

The New Legislation.

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Introduction.

The Welsh Government (2020b) states that the new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system is a new statutory support system in Wales for children and young people aged from birth to twenty-five years old. It has been created to support learners with ALN to overcome barriers to learning and to be an inclusive system to all. According to Dauncey (2018) the Welsh Government recognised that the Special Educational Needs (SEN) system was based on a model that was developed over thirty years ago and it needed to be updated to meet the needs of children and young people in Wales.

The change from SENCO to ALNCO.

According to ALN Wales (2019) the SENCO has been an important role in ensuring that children with special educational needs and disabilities get the support they need in schools. Under the new legislation the role will be known as the ALNCO. The Welsh government (2020b) states that the SENCO is a non statutory role, however the ALNCO is a statutory role and therefore the ALNCO should be a senior member of the team.

ALN (2019) states that the ALNCO has many roles and responsibilities, including according to the Welsh Government (2020b) the ALNCO needs to ensure that the needs of all the children with ALN in the setting are met.

The Children's Commissioner for Wales (2020) suggests that the new ALN code should have instructions for practitioners working with children with ALN so that each local authority will use it the same way.

The change to IDPs.

The Welsh Government (2020a) states that the new ALN legislation will create a statutory plan to replace all the other statutory and non-statutory SEN plans for learners. These will be called the individual development plan (IDP) and should be simpler to produce and revise than the SEN plans.

According to the Welsh Government (2020b) if the child is in school then the school will identify the ALN, prepare and maintain the IDP. The draft ALN Code contains IDP forms.

The Welsh Government (2020b) states that statements can take up to twenty-six weeks to produce, however IDPs should be produced within twelve weeks. According to Snap Cymru (2020b) statements stop when a child leaves school but IDPs will continue up to the age of twenty-five if the young person goes on to further education. The conversion of statements to IDP will happen over a two year period and the conversion of other plans such as school action will take place over a three year period (Snap Cymru, 2018)

Training for practitioners.

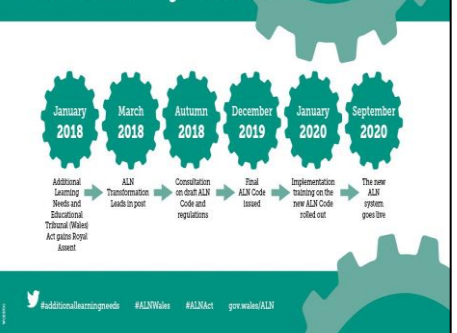
According to the Welsh Government (No date) they are providing funding for training for practitioners which will include how to identify additional learning needs.

According to Estyn (2018) nearly all schools Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO) or Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCO) have had training on the new ALN system.

The Welsh Government (2020a) states that they have provided a two year funding grant for local authorities for core skills development to develop a person centred practice. Practitioners advanced skills will need developing for the role of the ALNCO to replace the role of the SENCO.

There has also been a training programme on person-centred-practice which helps practitioners work with learners to understand their views, aims and needs, by doing this the practitioner can use this information to plan and support the learner (Welsh Government, 2020a)

Additional learning needs (ALN) timeline



(Source: Snap Cymru, 2020a)

Conclusion.

The Welsh Government (2020b) states that the new ALN system is coming in to effect in September 2020 and this will mean many changes for practitioners that they will need training for.

Dauncey (2019) states that until the new ALN system is in place the SEN framework is still to be used for learners who are already having support and for children who are being newly identified with SEN.