Petition response from Dumfries and Galloway Education Service.

- What are your views on the issues raised in the petition and the Committee’s subsequent discussion?

We feel that these are important issues, and recognise the need for continuing training in a number of ASN areas. This should not however be confined to one or two specific issues (such as Dyslexia or ASD), but should encompass a wide range of general ASL issues also, such as equality issues, communication and involvement of parents, roles and responsibilities and effective multi-agency working. Other more specialist areas would include resilience building, attachment issues and parenting approaches.

These should be given due priority by each Authority, who should be free to agree which aspects should be considered mandatory for that Authority.

- 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?

Yes. Training has covered whole groups of staff in a variety of areas, including ASD, attachment, behavioural approaches, etc. This is in response to the identified learning needs of individual staff and or school / cluster requests.

Regarding ASD, training has been provided locally since 2004, to whole staff groups in schools, including ancillary and support staff (see below).

The authority has run and continues to deliver training towards a post graduate certificate in ASN.

The Authority runs regular training in the TEAMTEACH approach to safe handling.

The authority, in partnership with health colleagues, is currently developing a local multi-agency GIRFEC training programme which will also be co-delivered with partners and which will encompass some of the issues above.

- 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?

The Authority supports inclusion of all staff members in such training where possible and has examples of good practice in this regard, for example in positive approaches to behaviour.