

PE1704/Q

Aberdeen City Council submission of 12 November 2018

1. That every person in Scotland going through an autism diagnostic procedure will be assessed within a calendar year

We feel this is an appropriate priority.

Receive a statutory services assessment from a qualified social worker as an integral part of this process, within twelve months from the date of their initial referral.

Not every family would necessarily want or require the involvement of social work services. Additionally, it would not be essential in all cases for a qualified social worker to undertake an assessment - a care coordinator/family support officer or equivalent post may provide a more workable solution.

2. That children with autism in mainstream schools will have their assessed needs for classroom support met by an ASL assistant with a recognised autism qualification as part of a mandatory registration process for ASL professionals.

We feel that there is already recognised legislation in place to ensure that children's needs are being assessed with regards to support within the classroom. There are many very experienced and able support staff working in classrooms across Scotland who already have the knowledge, skills and experience required to support children with an ASC. Making it mandatory to have a recognised qualification and registration process could potentially restrict the number of individuals being prepared and willing to embark on a career supporting children with additional support needs. There are already opportunities in place for those wanting to progress their formal learning within ASC's. As a Local Authority we have a service in place to support children, families and staff offering ongoing training and advice, guidance and resources and this approach ensures that bespoke training, designed to reflect the needs of individual children and young people, is provided rather than generic training.

3. That young adults with autism will have a statutory right to specialist support from their local authority up to the age of 25.

We feel this is an appropriate aspiration for all children and young people with an additional support need not just those with an ASC, the difficulty would be defining the support to be provided as all needs are highly individual.

It will be important to clarify that the qualifying criteria – autistic diagnosis and that the extension of service provision is adequately funded.

4. **That an Autism Act will be in place within the next 5 years to enshrine specific rights and services for autistic people in our legal system.**

We feel that it would be appropriate that any child or young person with an additional support need gets the protection and support they need through the legal system.

The timescale noted would appear appropriate and would allow time for services to plan for the proposed changes.