

# Additional Learning Needs



## Introduction

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The system for supporting children and young people who have Special Educational Needs has now changed. The term Special Educational Needs has been replaced with the term Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The term ALN also replaces the term 'Learning Difficulties and Disabilities' (LDD). As part of the changes, there is an emphasis on high aspirations and improved outcomes for all children and young people who have ALN.

For the majority of children and young people, their needs can be met through high quality teaching and learning. All education settings should put in place differentiated teaching or other targeted support to help pupils make progress, where appropriate. A small number of children and young people, however, will have ALN, which requires Additional Learning Provision (ALP). ALP is additional to or different from educational or training provision, which is generally available for all. Explaining how we meet your child's needs is known as the graduated response.

## What does it all mean?

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From September 2021, the term Additional Learning Needs replaced the term Special Educational Needs, which includes all children and young people aged 0-25 who have needs that require ALP.

A person has additional learning needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for additional learning provision.

It is important to remember that children and young people learn in different ways, and their needs may change over time. Through a continuous cycle of identifying needs, sharing information, planning, taking action and reviewing progress, different support can be identified and provided as necessary.

The support could be increased, reduced or changed over time according to your child's individual progress. This means that earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised to help achieve a growing understanding of

your child. It also supports them in making progress towards their hopes and aspirations.

## Early Years

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When it is decided that a child who is not of compulsory school age (and does not attend a maintained school) has ALN, the Local Authority are responsible for securing the ALP and writing their Individual Development Plan (IDP). The Local Authority has an Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer who can be contacted for advice and support.

## School Age Pupils

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For children who are of compulsory school age, the class teacher or Additional Learning Needs Coordinator is the first point of contact. They will be able to listen to your concerns, and if requested, begin to consider if your child has Additional Learning Needs. This decision will be made within 35 school days, unless the school requires further specialist assessment through the Local Authority or Health Services, in which case a further 12 weeks may be needed.

## Further Education Institutions (FEI)

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Young people accessing FEI who have an ALN will have their needs identified through the FEI provider in the first instance. In a small amount of highly complex cases, the FEI may refer a young person (with their consent) to the Local Authority for further advice and support.

## Universal Support

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Universal Support is the name given to the provision which is routinely available to all children and young people and may be provided at a whole class, small group or individual level. It is monitored and tracked in line with school procedures and could be a short or longer term

provision.

## **Additional Learning Provision (ALP)**

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If a child or young person does not appear to be making progress, then ALP may be required. This will involve the needs of the pupil being identified in a person-centred way and could lead to enhanced and alternative provision being provided to support the pupil in making progress. Children and young people needing ALP will have this described in an IDP.

## **Individual Development Plan (IDP)**

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Individual Development Plans have replaced Statements of Special Educational Needs and Individual Education Plans. These plans are person-centred, ensuring children or young people are at the centre of planning their provision.

Plans will be reviewed at least once a year, and will be created with the child or young person and their parents/carers or advocate. They can also be reviewed if information or needs change, and at the request of the child, young person or parent/carer.

These IDPs describe the individual needs of a child or young person, their aspirations and targets to help them achieve these aspirations. Any child or young person who receives ALP requires an IDP. The majority of these IDPs will be written and maintained by schools, but in some more complex cases, schools may request that the Local Authority consider the needs of the child or young person. If these needs are found to be complex and require specialist input, the Local Authority may write and then either direct the school to maintain the plan or maintain it themselves.

Parents and young people can request to have certain decisions they disagree with reconsidered:

1. To reconsider whether a child has ALN or not;
2. To reconsider a school IDP with a view to making changes to it;
3. To decide whether the Local Authority should take over responsibility for maintaining an IDP;
4. To reconsider a school's decision to cease to maintain an IDP.

Children who are not of compulsory school age and do not attend an LA-maintained school, who have ALN and require an IDP will have this written and maintained by the Local Authority, through the Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer.

In cases of post-16 ALN, the post-16 provider will write and maintain the IDP in the majority of cases, referring to the Local Authority only in cases of complex ALN. This would only happen when it would not be reasonable for the post-16 provider to secure the provision. The Local Authority is responsible for writing and maintaining IDPs for children who are electively home educated, looked after (CLA), and dual-registered pupils who are identified as having ALN.

## Person-centred Approaches

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Person-centred approaches are central to the ALN and Educational Tribunal Act and ALN Code. They are all about putting the child or young person at the centre of identifying their needs, planning their provision and reviewing this.

Reviews of IDPs should take place in a person-centred way and your child's school can provide information or answer any questions you may have regarding this.

## What to do if you're not happy with a decision

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If you are not happy with the decision of a school regarding the consideration of ALN, you can ask for the Local Authority to reconsider this decision. Prior to this, we would recommend that you discuss your concerns with your child's

school. After discussion, if you remain dissatisfied, you can contact the Local Authority to request a reconsideration by emailing the following address: [ALN@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:ALN@conwy.gov.uk)

The reconsideration period can take up to seven weeks. During a reconsideration, the Local Authority will review the information the school used to make their decision and will determine whether they agree or disagree with this. Should the Local Authority disagree, they could direct the school to either write or maintain an IDP for the child or young person or to amend the current version.

If you are not happy with the decision of the Local Authority regarding ALN, you have the right to appeal to the Educational Tribunal (Wales). Any appeals must be made by the first working day within eight weeks of the decision of the Local Authority. If the dispute resolution services noted below are used, the time scale for appeal is extended by a further eight weeks.

You can find out more about the Educational Tribunal (Wales) by visiting the following website: <https://specialeducationalneedstribunal.gov.wales/>

## Dispute Resolution

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If you want independent advice, guidance and support you can contact the Additional Learning Needs Information and Support Service, which is provided by SNAP Cymru. SNAP Cymru also provide a Dispute Resolution Service. SNAP Cymru can be contacted in one of the following ways:

Online Contact: <https://www.snapcymru.org/contact>

Telephone: 0808 801 0608

(Monday – Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm)

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PO Box 1  
Colwyn Bay  
LL29 0GG

[ALN@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:ALN@conwy.gov.uk)

Tel: 01492 575031

**Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd**