



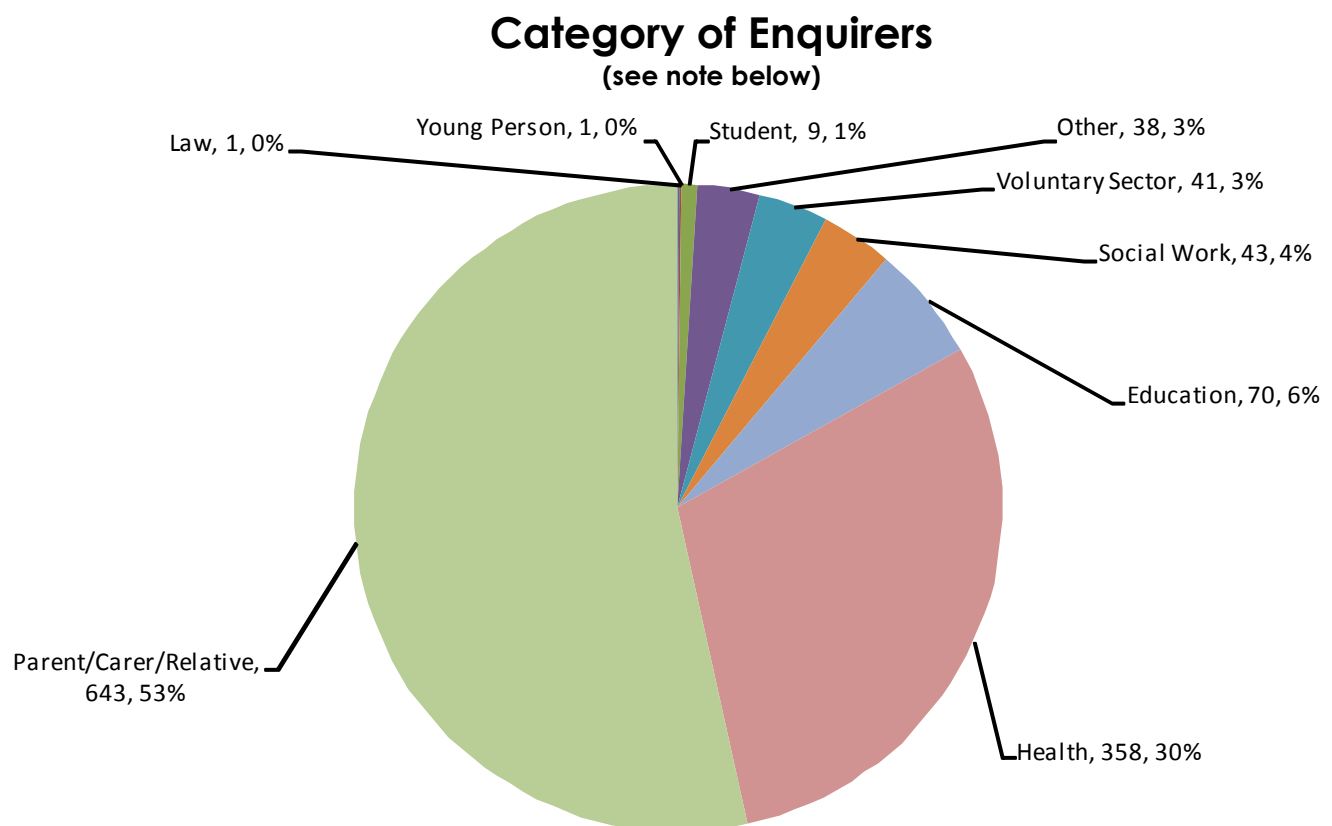
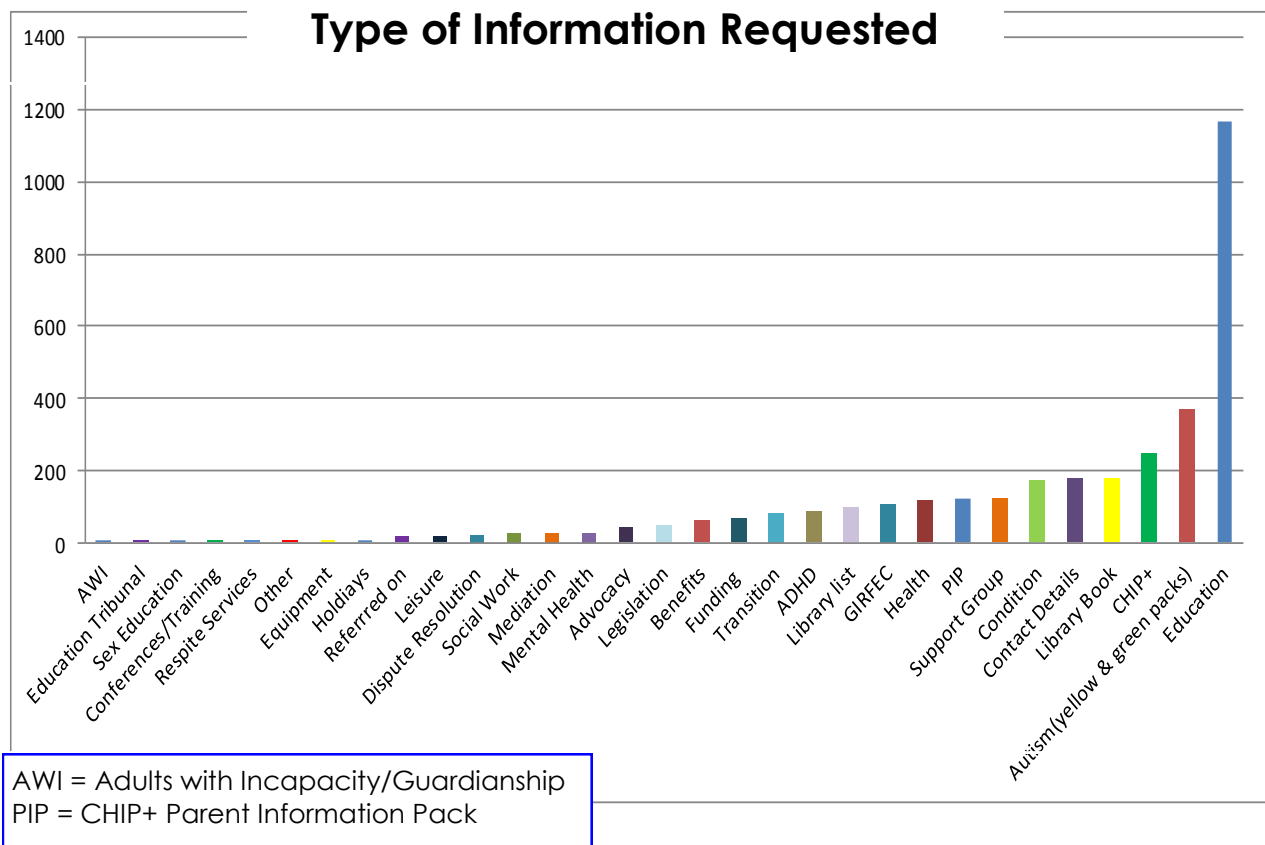
Children in the Highlands Information Point



