SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD WITH TRANSITION AND CHANGE

A guide for parents and carers to introduce tools and techniques that will support children with transition and change

Lockhart Campus

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1. **WELCOME**

Transition and change can be stressful for anyone, particularly when a new situation or environment is unfamiliar. When possible, transition and change can become a little easier when preparing ourselves and others. School's will have carefully considered individual support plans when planning for any transition.

Loss of routine, structure, familiarity, safe people and places can be particularly difficult for children with Additional Support Needs. Parents and Carers know their child best and it is hoped that this transition document will provide some hints and tips that can be selected to suit the family's needs when preparing their child for any new changes or transitions.

The amount of support needed from home will vary depending on each learner's needs and how they process information. Some learners may benefit from regular input from home when planning for transition or change, this may be as often as regularly daily visuals and discussions whereas other learners may need very little support.

When supporting children at home becomes very difficult or stressful, the designated key contact within school should be contacted. They are available for parents and carers to voice any concerns and work together to consider how best to move forward.

2. PLANNING FOR CHANGE AND TRANSITION

North Ayrshire Council aim to achieve early consultation and planning for transition for all learners. Staff will create individual support plans for each learner that strives for a positive and smooth planned transition. Communication between home and school is a priority and ensures an effective plan is prepared.

These plans will be responsive to needs of each learner and created in partnership with learners, families and other key professionals. The plan will be reviewed regularly.

Each learner will have:
- a designated coordinator known to them
- an individual support plan prepared in good time
- their views included when discussing changes in school and their education
- a clear plan with identified support in place

For senior phase learners, input or advice from parents and other agencies, such as health and social work services, Skills Development Scotland (Careers), further education colleges and institutions of higher education should also be involved in transition planning where required

3. SIGNIFICANT TRANSITIONS

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Our lives are full of transition and change, these can not always be avoided. Well planned transitions can work well and provide new and exciting opportunities for children, young people and their family. Building resilience and developing a toolkit to support children and young people when managing change is really helpful place to start.

Significant transitions within school can include:
- Early Years into Primary 1
- Mainstream to Lockhart Campus
- Year to year within Lockhart Campus
- Primary into Secondary
- Transition on to Adult Services

Early learning into Primary 1

Transition from the early learning setting to primary school can be both exciting and daunting for any child and their family. A change in environment, the layout of the school and school population all bring their own challenges. This can sometimes lead to a period of distress as children try to adjust to their new environment and routines.

Early transition planning is essential to support children when preparing and settling in to their new primary 1 class. This will require effective partnership working with the school who will provide opportunities in the pre-school year for meetings, visits and the sharing of information.

3. SIGNIFICANT TRANSITIONS

Mainstream to Lockhart Campus

Transition from mainstream can be another significant transition for children, young people and their family. Open and honest communication between parents/carers and school is key in preparation for this change. Conversations regarding a child's learning and any anxieties provide key information to create an effective transition plan. Visual aids and activities, such a walking past the school, can be helpful.

Year to year within Lockhart Campus

Year to year transitions, such as new classroom, teacher and staff, can be supported at home by introducing consistent visual aids, such as social stories or photographs.

Primary into Secondary

Similarly to other transitions within Lockhart Campus, communication between home and school is key. Visual aids can be used to support change in school uniform, teachers, as well as agreed plans to ensure moving about the school causes minimum distress, for example soft start, flexible transitions or a pass to move before the rest of the class.

Transition on to Adult Services

Moving from school to the world beyond can be an exciting but daunting journey for all young people and their family. It is essential that the foundations of this transition are laid throughout a young person's learning journey. Within useful websites there are a number of helpful links depending on what path your young person is taking.

3. SIGNIFICANT TRANSITIONS

Transition from Teachers and Key Adults

Learners are prepared using social stories (see example in the tools and resources section). Learners are provided with social story in preparation with a copy give to take home.

Communication Passports:

Communication passports are person-centred booklets for those who cannot easily speak for themselves. Passports are a way of pulling complex information together and presenting it in an easy-to-follow format. Passports help make sense of formal assessment information and enable important things about a person to be recorded. Passports are used in home, care, social work, health and education settings. They are of key importance in the community to link up input from all of those different settings. Passports are useful for a very wide range of people. It is not to do with age or medical diagnosis, it is primarily to do with communication difficulties, and life circumstances.

