

Easy Read



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The Draft Additional Learning Needs Code

Consultation Document - we want to know what you think

Please give your views by **22 March 2019**.



This is an easy read version of Welsh Government's: **The Draft Additional Learning Needs Code Consultation Document – Children and Young People's Version, December 2018**

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WG36741



How to use this document

This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.



You may need support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be hard to understand. These are in **bold blue writing** and have been explained in a box beneath the word.

If the hard word is used again it is in **normal blue writing**. You can check what it means in **Hard words** on page 29.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

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This document was made into easy read by **Easy Read Wales** using **Photosymbols**.

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Introduction

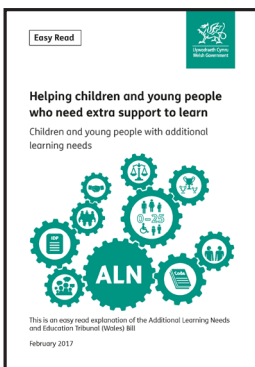


We want to make education and learning better for children and young people with **Additional Learning Needs**. This is also known as **ALN**.



Children and young people with **ALN** need extra support to learn. This could be because:

- they have a difficulty or disability that means they need extra support
- they find it harder to learn than other children and young people the same age
- they have a disability that means they cannot use the local school or college.



We are changing the way we support children and young people with **ALN** between the ages of 0 to 25. In 2017 we made a new law called the **Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act**.



The aim of this law is to improve support for children and young people with **ALN**. And to make sure all children and young people have the best chances to do well in life.

About this document

This document explains what is in the new **Code** for the **Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act**.



The **Code** gives rules and advice to help local authorities and others do what the law tells them to do. We will call it the **Code**.



The **Code** is for everyone in charge of supporting children and young people with **ALN**. For example, people who work in:

- schools
- colleges
- local authorities
- health services.



They must do what the **Code** says. It is the law.



We want to know what you think about our ideas for the **Code**. Please read this document. And then tell us what you think by filling out the response form.



Please tell us by **22 March 2019**.

Important ideas for the new law



The **Code** says how the new law will work in real life. So we want the **Code** to help people work in a way that means they:



- Listen to the views and feelings of children and young people. And make sure they are included when decisions are made about their support.



- Make sure the right support is given quickly.



- Work together to give the best support.



- Make sure children and young people are able to go to their local school or college.



- Make sure support is in Welsh if needed.

A plan for each child and young person with ALN



Children and young people with ALN will have a plan. This will be called an **individual development plan**.

Individual development plan is the name for the new plan children and young people with ALN will have. This will be instead of a **statement** or other types of school or college plans.



The **individual development plan** will say what support the child or young person needs to be able to learn. And what will be done so they are properly supported in school or college.



We have already decided that the plan must say:



- What **ALN** the child or young person has. For example ADHD, a problem with hearing or a learning disability.



- How the child or young person will be supported. And by who.



- If the support should be in Welsh.



- The name of any special school or special college the child or young person will go to.



We have some other ideas for what the plan must say. They are:

Name	_____
Age	_____
Address	_____

- Name, age, gender and address of the child or young person.



- How to talk to the child or young person. For example sign language.



- Who is in charge of keeping the plan up-to-date and making sure it is working.



- A 1 page profile all about what the child or young person likes and dislikes. And what is working well and not so well.



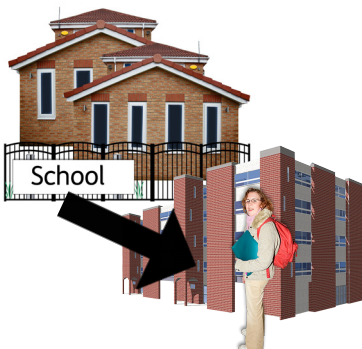
- If the child or young person will learn different things at school to other children their age.



- What information has been used to write the plan.



- Important things that have happened. For example changing school, hospital tests or things that have happened at home.

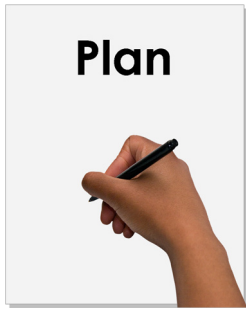


- Any changes that are going to happen. For example changing schools or going to college.

