

## **MEDIA RELEASE – 05/03/09**

### Enquire conference takes a timely look at Additional Support for Learning

With strong cross-party support expressed at Holyrood yesterday for the first Bill amending the Education (Additional Support for Learning) Scotland Act 2004, Enquire's annual conference in Inverness on 10 March will look at the impact of the Act since it was implemented and consider the way ahead.

With one in twenty pupils in Scotland identified as needing additional support for learning to succeed in school, *Three years on – how are we doing?* gives teachers, local authority managers, voluntary sector organisations, parents and young people a chance to look at the successes and challenges of the Act and to share good practice.

Speakers include Mike Gibson, Head of the Support for Learning Division of the Scottish Government, who will outline the impacts of the Act from a policy-maker's perspective and look to the future; and Elisabeth Ritchie, Depute Chief Inspector for HM Inspectorate of Education, who will provide an overview of current national practice. The conference is chaired by Penny Brodie, Director of LEAD Scotland (Linking Education and Disability).

Children and young people will contribute their views and experiences through drama and animation presentations by the Highland Carers' Project and Shakti Women's Aid in Edinburgh.

Backing the conference, Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, said: 'The Scottish Government wants to ensure that all our young people receive an education that encourages learning and development, which is why we fully support the Enquire National Conference.'

'This year the conference will focus on the implementation of the Additional Support for Learning Act three years on and will hear about the changes proposed to make it even more effective. This is excellent timing because on 4 March the Bill to strengthen the Act was debated in Parliament, receiving strong cross-party support, and progressed successfully on to the next stage.'

#### **Notes to Editors:**

For more information please contact:

Tracey Francis, tel: 0131 222 2419; email: [tfrancis@childreninscotland.org.uk](mailto:tfrancis@childreninscotland.org.uk)

1. *Three years on – how are we doing?* will be held at the Highland Council Chambers, Inverness, on Tuesday 10 March 2009, from 9:30 – 4:30. Podcasts from the day and a report will be available on the Enquire website in the weeks following the conference.
2. The need for, and right to, additional support for learning can be triggered by a wide range of circumstances, including (but not limited to): physical disability; young carers' responsibilities; behavioural difficulties; the needs of looked-after children; problems at home; social or emotional difficulties; or whatever other learning difficulties keep children from succeeding in school.
3. Enquire is the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning. It is managed by Children in Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government. This free service is available to parents and carers of children and young people with additional support needs, to children and young people themselves, and to professionals working with them.
4. Enquire offers advice and information by way of a national helpline (Helpline 0845 123 2303; Textphone 0131 222 2439) and through written responses to emails and enquiries via the website. It also offers training and talks and produces a range of free publications for parents, pupils and professionals. For more information visit [www.enquire.org.uk](http://www.enquire.org.uk)

**Children in Scotland** is the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that relevant policies, services and provision are of the best possible quality and able to meet the demands of a diverse society. For further information visit:  
[www.childreninScotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninScotland.org.uk)