This book is about me!

My name is

XXXXXXXXXX

Please read!
This book will help you to get to know me and how I communicate.

Page Index

1. All about me
2. You need to know
3. My Family
4. My Friends
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6. Things I like to talk about
7. How I communicate (1)
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13. I'm working on this...
14. Help!
15. Eating and Drinking
16. More about me

4. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Communication approaches

A total communication approach is used and appraches are individualised to what suits our learners. This includes:

- Spoken word
- Written word
- Makaton
- PODD (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display)
- Objects of Reference
- Visual support
- Talking Mats
- PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)
- AAC (Augmentative & Alternative Communication)
- Intensive Interaction

Learners can sometimes be introduced to Visual aids such as pictures and symbols to support them to process information. Some examples are provided within the tools and resources section in this booklet. All learners are individual, resources will be selected to suit each individual's needs. Please contact your key contact if you are unsure what is being used with your child.

4. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

These are some of the communication tools your child may be using in school, your key contact will share what is being used.

Makaton

Makaton is a language communication approach that uses signs and symbols to help our learners to communicate. It is designed to support spoken language and the signs and symbols are used with speech, in spoken word order. It supports the development of essential communication skills such as attention, listening, comprehension, memory and expressive speech and language.

PODD

Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display (PODD) is normally a book or device that contains symbols and words to support communication between people with complex communication needs and their communication partners, whether that's carers, family, friends or support workers.

Objects of reference

Objects of reference, or location markers, can be an object or even a song, a smell a touch that is personal to your child. This provides information that there is going to be a change, this could be a change in location or activity. The object of reference will have a twin – one in a fixed place and the other that will travel with your child.
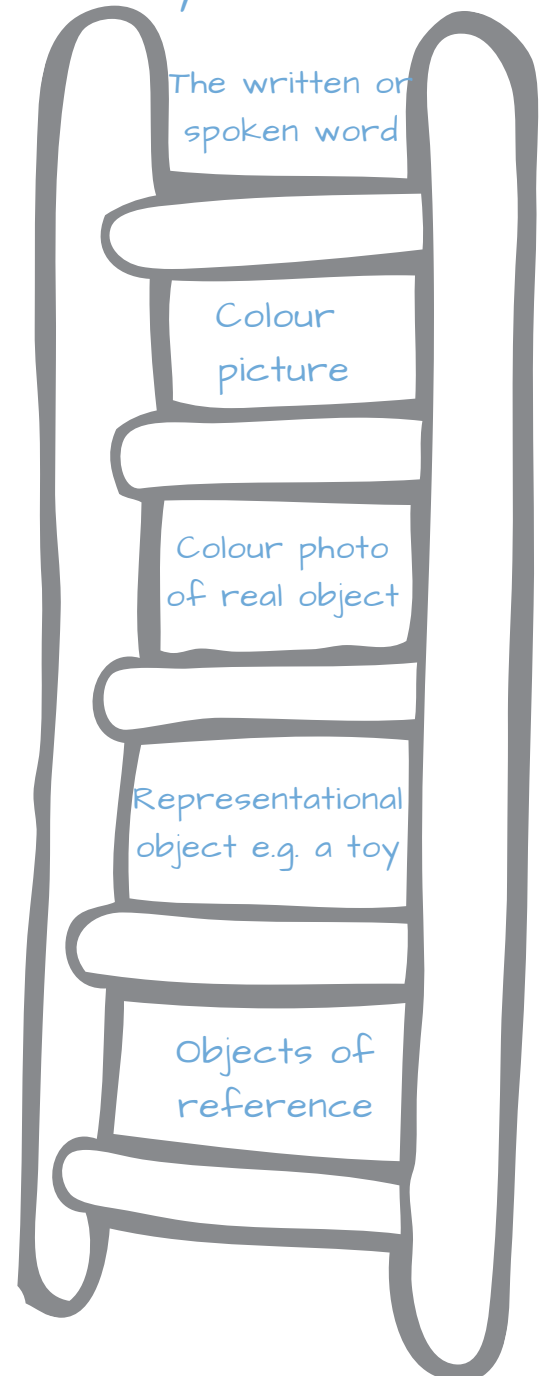
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Introducing visual aids at home

When trying to decide on the type of visual support to use with your child, it is better to start at an easier level and work up. (see ladder picture)

There are many symbol systems out there (PECS, Makaton, Boardmaker, Communication in print, Rebus etc.). It is important to ensure the symbols used are kept consistent across all environments. Speak to your key contact in school to learn about what is being used effectively.