Getting a plan



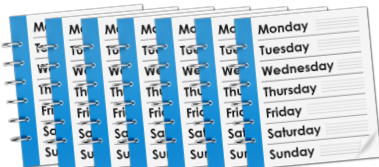
We want to make sure children and young people do not have to wait too long to get a plan. So the **Code** will say plans must be written within a certain amount of time.



Most plans will be written by schools and colleges.



Sometimes a plan will be written by a local authority. This may be because a child or young person has a lot of support needs.



Schools and colleges writing the plan

Schools and colleges will have 7 weeks to write a plan. Or to say they think a plan is not needed.



We think schools and colleges need 7 weeks to write a plan. They will need time to:



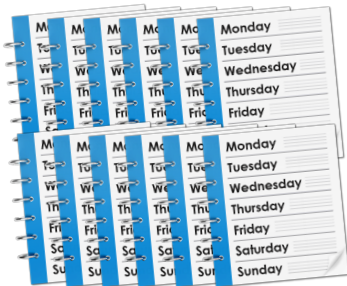
- Tell the child, parents or the young person they will be deciding if they have **ALN**.



- Get all the information they need to write the plan. Like talking to the child, their parents or the young person.



- Write the plan and give it to the child, parents or the young person. Or say it is not needed.



Local authorities writing the plan

Local authorities will have 12 weeks to write a plan.



We think they will need more time than schools and colleges. This is because they will be writing plans for children and young people who have a lot of support needs.



They will need to get a lot more information about support needs. They may need to talk to doctors or social workers.



Having more information means there will be more to think about. They will need to think carefully about all the information to make sure the support is right.

Getting information to write plans



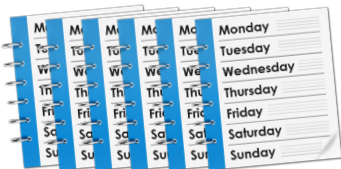
It is important that local authorities do not have to wait too long for information they need to write plans.



Local authorities must get lots of information about the child or young person to write their plans. They may need to ask other people for information. For example they may ask teachers, doctors or social workers.



If it takes a long time to get information from other people it will take a long time to write plans.



We think people should have 6 weeks to answer the local authority.



We think 6 weeks is enough time even if there is a lot of information to tell the local authority.



We think getting the information within 6 weeks means local authorities will be able to write plans in a good amount of time.

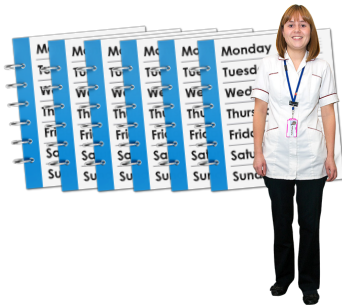
Finding out if health services can help



Children and young people may be able to get support from health services.



They should not have to wait too long to find out if health services can help.



We think health services should let people know quickly if they can help. And how they can help. We think they should do this within 6 weeks.



We think this will work because:



- Health services already do something like this for **statements**.



- It is the same amount of time other people have to give local authorities information.

Changing the plan

When something has changed



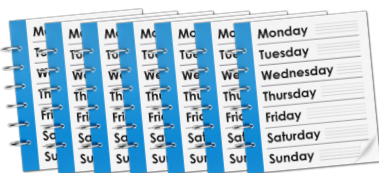
If something has changed in the child or young person's life they can ask for a **review** of their plan.



Review means someone will look at the plan again to make sure it is still working and whether it needs to be changed.



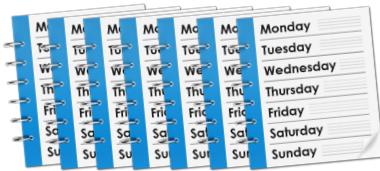
They should not have to wait too long for someone to **review** the plan.



Schools and colleges will have 7 weeks to **review** a plan.



We think it will take the same amount of time to **review** the plan as it did to write the plan. This is because the same sort of things will need to be done.



Local authorities will also have 7 weeks to **review** plans.



We think local authorities can **review** plans quicker than they can write plans. This is because we do not think they will need to get as much information to **review** the plan.