# Annual Report

## 2012–2013

CHIP+ provides information, support and advice to the families and carers of children with additional support needs and to the professionals who support them.



Note: First figure is the number of enquiries CHIP+ received for the year from that category of enquirer. Second figure is the percentage of enquiries from that category. So for example CHIP+ had 643 enquiries from Parents/Carers & Relatives in 2012/13 which represents 53% of all enquiries.

## **Annual Report 2012 - 2013**

### **List of Contents**

Page 2	Statistics:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Type of information requested</li><li>♦ Category of Enquirers</li></ul>
Pages 4/5	Minutes of last AGM (11th Sept 2012)
Page 6	Chairperson's report
Page 7	Statement of Financial Activities 2012/2013
Page 8	CHIP+ Board of Directors for 2012/2013
Pages 8/9/10	Chief Officer's Report
Page 11	Statistics:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Education Enquiries</li><li>♦ Enquirer's District</li></ul>

**CHIP+ gratefully acknowledges the funding it receives from the Highland Council and NHS Highland and (through the Lotland Street Charity Partnership) from the Scottish Executive's Unified Voluntary Sector Fund.**

# MINUTES OF CHIP+ ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2012 AT 1.30pm  
AT THE PINES, DRUMMOND ROAD, INVERNESS

**PRESENT:** Silvie MacKenzie (Chair/CHIP+ Director), Mary Clark ( Treasurer /CHIP+ Director), Duncan Finlayson (CHIP+ Director), Wendy Kelsey (CHIP+ Director), Isabel Paterson (CHIP+ Director), Karen Ross (CHIP+ Director), Helen Allen (Family Fund), Celia Baxter (Highland Children's Forum), Marie Bird (CHIP+), Rebecca Huxtable-Smith (Parent), Karen Kelbie (CHIP+), Karen MacKnight (CHIP+), Christian MacLean (CHIP+), Calum Munro (Highland Children's Forum), Kathleen Murray (CHIP+ Director), Elsie Normington (Author & Guest Speaker), Liz Shannon, Liz Syred (Trainer), Lisa Sturgess (Area Development Officer NAS).

**APOLOGIES:** Anne Bates, Carol Grant, Catherine Louttit, Diane Roberts, Sarah MacKinnon, Sue Murray, Gillian Newman, Georgina White.

Silvie Mackenzie welcomed everyone to the meeting and was especially pleased to see so many new faces.

<b>1.</b>	<b>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM (22.9.11)</b>  The Minutes of the previous AGM were read and approved. Proposed by: Mary Clark      Seconded by: Isabel Paterson
<b>2.</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>  There were no matters arising.
<b>3.</b>	<b>CHAIRPERSON'S/ANNUAL REPORT</b>  Silvie Mackenzie explained that CHIP+ had a very difficult start to the financial year with a funding cut and reduction in staffing from three to two full time staff. The workload continued and staff found it hard to fulfil all the enquiries. On top of this, files needed to be updated and resources had to be reviewed and replenished. She thanked all the staff for their creative way of working. She thanked the Directors, past and present, for keeping CHIP+ going. They had all done a good job and CHIP+ is doing very well as a result. She was particularly pleased to see the Coffee Mornings/Drop Ins at The Pines, Inverness going from strength to strength (an event run by CHIP+ and the NAS).  It was noted that Macleod and MacCallum continue to act as Company Secretary.
<b>4.</b>	<b>TREASURER'S REPORT</b>  Mary Clark reported that although there was a reduction in funding for the financial year there had also been a reduction in staffing to compensate.  The Directors had been given the opportunity to examine the accounts and no concerns had been expressed. As there were no questions, the accounts were approved.  Proposed by: Isabel Paterson      Seconded by: Duncan Finlayson

5.	<div>ELECTION OF DIRECTORS</div> <div>Silvie Mackenzie informed the meeting that unfortunately <b>Margaret Lamond</b> has now retired as a Director.</div> <div>She further reported that although Kathleen Murray was also due to retire and had therefore not been included in the papers sent out to members, she was delighted to say that Kathleen has been persuaded to stand for re-election again this year. Therefore the following Directors, having agreed to their names being put forward for re-election were elected en bloc:-</div> <div><div><div>Silvie Mackenzie</div><div>Mary Clark</div></div><div><div>Isabel Paterson</div><div>Wendy Kelsey</div></div><div><div>Kathleen Murray</div><div>Sarah MacKinnon</div></div><div><div>Duncan Finlayson</div></div></div> <div>Proposed by: Calum Munro      Seconded by: Liz Shannon</div> <div>Silvie Mackenzie was delighted to report that both <b>Karen Ross</b> and <b>Gillian Newman</b> had agreed to their names being put forward for election as Directors.</div> <div><b>Karen Ross</b> was proposed by Isabel Paterson and seconded by Calum Munro.</div> <div><b>Gillian Newman</b> was proposed by Silvie Mackenzie and seconded by Isabel Paterson.</div>
6.	<div>APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER OF ACCOUNTS</div> <div>Peter Munro &amp; Co of Kingussie was again put forward as the Independent Examiner of Accounts. This was approved and remuneration for services provided would be agreed by Directors.</div> <div>Proposed by: Mary Clark      Seconded by: Silvie Mackenzie</div>
7.	<div>AOCB</div> <div>Isabel Paterson asked for an update on the appointment last year of Rebecca Nicolson as Young Person's Advisor. Christian MacLean informed her that she continues to have an informal link with Rebecca and hoped to consult her on any potential direct work with young people.</div> <div>Mary Clark was presented with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of all her hard work with the charity's accounts.</div> <div>As there was no further business the meeting closed.</div> <div>Christian MacLean then introduced the guest speaker, Elsie Normington, who spoke about her new book, The Silent Doorbell, giving everyone a most moving and inspirational account of her experience as the mother of a child/young man with complex needs.</div> <div>The football raffle raised £20.</div>

