



**RHONDDA CYNON TAF**

**Rhondda Cynon Taf  
Additional Learning Needs  
Access and Inclusion Service  
Service Delivery Model for School based Support**

January 2022

## **Introduction**

There have been long established referral routes to Access and Inclusion Services for schools to access support to develop their inclusive practice and also to help ensure the most appropriate provision is in place for individuals with more complex additional learning needs. In line with the requirements of the ALNET Act schools will continue to develop their provision to reflect the uniqueness of the school's own population.

This guidance can be used to help schools identify where they have appropriate expertise and provision and where they might need to target training and development to ensure all RCT learners have access to equitable additional learning provision.

*Within the document there are reference numbers these relate to the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021.*

## **Deciding if a child needs targeted support**

Where a learner is showing less than expected rates of progress, settings and schools should explore any underlying reasons for this in collaboration with the child and young person, their parents and carers and any other adults involved in their care, health and wellbeing. Settings and schools should consider the following key questions in relation to progress.

- 1. Is progress significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline?**
- 2. Does progress fail to match or better the child's or young person's previous rate of progress? or,**
- 3. Has progress failed to close the attainment gap between the child or young person and their peers, despite the provision of support aimed at closing that gap (such as differentiated teaching)?**

based on Paragraph 20.8

## **Considering if a child/young person has Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and may require Additional Learning Provision (ALP)**

20.9. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has ALN and would not automatically lead to a decision that the learner has ALN. Equally, it ought not to be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no ALN.

20.10. Children and young people will inevitably progress at different rates so the fact that a child or young person is apparently underperforming by comparison with others of the same age is not, on its own, proof of ALN. When considering the child or young person's needs, it might be revealed that the child or young person is actually making good progress from a low base. Indeed, there will always be some learners who have lower levels of attainment and ability who will progress at a slower but steady rate. They will require support to access a differentiated curriculum to make suitable progress, but that support may not necessarily amount to ALP.

20.11. Those considering the evidence will need to consider whether the evidence points to other underlying needs and not ALN and if so, whether there are other ways to support the child or young person's needs and other services which need to be involved in the child or young person's life such as an educational psychologist, education welfare services, social services or health bodies.

20.12. In particular, many factors can contribute to poor academic performance or inadequate progress. These can include poor attendance records, not having adequate learning opportunities, frequent moves or changes to teaching staff or the learning environment or wider social and family challenges. Although these factors could be present where a child or young person has ALN and might even contribute towards ALN, they do not necessarily mean that the child or young person has ALN.

20.13. To establish the cause of poor academic performance or inadequate progress, it might be useful to consider if the child or young person is showing different behaviour or demonstrating different learning ability in different settings and environments. Where a child or young person is already known to another agency, for example social services, it might be useful to work closely with them. Examining whether there is a marked disparity of evidence provided by different individuals/agencies and where the child or young person is in different settings, will give a more accurate understanding of the child or young person's needs. Where there is marked disparity, it might suggest a need to consult with professionals with the relevant expertise in order to consider the child or young person's needs in a holistic manner.

20.14. Where progress is not adequate, it will be necessary to take some additional or different action to enable the learner to learn more effectively. The first response to inadequate progress would often be teaching targeted specifically at a learner's areas of

weakness. All education settings are expected to put in place differentiated teaching or other targeted interventions designed to secure better progress where appropriate, for all learners. Indeed, most children and young people will require a differentiated approach in some aspect of their education at some point. This is a fundamental element of high quality – but routine – teaching.

20.15. Such differentiated teaching does not, itself, constitute ALP and just because a child or young person requires a differentiated approach does not mean that they have ALN. ALP encompasses additional or different educational or training provision, which goes beyond that generally made available.

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## **A Graduated Response**

The Code places a different perspective on a graduated response to how it has traditionally been interpreted as following a pathway over time with increasing frequency and intensity of intervention.

*20.23. Maintained schools, FEIs and local authorities should adopt a graduated response in relation to children and young people with ALN, making use of a wide range of strategies. **This means that the ALP made should be at the lowest level necessary to meet the child or young person's identified needs. In particular, schools and FEIs should make full use of their available resources before, where necessary, bringing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child or young person may be experiencing.***

*20.24. In many cases the ALP initially made will mean that the child or young person's needs are fully met or resolved. Only for those children or young people whose progress continues to cause concern is increased or different ALP likely to be needed. Some children or young people may gradually require less rather than more ALP if the interventions are a success.*

In response to this, the Learner Support Service and Educational Psychology have reviewed the Service Delivery Models (formally referred to as Pathways) to better support schools to implement this new definition as set out below.

