wed: 15	Inclusive provision. Wide range of needs	Yes	Council and Capability Scotland (until Sept)
Stanmore House School	Stanmore House School, Lanark	Mon–Thurs during term. 15.00–16.30	5–18	Varies	More profound disabilities	Yes, if required	Council(Sept)

### *Mainstream Out of School Care*

There are 45 OSC services in South Lanarkshire. In a recent survey organised by the Childcare Partnership into special needs provision, a large number of OSC providers stated that special needs has not been an issue for them so far because they have not yet been approached by any parents of special needs children.

No physical support is provided to OSC projects caring for children with special needs. Training in special needs care is provided by Social Work and NCH and Childcare Challenge Funds are available to OSC projects for equipment and alterations.

The Childcare Partnership have recognised that it is not sustainable to support 1:1 ratios in OSC, for that reason they provide indirect support so as to assist playworkers to be as efficient as possible within their own staffing ratios.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

<b>Name of service</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Days and times</b>	<b>Ages</b>	<b>No. of places</b>	<b>Types of disability</b>	<b>Transport</b>	<b>Funding</b>
Stanmore House	Stanmore House School, Lanark	2 weeks at Easter, 4 weeks in summer. Tue, Wed and Thur	5-18	Up to 20 altogether	More profound disabilities. Siblings attend also	Yes, if required	Council and Fund-raising

### *Mainstream Holiday Services*

Most of the OSC services in South Lanarkshire operate over the school summer holiday period. There are also several other playschemes that only run over the holidays. Although these playschemes can access the Childcare Challenge Fund, Special Needs Play Equipment and Training, very few playschemes make applications as they are only in operation for such a short time of the year.

# Stirling

Stirling has a population of 85,220, of which 15,233 are aged between 0–14. Over half of this population live in 4 major centres in the southwest. The remainder of the population live in more rural areas in small towns and villages. Stirling is now one of the fastest growing areas in Scotland and there is an expected increase of around 10% over the next 14 years of the under five population.

The area is heavily reliant on the public sector and tourism for employment. The unemployment rate is relatively low at 2.8%, though rates can vary quite widely across wards. There is one Social Inclusion Partnership area. Stirling has one postcode sector which is one of the most deprived in Scotland, embracing 10% of the Stirling population.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population have a disability of some kind, there are approximately 457 children in the Stirling area with a disability. There are 6 special schools or units within the authority, attended by a total of 90 pupils. 185 school pupils in Stirling have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in Stirling

Stirling Council has an integrated Children's Service which oversees all services and facilities for children in the area. As a result of this, Education and Social Work come together for the provision of services, ensuring that all services are fully co-ordinated to complement each other. Children's Services, as a result of its broad remit, is able to have a more flexible approach to funding and can also react faster to the recommendations of the Childcare Partnership.

Children's Services have a service-level agreement with 'Playplus', a voluntary organisation that provides inclusive play, leisure and social opportunities for children and young people aged 5–19 with a disability. This organisation can provide support for children with special needs in accessing OSC and holiday playschemes as well as other leisure activities such as swimming or attending the uniformed services. This is due to Playplus being funded by Children's Services, allowing the organisation to provide access to a wide range of services depending on the needs and wishes of the children concerned. There are currently 150 children and young people registered with Playplus.

The Childcare Partnership produces a training directory to inform all childcare workers of future training events.

Stirling Council have prioritised provision for children with special needs for over 15 years and inclusive play has been promoted in Stirling long before it became popular government policy. As a result of both this history, and of the effective operation of services such as Playplus, Stirling Council stands out as an example of best practice regarding the inclusion of children with special needs into childcare services.

## Childminding

There are around 215 registered childminders in Stirling. Childminders can access the training provided by the Council, but most childminders stated that they had never received any training for looking after children with special needs.

At the moment, there are no formal support mechanisms for childminders who are looking after children whose needs may require a reduction in ratio. This has not been an issue as of yet, so how the Partnership would respond to a request for a subsidy or support is not known. Over 85% of childminders that responded to the questionnaires did not know if any support would be available from the Childcare Partnership if they were asked to look after a child with severe disabilities.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

The Early Years Support Service is a team of teachers and senior nursery nurses who provide a support service for very young children and their families who need specialist help. Support can be provided in the child's nursery, home, or through small group work in The Bungalow, Viewforth.



There are 32 local authority nurseries and children and family centres in Stirling. The Council have a policy by which each nursery unit must create a set number of places for children with special needs. Special Duty Attendants can go into the nurseries if extra support is required for children with special needs.

There are 22 partner providers of pre-school education in Stirling, 11 of which are playgroups, 10 are private nurseries and 1 is a childminder. The support available to the partner nurseries will differ depending upon a number of factors including the identified needs of the child, the training and skills of the staff team and the numbers of children attending the nursery. It is felt that children with more profound needs would be unlikely to attend a partner provider nursery as support is more readily available in the local authority nurseries. Discussions with several of the partner providers confirmed this.