## **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT APRIL 2012 TO MARCH 2013**

Dear Parents, Carers, Professionals and Friends of Chip+

This being my last year as Chairperson of Chip+ I would like to say a few words about my time with Chip+. When we started Chip 20 years ago there was a real need for basic information for parents and Carers of children with special needs. This need has never changed over the years, but the range of information people require has changed and become much more complex over the years.

As the enquiries grew the need for more Information officers grew as well. Not only did we need more staff, but Staff with a huge understanding and knowledge regarding special needs and special educational needs.

Chip+ has always been lucky to find competent, dedicated and loyal staff to fulfil the needs of parents, carers and professionals. They not only gave information, guidance and support, but also arranged many training sessions for different groups of parents and professionals. Chip+ took part or arranged many events and conferences all over the highlands.

I have always thought outreach a major part of Chip+ work and for many years the team travelled all over the highlands to give parents the opportunity to meet the team, make personal links which would help in the future when most needed. I would like to thank the whole team for their willingness to give up their evenings and stay away from home to make this possible. Unfortunately our current financial situation does not allow us to go out with the Inverness area very often at the moment. I do hope this will be a priority again as and when we are able to get some funding for it.

The complexities of the enquiries today very often turn into on- going caseloads requiring many hours of guidance and support for parents and Carers. Our small team is struggling to cope with the ever increasing workload and a priority is to find additional funding to employ more staff.

At the end of this financial year Chip started planning our 20 years celebration. This did not help to reduce the workload for our staff team, but with the help of the Directors, friends and the team we managed to have a most wonderful celebration in June.

I am delighted to have been able to be part of this special celebration. I have always valued to be part of Chip+, in all the ups and downs over the years and I am very proud of what Chip+ has achieved over the years.

I would like to say a very big thank you to all the wonderful Staff, the many Directors who have given their time and enthusiasm to keep Chip+ going and to all the parents and Friends who have supported Chip+ over the years.

I would also like to thank the Highland Council and NHS for their on-going support.

And finally I would like to say thank you for all Chip+ has given me personally over the years.

I wish Chip+ all the very best for the future.

**Silvie MacKenzie**

**CHILDREN IN THE HIGHLANDS INFORMATION POINT PLUS (CHIP+)**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013**

			31.3.13	31.3.12
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		funds	funds	funds
	Notes	£	£	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>				
<b>Incoming resources from generated funds</b>				
Voluntary income	2	4,192	7,464	11,656
Investment income	3	37	-	37
<b>Incoming resources from charitable activities</b>				
Hi Hope Handbook		-	-	-
ASL Guides		-	1,844	1,844
Autism packs		-	2,737	2,737
ADHD packs		-	296	296
Service level agreement		87,000	-	87,000
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		91,229	12,341	103,570
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>				
<b>Charitable activities</b>				
Outreach work		1,531	-	1,531
Core Activities (Information / Support Service)		56,952	3,306	60,258
Hi Hope Handbook		-	-	-
ASL Guides		-	1,844	1,844
Autism packs		-	2,737	2,737
ADHD packs		-	296	296
Support costs		31,500	1,338	32,838
PIP Packs		84	-	84
<b>Governance costs</b>		6,812	-	6,812
<b>Total resources expended</b>		96,879	9,521	106,400
<b>NET INCOMING/(OUTGOING) RE-SOURCES</b>		(5,650)	2,820	(2,830)
<b>Gross transfers between funds</b>	10	182	(182)	-
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources</b>		(5,468)	2,638	(2,830)
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>				
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>		37,674	686	38,360
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		32,206	3,324	35,530

