

COMMITTEE:	Policy and Performance Review Committee
MEETING DATE:	15 January 2026
BY:	Deputy Chief Executive – Children and Communities
REPORT TITLE:	Additional Support Needs (ASN)
REPORT STATUS:	Public

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides the Policy and Performance Review Committee (PPRC) with an overview of the rising numbers of children and young with ASN in our schools, the nature of those needs and the current provision in place to meet them.

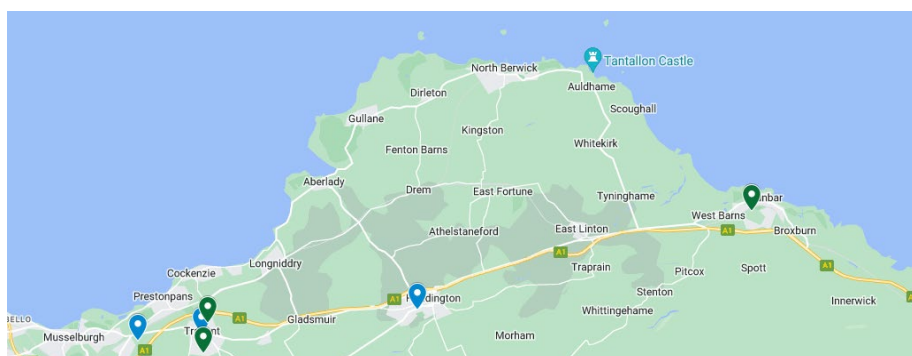
2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are recommended to note the information contained in the report.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 places a legal duty on local authorities to identify and assess additional support needs and to make adequate and efficient provision tailored to meet individual needs.
- 3.2 Nationally, 43% of children and young people are recorded as having ASN. This is an increase of 89% since 2015.
- 3.3 In East Lothian, 40.5% of children and young people were recorded in the 2025 school census as having ASN.
- 3.4 ASN arises from four overarching categories. These are in relation to: learning environment, family circumstances, disability or health needs, and social and emotional factors. ASN can be temporary or enduring in nature and it does not require a diagnosis to access support.

- 3.5 The Child Planning Framework provides the mechanism for identifying and meeting needs. A fundamental principle of which is early and minimal intervention.
- 3.6 For children and young people with complex and enduring needs, which cannot be met within a mainstream school setting, East Lothian has six specialist ASN provisions. These are attached to mainstream schools. The geographical position of provisions is illustrated in the map below. Primary is shown in green and secondary in blue:



- 3.7 There has been a growth in demand for specialist ASN provision. By way of illustration:

Year	Number of Referrals for Provision	% Increase
2020-21	37	
2021-22	63	70%
2022-23	71	13%
2023-24	82	15%
2024-25	86	5%

- 3.8 Being unable to provide a suitable specialist place for a child or young person is a significant risk to East Lothian. It was noted in the internal audit of ASN in September 2024: “The Council has appropriate arrangements in place for the provision of ASN services, however priority requires to be given to ensuring sufficient capacity within the school estate for 2025/26 and beyond.”
- 3.9 The risk of not meeting this legislative duty gives families recourse through the ASN Tribunal service. Nationally the number of references to the Tribunal service has increased by 67% since 2019/20 ¹.
- 3.10 There is also the risk that placements out with East Lothian will be required to be procured if there is no capacity within our estate. This is a significant financial risk. It also does not align with *Belonging to East Lothian* by meeting children and young people’s needs in the communities in which they belong.
- 3.11 Between 2023 and 2025 the capacity of East Lothian Council’s specialist provisions has increased:

¹ https://audit.scot/uploads/2025-02/briefing_250227_additional_support_for_learning.pdf

Provision	Capacity 2023	Capacity 2025	Increase in Spaces %
The Cove, Dunbar Primary	30	52	22 (73%)
The Hub, Sanderson's Wynd Primary	24	33	9 (38%)
Woodside Windygoul Primary	18	27	9 (50%)
Meadowpark Knox Academy	49	58	9 (18%)
The Brae Rosehill High	16	44	28 (175%)
Ross High ASN	34	34	0
Total	171	248	77 (45%)

3.12 Almost all of the above spaces have been allocated. There is limited capacity to support local authority growth, generally and the growth in children and young people with ASN, specifically.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 To meet increasing demand, services for children and young people with ASN are growing and evolving. These include:

4.1.1 **Refreshed Policy and Guidance** - for school staff with commensurate training opportunities.

4.1.2 **Child Planning Framework - Locality Teams (CPF-LTs)** – multi-disciplinary teams providing a solution orientated forum to address unmet needs are now embedded in each locality.

4.1.3 **Equity & Inclusion Education Outreach Service** – the provision of educational support to children and young people in collaboration with their schools to meet identified gaps in learning.

4.1.4 **Revised ASN Funding Model to Schools** – a data led approach providing more flexible funding on a wide range of factors giving rise to ASN.

4.1.5 **Deaf / Hearing Impaired Service** – enhanced and expanded with a Principal Teacher and two Communication Support Workers.

4.1.6 **Specialist Contracts** – retained with The Royal Blind School / Sight Scotland and NHS Speech and Language Therapy.

4.1.7 **Expansion of the Specialist Provision Estate** – to meet growing demand, provision has increased. Further growth is now required. Significant scoping work is underway within the learning

estate to identify suitable additional provision to meet needs. A further paper will be presented a future East Lothian Council meeting.

5 RESOURCE AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Finance: additional capital and revenue required for 4.1.7
- 5.2 Human Resources: additional staffing required for 4.1.7.
- 5.3 Other (e.g. Legal/IT): none
- 5.4 Risk: as outlined in 3.8, 3.9 and 3.10.

6 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 **Select the statement that is appropriate to your report by placing an 'X' in the relevant box.**

An Integrated Impact Assessment screening process has been undertaken and the subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on: equality and human rights; tackling socio-economic disadvantages and poverty; climate change, the environment and sustainability; the Council's role as a corporate parent; or the storage/collection of personal data.

or

The subject of this report has been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process and impacts have been identified as follows:

Subject	Impacts identified (Yes, No or N/A)
Equality and human rights	
Socio-economic disadvantage/poverty	
Climate change, the environment and sustainability	
Corporate parenting and care-experienced young people	
Storage/collection of personal data	
Other	

7 APPENDICES

7.1 None.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Child Planning Framework – Locality Team (CPF-LT) Guidelines
<https://sites.google.com/edubuzz.org/eastlothianeduhub/caring-relationships/policy-process-and-guidance>

8.2 Equity & Inclusion Education Outreach Service Guidelines
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15FZ1QV60Q9xTnt0PCpqEE2NbRFOWN4yV/view>

8.3 Equity & Inclusion Education Outreach Service media coverage
<https://www.eastlothiancourier.com/news/25652733.education-outreach-service-review-reveals-first-year-success/>
<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/east-lothian-outreach-team-helps-160521329.html>

9 AUTHOR AND APPROVAL DETAILS

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Date	8 December 2025

Head of Service Approval

Name	Nicola McDowell
Designation	Head of Education
Confirmation that IIA and other relevant checks (e.g. finance/legal) have been completed	Yes
Approval Date	15 December 2025