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

Education Scotland would concur with the view that there is considerable scope to improve training for all staff working with children and young people to ensure that the needs of those with additional support needs are met more effectively. In the past five years, HMIE, now part of Education Scotland, has highlighted the issue of staff training in relation to meeting the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. In 2006, HMIE published a report, *Education for Pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. A key recommendation was that teaching and support staff have access to a programme of staff development relating to autism spectrum disorders and that specialised training should be provided for teachers and non-teaching staff working directly with children and young people with autism spectrum disorders. *The Report on the Implementation of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004* (HMIE 2007) suggests that action for improvements should include improved opportunities for joint training of education practitioners and professional colleagues working in partner agencies. *Count Us In: Achieving Success for Deaf Pupils* (HMIE 2007) commented on limited training opportunities and that some mainstream teachers do not have sufficient understanding of the needs of their deaf pupils.

In 2010, HMIE carried out a review looking at how the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (“the Act”) is affecting children and young people who:

- are looked after,
- are young carers,
- have mental health disorders,
- have sensory impairments.

In its report on the findings of this review, it recommended that education authorities, partner agencies and establishments should ensure that staff have appropriate training to help them meet the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. There are similar recommendations and messages in recent HMIE online reports such as Count Us In: Mind Over Matter: Promoting and Supporting Mental and Emotional Wellbeing and Count Us In: Success for All.

Question: From the perspective of your organisation, what work is planned or underway to ensure that all new teachers are confident in their abilities to firstly identify and then secondly address additional support needs (especially dyslexia and autistic spectrum disorders)?

- The Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC) has developed a „Framework for Inclusion” (2009) which is used by all providers of initial teacher education when developing their programmes and courses. It aims to
ensure that all new teachers are equipped to teach pupils with additional support needs:

- We are working in partnership with other stakeholders to address the recommendations and key messages in “Teaching Scotland”s Future” which relate to strengthening further the training and support for teachers in relation to meeting children”s learning needs. Additional support needs is recognised in the report as one of the “core” elements of continuing professional development (CPD) that all teachers need to refresh throughout their career.