For a full set of Accounts please contact the CHIP+ office

# CHIP+ BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2012-2013

**Chairperson:** Silvie MacKenzie

**Treasurer:** Mary Clark

Isabel Paterson - Parent/Carer (Highland Children's Forum)

Wendy Kelsey - Parent/Carer (Highland AD/HD Support Group)

Sarah MacKinnon - Parent/Carer

Duncan Finlayson - Support for Learning Teacher (retired)

Kathleen Murray - Parent/Carer & Lecturer in Child and Family Studies

Karen Ross - Parent/Carer (FACES)

Gillian Newman - Independent Participation Professional

**Company Secretary:** Macleod and MacCallum

## CHIP+ 2012 TO 2013

**Where we've come from....**On our front cover this year you'll see a photograph of a happy moment from our 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrations. Because amazingly, CHIP+ has reached the grand old age of 20 this year! Started by Sue Murray and Silvie Mackenzie—with support from many others—In 1993, CHIP+ was “set up specifically to meet a perceived need for information relating to children with special needs.” (all quotes are from Annual Reports). A range of partner organisations throughout Highland supported the new charity and have continued to work closely with us.

CHIP+ started with one very part-time worker, Liz Shannon, working out of a completely empty room in Drummond School. But the information needed “had first to be gathered. My filing cabinet became full and my shelves looked less bare”. Very quickly enquiries started to pour in—with 103 in the first year rising year on year until by 2000 the number had quadrupled. For the first 10 years around half of the enquiries every year related to syndromes or medical conditions, funding, or support groups. Slightly more than half of all enquiries came from professionals (usually health professionals seeking information on behalf of a family) with the rest from parent/carers. And in the first year more enquiries came by letter than by phone.

Other developments followed quickly. In its first year CHIP produced two newsletters with a circulation of 750: by 2000 a quarterly newsletter reached 2500 recipients. Liz mentions in her reports the dramatic surge in enquiries which tended to follow every newsletter's publication. In 1995 CHIP became one of the first occupants of the new Birnie Child Development Centre at Raigmore Hospital, forging close links with a range of health professionals there and providing a convenient drop-in information point for families attending clinics.

The first Parent Information Pack was launched in 1997 : “There has been general agreement that it will go a long way to balance the lack of information that parents so desperately want and need”. Early copies were eagerly sought by parents, professionals and other agencies, with one turning up at a conference in Barcelona!

Increased funding from various sources enabled a gradual increase in the Information Officer's hours until by 2001 the office was open 5 days a week and a part-time Assistant was appointed. The biggest change in CHIP's work, however, came with Scottish Executive funding for the CHES project (Children in the Highlands Education Support Services) in 2003, a multi-agency project led by CHIP. The new organisation's emphasis on providing support in educational issues was a new development and provided a foretaste of the major shift in emphasis which was to come with the advent of the Additional Support for Learning legislation in 2004. It had become clear that “Families require a one-stop holistic service providing information, advice and support on all aspects of their children's lives”. As the CHES project ended CHIP became CHIP+ with a remit to become “the first-line provider of information, advice and support in relation to additional support needs, including the new requirements which fall within the additional support needs legislation”. A second office and resource centre at Lotland St was opened and new partnerships developed.



2005 to 2007 saw CHIP+ with 4 full-time Information and Support Officers and a part-time Chief Executive: 1269 enquiries were answered.

**In 2012-2013 we had two fewer full-time staff answering 1204 enquiries.** Even more significant is the balance of enquiries and the impact on CHIP+'s work. **While only 13 Enquiries in 2005-06 were Stage 3 level, this had risen to 153 by 2012-2013.** (Stage 3 enquiries are complex and usually lengthy enquiries from parent/carers, often involving attendance at school meetings throughout Highland and always requiring extensive record-keeping).

The increasing number of very complex enquiries, often involving parent/carers in distress over very difficult situations, has continued to put major stress on CHIP+ Information and Support Officers over the past year. Staff are working at full capacity and continue to have to look for ways to manage the workload as efficiently as possible. As highlighted in the Chairperson's report, this has unfortunately led to a decrease in CHIP+'s ability to undertake much outreach throughout the Highlands. Despite this staff have attended a range of meetings and roadshows organised by partner voluntary organisations throughout Highland, providing Information stalls and speaking about our work.