Your child may be functioning at a higher level during motivating or routine situations but lower in others, such as adult directed activities. So you can use your visual aids for specific purposes.

Symbol ladder

The written or spoken word

Colour picture

Colour photo of real object

Representational object e.g. a toy

Objects of reference

Talking Mats

Talking Mats is an interactive resource that uses three sets of picture communication symbols: topics, options and a visual scale. It also includes a space on which to display them. This can either be a physical, textured mat, or a digital space, for example a tablet, smart board or computer screen for which we have created one of the best apps for communication disability.

Topics: whatever you want to talk about, e.g., pictures symbolising 'what do you want to do during the day', 'where you live' etc.

Options: relating specifically to each topic. For example: ''your bedroom'? Or 'the garden'?

Top Scale: this allows your child to indicate their general feelings about each topic and option. The meaning of the visual top scale can be adapted to suit the questions you are asking the learner, for example, whether they are happy, unsure, or unhappy

Once the topic is chosen, options are given one at a time for your child to think about how they feel about each one. They can then place the symbol under the appropriate visual scale symbol to indicate what they feel.
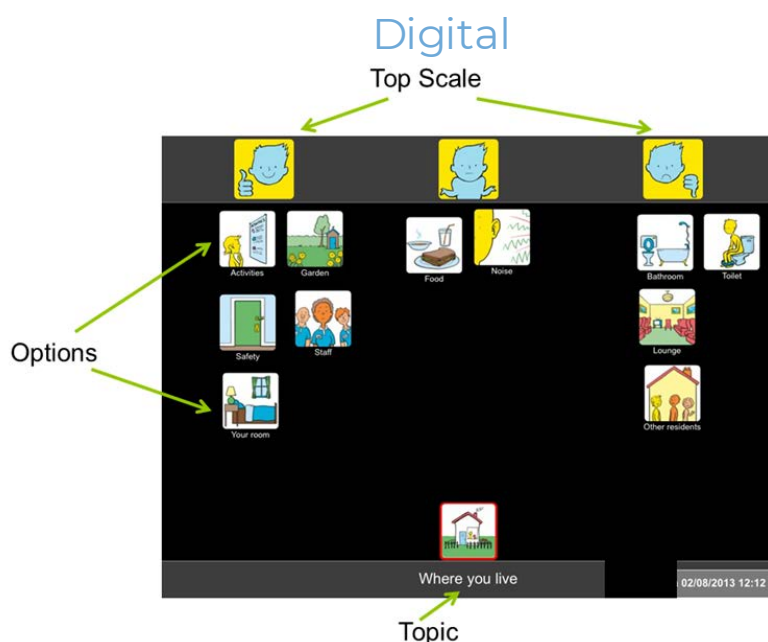
Digital

Textured

PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System)

PECS is used for learners with little or no communication abilities to communicate using pictures. PECS works well in the home or in the classroom. Its main aim is to allow learners to make requests, answer questions or make comments.

Creating your own picture cards at home allows parents and carers to tailor them to your child's individual needs. Simple images drawn on a piece of paper, or cut out of magazines and glued to paper, and then labelled. Laminating frequently used picture cards will allow then to last longer. Cards can be separated into categories for easy access e.g. food and beverages, toys, etc

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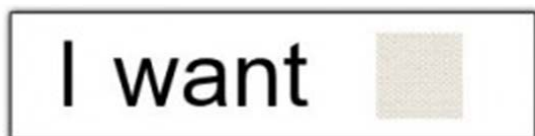
4. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

First and Then

First and then boards are resources used in schools to show children what activity they're doing and what they will be doing next. Keeping the information concise, communicates a clear message without overloading information. This can also support children to process information and understand expectations.

Visual timetables

Your child may respond well to visual timetables in school. These can be replicated at home. Ask your key contact more about this.