When children, parents or young people are not happy



If children, parents or young people are not happy with the plan written by the school they can go to the local authority.



They can ask the local authority to check the plan.



The local authority will have 7 weeks to do this.



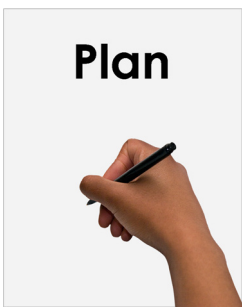
We think they will need 7 weeks to check the plan. They will need to do the same sorts of things as the school did to write the plan. For example:



- Get all the information needed for the plan. And check through it.



- Think about whether the plan is right.



- Write a new plan if needed.

Disagreements about plans

When children, parents and young people disagree



If children, parents or young people disagree with their plan we want it to be quickly sorted out.



We have decided that local authorities must:



- Try to stop disagreements happening.



- Sort out disagreements quickly if they do happen.



- Tell children and young people what they are doing to sort out disagreements.

To help stop and sort out disagreements we think local authorities should:



- Give information on their website about what they do about disagreements.



- Make sure children and young people can understand what they are doing to sort out disagreements.



- Tell children and young people they can talk to someone and get help.



- Make sure people who help know about [ALN](#) and are fair.



- Make sure it is easy for children and young people to get help.



- Make sure children and young people can get help on their own if they do not want help from their parents.

Advocacy



If a disagreement is not sorted out children and young people can get help from an **advocate**.



An **advocate** is someone who speaks up for someone else. They can make sure people know what children and young people think and how they are feeling.



Local authorities must make sure that children and young people can get an **advocate**.



We think it is important that local authorities tell people about **advocates**. For example through posters, leaflets and websites.



We think that local authorities should make sure all **advocates** are doing a good job.

They should make sure **advocates**:



- give help quickly



- understand all about **ALN**



- know how to talk to children and young people in different ways, like in sign language



- are safe to work with children and young people.

Asking the Tribunal to decide what is right



Children, parents and young people can ask the **Education Tribunal for Wales** to look at disagreements about plans.



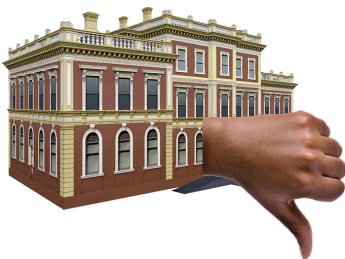
The **Education Tribunal for Wales** is a special group of people whose job is to deal with a disagreement.



They can do this if they are still not happy with:



- their plan



- what the local authority has done



- what the college has done.



The **Tribunal** will need to know why the child, parents or young person is not happy. They will have to write down the things they are not happy with. And they will have to explain why they think the local authority or college is not right. This is called a **case**.



The **Tribunal** will tell the local authority or college that there is a **case** against them. The **Tribunal** will ask the local authority or college to write their own **case**. They will have to write why they think what they have done is right.



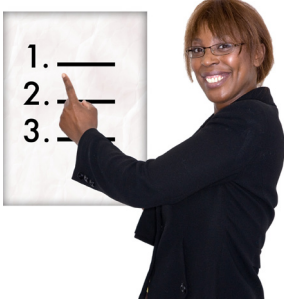
We think the local authority or college should be able to read the case made against them before they write their own.



This means the local authority or college can write about the things the child, parent or young person is not happy about. They will not write about things that do not matter.



We think this is important. It will save time and help to make sure things are done quickly. The **Tribunal** will not have to read about things that do not matter. And they can then make a decision quickly.



When the child, parent or young person takes their disagreement to the **Tribunal** we think this should happen:



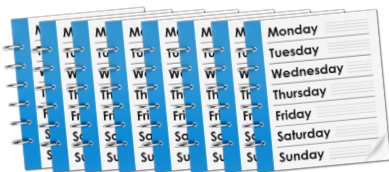
1. They will ask the **Tribunal** to look into the disagreement.



2. They will write a **case** explaining why they are not happy.



3. They will send the **case** to the **Tribunal**.



4. They will have 8 weeks from the disagreement to tell the **Tribunal** they want help. And to send their **case** to the **Tribunal**.



5. The **Tribunal** will tell the local authority or college straight away when a child, parent or young person has contacted them to help.