Our involvement at the Pines also continues to grow: the drop-in events for parent/carers organised jointly with the National Autistic Society (now alternating themed meetings and informal drop-ins every two weeks through term-times, with the addition of quarterly twilight sessions), continue to be very well-attended (with the morning sessions often having 20-30 attendees). In addition the Pines library (though only open for a brief period each week at present) is now up and running: we attended the opening event and are involved in the ongoing development of the library with NAS and The Pines.

As part of the necessity to manage workloads with a reduced staff team, staff have attended fewer school meetings as part of an attempt to deal with as many situations as possible through pre-planned phone meetings with parent/carers. This is monitored to ensure that parent/carers get the support required: at the same time attendance at school meetings is extremely time-consuming (often involving substantial travel throughout Highland along with a high degree of preparation and follow-up). If the shift towards more phone-based meetings is successful it would enable us to manage the workload and meet the needs of as many families as possible.

Our Information Packs continue to be regularly updated: the final pack in the 3-part ASD information pack for parents (given out by health professionals on actual diagnosis) is heavily used and meetings took place to develop this further and ensure a clear distribution pathway.

Demand for inclusion of articles in our newsletter (as a regular and widely read source of information on issues of relevance to both families and professionals) continues to grow. Through the year we moved to a termly edition (one at the start of each school term, so 3 per year) and started to move to online distribution where possible.

Since we lost approx 25% of funding at the start of the previous financial year (2011-2012) we have struggled financially. (This comes in the context of 50% of small to medium UK charities dipping into Reserves during the 2012-2013 financial year in order to survive). We continue to be very grateful to our funders in the Highland Council and NHS Highland who continue to support our work through a Service Level Agreement. At the same time we recognise the urgent need to broaden our funding base, but again in common with many small charities, the increasing demands on staff mean that the time required for fund-raising is very limited. We were delighted, however, to receive donations through the year from Highland Cross, Technip and the James Paton Trust, along with Dingwall and Caithness Rotary Clubs and a number of individual supporters.

At the end of March 2013, however, UVSF funding for the Lotland St Partnership (a consortium of charities operating from shared offices) came to an end and we moved to the CHIP+ office in the Pines, with our main office continuing to be in the Birnie Centre. We have greatly valued the partnership with the other charities involved, and in particular with HCF, who led the bid for UVSF funding and with whom CHIP+ has worked closely for many years. Joint working continues

with representation on each other's committees and shared interests in issues affecting children and young people with Additional Support Needs.

CHIP+ continues to provide regular inductions for new staff based at or using the Birnie Centre and to be well used as a source of information by staff based there and the Pines. To enable us to develop a relationship with new staff based at the Birnie, and to ensure that all staff are aware of what we provide, we hosted an informal drop-in session in the autumn and plan to repeat this on a regular basis.

CHIP+ continues to have representation on a range of other bodies: within Highland itself Highland Children's Forum, the Disability Improvement Group (Highland Council), Highland 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Children and Families Group, Dyslexia Association, the Down's Syndrome Association; and on a national level Contact a Family (Scotland) and the Education Law Unit (Govan Law Centre).

Yet again we have been very fortunate in having a group of very committed and involved Directors, with the majority being parent/carers. Through the year we had two very good team-building and planning days with both staff and Directors. On behalf of all the staff I would like to give them all our thanks for all their dedication and support.

As I write this report we face major changes in our committee with the forthcoming retirement of two of our longest-serving Directors. Mary Clark has been CHIP+ Treasurer for 9 years and has been a pillar of support to CHIP+. And Silvie MacKenzie, one of our founders, is standing down as Chairperson at the next AGM. It is hard to imagine CHIP+ without Silvie's commitment, wise counsel and above all her passion for making all services, including ours, respond creatively and well to the needs of children and young people with additional support needs. We will miss her but feel sure her involvement with CHIP+ will continue as we move into the next 10 years.

