

Introduction

The purpose of this poster, is to discuss the impending changes to the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) legislation in Wales, It is also the aim to discover the implications of these changes to Early Years practitioners.

In the past, the term additional learning needs was referred to as Special Educational Needs (SEN). Although the term has changed, the need is just as paramount. This change has combined two systems and combined them to ensure a higher level of support and aid, is provided to anyone that requires it. (Welsh Government 2018).

Dauncey (2015) defines special educational needs as having a significant difficulty in learning compared to their peers. He goes on to specify this further by stating that a disability that hinders or prevents the child from using educational facilities that have been provided. The Education act (1996) agrees with this as they state that a child has special educational needs if they have a difficulty that requires special educational provisions to be made for them.

Role Change

SENCO- Responsible for co-ordinating SEN provisions within the school setting. It is also their responsibility to identify pupils SEN and what form of intervention is required. (Dauncey, 2016).

ALNCO- The ALNCO must now be a qualified teacher and part of the senior management. This is due to the ALNCO's role being a strategic one and they need to be able to communicate with senior leadership. (Welsh Government 2020). The new role of the ALNCO, must have extensive practical experience and training with learners with ALN.

Implications of impending changes to ALN legislation in Wales for Early Years practitioners.

Bethany Hannaford

1802829

EAEE6002/C

Reviews and Reforms

According to Dauncey (2016) approximately 1 in 5 children in maintained schools have some sort of Special educational need. He states that currently there are 3 graduated stages of intervention, These include:-

- School action
- School action plan
- Local authority statement of Special educational needs

However, the new proposed reform, introduces a "more modern approach to multi- agency working". This is according to Dauncey (2016). This new approach will also have 3 objectives:-

- A unified legislative framework
- An integrated, collaborative process
- A fair and transparent system

Dauncey(2016) highlights that these changes are important as the Welsh Government has recognised that the old system is not fit for purpose.

Age Ranges

Additional learning needs has previously been split into two systems. These are Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). The first system, focuses on learners under the age of 16 years and the second system is aimed at learners over the age of 16 years. This new Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system will replace both of these and will encompass the needs of all learners under the ages of 25 years (Welsh Government, 2018). These have been combined in the hope that local authorities will collaborate and provide consistent support as the learner transitions from school to higher education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, many elements of the current ALN legislation is changing in Wales. These changes may have various implications such as confusion, miscommunication and an increase of pressure. This will affect the children with an ALN and potentially the support and additional help that they require. However, these changes will also bring about new and up to date training, support for the setting, the members of staff and for the children. Although these changes may bring new challenges and uncertainty, the Welsh Government are confident that these changes will resolve issues and best support the children and members of staff in the meeting of their needs.

ALN Implementation Timeline – (Welsh Government, 2018)

2018	2019	2020	2023
<u>January</u> ALN and educational tribunal Act gains Royal Assent.	<u>December</u> Final ALN Code issued.	<u>January</u> Implementation training on the new ALN code.	<u>Summer</u> The SEN and LDD systems both come to an end.
<u>March</u> ALN Transformation.		<u>September</u> The new ALN system goes live.	
<u>Autumn</u> Consultation on draft ALN Code and regulations.			