6. The **Tribunal** will send the **case** to the local authority or college as soon as they get it.



7. The local authority or college will then write a **case** to explain why they think they are doing the right thing. They will have 4 weeks to write the **case**.

Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators



We want every school and college to have an **Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator**.

The job of an **Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator** will be to make sure all children with **ALN** have the help and support they need. We will call them **ALNCos** for short.



Who should be an ALNCo

It is important that this person is the right person for the job.



We think **ALNCos** should be teachers or someone already doing a similar job. At the moment we call these people **SENCo**s.



We think this is important because teachers can tell the head teacher if something needs to change across the whole school.



Some **SENCo**s are not teachers. But we think if they are already doing a good job they could be the right person to be an **ALNCo**.

What ALNCos should do

ALNCos will do lots of things to support children and young people with ALN.



They will:

- Find out which children and young people have ALN and make sure they have plans.



- Make sure plans are kept up-to-date.



- Make sure all children and young people with ALN get the support they need.



- Check the support for children and young people is working.



- Give information to children, parents and young people.





- Learn more about how to give the best support to children and young people with [ALN](#).



- Show other teachers how to help children and young people by teaching in different ways.



- Support teachers and other people who help children and young people with [ALN](#).



- Help children and young people when change happens. For example leaving school or going to college.



- Work with others to make sure children and young people get the support they need.



- Help children, parents and young people when things are not going well.

Hard words

Additional Learning Needs / ALN

Children and young people with ALN need extra support to learn because:

- they have a difficulty or disability that means they need extra support
- they find it harder to learn than other children and young people the same age
- they have a disability that means they cannot use the local school or college.

Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator / ALNCo

The job of an Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator will be to make sure all children with ALN have the help and support they need. We will call them ALNCo for short.

Advocate

An advocate is someone who speaks up for someone else. They can make sure people know what children and young people think and how they are feeling.

The Additional Learning Needs Code / Code

The Code gives rules and advice to help local authorities and others do what the law tells them to do. We will call it the Code.

Education Tribunal for Wales

The Education Tribunal for Wales is a special group of people whose job is to deal with a disagreement. A judge will make the decision.

Individual Development Plan

Individual development plan is the name for the new plan children and young people with ALN will have. This will be instead of a statement or other types of school or college plans.

Review

Review means someone will look at the plan again to make sure it is still working and whether it needs to be changed.



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A 0–25 age range

Local authorities will be responsible for learners with additional learning needs (ALN) from 0 to 25, ensuring they can access suitable education and/or training, including compulsory education and specialist post-16 education or training where necessary.

A new local authority Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer role will contribute to improving early identification and intervention in relation to ALN, and ensuring better planning for future provision.

Welsh language

Local authorities will have a duty to take all reasonable steps to secure provision in Welsh where required and, when reviewing IDPs, to consider the sufficiency of Welsh language additional learning provision.

A mandatory ALN Code

The ALN Code will impose mandatory requirements on local authorities in respect of:

- information and advice services
- independent advocacy services
- the preparation, content, form, review and revision of IDPs
- ceasing to maintain IDPs.

Clear and consistent rights of appeal

All children, their parents/carers and young people up to the age of 25 will have the right to appeal to the Education Tribunal against decisions made by a local authority in relation to their ALN or their IDP.

Local authorities must provide access to independent advocacy services.

Increased participation of children and young people

Local authorities must provide children, young people and others with information and advice about ALN and the new system, and ensure that it is accessible for all who need it.



A unified plan

Individual development plans (IDPs) will replace the existing variety of statutory and non-statutory plans for learners of compulsory school age and below, and those over compulsory school age in school or further education.

Local authorities will normally only prepare and maintain an IDP in instances where the child or young person's needs are more severe or complex. Ordinarily IDPs will be the responsibility of the maintained school or further education institution.

Avoiding disagreements and earlier disagreement resolution

Local authorities must make arrangements for avoiding and resolving disagreements.

If disagreements arise, local authorities' arrangements should ensure they are resolved at the earliest opportunity and at the most local level.

Increased collaboration

Where a local authority requests help or information from another body in the exercise of any of their ALN functions, that body should comply with the request.