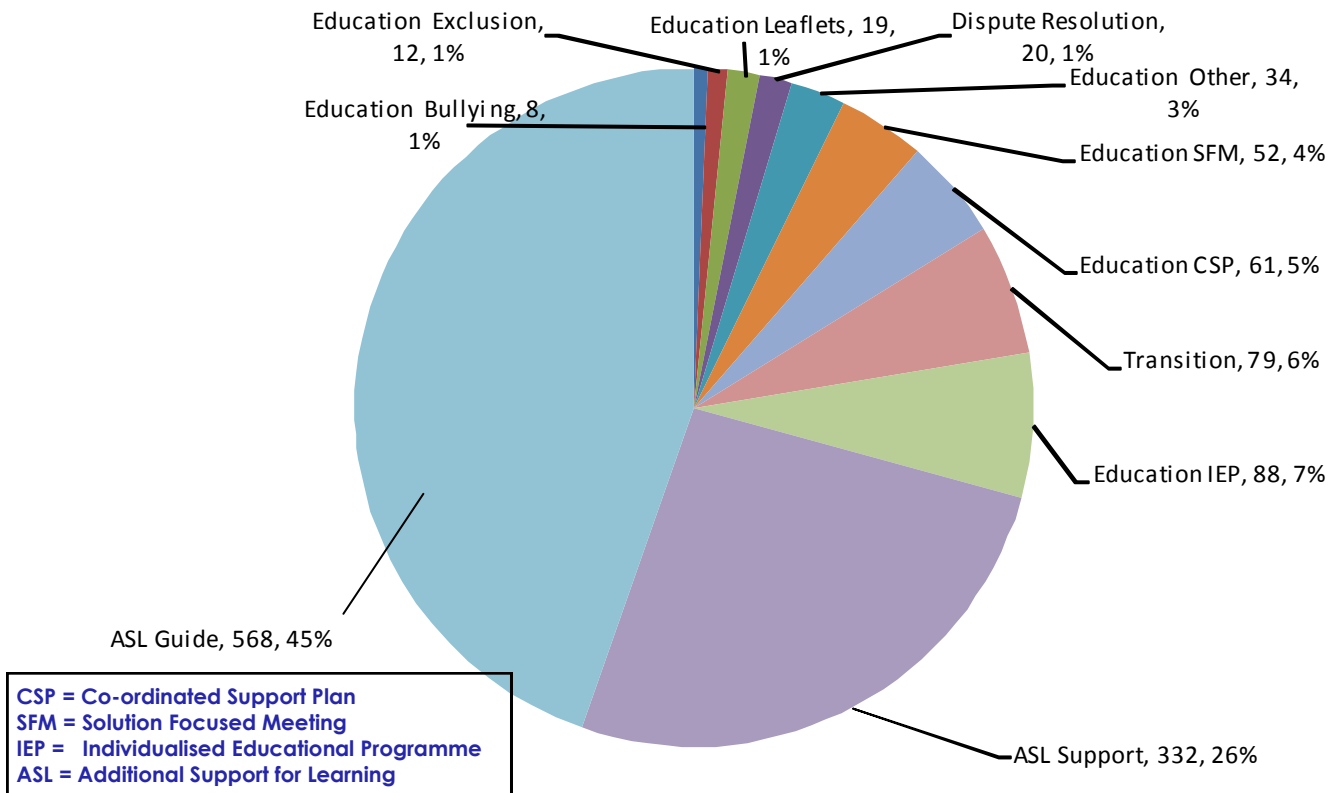
At the same time we will say goodbye to Marie Bird, Senior Information and Support Officer since 2005, whose knowledge of the Additional Support for Learning legislation, together with her caring and conscientious approach to all she does, have made her an invaluable source of support to families throughout Highland.

Looking through the Reports of CHIP+'s work since its founding in 1993, the continuing support (both financial and as partners) for CHIP+ shown by our main funders, the Highland Council and NHS Highland, has been a constant, and we would like to thank them on behalf of all our users. CHIP+ has also always had a tremendous range of support from a variety of individuals and organisations, and particularly all the families who use our service, and we owe them all a huge thank you.

Over the past 20 years CHIP+ has changed and developed in many ways to meet shifting needs and changing legislations and demands. Throughout this, however, its original vision-the provision of reliable, accessible and local information and support for the carers (families and professionals) of children and young people with Additional Support Needs-remains relevant and as urgently needed as at any time before.