## How best to utilise the support of Education Psychology Service (EPS) & Learner Support Service (LSS)

There are times when the roles are not so distinct in nature but the guidance below is helpful to schools in making decisions as to the service that is best placed to support in the first instance. As an appropriate graduated response develops collaborative working between the services can also be beneficial (e.g. multi agency approach)

Role of the EPS	Role of the LSS
The pupil's needs are complex and multifaceted. School would like clarity around the primary barrier to learning and there needs to be consideration around the complexity, exceptionality, and long-term nature of the pupil's learning need.	School feel confident about the underlying nature of pupil's Additional Learning Need (e.g. ASD, Behaviour, Literacy, etc.) but are uncertain around how to meet these needs.
Initial support will encourage reflection and questioning to explore thinking and hypotheses to inform a better understanding of a pupil's complex needs and how these impact on learning.	Initial support will provide specific advice, guidance and professional learning for meeting a pupil's needs.
EPS, school and parent/carers (including other professionals if known) will explore and agree key aspects of the pupils learning experience, what works and what the barriers are. This will include learner voice as a key part of discussion. A clear and bespoke action plan will be developed.	LSS staff will outline strategies and approaches to help school respond to the specific needs of pupils and put in place effective ALP.
EPs will collaborate with key adults around the child and ensure that psychology, research and knowledge of whole child development is part of the evidence-based action planning and that there is a clear way forward.	LSS will provide expert advice and knowledge within their area of specialism to enhance staff understanding and practise.

## Education Psychology Service Delivery Model

### Systemic working

Support for schools at this level focusses mainly on embedding evidence based practices and robust policy and procedures.

### Universal / School Targeted Support

Developing preventative approaches with the aim of enhancing the universal provision available in schools. This support for schools seeks to enhance staff's understanding and confidence in meeting the learning needs of pupils.