### **Out of School Care**

While there are no separate OSC services specifically for children with special needs, children with disabilities are integrated and supported in the OSC services.

There are 14 OSC services in Stirling which are organised by either the local authority or by voluntary or private sector organisations. Six of these OSC services are run in nurseries. A further 3 OSC services are in development to be opened in the new year. Five of the OSC services in particular have built up a great deal of expertise in working with children with special needs. The Council and Playplus provides training for the staff of the OSC services to enable them to support children with special needs in OSC projects in Stirling.

### **Holiday Provision**

Most of the OSC projects operate a full-day service over the holiday period, although some may take a weekly or fortnightly break during the summer. Children with special needs access OSC during the holidays. Playplus is able to provide some support for children with special needs to attend some services and leisure facilities during holidays.

### **Other Provision**

Playplus have a pool of befriending staff and offer a befriending service for children with special needs. 38 children and young people are currently using the befriending service. They are with their befriender approximately 6 to 8 hours each month.

Playplus can support children with special needs in accessing a range of sport, leisure or play facilities in the Stirling area.

Playplus have been running projects for young people over the age of 12. The Wallace Pilot project for over 12s demonstrated that there was a strong demand for such a service. There are concerns regarding the lack of funding that can be provided to ensure that services for children with special needs do not end when children reach the age of 12. The Youth Theatre meet every Thursday evening and the ages range from 12 to 19. They have an over 12s Sports Club on a Wednesday evening at Stirling High School and befriending can also be offered to the over 12s to enable them to access any activity of their choosing.

# West Dunbartonshire

West Dunbartonshire has a population of 94,600, based mainly in three main centres – Clydebank, Dumbarton and the Vale of Leven. The remainder of the population reside in smaller rural communities inland. There are approximately 18,700 children aged between 0–14 in West Dunbartonshire.

The local economy features light engineering, farming and associated industries. As a result of the steep decline of traditional industries, West Dunbartonshire's unemployment rate, at 9.1% is the highest in Scotland. West Dunbartonshire is a Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) area and 3 postcode areas are within the most deprived 10% in Scotland.

## Children with Special Needs

On the estimation that around 3% of the child population have a disability of some kind, there are approximately 561 children with disabilities in West Dunbartonshire. There is 1 special school and 1 special needs unit in the authority and these are attended by a total of 146 pupils. 139 school pupils in West Dunbartonshire have a Record of Needs opened.

## Childcare for Children with Special Needs in West Dunbartonshire

The Social Work department in West Dunbartonshire have recently employed a Respite and Leisure co-ordinator. The 'Better Neighbourhoods Fund' has funded the post and all services will be examined so as to assess their accessibility by children with disabilities. It is hoped that, through this new post, more inclusive services will be developed for children with special needs. Improving childcare services to make them more accessible by children with disabilities will therefore have direct benefits for education and social work services. Currently, there are 4 projects in West Dunbartonshire that operate specifically for children with special needs (detailed below). The Childcare Partnership is trying to obtain extra financial support in order to enable these projects to be more inclusive, rather than focussing on specialist services alone.

The high unemployment levels in West Dunbartonshire have slowed the process of childcare development as the need for childcare may be reduced as a result of the lack of employment. It is perhaps partly because of this that moves to develop childcare services for children with special needs have come from social work through the development of respite care provision as opposed to childcare for working parents. There still seem to be concerns regarding the accessibility for children with special needs to many mainstream childcare services, including OSC services and childminders.

Clydebank College and Oneplus provide training for childcare workers in West Dunbartonshire. Both courses include elements of special needs training.

## Childminding

There are around 57 registered childminders in West Dunbartonshire. Childminders looking after children with special needs are entitled to apply to the Childcare Partnership for funding. As of yet, no applications for funding have been received from childminders. It is thought that children with more profound needs are more likely to attend local authority nursery provision, where the support is more specialised.

## Nursery and Playgroup Provision

There are 2 family centres in West Dunbartonshire which are both specialised in caring for children with special needs. Clydebank Family Centre and Faifley Family Centre. The family centres operate from 7.00–18.00. Kilpatrick School provides pre-school education for children with special needs, but does not operate wrap-around childcare.

There are 25 local authority nurseries in West Dunbartonshire, most of which provide wrap around childcare. Special Needs auxiliaries can support children with special needs in these nurseries where required. The auxiliaries can remain outwith the set pre-school hours where the needs of the child suggest that they require more than the set 12½ hours entitlement.

There are 10 private and voluntary sector nurseries in West Dunbartonshire. These sectors do not receive the same support when looking after children with special needs. Whether or not a child would receive support for the full day would depend upon the recommendation from educational psychologists.

