



Education Law Unit Finances

Of course, it is impossible to provide the level and quality of service we do without financial support and, in that regard, we are most grateful to the following organisations.

Our core funding is provided through the Scottish Executive's Children, Young People and Families Unified Voluntary Grant Scheme. This helps us to provide the Education Law Helpline; maintain the website; deliver training and support the mediation service.

We also receive a smaller amount of funding from BBC Children in Need, which allows us to provide free advocacy services through our Pupil Representation Project and to provide some free training to local schools.

Finally, we remain grateful to the Govan Law Centre Trust, which provides financial, administrative and practical support to the Education Law Unit. Without this, none of our activities would be able to continue.

“Excellent service which is highly respected and utilised throughout the field.”
Children's Rights Officer



**Education Law Unit
Annual Report 2005**



Education Law Helpline

Key Statistics

- 544 Helpline Calls
- Over 4,000 minutes of free expert legal advice
- 92% satisfaction rating
- Typical call lasts 10 to 12 minutes
- 50% of calls from parents, the rest from local authorities, voluntary

Subject Matter

- Disability Discrimination (35%)
- Exclusion (25%)
- Placing Requests (15%)
- Transport to School (15%)
- Others (10%)

“..your advice gave me the ammunition I needed .. my daughter is now back at school..”



Testimonials

“The Education Law Unit provides a specialist service for families experiencing serious difficulties which is available nowhere else in Scotland”

Parent of Primary School Pupil with Autism

“Thank you for sending the information leaflets last week. I was impressed by how easy to read they were.”

Autism Resource Centre, Maryhill, Glasgow

“The Education Law Unit is a fantastic resource for all those involved in education: children, parents and school staff. It is wonderful to have such a knowledgeable and helpful team available to ask questions, and to provide legal assistance when required. Your website is another great resource.”

Parent Member of Primary School Board

“.. the Education Law Unit has made a big difference in the life of my son.”

Parent of Excluded Child with Asperger's



Advocacy and Representation

Case Study: Penny's Case

Penny is a 6 year old girl with speech & language difficulties. She was refused a place at a special unit. An appeal had failed. It was 2 weeks until start of term. GLC drafted and lodged her appeal in court, secured the services of an advocate, conducted a 4 day proof and had Penny in the specialist unit by the first full week of term. This was done without cost to the parent, who was not eligible for Legal Aid. No other agency in Scotland could have provided this service.

Case Study: Emily's Case

Emily is a young person with severe physical and learning disabilities. Her respite was under threat due to social work's insistence that it should be drastically reduced or Emily taken into care. GLC initiated a review of Emily's Record of Needs and, on appeal to the education appeal committee, were able to secure a residential placement at her school, allowing the respite to continue as before.



Education Law Helpline

Case Study: Kyle's Case

Kyle was a ten year old boy with an autistic spectrum disorder. He was educated at a special unit within a primary school. Support staff at the school refused to work with him because of his tendency to "prod". A call to the Education Law Helpline quickly established that the actions of the staff amounted to unlawful disability discrimination and the Council were quick in ensuring that Kyle returned to full-time education.

Case Study: the Case of S. Primary School

S. Primary School was targeted for closure by the local authority. The proposals were for the pupils to be bussed to another primary school outwith the area. By phoning the Education Law Helpline, concerned parents were able to access detailed advice on the statutory consultation process. This advice enabled the parents to put the best possible case against closure.



Education Law Training

Key Statistics

- Over 1,500 education professionals trained
- Approx. 150 parents and 150 advisors trained
- Training for education appeal committees - CD-Rom training pack in preparation
- 95% satisfaction rating



The Govan Law Centre is registered with the GTC Scotland's national register for CPD for teachers. We also provide CPD for solicitors

“..real food for thought - will take back to school to share with staff..”



Advocacy and Representation

Key Statistics

- 115 cases (2004/5)
- Representation at children's panels; education appeal committees; sheriff courts & Court of Session
- For pupils from 18 different Council areas with a variety of additional support needs and disabilities.

A Typical Case

- Average age of pupil = 11
- 70% are male
- 75% of cases relate to one of 5 areas:
 - Placing requests
 - Exclusions
 - Record of Needs
 - Transport to School
 - Disability

“The Education Law Unit has helped my family in our fight to get the best possible education for my son”



www.edlaw.org.uk



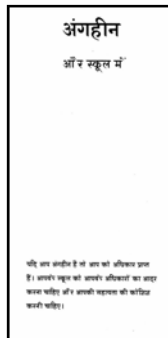
In the 2 months since its re-launch, the website has received over 2,000 unique visits.

Latest News and Pupils’ Rights are the most popular pages.

What’s on the website?

Visitors to the website can access the latest news in the world of education law in Scotland. There are brief guides to the law in each of the main areas of pupils’ rights.

Our information leaflets are available to download in community languages, audio and BSL. In the coming months we hope to partner with www.parant.org.uk – in providing information to Gaelic speaking pupils.



Education Law Training

Case Study: ASL Rights and Remedies
Our “Additional Support for Learning: Rights and Remedies” was a national scale event. It ran in both St. Andrews and Glasgow and brought together over 200 teachers, managers, social workers, health professionals, parents and voluntary sector workers. The day considered the implications of the new legislation with a particular focus on children’s and parents’ rights.

Case Study: parents’ training with CHIP+
Highland children’s organisation CHIP+ and Govan Law Centre ran a joint event in Dingwall for parents of children with additional support needs. GLC’s Iain Nisbet delivered a full day covering: additional support for learning, disability discrimination, placing requests & exclusion and discipline.

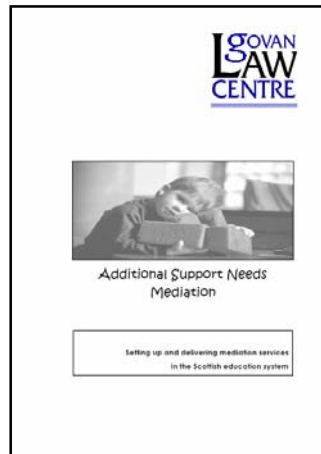
“I feel I am now aware of my son’s rights to a more appropriate education”



Additional Support Needs Mediation

Key Points

- Providing mediation services for education authorities, including: Dumfries & Galloway; Midlothian; North Ayrshire; and East Ayrshire
- 73% of those using mediation would recommend it to others



“The mediator displayed a high level of skill – this is a quality service.”



Additional Support Needs Mediation

The Mediation Service

Although the legal obligation to provide mediation is not likely to come into force until the end of the year, a number of authorities have contracted with GLC for the provision of mediation. We work with a team of experienced mediators who have additional training in the SEN and ASN frameworks. Examples of issues involved in mediation cases include: school placement; non-attendance at school; resources and support at school; transport and bullying.

Mediation Awareness Training

We have also developed a mediation awareness training programme which has been delivered to a number of education authorities and parent organisations. The training seeks to raise awareness of mediation; to consider conflict and how people manage it; and to explore some practical techniques and strategies used in mediation.