

Contemporary Issues and Practical Suggestions in The Replacement from SEN To ALN in Wales

"transition experiences should be regarded as an on-going process rather than a one-off event (Packer, Abbinett and Morris, 2022) "

Initial Purpose of Introducing System for Extra Needs

The argument made by Knight and Crick in 2021 indicated that Education research, policy, and practice have established inclusive education as a key objective. In broad terms, "all learners matter equally" is the central message (UNESCO, 2017, p. 12). The belief that ALNs should remain in their current format is a core belief for those in education-based roles and/or curriculum roles. (Conn and Hutt, 2020). Children with special educational needs are protected by the 2018 Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal Act (Ware, 2019).

Given the complexity of the concept of inclusion, two continua are proposed by Knight and Crick (2021) to map how policy and guidance documents frame it.

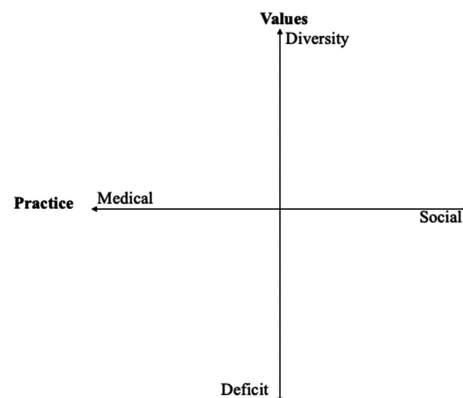


Figure 1. Practice and values continuum (Knight and Crick, 2021, pp. 267)

Motivation of the Replacement from SEN to ALN

The education of children deemed abnormal prior to the Education Act 1981 was largely determined by their medical or quasi-medical diagnosis, and the school they attended was often almost automatically determined by their diagnosis. A number of children were classified in vague categories, and some were positively offensive. There were schools for 'backward' children, 'delicate' children, and 'educationally sub-normal' children (Gill Richards and Armstrong, 2016, p. 10).

Therefore, with the higher demands on identifying children with extra needs and better support, ALN system was introduced to replace SEN system.

Aims of the NEW ALN Policy

- To determine if a learner under their care has ALN
- To ensure that learners with ALN are getting the educational provision they need.
- All learners are under the ALN system

Supportive Abbreviations

SEN – Special Educational Needs

ALN – Additional Learning Needs

IDP – Individual Development Plan

ALP – Additional Learning Provision

What Does The Law Say

According to the guidance of Welsh Government published in 2021, local authorities have a duty to identify children with ALN in their care. They must ensure that children with ALN are getting the education provision they need.

1. Identifying ALN – Mainstream schools and further education institutions, conducted by ALN coordinator
2. The school or native authority will gather demonstration to identify if the child has ALN.
3. Once the child does have ALN, the authority or education institution will prepare an Individual Development Plan
4. IDP might vary in length and complexity, depending on the child or young person's educational needs and the provision required.
5. Most children with ALN will go to a mainstream school.

Contemporary Issues

- i. Financial challenge
- ii. Policy conductor – Teachers' Perception
- iii. Post-Covid 19 Era engagement

Official News

Parents are devastated that plans for a new multimillion pound school for children with additional needs cannot proceed due to financial constraints. (Aimee Thomas & Caitlin Parr, 2024)

When a mother faced difficulties getting additional learning needs (ALN) support for her son, she felt as though she was a failure (Oscar Edwards, 2023)

Literature Arguments

Communication of differences within and between inclusive policy and guidance documents. (Knight and Crick, 2021)

Teaching must be viewed as a change agent to achieve educational transformation. (Conn and Hutt, 2020)

A crucial aspect of preparation for transition is fostering an effective practitioner-learner relationship. (Packer, Abbinett and Morris, 2022)

What is challenging ALN Act in Wales

- Social media and academic perception
- Problems with allocation of funding
- Teachers' quality (professional skills, attitudes, visions)
- Differences between and within policy and implementation



Image source: <https://sbuhb.nhs.wales/children-and-young-people/additional-learning-needs/>

Plus: Why ALN

- Reflection on China's current circumstances
- Refer policy and implementation from western societies
- To better construct policy in China for marginalized community