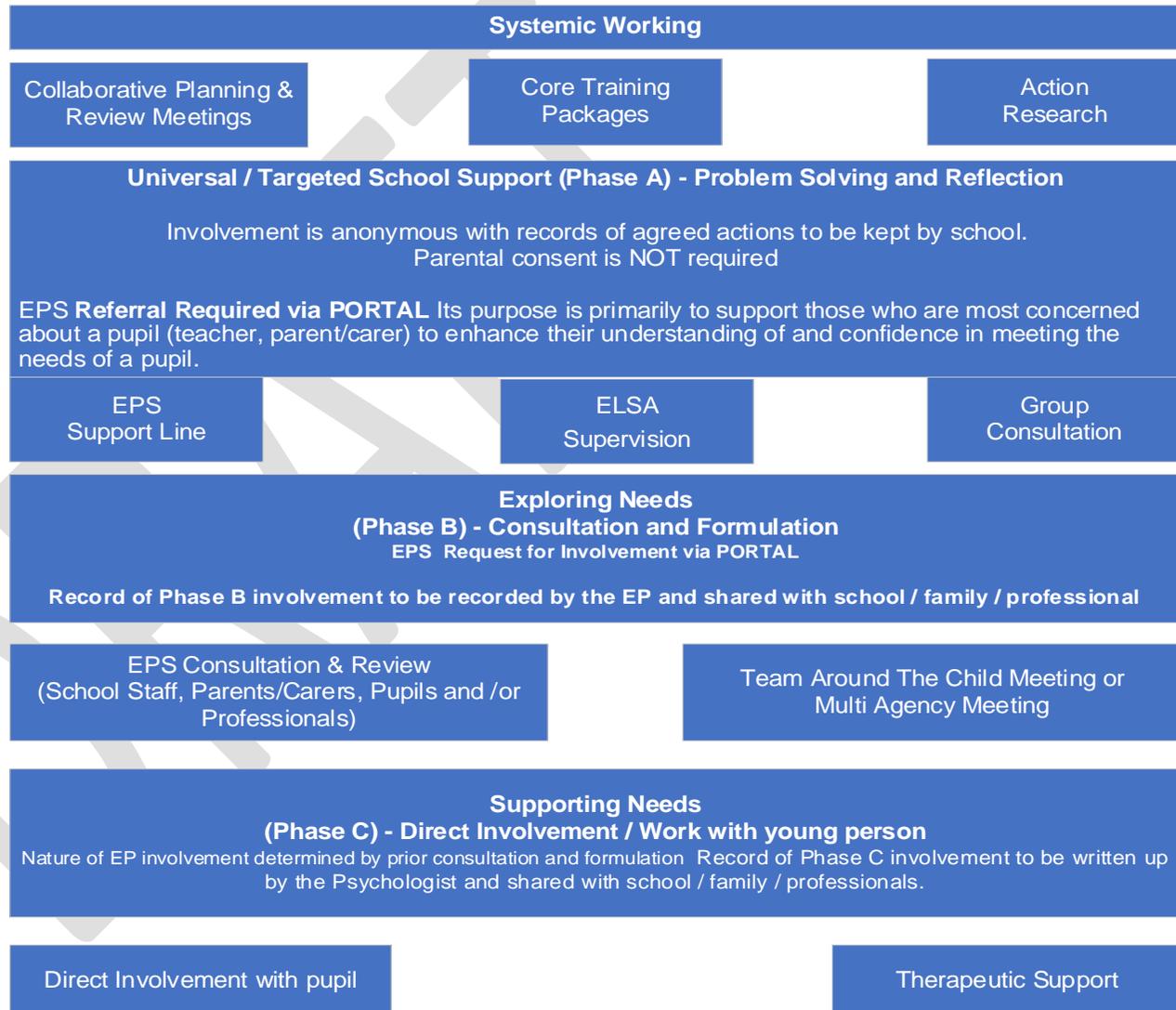
### Exploring Needs

Support to schools to help ensure they implement a robust graduated response and to develop bespoke action plans for pupils from within schools existing resources based on their profile of needs.

This work should facilitate bespoke actions to meet the needs of individual pupils and those supporting them.

### Supporting Needs

This work is undertaken to help better understand the underlying nature and / or extent of a pupils additional learning needs. This work will involve an in-depth process of assessment which may involve a variety of different approaches dependent on the pupils underlying needs and current presentation.



## Learner Support Service Delivery Model

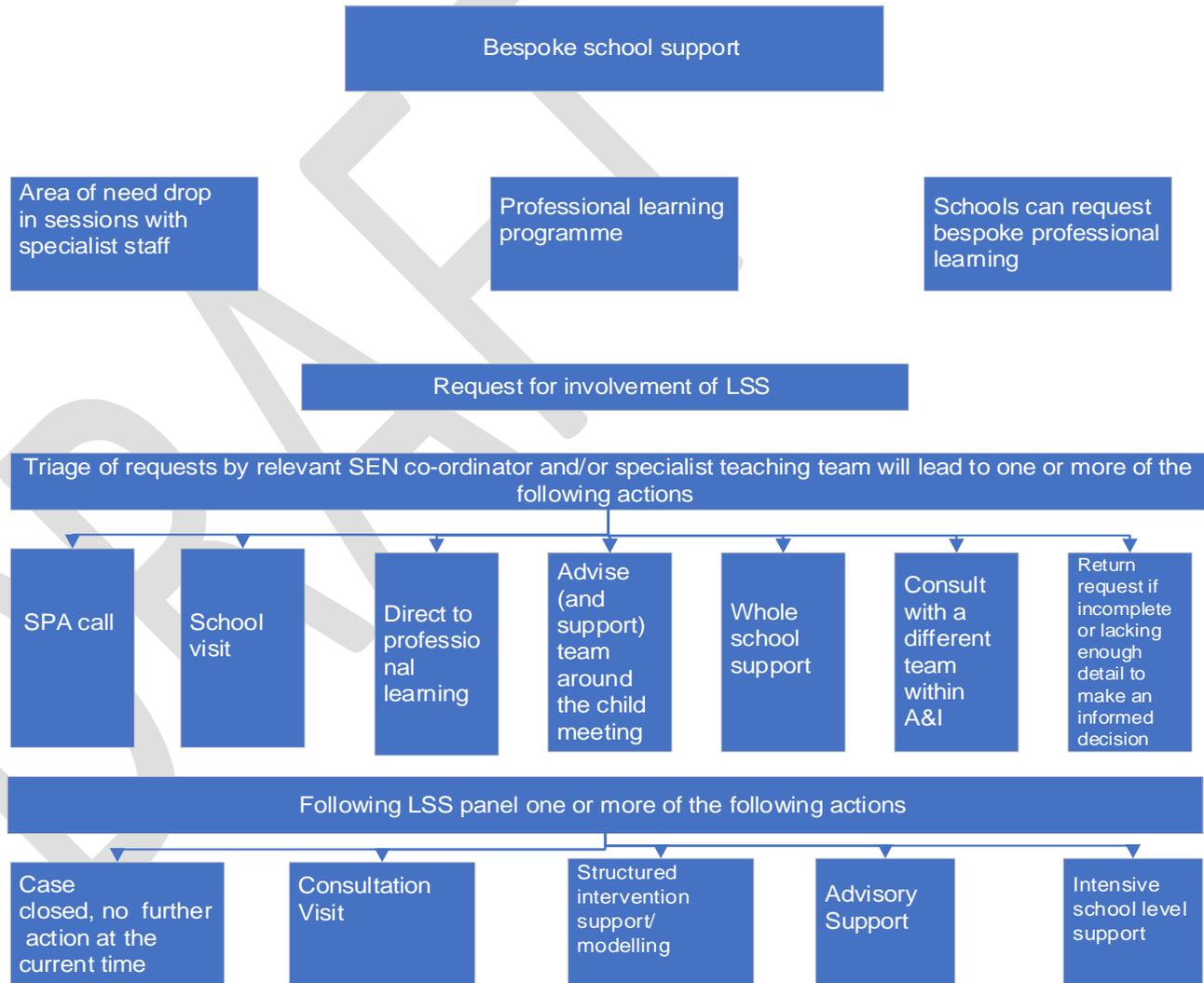
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## Systemic Working

