

Education Support Service

..... NEED TO KNOW GUIDES

Assessment of Need

A Guide for Parents and Carers

EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

Inclusion in West Lothian



An Assessment of Need is a structured process used by schools and education services to build a clear understanding of a child or young person's strengths, needs and any barriers that may be affecting their learning, wellbeing or participation in school. It is part of West Lothian's Continuum of Support (COS) and helps ensure that the right support is put in place at the right time.

The assessment is not a test and is not about labeling your child. Instead, it is an opportunity for everyone involved to work together to identify what is going well, what challenges exist and what supports may help.

Why might my child need an Assessment of Need?

A school may suggest an Assessment of Need when:

- Your child requires additional support beyond everyday classroom strategies.
- Staff would benefit from a fuller understanding of your child's needs.
- Current support is not having the desired impact.
- There are concerns about wellbeing, learning, attendance, relationships or inclusion.
- Planning is needed to support a transition or significant change in circumstance.

Who is involved?

1. You (Parent/ Carer)
2. Your child or young person
3. School staff
4. Other services (if needed)

What information is gathered?

Information may include:

- Strengths and interests
- Learning in school
- Wellbeing and friendships
- Home life and family support
- Supports already in place

We focus on what is going well as well as any challenges.



Remember

The assessment considers discussion points of Social Communication, friendship and social interaction, emotional regulation, independence wellbeing using the **GIRFEC** wellbeing indicators: **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included**

How is my child's voice included?

Children and young people should be involved as much as possible in decisions that affect them.

Depending on their age and stage they may:

- Attend meetings
- Complete a pupil profile or questionnaire
- Share their views with a trusted adult
- Contribute directly to the assessment and action plan

What happens next?

Following the assessment, the school will identify:

- **Needs**
- **Barriers**
- **Next Steps**

Next Steps may include:

- Continued monitoring
- An Assessment of Need Action Plan
- An Individualised Education Programme (IEP)
- Referral to another service
- Multi-agency planning where appropriate

What is an Assessment of Need Action Plan?

If additional planning is required, an Action Plan may be created.

The Action Plan will:

- Identify clear goals
- Describe what supports will be provided
- State who is responsible for each action
- Set timescales for review
- Be shared with parents, carers and the child or young person

Have questions?

We are here to work in partnership with you and your child or young person every step of the way

If you would like more information about an Assessment of Need, please contact your child or young person's school for further discussion.

This leaflet has been developed to support families' understanding of the Assessment of Need process within West Lothian's Continuum of Support.