### Out of School Care

There is one specialised after school service run by Enable in Kilpatrick School. The staff in this project have been trained in special needs through a project run with Enable Scotland.

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Play After Learning (PALS)	Kilpatrick School, Mountblow Road, Clydebank	Mon–Fri 15.00–17.30	5–18	17 on roll. 10 attend each day	Severe and complex needs. Only for children from school	Children from school	Council

There are 19 OSC services in West Dunbartonshire. 5 of these OSC services are managed and staffed by the Council. OSC clubs looking after children with special needs can apply to the Childcare Partnership for additional monies where required.

Currently, there does not seem to be a large number of children with special needs accessing OSC services in West Dunbartonshire. The Social Work Department have referred children with special needs to OSC services as a form of respite for the carers. Where a child is referred from Social Work, auxiliary support would be provided to the OSC club.

As many of the OSC services operate from Council buildings, accessibility for children with special needs has not been a major problem. Several projects have been given funding to build ramps and disabled toilets. There are several projects that have a better reputation than others for their ability to successfully integrate children with special needs into the provision. It is thought that this is due to the dedication of staff in particular clubs to ensuring that their equal opportunities policies are adhered to.

### Holiday Provision

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
National Autistic Society	Renton Primary School	Summer holidays	5–18	12 (6 children per session)	Very severe autism	If necessary	NAS and Council
Kilpatrick PALS	Kilpatrick Primary School, Mountblow Road, Clydebank	All holidays except Christmas. 10.00–15.00	5–18	17 on roll, 10 each day	Wide range of needs	No	Council
Holiday Club	Faifley Family Centre, Clydebank	4 weeks in summer, 1 wk Oct and 1 wk Easter. 2/3 days each wk	This club is run by the Social Work department as part of an integrated playscheme. The children attending are all Social Work referrals				

The Social Work department also fund approximately 10 children with special needs to attend the Parklands Playscheme in Helensburgh.

Most of the OSC services in West Dunbartonshire operate full-day services over the summer holiday period. There are also a number of holiday-only playschemes which are funded through the Council's playscheme funding. In the calculation of the amount of funding that each playscheme is entitled to, a higher sum is given to playschemes that are looking after children with special needs.

**Other Provision**

<b>Name of service</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Days and times</b>	<b>Special needs details</b>
Dumbarton 'Get Along Group'	Dumbarton	2 evenings/wk and Sat and Sun mornings. All day Mon and Wed during holidays	This club is run in conjunction with the Social Work department and all the children attending are referred to the club by Social Work. It is a specialised club for children with special needs. A review of the service was carried out recently and it is hoped to continue the service as both parents and children greatly appreciated the club
Go For It	Bellsmyre	Holidays and some evenings	This project was set up by Community Education for children and young people with special needs. The children attending participate in art and drama activities and games
Faifley Saturday Club	Faifley	Saturdays	This is a Saturday Club for children with special needs. Many of the children and young people from Kilpatrick special needs school attend this group
Dalmuir Club	Dalmuir Centre	Tuesday Evenings	This Club operates every Tuesday evening as a social group for young people with special needs

## West Lothian

West Lothian has a population of approximately 156,690 people, 31,386 of whom are aged between 0–14 (over 20% of the population). This is evidence of the fact that West Lothian have the youngest population in Scotland and the number of pre-school children is expected to increase by 9% in the next 15 years. It is a diverse geographic area with a mixture of communities, rural villages and urban towns. West Lothian is one of the UK's fastest economic growth areas. A strong concentration of high technology has grown in and around Livingston and a considerable number of commuters to Edinburgh live in the area.

Despite this, at 4.3%, the unemployment rate is slightly higher than the Scottish average. Although there are prosperous areas close to Edinburgh, there are also deprived areas especially in the South West of the authority.

### Children with Special Needs

There are 4 special schools and units in the area, attended by a total of 390 children. On the estimation that 3% of the population have a disability of some kind, it can be assumed that around 942 children and young people in West Lothian between the ages of 0–14 have a disability. There are 359 school pupils with a Record of Needs opened.

### Childcare for Children with Special Needs in West Lothian

A questionnaire was sent out by the Childcare Partnership to parents of children with special needs in order to ask about the types of childcare provision that they wanted in their area. 49% of respondents indicated that they preferred integrated facilities and 39% indicated that they would rather have more provision that is specifically for children with special needs.

The National Autistic Society provides training in conjunction with the Social Policy service in the Council. This training has been carried out within several OSC clubs in the area.

Social Policy now has a social work team for children with disabilities, which works with families to assess need and, as appropriate, ensure provision of services. Social Policy also oversees holiday playschemes for children with special needs, respite and is working to develop befriending services. In order to access respite and befriending children would need to be referred by the Team.

