



# Additional Learning Needs

An information guide for Parents and Carers

# Introduction

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The system for supporting children and young people who have Special Educational Needs has now started to change. The change will take place over a period of three years and the term Special Educational Needs will be replaced with the term Additional Learning Needs (ALN). It will also replace the term Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD). As part of these changes, there will be 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, and it will encompass children and young people aged 0-25 who have needs that require ALP.

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.

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 and 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 and helps them to realise their hopes and aspirations.



# Early Years

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Should it be determined that a child who is not yet of compulsory school age has ALN and they are not attending a local authority maintained school, 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 attending a maintained school, 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 7 weeks may be required.

# Further Education Institutions

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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 Provision

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Universal Provision 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

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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 who access ALP are classed as having ALN and as such will require an IDP.



# Person-Centred Practice

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Person-Centred Practice is central to the Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act and Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales. This is all about putting the child or young person at the centre of identifying their needs, planning their provision and reviewing this.

Ensuring that children and young people are involved in identifying what is important to and for them, in planning their provision and in outlining their hopes and aspirations, explaining how they wish to realise these are all part of an overarching ethos to person-centred practice.

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@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:ALN@flintshire.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 can determine that they agree with the school decision or that they disagree with this. Should the local authority disagree, they could direct the school to either write and 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/>

# Advocacy & Dispute Resolution

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



Online Contact: <https://www.snapcymru.org/contact>  
Telephone: 0808 801 0608

A Disagreement Resolution Service is also available, which is provided by SNAP Cymru. You can get information from your designated coordinator or by contacting SNAP Cymru directly: [DRS@snapcymru.org](mailto:DRS@snapcymru.org).

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. Cysylltwch â 01352 752121 i gael fersiwn Gymraeg

This document is available in Welsh. Please contact 01352 752121 for a Welsh version

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