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Getting ready - home time keyring cards

You can support your child to remember important routines by using prompt cards, this can encourage independence. Here is an example for a home time routine. Cut out, laminate, punch a hold in the corner an attach to a keyring for a handy set of prompt cards. Cards can be adapted to suit individual needs and routines. Keyrings are also used for other areas, such as behaviour.
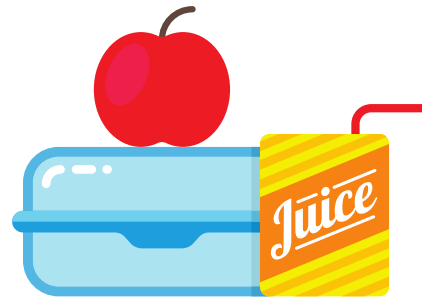
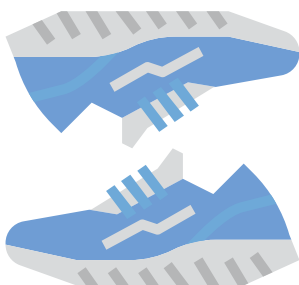**Going home**
I need to remember. . .

School bag

Home School Diary or Planner

Lunch Box

Juice

PE kit

Homework

Do I understand what I need to do? I can ask my teacher if I need help. . .

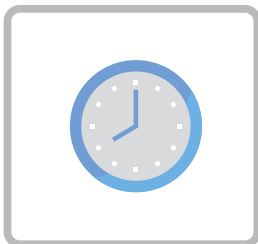# 4. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Social Stories

A social story is an aid to help children with social or sensory needs. This can prepare them for what to expect, as well as what to do or how they might feel in an event or unfamiliar situation. There are some examples below to show how these can be used with your child. How often you or you child reads their social story will vary, some children may benefit from reading this daily while others may not need this resource.
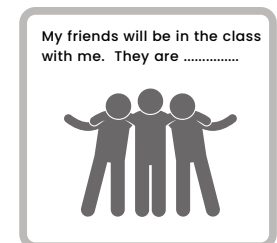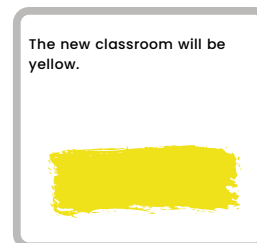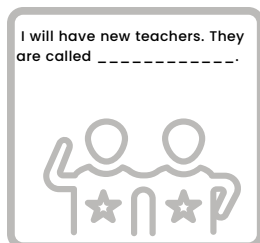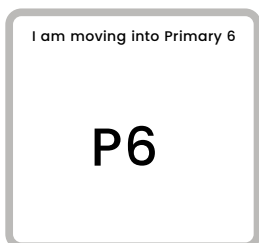
Pictorial example- what I need to take to school

Visual example- getting up in the morning

Visual and word example- moving up a year in school

I am moving into Primary 6

P6

I will have new teachers. They are called _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .

The new classroom will be yellow.

My friends will be in the class with me. They are ....

Words only example- being at school

I will see my friends

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

At break time I will

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ .

At lunch time I will

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ .

I will tell _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ all about my day when I am home from school.
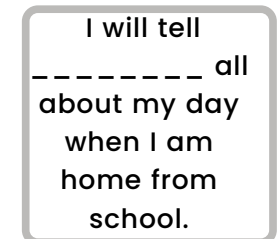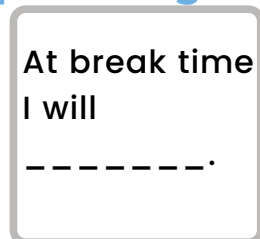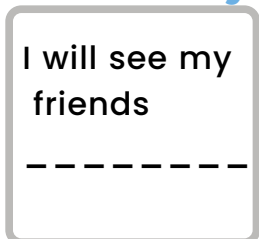
Comic Strip

Comic strip conversations, created by Carol Gray, are simple visual representations of conversation. They can show: the things that are actually said in a conversation how people might be feeling what people's intentions might be.

Comic strip conversations use stick figures and symbols to represent social interactions and abstract aspects of conversation, and colour to represent the emotional content of a statement or message.

