



# Parent Partnership Service



## How will my child or young person's Additional Learning Needs be supported within the new ALN system?

The new Additional Learning Needs - ALN system will be phased in over 3 years from September 2021. The ALNET Act and ALN Code sets out how children and young people aged 0 to 25 with ALN will be supported by a Person Centred Process-PCP, with the child or young person (learner) and their family at the centre of the process. This leaflet aims to give an overview of how learners who have (or may have) additional needs will be supported in schools and settings.

### What is an Additional Learning Need (ALN)?

'A person has additional learning needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise) which calls for additional learning provision.'

The ALNET Act (Wales) 2018

The ALNET Act says that a child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- a) has a **significantly greater difficulty** in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or;
- b) has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 which **prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education** or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream institutions in the further education sector.

A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is likely to (or would be likely to if no ALP were made) have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers when they reach compulsory school age.

### What is Additional Learning Provision (ALP)?

Additional learning provision (ALP) for a person aged **3 years or over** means educational or training provision that is **additional to, or different from**, that made generally for others of the same age. This will of course vary, for learners and for schools, and your child's school should be able to provide this information. A graduated approach from schools should ensure that all learners with ALN get the right level of support when needed.



Many learners will receive support through early interventions and will have their needs identified and met within school's 'Universal Provision', and the 'assess, plan, do, review' approach to meeting learners needs and will have a school based plan.

## What do we mean by Inclusive mainstream schools?

It is possible for a child or young person to have a learning difficulty or disability, or a medical condition, and not be considered to have ALN. One of the principles of the ALN Code is inclusive education, this means where children and young people, including children with ALN, are supported to participate fully in mainstream education, wherever feasible, and a whole school or whole setting approach to meet the needs of learners with ALN. Inclusive mainstream schools will adopt a fully inclusive approach combined with universal learning provision that meets a broad range of learning needs.

## How will schools and Local Authorities decide whether a child has Additional Learning Needs (ALN) which requires Additional Learning Provision (ALP)?

Schools and Local Authorities under the new ALN system will use the following 2 step processes as part of the person centred approach to supporting learners' needs. The learner will be at the centre of this process and parent/carer's views should be included and involved throughout the process.

Question 1. Does the child or young person have a learning difficulty or disability?



If the answer is yes, proceed to question 2 (below)



If the answer is no, the child or young person does not have ALN.

Question 2. Does the learning difficulty or disability call for Additional Learning Provision (ALP)?

Additional Learning Provision (ALP) can take many forms; it might include any support that takes place inside or outside the mainstream classroom, where it is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age. ALP might also be delivered in settings outside of the school in some circumstances and/or by external professionals.



If the answer is yes, they do have ALN which requires ALP, and they will require an Individual Development Plan IDP.



If the answer to this question is no, then they do not have ALN which requires ALP, and they will be supported by schools Universal provision and possibly a school-based plan (not an IDP).

*Please note: For children aged under three, ALP means educational provision of any kind. This is because these children are not at an age where maintained education is routinely available.*

## What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)?

If a child or young person has ALN which requires Additional Learning Provision an Individual Development Plan (IDP) must be prepared. An Individual Development Plan is a plan created with, and agreed by, those



people most closely involved with supporting a child or young person including parents/carers. The ALP needs to be identified and described in the IDP, and secured by the school or Local Authority maintaining the IDP - except where an NHS body is to secure it instead.

For many children and young people, the education setting will provide or arrange the ALP. When this is the case, there may be no need to include other professionals or the local authority in the preparation of the IDP, its day-to-day operation or subsequent reviews, although their advice may be helpful to inform its preparation.

For other children and young people, the support of different agencies may be needed. For those with more complex needs, ensuring that the needs of a child or young person are met might require the input and support of different agencies coming together to provide a comprehensive package of Additional Learning Provision.

### **What happens if a child, parent or young person disagrees with a decision about ALN?**

From time to time, disagreements may arise about your child's Additional Learning Needs (ALN) or Additional Learning Provision (ALP). As far as possible these disagreements should be avoided or resolved at the earliest opportunity.

Firstly, discuss your concerns with your child's school or educational setting. The Parent Partnership Service can support you to do this and offer mediation and impartial advice and support.

Families can request impartial disagreement resolution from the Parent Partnership Service, and can also request an independent disagreement resolution service.

If you have a disagreement about a decision around your child's ALN, in the first instance, you, and/or your child/ young person, should ask for the matter to be reconsidered by the school or setting that made the decision.

If a school is dealing with the request to reconsider the matter and the child, parent or young person concerned is unhappy with the decision following the reconsideration, they can refer the matter to the local authority

If the child, parent or young person concerned is unhappy with a local authority's or FEI's decision, they can make an appeal to the Education Tribunal for Wales.

### **For more information contact:**

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