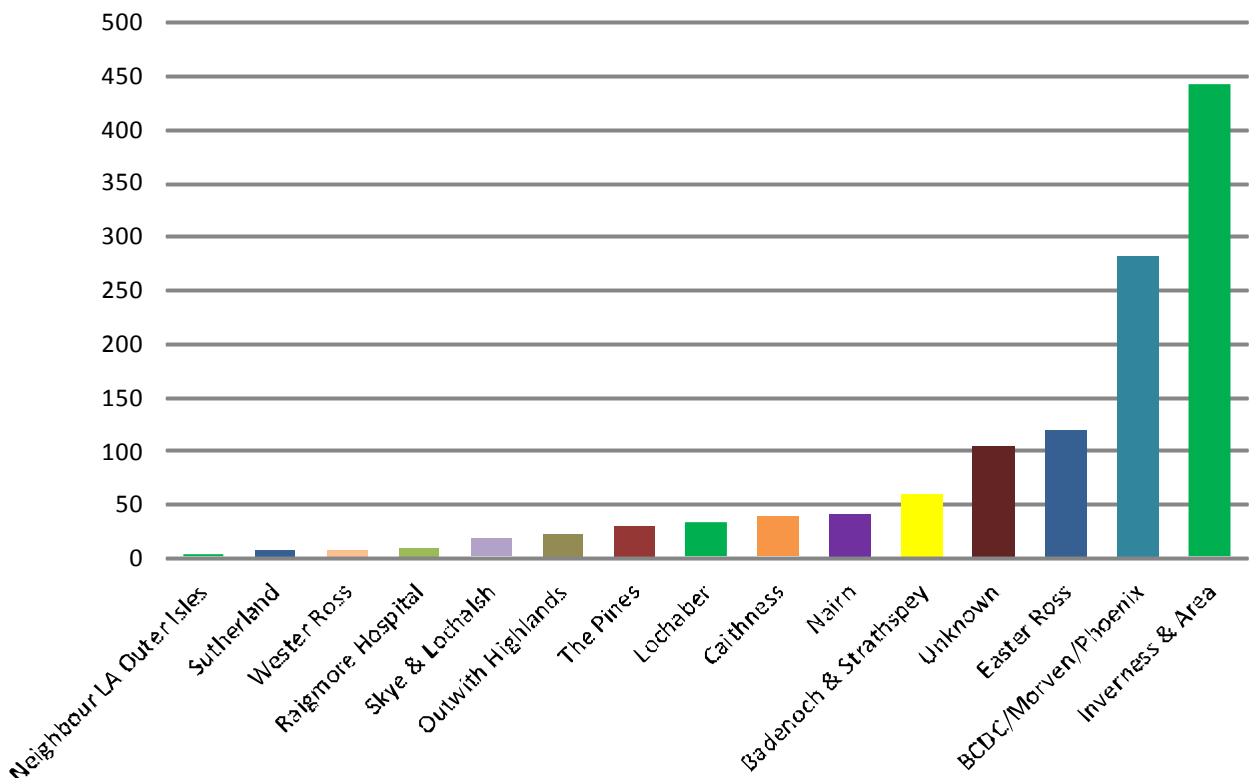
**Christian Maclean**  
**Chief Officer**

## Education Enquiries



**Note:-** Above chart shows information, support and advice given out specifically regarding Education. So, for example, CHIP+ was contacted 79 times for information on Transition which represents approximately 6% of information given out on Education over the entire year.

## Enquirer's District



Neighbour LA = Neighbouring Local Authority  
 BCDC/Morven/Phoenix = Birnie Centre, Morven House and Phoenix Centre



Children in the Highlands Information Point



"It was a God send at the time as I heard what I needed to hear at the right time and in the right place for me. "

CHIP+  
Birnie Centre  
Raigmore Hospital  
Inverness  
IV2 3UJ

Tel: 01463 711189  
[info@chipplus.org.uk](mailto:info@chipplus.org.uk)  
[www.chipplus.org.uk](http://www.chipplus.org.uk)

Scottish Charity Number: SC024835  
CHIP+ is a Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in Scotland  
Reg. No. 241635  
Reg. Office: 28 Queensgate, Inverness, IV1 1YN