Both EPS and LSS provide services to schools to enhance their systemic approaches to promote pupil's access to learning and inclusion. Support for schools at this level focusses mainly on embedding evidence based practices and robust policy and procedures.

**Please note:** *Parental consent is not required to access support at this phase of involvement.*

Education Psychology Service	Learning Support Service
Planning Visits / Collaborative Planning Bespoke Action Plan	Bespoke school support / when school improvement priority identified
Action Research Projects	ALNCO Forums, ALN Cluster Group Work
Policy Advice and Support	
Reviewing effectiveness of school based intervention(s) and inclusive universal provision	

## Universal / School Targeted Support

Both the EPS and LSS provide preventative approaches with the aim of enhancing the universal provision available in schools. This support for schools seeks to enhance staff's understanding and confidence in meeting the learning needs of pupils.

*Please note: Parental consent is not required to access support at this phase of involvement.*

Education Psychology Service (Phase A)	Learning Support Service
<p><b>EPS Support Line:</b> This is an early access support service (40 minute consultation) that is available to staff to discuss their general concerns regarding how best to meet the needs of pupils.</p> <p>This is an <b>anonymous service</b> (individual pupils MUST not be named). Access to the service is managed via the school ALNCo.</p>	<p>This service provides expert advice and guidance in relation to specific areas of need.</p> <p><b>Area of Need Drop-In Sessions:</b> The LSS provide regular 'Area of Need drop in sessions' with specialist staff.</p> <p>Any school staff can access the sessions to discuss particular challenges they have in supporting learning without the need to refer to a specific individual.</p>
<p><b>Group Consultation:</b> This is a group problem solving approach facilitated by an Educational Psychologist with staff from across a cluster (schools can identify the most appropriate person to attend each time). Sessions are arranged each half term by the link EP.</p>	
<p><b>Group Supervision:</b> The EPS provide regular supervision for staff with certain qualifications within schools (ELSA, TIS,)</p>	
<p><b>Professional Learning Opportunities:</b> Both LSS and EPS provides a number of different professional learning opportunities in a variety of formats to enhance school's capacity to meet the needs of pupils.</p> <p><a href="https://www.rctcbc.gov.uk/professional-learning-programme-2021-2022">Professional Learning Programme 2021/2022   Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (rctcbc.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><i>Bespoke sessions are also available.</i></p>	

