

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill

Introduction

There are currently impending changes for legislation, which supports children and young people with additional learning needs within Wales. The new Act comes after concerns that current legislation is outdated (Welsh Government, 2018). Furthermore, the proposed Act is set to replace current SEN legislation and replaced with new ALN terminology (Dauncey, 2016). Additional changes within the Act include, support for individuals with ALN will be in place until 25 years (Dewis Cymru, 2020). The aim of this poster is to critically analyse three main changes and themes, within the reform of the Act and discuss implications for practitioners within the early years.

SEN to ALN

One visible change in the Act is the terminology of SEN changing to ALN (Snap Cymru, 2019). Although the definitions are the same, the new ALN Act will now support individuals with learning needs and disabilities, up to the age of 25 (Dewis Cymru, 2020). However, with no date set for when the new Act will be in place, the Welsh Government (2018) emphasis the old SEN legislation, must be still used until a date is released.

Implications

- Cardiff Council (2020) are still referring to the SEN terminology.
- Swansea Council (2020) are already rolling out the new ALN terminology.

Confusion between local authorities using SEN and ALN can cause uncertainty between practitioners, within the early years on which terminology and processes should be used.

SENCo to ALNCo

The role of the SENCo is to be replaced with ALNCo, as one of the changes within the Act (ALN Wales, 2019). The role of a SENCo identifies a child's SEN and the need to draw up an individual education plan (IEP) (Welsh Government, 2010). Within the ALNCo role, IEP's are set to be replaced by IDP's (Welsh Government, 2018). IDP's will be available for all individuals with learning needs and disabilities, up to the age of 25 (Welsh Government, 2020).

Implications

- Increased pressure and stress on SENCo's reverting to ALNCo's
- New proposed ALNCo job role wants individuals to hold a MA qualification (Welsh Government, 2018).
- Practitioners could become concerned about what will happen without a MA qualification.
- Proposed job role training date has passed with no new date set (Welsh Government, 2019).

Training in practice

Implementation training proposals have been noted in a form of 4 tier training, including categories for all sectors who work with children with ALN (Welsh Government, 2018).

Tier 1

E-learning course for individuals who work and have an interest in ALN (Learning@Wales, no date).

Tier 2 and 3

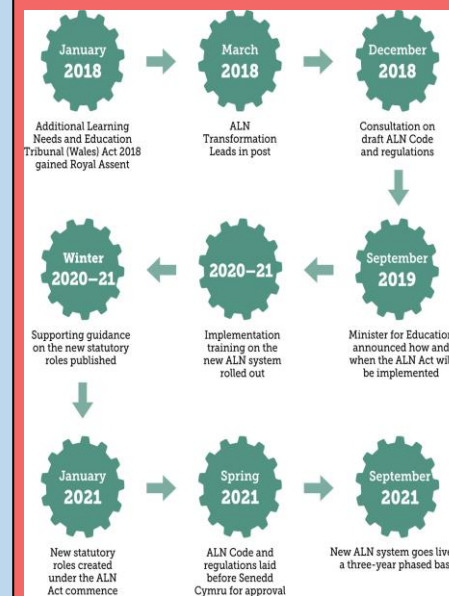
Targeted for current SENCos and new ALNCo's (Welsh Government, 2019).

Tier 4

For leaders with a statutory responsibility such as governing bodies (Learning@Wales, no date).

Implications

- Tier 1 will be the only mandatory training including practitioners (Learning@Wales, no date).
- An e-learning course may not give practitioners enough knowledge to fully support children with ALN.
- Little literature on how e-learning can be used to support teachers and practitioners (Ullman, 2010).



(Roberts, no date).

Conclusion

To summarise, confusion, stress, lack of adequate training and no proposed date for the implement of the new Act, are all found to be possible implications for practitioners.