

Introduction to the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.

The legislation has been updated and modernised to replace the current Special Education Needs and Learning Difficulties and Disability framework to combine into one legislation to support children with Additional Learning Needs (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004; Welsh Government, 2018).

The aim is to:

- To provide effective change for children and young people with additional learning needs with services that support them.
- Introduce the an IDP document to move away from statementing children and the use of Individual Educational Plan.
- Access children and young people for purpose of the Equality Act 2010.

(HM Government, 2011; Welsh Government, 2018).

Change of terminology from SEN to ALN

The terminology of a child or young person receiving support through an IDP will gradually replace SEN with ALN (Welsh Government, 2018). Evidence states a change in terminology has a positive effect for children and young person where consideration is considered to avoid discrimination of negative connections and their rights to be treated equally in society (UNCRC, 1989; HM Government, 2011; Federal Register, 2013). However, the change in terminology is still labelling a child or young person with a disability, that can impact on their participation in society (Algraigay and Boyle, 2013; Federal Register, 2013).

The change in terminology could also cause confusion of the nature of the disorder, where parents/guardian's will wish to seek to apply for their children to receive additional support (Algraigay and Boyle, 2013; Federal Register, 2013).

Individual Development Plan

The ALN 2018 has issued a new statutory document for ALN children and young people. The IDP will include records of the arrangements made to meet the child's needs, education and training. The ALN 2018 states the effectiveness of the intervention that is monitored and adapted to make sure they deliver the desired outcomes (Welsh Government, 2018).

The health boards and local authorities will collaborate to meet children's needs through an IDP. Where services will work together in a collaborative way to ensure the needs and wishes of children and young people are met appropriately, to make a positive difference and fulfil their lives as much as possible (UNCRC, 1989; Duncan, 2013; Dauncey, 2016; Snap Cymru, 2019).

The IDP's will be an effective document to support children's holistic development with the expertise of different services involved (Welsh Government, 2018). However, there is insignificant information of how a disagreement between multi agency services can be resolved (Atkinson et al. 2007; Hodgkinson, 2016). Furthermore, evidence states multi agency teams don't communicate effectively that can cause implications to the effectiveness of the support delivered to children (Hodgkinson, 2016).

However, the IDP templates will provide consistency and eases in the preparation of the care and support plans for ALN children throughout Wales. However, the template should not be used strictly by the rules but to ensure there are pathways to progression (Lewis, 2015; Welsh Government, 2018).

The increase in support for ALN children and young people up to the age of 25

The ALN 2018 has increased the age of support from 0-16 up to the age of 25 when young people with ALN attend further education, Unlike pervious legislations where statements would stop after a young person leaves school at the age of 16 (Welsh Government, 2017; Welsh Government, 2018).

The IDP will continue with ALN children up to the day before their 26th birthday or until their education ends which ever will be first. Designed to provide a unique support individual through education from preschool up to collage (Welsh Government, 2018).

However, the ALN 2018 does not provide enough information on the support young children with ALN will receive when they finish education at 16 years of age, more information is needed to explain what will happen with the IDP if the young person was to develop their education through training or an apprenticeship (Lewis, 2015).

Conclusion

The legislation provides significant evidence that the ALN 2018 will be an effective working document.

The support of multi-agency teams working together in a collaborative partnership will remove barriers to learning and increases opportunities for children and young people with ALN to access education, and facilities of others at the same age, providing them with equality and opportunities of successful futures. (HM Government, 2011; Devarakonda, 2013).

The legislation aims to change the attitudes and approaches towards people with disabilities by including the child and families in preparation of the IDP. (HM Government, 2011).

Through multi agency partnership the child or young person will receive a holistic approach to learning, However, there are concerns regarding if the legislation will work in practice (Lewis, 2015).

Further Reading

https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/158677/mod_resource/content/1/Dauncey%202016.pdf

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/additional-learning-needs-aln-transformation-programme-v2.pdf>