**Process for requesting involvement of Education Psychology Service or Learning Support Service in relation to an individual.**

For support related to named individual pupils for further exploration of need or direct support a **request for involvement** is required. The request will be made through the professional portal. The LSS and EPS have **essential requirements for a request for involvement** which are seen in the table below;

Education Psychology Service	Learning Support Service
<p>School <b>must</b> have discussed the relevant case with their link EP in order to agree on the most appropriate course of action based on request information (<b>requests that EPs are not aware of will not be processed</b>).</p> <p>Evidence of robust Universal and Targeted support should be evident. School should have good information around the pupil's complex needs and what has been tried already.</p> <p>Once agreed with the link EP the ALNCo should submit a EPS request for involvement via the Portal .</p> <p>Parental Consent <b>must</b> be submitted for work with an EP to commence.</p> <p><i>A current (in the past year) signed and dated consent by parent/carer must be part of the request for involvement. Parent/Carer consent is a requirement of our regulatory body – the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC).</i></p>	<p>About me profile</p> <p>Current Academic levels and progress over time</p> <p>Evidence of implementing reasonable adjustments and/or high quality differentiated teaching (e.g. Advice given to teacher by ALNCo)</p> <p>Evidence of the school's activity to identify need (assessment) and implementing targeted approaches in response to identified needs. Evidence of targeted intervention will cover at least 2 cycles of intervention with supporting documents eg IDP/IEP/play plan/IBP/Health care plan. A cycle may vary in length depending upon the child or young person's levels of need and responses to support. Typically each cycle would not usually be any less than 6 weeks and could be greater than one term.</p> <p>Evidence of access to relevant professional learning: this should include the names and roles of staff, the date of the learning and the provider. The documents above should show clearly the adult's involvement with the learner.</p> <p>Evidence of action taken on advice from other professionals involved with child (e.g. health, early years intervention, EP)</p> <p>Risk assessment if one is in place.</p>

	For HI and VI requests, Information from Ophthalmology or Audiology (Health may refer directly to the service)
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### Exploring Needs

Both the EPS and LSS provide support to schools to help ensure they implement a robust graduated response and to agree ways forward and develop bespoke action plans for pupils from within schools existing resources based on their profile of needs.

Work of this nature does not always involve direct assessment of a pupil. Its purpose is primarily to understand the concerns the adults have around a pupil's learning (teacher, parent/carer) to consider a helpful way forward.

This work should facilitate a plan to meet the needs of individual pupils and those supporting them.

Education Psychology Service (Phase B)	Learning Support Service
<p><b>Phase B Consultations &amp; Multi Agency Meetings:</b></p> <p>Each school in RCT is allocated a number of visits for the link EP to engage in consultation with staff, families, the pupil and other professionals. These sessions are agreed between school and EP prior to a request being made.</p> <p>Observation of classroom context and collecting Pupil Voice may be used to help develop a good understanding of the strengths and needs of the pupil.</p> <p>Parental Consent <b>MUST</b> be given for EP involvement at this stage.</p>	<p><b>LSS Triage:</b></p> <p>LSS requests for involvement will be triaged by the relevant SEN co-ordinator and/or specialist teaching team. This process will lead to one or more of the following actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPA call</li> <li>• School visit</li> <li>• Direct to professional learning</li> <li>• Advise (and support) team around the child meeting</li> <li>• Whole school support</li> <li>• Consult with/refer on to a different team within A&amp;I</li> <li>• Return request if incomplete or lacking enough detail to make an informed decision</li> </ul> <p>Parental Consent does not need to be given for LSS involvement but parents should be informed of the request at this stage.</p>

## Decision Making

Both EPS and LSS have systems to consider the severity and complexity of pupils needs, the robustness of support provided and to review agreed actions. This process is important to make informed and reasoned decisions, to plan a way forward and consider whether further intervention and or involvement is required.

<b>Education Psychology Service</b>	<b>Learning Support Service</b>
<p data-bbox="327 475 943 507"><b>EPS formulation and reflection Meetings</b></p> <p data-bbox="203 549 999 655">The EPS team hold weekly sessions to discuss ongoing case formulations and to ensure there is a consistent approach across the team.</p>	<p data-bbox="1417 475 1697 507"><b>LSS Triage / Panel</b></p> <p data-bbox="1088 549 2011 655">LSS requests are triaged on a weekly basis, with panels for more intensive support held half termly to decide the most appropriate next steps.</p>

## Supporting Needs

Both the EPS and LSS provide direct involvement and/or assessment and intervention for pupils with complex additional learning needs. This work is undertaken to help better understand the underlying nature and / or extent of a pupils additional learning needs.

