

# Additional Learning Needs Ambassador programme

## Children's views on the Additional Learning Needs Act



# How to use this document



This is an Easy Read version of: **Children in Wales Participation Programme 2024/25 – Additional Learning Needs (ALN) End of year report.**



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PLANT YNG NGHYMRU  
CHILDREN IN WALES

Where the document says **we**, this means **Children in Wales**. For more information contact:

**Website:** [www.childreninwales.org.uk](http://www.childreninwales.org.uk)



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# About this report



We are **Children in Wales**. We work to improve the lives of children and young people across Wales.



The law is called the **Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018**. We will call it the **ALN Act** for short.



The Welsh Government asked us to find out what children and young people think about this law.



We held sessions in different schools. In both Welsh and English.



The children and young people were 6 to 16 years old. We talked to children with additional learning needs.

**1**   
**2**   
**3**

We asked about 3 main areas linked to the ALN Act. They were:

1. About you in school
2. About your school
3. About your future

# What children and young people told us



Now we will share what children and young people told us about these areas.

## 1. About you in school

### Relationships with teachers



Children said when teachers had good relationships with them, their needs were better met.



Good teachers were:

- Kind
- Funny
- Trusting
- Made school feel safe



Children felt listened to and respected by these teachers.



Teachers who were too strict, shouted or rushed them did not meet their needs.



Children felt most involved with school when they were seen, respected and valued.



Praise and being personal helped them feel good.

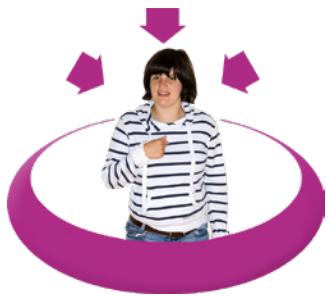


Poor relationships with teachers made children not want to take part in school.



It was important for children to be able to ask for support.

## In the school



Children said it helped when schools used person-centred approaches. This means looking at each child's needs and helping them in the best way for them. For example, 1 to 1 work or small groups.



Children found it helpful when teachers listened and were flexible.



These things helped children cope better and feel stronger. When teachers worked with their needs, it had positive effects.



Children said it was important when they can be open and honest. They liked teachers telling them it was OK to make mistakes.



Some children were not confident that school can meet their needs.



Sometimes schools did not have enough time or resources.



Some children felt their needs were not understood by the school.



Some children felt they could not ask for more support because others also needed help.



Some could not ask for help because they had difficult relationships with teachers or other children.



Some children dropped subjects because they could not get support.



Children talked about how important technology and other resources are. These helped with their learning.



Some children said:

- 1 to 1 support helped.
- Flexible timetables helped. Quiet or calm spaces helped them learn better.

## Person centred planning meeting and plans



Children' needs, age and choices changed how much they joined their meetings about support.



Some children did not understand some of the words used in ALN. But they knew their needs were met.



Some children said the Individual Development Plan helped them feel known and listened to.



But some said they were old and not useful anymore.



Children said their meetings helped them make progress. They also felt listened to.



Some children were quiet in meetings but felt listened to outside the meetings.



Meetings helped children understand decisions about their education and life. This helped them feel included and happier.



Some said they were not always honest. Talks did not feel important or helpful to them.



Some said talks about 6th form made them upset. They did not feel they could get the right support in 6th form.

# Language and Children's Rights

Cymraeg

All children talked about language and said it did not matter if teachers used Welsh or not.



Some children said it was hard when teachers did not always use both English and Welsh. They said it makes learning tiring, especially when there are hard words.



Children did not know much about their rights under the ALN system.

## 2. About your school

### Happiness in school



Children said they were happiest when they had strong relationships with teachers and other children.



These relationships made them feel valued, respected and strong.



Positive teachers helped them grow and learn.



Children liked:

- Lessons they enjoyed
- Support from teachers
- Being outside in nature



Children said exams caused pressure and affected their wellbeing.



Negative attitudes from teachers hurt children's feelings and learning.

# Getting involved in school



We asked children if they wanted to get involved in school. Answers were a mix of yes, no, and it depends.



Some children said teacher's strengths helped them get involved.



They talked about time spent with favourite teachers who could make them laugh.



They felt more able to get involved when learning felt creative and hands on.



They also felt more able to get involved when the work had a purpose.



Or when teachers thought about children's learning and communication styles.



Some children said less writing and more practical learning would help.



Some felt nothing was being done about bullying. This stopped them from joining in. It stopped them from wanting to learn.



1 disabled pupil talked about a gym lesson where the teacher did not understand their needs. They ended up not wanting to take part.



Children said friendships were important and gave support.

### 3. About your future

#### Goals in education



All children wanted to go to 6th form, college or get a job.



They said emotional support and careers advice from school helped them.



Some knew what job they wanted. Others were unsure.



Things that helped children feel they could reach their goals were:

- Good relationships
- Exam results
- Enjoying their subjects



Sometimes teachers had different ideas about what children could achieve than they did.



Some children worried about going to college. They worried about others judging them and what college would be like.

## Getting involved outside of school



Most children were not involved in activities outside of school.



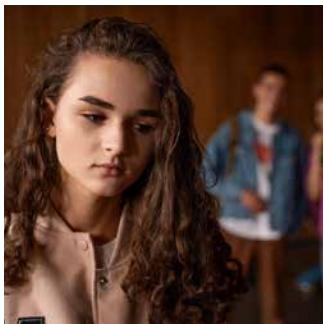
Some joined social groups or mental health activities.



Children talked about hobbies like sport, gaming and social media.



They said they needed transport and more chances to do activities outside school.



Some worried about bullying and living far from places to go.



- It has shared children's experiences of the ALN system.



- It has shown good examples of what works well in different places.



- It has found areas that need to get better.

# What happens next



Welsh Government will work with Children in Wales to look more closely at these areas. This will happen in the final year of the programme.



We will find ways to share the views of children and young people with teachers, schools, and other settings.

