What are your views on the issues raised in the petition and the committee's subsequent discussion?

The issues raised in the petition and the committee’s subsequent discussion reflect a very generalised and, in most part, anecdotal representation of individual experiences. Although parents, children/young people views are reported the hard evidence is contained within statistical information from the Scottish Government regarding exclusions and attainment and reference to the Donaldson Review and the training opportunities within Universities. This notwithstanding, the premise and basic principle behind the petition is reasonable as it attempts to open a discourse on the best way to ensure that all children and young people with additional support needs encounter confident and skilled staff.

Although the discussion raises pertinent points with regard to the difficulties relating to consistent approaches to training across Authorities, the opportunity should be taken to look at current good practice and explore how this can be developed to provide a bespoke continuing professional development tool, which enables individual schools/learning communities to identify their own children/young people’s needs, that can vary dramatically, within a few miles.

Mandatory training without proper support will in itself not resolve the issues of staff believing that they are unable to support some children and young people with specific identified needs. The paper also needs to recognise other factors which influence a child/young person’s ability to self-regulate their behaviour and interact with peers and adults positively.

Even when training combines theory and practice and delegates are given the opportunity to participate in role play (explore and test their new skills on colleagues) the variables change the second they leave the training room:

- They are no longer in a controlled environment
- Children/young people can be unpredictable
- Although motivated and inspired after attending the training they may expect instant results and feel a sense of failure when this does not happen or they may feel demoralised when they return to their organisation and the training is not embraced.
- Even if the whole staff attend the training not everyone will support the philosophy
- Support from SMT and leadership is key to promote change
- Staff require time to become confident with their new skills – this needs nurtured

Continuing professional development combined or linked with in-house support offers a more sustainable model. Modelling and coaching offers opportunities for staff to practice their new strategies and seek advice from skilled practitioners/mentors in a realistic setting enabling staff to become confident and empowered.
This sustainable training model complements the principles of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) which builds support around the child/young person’s needs to ensure that every child/young person, if and whenever possible, is able to maintain their education within a mainstream environment.

**Does your local authority provide continuous professional development (CPD) for teaching staff in additional support needs? If not, what are the reasons for this and are there any plans to look at this again?**

**All newly qualified teachers** in East Ayrshire participate in a comprehensive CPD programme.

**Psychological Services** offer training and support on specific disabilities; conditions and approaches.

**East Ayrshire Support Team CPD Menu (March 2012 onwards)**

Training and Support in the following areas:


**Building Capacity**

**East Ayrshire Council** funds Post Graduate courses in relation to ASN. In the past these have included:

- Post Graduate Certificate Educational Support (Strathclyde University)
- Post Graduate Certificate/Diploma Support for Learning (Glasgow University)
- Post Graduate Certificate/Diploma Additional Support for Learning (Edinburgh University)

**EAST** provides intensive whole school support to establishments to build sustainable strategies and empower all staff, children/young people and their families. Everyone involved in the day-to-day running of the school or early years establishment participates in the training, modelling and coaching. This support and training can be extended to the local community.

**EAST** hosts Sharing Good Practice events. (ICT support software, assessment and interventions).

**Educational establishments** offer pastoral and professional support to staff.

**All Staff** can access external courses in relation to ASN.

The local authority works closely with NHS Ayrshire and Arran to develop and deliver joint learning and development. The health service will support individual schools/nurseries in relation to meeting children/young people’s needs by training specifically for that establishment.
What support or training does your authority provide to non-teaching staff (for example, janitors, caretakers or catering staff) to help them deal with pupils who have additional support needs?

**Local Government Employees** can access specific awareness training e.g. ASD on a needs led basis. They are also involved in whole staff training sessions e.g. Quality Circle Time.