
Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Stage 1 Scoping and Assessing for Relevance

Section 1 Details of the Proposal

A. Title of Proposal: Development of Cluster Pupil Support Teacher model

B. What is it? A revised Policy/Strategy/Practice

C. Description of the proposal: The development of a Cluster Pupil Support Team Model is a strategic initiative aimed at transforming the effectiveness of inclusive education delivery across Scottish Borders Council (SBC) schools. The delivery model supports subsidiarity via the cluster model approach to decision making and resource allocation.

This model reimagines the structure, terminology, and operational practices of the majority of existing pupil support services, Inclusion and wellbeing services, Autism outreach, Access to ICT, language and communication teachers to better align with Scotland's commitment to inclusive education. All schools remain responsible for meeting the needs of all learners.

The revised model supports the staged intervention framework model by:

1. Integrating key services—initially in phase one Leader Valley Autism, Language and Communication, Access to ICT and Inclusion and Wellbeing service teachers—into a cohesive Targeted Pupil support team based around the cluster.

2. Establishing a cluster-based Pupil Support team, in phase 2, consisting of current Support for Learning and Pupil Support teachers supporting work done by the school at Universal and Universal plus level to ensure every child receives the support they need to thrive in mainstream education settings.

The model reinforces the Team Around the Cluster approach, for Targeted Pupil Support where staff from various support backgrounds collaborate to provide targeted, flexible, and responsive interventions. It also creates a cultural shift in how pupil support is understood and communicated, with a strong emphasis on professional learning, resource equity, and community engagement.

Objectives

Embed Inclusive Practices

Ensure consistent approaches to inclusive learning, teaching, and assessment are understood and implemented by all schools.

Rebrand and Unify Support Roles

Standardise terminology across services to foster consistency, clarity and cohesion, including renaming roles such as Support for Learning Teachers (Phase 2)

Strengthen Collaboration Across Clusters

Establish cluster-based teams that work collegiately to meet pupil needs using existing resources more effectively.

Enhance Professional Learning

Provide universal and bespoke training to all school staff, focusing on trauma-informed practice, neurodivergence, nurture and wellbeing.

Conduct Needs-Based Resource Allocation

Use data-driven analysis to allocate support staff and resources based on actual pupil needs, ensuring fairness and transparency.

Ensure Sustainable and Flexible Support Delivery

Create a model that allows for dynamic response to emerging challenges, using regular cluster meetings (CAG) to review and reallocate resources.

Minimise Structural Disruption

Implement changes without requiring current staff to reapply for roles, preserving expertise and maintaining stability.

D. Service Area: Education

Department: Education and Lifelong Learning

E. Lead Officer: Downie, Wayne

F. Other Officers/Partners involved: (List names, job titles and organisations)

Kathy Davidson Principal Educational Psychologist

Christian Robertson Quality Improvement Manager

Fiona Mills Headteacher Leader Valley

Fiona Wilson Financial Analyst

Lorna Aitken HR Business Partner

G. Date IIA completed: 30/10/2025

Section 2 Will there be any impacts as a result of the relationship between this proposal and other policies?

Yes

If yes, - please state here

testing

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- Strengthen Collaboration Across Clusters Establish cluster-based teams that work collegiately to meet pupil needs using existing resources more effectively.
- Enhance Professional Learning Provide universal and bespoke training to all school staff, focusing on trauma-informed practice, neurodivergence, nurture and wellbeing.
- Conduct Needs-Based Resource Allocation Use data-driven analysis to allocate support staff and resources based on actual pupil needs, ensuring fairness and transparency.
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reallocate resources. Minimise Structural Disruption Implement changes without requiring current staff to reapply for roles, preserving expertise and maintaining stability.

Section 3 Legislative Requirements

3.1 Which groups of people do you think will be or potentially could be, impacted by the implementation of this proposal?

(You should consider employees, clients, customers / service users, and any other relevant groups).

In considering the impact of your proposal on people with equality characteristics, you should take into account the fact that the Equality Act 2010 covers:

- A. **Elimination of discrimination (both direct & indirect), victimisation and harassment.** (Will the proposal discriminate? Or help eliminate discrimination?)
- B. **Promotion of equality of opportunity?** (Will your proposal help or hinder the Council with this)
- C. **Fostering good relations?** (Will your proposal help to foster or encourage good relations between those who have different equality characteristics?)

Protected Characteristics:

Please describe the potential impacts, and how any negative impacts could be mitigated. Some negative impacts may not be capable of mitigation, but the proposal as a whole may still be regarded as a proportionate means of achieving its outcomes.