Comic strips can be made simple by using paper and pens, word on a computer or on an ipad. Whichever your child prefers to use. This approach can help some of the more abstract aspects of social communication (such as recognising the feelings of others) are made more 'concrete' and are therefore easier to understand.
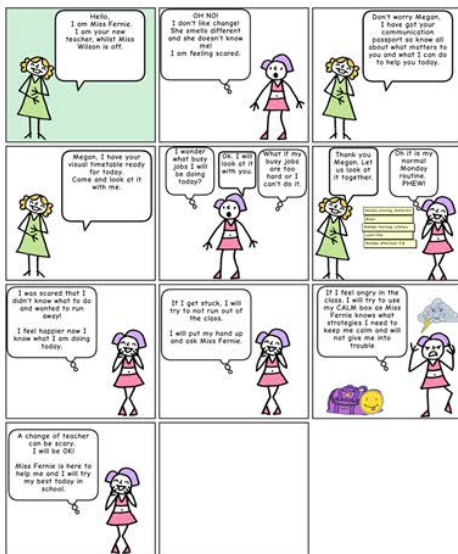
4. TOOLS AND RESPONSES

AAC (Augmentative & Alternative Communication)

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) covers a huge range of techniques that support or replace spoken communication. These include gestures, signing, symbols, word boards, communication boards and books, as well as Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs).

AAC is a range of strategies and tools from simple letter or picture boards to sophisticated computer technologies. AAC helps someone to communicate as effectively as possible, in as many situations as possible.

Intensive Interaction

Intensive Interaction is an approach designed to help learners at early levels of development. Intensive Interaction teaches and develops communication such as; use and understanding of eye contact, facial expressions, vocalisations leading to speech, taking turns in exchanges of conversation and the structure of conversation.

Transition scenarios

Some children may find it helpful to discuss stress-inducing scenarios with an adult beforehand. Please find some examples, which are easily adaptable, below.

You are moving in to a new class.

What do you think it will be like?

What will be the same? What will be different?

What questions could you ask?

How will you feel?

Who could you ask for help?

You are late to school in the morning because the bus didn't turn up on time.
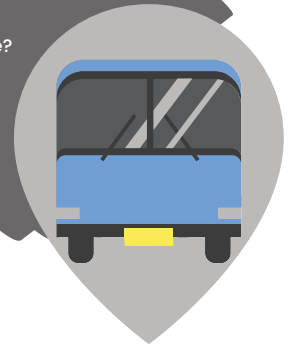
How might you feel?

What happens when you are late?

What could you do?

What might you say?

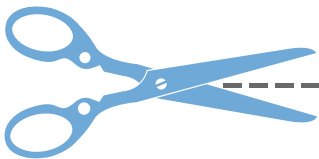Who could help you?

Getting ready - checklist

Cut out, laminate and keep this checklist for getting ready in the morning. You can stick it on the fridge, or a bedroom wall to refer back to. You can tick off with a dry-wipe pen as you go.

- [ ] School bag
- [ ] Jacket
- [ ] Reading book
- [ ] Water bottle
- [ ] P.E kit
- [ ] Home diary
- [ ] Lunch box
- [ ] Pencil case
- [ ] Hat, scarf and gloves

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Co-regulation activities

Blow out the candles

Hold out your hand in front of you or ask the learner to hold out their hand. Pretend that the fingers are candles and 'blow them out' one by one. Breathe in deeply through your nose after each 'blowing out'.

Blow out the candles

Star Breathing

Get your finger ready to trace, starting at any 'Breath in' side of the star. Hold your breath at the point, then breath out. Keep going until you have travelled around the star.
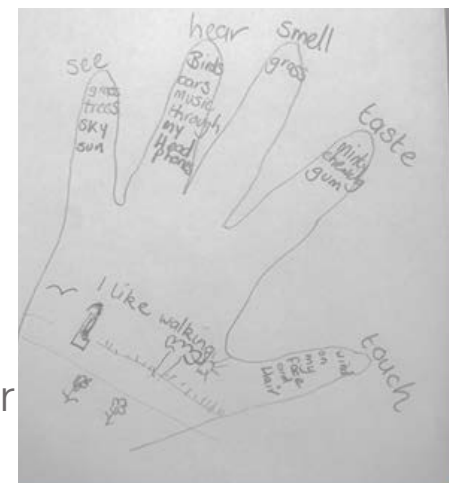

Happy Hands

Help your child to draw around their hand. At the tip of each finger write each sense (see, hear, smell, taste, touch).
Then ask your child to think of a place they enjoy being or an activity they enjoy doing. Draw or write the activity in the palm of the hand and then fill out what sense they experience in each finger.
Your child can trace their finger around their hand template while breathing to help them regulate or visit their happy place when worried or anxious.