This work will involve an in-depth process of assessment which may involve a variety of different approaches dependent on the pupils underlying needs and current presentation.

Education Psychology Service	Learning Support Service
Person centred assessment and pupil voice	Consultation Visit to Discuss Needs
Pupil observation and engagement in classroom setting	Advisory Support
Parent or Teacher Based Assessment	Static Assessment (summative)
Summative / Static assessment	Dynamic Assessment (formative)
Dynamic assessment (formative)	Observation
Therapeutic Support	Coaching / Modelling in relation to delivery of specific learning programmes
Coaching / Modelling and professional learning opportunities in relation to delivery of specific learning programmes	Direct Teaching and Intensive school level support.

## **Additional Service Information**

### **Sensory and Physical Medical Needs**

In RCT substantial resources are made available to children and young people with sensory and physical/medical needs to ensure they can access inclusive mainstream education opportunities. As a result of the consultation with Headteachers on the delegation of Additional Needs Funding to schools, Access & Inclusion Services now holds a monthly Physical/Medical panel to which primary schools can request for enhanced capacity funding (ECF) to support the physical and or medical needs of their pupils.

### **Disability**

2.25 Not all children and young people who have a disability (as defined by the Equality Act 2010), will have ALN. It is only where the child or young person's disability prevents or hinders them from making use of educational or training facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream FEIs, and this calls for ALP, that they have ALN10 (unless they have ALN because they have a learning difficulty that calls for ALP).

2.26. To amount to ALN, a disability need not affect access to educational or training facilities in all areas of learning but might be, for example, a physical impairment that only affects access to physical education facilities and calls for ALP in relation to physical education only. A child or young person may even be performing well across all areas of the curriculum but still have ALN because they have a disability that is preventing or hindering them from making full use of educational or training facilities unless ALP is made for them.

2.27. There are some forms of disability where the nature of the disability means it is likely the learner will have ALN. For instance, local authorities have to establish and maintain a register of those in their area who are sight or hearing impaired, or have a combination of both, such that it has a significant effect on their day-to-day lives. Children or young people on this register are more likely to have ALN by virtue of the fact the impairment is likely to prevent or hinder them from making use of educational or training facilities and is likely to call for ALP, but this should not be assumed so.

## **Medical conditions**

2.31. In some cases, medical conditions may have a significant impact on a child or young person's experiences and on the way they function in school or further education, such that they result in a learning difficulty or disability within the meaning of that term. The impact may be a direct one, in that their cognitive abilities, physical abilities, behaviour or their emotional state may be affected. The impact could also, or alternatively, be indirect, for example by disrupting their access to education through unwanted effects of treatment or through the psychological effects that serious or chronic illness or disability can have on a child or young person and their family.

2.32. However, not all children and young people with a medical condition will have ALN. As with other learners, the question is always whether the child or young person has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for ALP. There will be instances where a child or young person with a medical condition does not have a learning difficulty or disability, or if the person does, the learning difficulty or disability does not call for ALP. In these cases, the child or young person's needs ought to be met through other means.

2.33. The Welsh Government's statutory guidance on Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs addresses the arrangements to be made by maintained schools and local authorities to support learners under the age of 18 with healthcare needs including those that arise from a medical condition.

## **Multi-Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS) Referrals**

To access support from the Multi-Ethnic Achievement Service (MEAS) schools are required to submit a referral through portal with an approximation of the pupil's stage of English based upon Welsh Government stages A-E and parental consent. It should be noted that although many pupils for whom English is an additional language will need extra support to achieve their potential, this does not constitute an additional learning need. Schools should seek advice from the MEAS team in the first instance if they believe that a pupil with English as an additional language is making slower than expected progress.

## **Children Looked After (CLA) Education Team**

The CLA Education Team can provide different levels of assistance when there are concerns in relation to Education and care experienced children and young people. Any queries/concerns can be sent to [CLAED@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CLAED@rctcbc.gov.uk)

In addition to other responsibilities, project work and to align with the additional learning needs (ALN) reforms we will be working in a three tiered and phased approach – Phase A, Phase B and Phase C (this is similar to the Educational Psychology Service phased approach).