Age: Older or younger people or a specific age grouping

27/11/2025 Positive impact: Children and young people will benefit from more equitable and needs-based allocation of ASN support. A more effective and fairer use of resources will serve the interests of and improve the outcomes of children regardless of their age.

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This may be visible or invisible, progressive or recurring.

27/11/2025 Positive impact: Pupils with additional support needs (visible or hidden, physical, sensory, learning or mental health related) will receive support aligned more closely to their actual needs. This reduces reliance on the persuasiveness of applications and ensures consistency across schools.

Sex: Women and men (girls and boys)

27/11/2025 No impact identified

Gender Reassignment: Anybody who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.

27/11/2025 No impact identified.

Marriage or Civil Partnership: People who are married or in a civil partnership

27/11/2025 No impact identified.

Pregnancy and Maternity: (refers to the period after the birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth).

Answer: 27/11/2025 No impact identified.

Race: including colour, nationality, ethnic origins, including minorities (e.g. gypsy travellers, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers)

27/11/2025 Positive impact: by extending the insight and skills of the current Bilingual support team across the wider proposed Targeted pupil support team the capacity to support schools to understand and meet these needs will be improved.

Religion or Belief: different religious or philosophical beliefs, customs (including atheists and those with no aligned belief) e.g. Christianity, Islam, Hindu, pacifism, vegetarianism, gender critical.

27/11/2025 Positive impact: by extending the insight and skills of the current Bilingual support team across the wider proposed Targeted pupil support team, the capacity to support schools to understand and support pupils with different beliefs and customs will be improved.

Sexual Orientation: e.g. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Heterosexual

27/11/2025 No impact identified

3.2 Fairer Scotland Duty

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to how we can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socioeconomic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

The duty is set at a strategic level - these are the key, high level decisions that SBC will take. This would normally include strategy documents, decisions about setting priorities, allocating resources and commissioning services.

Is the proposal strategic?

Answer: Yes

If No go to Section 4

If Yes, Please describe the potential impacts, and how any negative impacts could be mitigated. Some negative impacts may not be capable of mitigation, but the proposal as a whole may still be regarded as a proportionate means of achieving its outcomes.

Low and/or No Wealth: enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.

27/11/2025 Enhanced access to support services through cluster-level coordination for pupils may reduce barriers to learning caused by financial instability in the home.

Material Deprivation – being unable to access basic goods and services i.e. financial products like life insurance, repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies

27/11/2025 Trauma-informed and resilience-building practices can mitigate the emotional toll of deprivation.

Area Deprivation – where you live (e.g. rural areas), where you work (e.g. accessibility of transport), see rural proofing guidance

27/11/2025 Cluster-based models allow for localised responses, which is especially beneficial in rural or underserved areas.

Socio-economic Background – social class i.e. parents' education, employment and income

27/11/2025 Professional learning for staff on neurodiversity and trauma can help reduce bias and improve outcomes for pupils from disadvantaged background. Children from lower

socio-economic backgrounds are statistically likely to have experienced higher rates of trauma related experiences and there can be lower rates of diagnosis of Neurodivergence in children from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Strategic leadership of targeted supports and consistent terminology promote equity across schools.

Care experienced people

Answer: 27/11/2025 Trauma-informed practices and multi-agency collaboration directly support care-experienced pupils. Bespoke training and localised, flexible support structures can address their unique needs.

Carers paid and unpaid including family members

27/11/2025 No direct impact identified

Homelessness

27/11/2025 <p>Holistic, needs-based support can help identify and assist pupils experiencing housing instability including those in temporary accommodation or without a fixed address. </p>

Addictions and substance use

27/11/2025 Trauma-informed approaches can support pupils affected directly or indirectly by addiction.

Those involved within the criminal justice system

27/11/2025 No direct impact identified.

3.3 Consumer Duty

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to have regard to the matters listed below.

This applies to strategic matters so only complete this section if you have marked “Yes” in Section 3.2

How will the proposal impact on users or potential users of the service? E.g. Will the proposal affect the way in which people can access services, will it improve the range of choice accessible to service users, will it improve or hinder access to information for service users?

27/11/2025 This proposal will positively impact on the potential users of the service. The service will be more equitable and simplify access to targeted pupil support services through a unified and streamlined approach.

If there are any negative impacts, do you intend to mitigate these and, if so, how?

27/11/2025 None identified

3.4 Armed Forces Covenant Duty (Education and Housing/ Homelessness proposals only)

This duty places a legal responsibility on Scottish Borders Council (SBC) to actively consider (give due regard) to the three matters listed below in Education and Housing/ Homelessness matters.

This relates to current and former armed forces personnel (regular or reserve) and their families.