Separation Anxiety

Young people of any age can feel worried or upset about leaving a parent or carer. This may be for a number of reasons and the young person may not even know why they feel this way. This activity aims to help a young person feel that they have something of their parent or carer with them, even when they are not there in person. The activity provides the child with a visual aid to help them stay calm and content throughout the day. Often, the frequency of needing to look at the object will decrease.

You will need:

- paint (in bright colours) for each person;
- fabric or material (ideally an old bedsheet or t-shirt);
- a paint brush;
- clean water

Instructions:

1. Before you begin, it is important to make sure your hands are clean. Each person should pick a colour of paint to use.

2. Using the paintbrush, paint your child's hand.

3. Place the painted hand on the fabric, making sure that you press down firmly to leave a full handprint. Leave the fabric to dry.

4. While the print is drying, wash off the excess paint and swap roles. Your child can now paint your hand.

5. Again, place the painted hand on to a clean piece of material. You can put both prints on separate pieces if material or put them together.

6. Once the paint has dried, your child can keep your hand print and you can keep theirs.

7. Decide where you are going to keep them e.g. pocket or bag, Agree that you will keep them with you at all times.

4. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Summer Bag Challenge

To help your new teacher and class get to know you, why not create a 'transition bag' over the summer holidays and bring it in to share when you start back? You could include photographs, hand-drawn art, objects. . . anything you like! Here are some ideas of what to include in your bag. . .

What do you like to do?

What makes you special?

Who are you?

Who is in your family?

Who are your friends?

What is your favourite place?

What is your favourite food?

What makes you smile?

Who makes you smile and laugh?

5. LOCAL SUPPORT

Parents and carers are encourage to get in touch with their designated key contact. Working in partnership is extremely important to Lockhart Campus staff.

Lockhart Campus

Boglemart Street
Stevenston
KA20 3JX
01294 441400
LockhartCampus@glow.sch.uk
https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/na/asncampus/

North Ayrshire Specific Support:

Ayrshire College
www1.ayrshire.ac.uk/

CEIS
www.ceis.org.uk/

DYW - Developing The Young Workforce
www.dyw.scot/ayrshire.html

Education Psychology
www.northayr-edpsychs.co.uk

Money Matters
www.nahscp.org/money-matters

NAC Speech and Language
01294 400721

Supported Employment - Employability Hubs and Training Support
www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/jobs-and-training/employability-hubs.aspx

6. NATIONAL SUPPORT

AAC (Augmentative & Alternative Communication)
https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk

ARC Scotland Scottish Transitions Forum
https://scottishtransitions.org.uk/7-principles-of-good-transitions/

Scottish Government
https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-disabled-children-young-people-and-their-families

Carers Scotland Making Life Better For Carers,
https://www.carersuk.org/scotland

Contact Talking About Tomorrow
http://www.talkingabouttomorrow.org.uk

Enable Scotland
https://www.enable.org.uk

Enquire; The Scottish advice service for additional support for learning.
 http://www.enquire.org.uk

ILF Transition Fund
https://ilf.scot/transition-fund

Intensive Interaction
https://www.intensiveinteraction.org

LEAD: Linking Education And Disability
http://www.lead.org.uk

National Autistic Society
www.autism.org.uk

PAMIS: Promoting A More Inclusive Society
https://pamis.org.uk

Mecoco Social Enterprise Scotland
https://www.mecoco.org

Princes Trust
https://theprinces-trust.org.uk/about-the-trust/where-we-work/scotland

Sense Scotland One Giant Leap
https://www.sensescotland.org.uk/what-we-do/one-giant-leap/

Skills Development Scotland Provides career advice and information for all young people, including those with additional support needs.
https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/

Social Stories
www.CarolGraySocial Stories.com

Talking Mats
https://www.talkingmats.com

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