Transport may be provided for children with special needs to access childcare services by Social Policy. Education share the cost for certain playschemes (Barnardo's at Beatlie School).

### Childminding

There are 341 registered childminders in West Lothian. The number of childminders who can or do look after children with special needs could not be identified, although the sample of childminders surveyed suggested that most childminders were not aware of any funding that they could obtain in order to support them when looking after children with disabilities.

### Nursery and Playgroup Provision

'First Steps' is a charity based within Beatlie school which operates a playgroup for children under the age of 3 with special needs. A very limited number of places are available due to the severity of need provided for. Wraparound childcare can be provided over lunchtimes where necessary.

There are 51 local authority nurseries in West Lothian, around 10 of which provide extended hours childcare. Children with special needs can be supported by a SN Support Assistant for the set pre-school hours in the nursery. Where the child remains in the nursery for the wrap around hours, the increased costs must be met by the parent. This means that if an extra member of staff is required in order for the child to be appropriately accommodated within the nursery, the parent would need to pay a higher cost for 1:1 care over the wrap around hours.

There are 36 registered playgroups in West Lothian, 5 of which are also partner providers of pre-school education. There are 17 private nurseries and 5 of these also provide pre-school education. The private nurseries in the area

had differing views on childcare provision on children with special needs, and the majority of services interviewed considered that financial and staffing concerns would be a major concern if they were asked to look after children with profound special needs.

## Out of School Care

There are no specialised OSC services that are exclusively for children with special needs. The majority of children with severe disabilities are educated within West Lothian. Some children still travel to schools in Edinburgh and remain at that school for after school care where it is offered. (This refers to only 2 or 3 children. Some are given respite at Cairdean or Douglas House afterschool. One child stays at RBS one night a week. All overnight stays are paid for by social policy.)

There are 22 registered OSC services in West Lothian, all of which have set equal opportunities policies in place. Children with special needs can therefore be accommodated within any of the OSC services, but due to lack of funding, OSC clubs cannot afford 1:1 or even 1:3 care without extra financial support. No extra support is provided to clubs from the Council.

Notwithstanding this, several clubs do manage to care for children with complex needs and 4 services have stated that they have successfully integrated children with special needs into the mainstream provision. One such service has received one-year lottery funding to cater for 3 children with special needs.

## Holiday Provision

### *Specialised Holiday Services*

Name of service	Location	Days and times	Ages	No. of places	Types of disability	Transport	Funding
Lothian Autistic Society	Pinewood School	Every day, summer and Easter. 9.30–14.30	4–17	26	Autistic spectrum disorders	Yes	Lothian Autistic Society and Council
Enable 'First Steps'	Beatlie School, Livingston	Summer holidays	Varies	30	Children with special needs and their siblings	Where necessary	The LCP fund the Playscheme Assoc to run this
Barnardo's	Beatlie School, Livingston	4 weeks summer, 3 weeks Easter, 1 week Oct.		12	Complex needs	Yes	Council and Barnardo's

There are also around 30 local playschemes that can be accessed by children with special needs. The West Lothian Playscheme Association administers these playschemes and they have a strongly inclusive policy for children with special needs. They have an agreement with Barnardo's in order to ensure that inclusion in the playschemes operates successfully. In 2000, 10 children with special needs were integrated into 12 playschemes.

Most of the 22 OSC clubs in West Lothian operate full-day services over the summer holiday period. The 'West Lothian Summer Activities Group' runs a holiday activity group for young people over the age of 12 with special needs.

Barnardo's operates a befriending service over the holiday period through which 12–14 young people aged between 5–14 are placed with a carer in a local playscheme. A grant is given to Barnardo's to operate this service. The number of hours that each child can receive from the befriender will vary according to the needs of the child and the number of befrienders available.

**Other Provision**

Barnardo's have an outreach worker scheme for more able children to enable them to attend mainstream leisure facilities.

Capability Scotland have been awarded an innovation grant of £105,500 to set up a project which will support the inclusion of pupils with a disability who are currently educated in mainstream schools. It is hoped that this project will create opportunities for physically disabled pupils to access a wide range of activities with a disabled peer group and also their non disabled peers.

# Notes on Statistics Used in this Report

1. Population figures are the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS) 1998 based population projections. Mid-Year Population Estimates: Scotland and its Council areas by age: 2000, unless where up-dated by the Childcare Partnership.
2. Unemployment statistics are based on unemployment figures from the Office for National Statistics, NOMIS for December, 2001.
3. Number of Services. The number of registered childcare services in each area were provided by the Childcare Information Services from the respective areas as at mid-2002.
4. Special Educational Needs statistics including the number of special schools and units and the number of Children with a Record of Needs opened are from the September 2001 School Census. Scottish Executive National Statistics.
5. All other figures are derived from information provided by Local Authorities.



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