**Universal / School Targeted Support (Phase A)** – Anyone can request a broad discussion with a member of the CLA Education Team. A request for discussion can be made via email to [CLAED@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:CLAED@rctcbc.gov.uk)

The type of work may include:

- CLA Friendly Schools & Quality Mark
- Training for school staff/ Governors/ Foster Carers
- Role of Designated Person
- ALN / PEP
- Advice on PDG Grant Funding
- Trauma Informed Approaches, including supervision
- Transitions & Changes in Education Provision
- Support for Foster Carers, e.g. Therapeutic Approaches
- Person Centred Practices / Gaining pupil voice
- Offering guidance and advice surrounding attendance & exclusions
- Concerns relating to the education of a child/young person
- Signposting to other agencies/further support help
- Involvement with grant funded project work
- Research & Evaluation work

It may, in the cases of concerns in relation to an individual child or young person, that further exploration of the issue/concern is required. This will require signed consent from someone with parental responsibility for the child/young person prior to this work being completed.

**Exploring Needs (Phase B)** – Work at this phase will be more focused on concerns relating to an individual child/young person.

The type of work may include:

- Consultation
- Circle of Understanding Meeting
- Enhanced Case Management Meeting
- Reflective Sessions
- Team Around the Child Meeting (TAC Meeting)
- Involvement in multi-agency meetings (e.g. CLA Reviews, Child Protection Reviews, IDP Meetings)
- Involvement with interventions

Again, if further exploration or further information is required, it may be agreed to progress to further involvement.

**Supporting Needs (Phase C)** – Work at this level will be more focused on gaining a better understanding of the concerns relating to an individual child/young person. This will require signed consent prior to this work being completed.

- Therapeutic Interventions
- Gaining pupil voice
- Direct assessment Work
- Observation
- Providing Psychological Advice

## **Access and Inclusion Service FAQ:**

### **Can LSS make a request for an EP assessment?**

No. Neither the EPS or LSS can make direct requests for the involvement of the other service. However, with parent's consent they will often collaborate and discuss pupil needs together.

### **Does a pupil need to have had 2 terms of LSS support prior to requesting EPS involvement?**

No. The LSS and EPS requests for involvement are independent of one another.

- LSS require 2 **cycles** of intervention for a request to be accepted.
- EPS do not have a fixed criteria for a request but evidence of robust universal and targeted support is required.

### **EPS or LSS has recommended the involvement of the other service what do I do?**

Professionals from either LSS or EPS may sometimes suggest that schools contact other relevant services to explore their concerns. However, schools will always be required to follow the relevant process to access service support for EPS or LSS (see table above).

### **I want a pupil to be considered for Specialist Placement, do I need an EP assessment?**

Not necessarily. The EP role is to help you understand a pupil's needs and ensure robust and appropriate school based ALP is in place. The EPS can help you in this process but as long as you have clear evidence relating to the severity of need and a robust

graduated response you do not necessarily require an EP assessment to access provision. What matters most is the quality of provision you are providing and evaluation of the impact this is having on pupil progress.

**The EPS & LSS Service Delivery models just seem to be putting off direct assessment of a pupil. Is this correct?**

No. The EPS & LSS Service Delivery models are there to support schools in meeting the needs of learners in the most effective and efficient way. For both services, the 'exploring needs approach' (Phase B / Triage) is crucial to take informed and reasoned action considering whether further assessment / intervention is required and if so what the specific focus of this work will be.

**I feel that a cognitive assessment is needed to clarify the extent of a pupils needs why won't the EP do this?**

EPs use a range of different assessment approaches to explore the needs of pupils. By following the Service delivery model any EP involvement MUST always be guided by a clear hypothesis and formulation (what is unknown or needs to be explored) and will be decided by the individual EP. Your EP will be happy to discuss with you the rationale for their chosen course of action.

**Can I make a request for involvement of both EPS and LSS at the same time?**

This is not advised. Please consider the most appropriate service to meet your pupil's needs at the present time. Use the guide above to help you make the right decision. Although both the LSS and EPS are part of the Access and Inclusion Service they have specific remits and expertise that can help you in different ways.

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