



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Plans for additional learning needs

A consultation for children and young people

Hello

The Welsh Government wants all children and young people in Wales to have the best opportunities to do well in life.

We don't want anyone to be held back in life because they find learning difficult.

Some children and young people find learning harder than others and may need extra help with:

- school work
- understanding information
- letting people know what they think.

We call these **special educational needs (SEN) or learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD)**.

In Wales there's a lot of good work to support children and young people with these needs, but we want to make sure that the right support is easily available to anyone who needs it.

What we want to do

This booklet is about the changes we want to make to the law so we can have a better system that helps services work together.

We want to know what you think, so please answer the questions as you go.



Your rights

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out different rights for children and young people. It includes your right to an education and to have a say in decisions that affect your life.

Introduction

Why do we need changes?

The systems we use today were put in place 30 years ago and they no longer do everything we need them to do.

Our vision

We want a new system in Wales to support children and young people who find learning difficult.

This new system will:

- put children, young people and their interests first
- listen to children, young people and their families in decisions that affect their lives
- make sure that the right support is put in place for children and young people
- make the process of agreeing plans easier for them
- help issues or disagreements to be sorted out quickly
- make sure that everyone is working together.



Our three goals

We want:

- a single law about how to support children and young people aged 0–25 who need help with learning
- one system of working together so that all services can step in early with the right support for children and young people who need help with learning
- clear information, advice and support which is fair to everyone if things go wrong or they don't like a decision.

To help us reach these goals we have 10 main things we want to do.

10 aims

1. We want to introduce a new term: 'additional learning needs' (ALN).

ALN will replace SEN (special educational needs) and LDD (learning difficulties or disabilities). The new law will explain exactly what ALN means.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ focus on education and learning needs, not other needs like health needs
- ✓ be a new way of helping children and young people who find learning more difficult than others
- ✓ support learners across early years, school and further education.



2. We want to support all children and young people from 0–25.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ bring all the different systems and laws together into one new system
- ✓ support young people in post-16 further education or training
- ✓ help all learners as they move between schools, move into post-16 education or start work.



Is focusing on learning needs, rather than other needs like health, the right approach?

Yes

No

Why?



Do you think this will help children and young people with additional learning needs aged from 0–25?

Yes

No

Why?

3. We want one individual development plan (IDP) instead of a statement of SEN or other types of plans.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ give every child and young person with ALN an individual development plan (IDP)
- ✓ offer all children and young people with ALN the level of help that they need
- ✓ support all additional learning needs.



Will having IDPs be better than having different plans for different needs?

Yes No Why?

4. We want children, young people and their families to be involved and included in decisions that affect their lives.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ help children, young people and their parents/carers to be involved in planning the help and support they need
- ✓ give clear information and advice
- ✓ offer advocacy when it's needed.



Will this help children and young people have a say in the support they get?

Yes No Why?



Advocacy – someone on your side to help you be heard.

5. We want all children and young people to have hopes for their futures and have goals in their IDP.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ help children and young people to know what support they're supposed to get
- ✓ make sure schools have an Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) who will help children and young people with ALN
- ✓ help children and young people see the achievements they've made and celebrate them
- ✓ make IDPs flexible and easy to change so new goals can be set.

6. We want planning and changing IDPs to be clear and simple so everyone can take part.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ make planning easier than the SEN system we have now
- ✓ help sort out issues and problems quickly
- ✓ give people a way of having a say.



Will these changes better support the needs of children and young people with ALN?

Yes

No

Why?

7. We want all services supporting children, young people and their families to work together.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ help education, health and social services work together as part of the IDP
- ✓ include any support from Local Health Boards (LHBs) or NHS Trusts in IDPs
- ✓ make sure there is a person in each LHB who will help with ALN
- ✓ support looked after children to have an IDP that works with their social services' plans
- ✓ help information to be shared.



Looked after children – some children are looked after by the local authority in foster families or with other carers so they're kept safe.



Will this help everyone to work together to support children and young people with ALN?

Yes

No

Why?

8. We want disagreements and complaints to be dealt with quickly so people don't have to go to a tribunal.



Tribunal – like a court, where someone listens to and makes decisions about disagreements.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ help to stop disagreements and problems from happening
- ✓ support local authorities and parents/carers to work through problems together
- ✓ offer advocacy services to children and young people
- ✓ offer someone separate from local authorities to look at issues and give advice.

9. We want all children, young people and parents/carers to have the right of appeal if they need to.



Appeal – asking someone to look at a decision again.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ give everyone involved the right to appeal or go to tribunal including learners up to the age of 25.



Will this help when there are problems or disagreements about support?

Yes

No

Why?



10. We want a new code of practice to set out rules and guidance for everyone working with children and young people with ALN.

The new ALN system will:

- ✓ let everyone know how to work to the new law.

Next steps

Please send your answers in by 18 December 2015 to:

Additional Learning Needs Branch
Support for Learners Division
Infrastructure, Curriculum, Qualifications and Learner Support Directorate
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

or: SENReforms@wales.gsi.gov.uk



Is there anything you think we have left out from our aims?