Is the Armed Forces Covenant Duty applicable?

Yes

If Yes:

For each of the following Covenant Duties, You should cover these two points:

The unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the armed forces;

The MOD Statutory Guidance gives the following examples – Link for this can be found here: [MOD Statutory Guidance](#)

- Danger
- Geographical Mobility

-
- Separation from Family
 - Service Law
 - Unfamiliarity with Civilian Life
 - Hours of Work
 - Stress

How is the proposal impacted by the following principles?

If there are any negative impacts, do you intend to mitigate these and, if so, how?

Some negative impacts may not be capable of mitigation, but the proposal as a whole may still be regarded as a proportionate means of achieving its outcomes.

27/11/2025 The emphasis on flexibility, trauma-informed practice, and multi-agency collaboration aligns well with the needs of service families, who may face frequent relocations, separation, and stress. Cluster-level support allows for local responsiveness, which is crucial for families experiencing geographical mobility or unfamiliarity with civilian systems.

The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the armed forces;

How is the proposal impacted by the following principles?

If there are any negative impacts, do you intend to mitigate these and, if so, how?

Some negative impacts may not be capable of mitigation, but the proposal as a whole may still be regarded as a proportionate means of achieving its outcomes.

27/11/2025 Professional learning for staff on trauma and resilience can help them better understand and support pupils from armed forces backgrounds, removing barriers and disadvantage.

The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the armed forces.

How is the proposal impacted by the following principles?

If there are any negative impacts, do you intend to mitigate these and, if so, how?

Some negative impacts may not be capable of mitigation, but the proposal as a whole may still be regarded as a proportionate means of achieving its outcomes.

27/11/2025 Bespoke training and flexible support structures allow for additional provision where needed, acknowledging the unique pressures faced by service families.

3.5 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Scottish Borders Council (SBC) has a duty not to act, or fail to act, in a manner incompatible with the requirements of the UNCRC.

This only applies to certain matters, where SBC is acting under:

- An Act of the Scottish Parliament.
- Regulations made under an Act of the Scottish Parliament.
- A general (common law) legal duty.

Is the UNCRC Duty applicable?

Yes

If "Yes", please complete below

If you have answered yes for any of the Articles, please specify whether it is positive, negative or neutral, the nature of the impact, as well as any mitigations put in place if the effect is negative. Some negative impacts may not be capable of mitigation, but the proposal as a whole may still be regarded as a proportionate means of achieving its outcomes.

Which of the General Principles of the UNCRC are engaged?

Non-discrimination (Article 2)

Impact: Yes

27/11/2025 The needs-based resource allocation ensures that support is distributed fairly across clusters, using data like FSM, care experience, and roll numbers to avoid bias. The integration of services (e.g. Autism Outreach, Bilingual Support) under a unified framework helps eliminate disparities in access to specialist support. The emphasis on inclusive practice and professional learning ensures that all staff are equipped to support diverse learners equitably. Impact: Promotes fairness and equal access to education and support, regardless of background or ability.

Best interests of the child as a primary consideration (Article 3)

Impact: Yes

27/11/2025 The Team Around the Cluster approach ensures that decisions and interventions are made collaboratively, with the child's needs at the centre. The model avoids structural disruption (e.g. no forced reapplication for roles), preserving continuity and stability for pupils. Regular cluster meetings and strategic planning ensure that support is responsive and child-focused. Impact: Ensures that every decision prioritises the wellbeing and educational success of the child.

Right to life, Survival and Development (Article 6)

Impact: Yes

27/11/2025 The enhanced early intervention at Universal and Universal Plus levels helps identify and address needs before they escalate. Professional learning in trauma-informed practice, neurodivergence, nurture and wellbeing supports holistic development. The model builds staff capacity to support pupils' emotional, social, and academic growth. Impact: Supports the full development of every child, especially those with additional needs

Right to be heard (Article 12)

Impact: Yes

27/11/2025 Pupil voice and engagement is explicitly included in Stage 1 of the project plan. The communication strategy includes engaging learners in shaping the model and understanding its impact. The emphasis on community engagement and feedback loops ensures that children's views are considered in decision-making. Impact: Empowers children to participate in shaping the support they receive.

Other:

Impact: No Impact

Section 4 Full Integrated Impact Assessment Required

Select No if you have answered “No” to all of Sections 3.1 – 3.5.

Yes

If a full impact assessment is not required briefly explain why there are no effects and provide justification for the decision.

Signed by Lead Officer: Downie, Wayne

Designation: Head Teacher Inclusion and Wellbeing

Date: 16/09/2026

Counter Signature Director: Downie, Wayne

Date: 16/09/2026