

Impending changes to ALN legislation in Wales

Introduction - Within this poster it will be looking at the many impending changes to ALN legislations and practices to practitioners within Wales (Welsh Government, 2015) Finding the law for Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs being out of date, a new and updated law is coming on board. The change in law was initially planned to be rolled out in September 2020 however has been pushed back until September 2021 due to the current circumstances, stating by the Welsh Government National Deaf Children's Society (No Date) that those children who are identified with Additional Learning Needs and those with individuals with the highest level of need will all receive a IDP by September 2021. Welsh Government (2020a) believe that by making a change to the ALN legislation that they can modify expectations, provide the best experiences and effective outcomes for Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs.

ALN IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE



(Source: Snap Cymru, 2018)

SEN TO ALN

Referenced within the Welsh Government (2020) document it states that the new law and legislation coming in will set out the definitions refraining from Special Education Needs (SEN) and introducing the new term Additional Learning Needs (ALN) which will cover individuals aged 0-25 years old. The changes in language could come confusions to many practitioners, adding stress and pressure, as stated by Welsh Government (2018) they have provided research to suggest that they have combined together funding to provide five additional learning needs support to deliver and roll out the new and reformed programme to ease with anxieties and confusion, stating that these roles will play a fundamental role in implementing the system within settings ensuring practitioners fully understand the importance.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPEMNT PLANS (IDP)

At this moment in time, according to Snap Cymru (No Date) children with additional learning needs used something called the statementing process / a statutory statement, this is completed and sent to the local authority, when successful the individual child will then be provided with a written statement. Suggested by Welsh Government (2021) they state that on the introduction of the new law the statementing process will then be replaced by something called an Individual Development Plan (IDP) this will be a written document and According to Welsh Government (2019) the IDP's will include many targets, plans, and ways forward for the child to work towards to help improve their learning and development, additionally this Individual Development Plan will support individuals up to the age of 25. Therefore, another limitation is that a child / individual will only be identified as having Additional Learning Needs when their Individual Development Plan is maintained by the local authority, Kirwan (2018) also suggest that Person Centred Planning will become a key aspect of putting the child in the centre of all the planning and preparation aspect also liaising with the family to take their ideas into consideration will help when forming the Child's Individual Development Plan.

SENCO TO ALENCO

Upon the new legislation as referenced by Welsh Government (2018b) it will be found many changes to the settings Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) being substituted with an Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALENCO). Additionally, stated by Islington (No Date) they say this comes with additional pressure and responsibility for the individual practitioner who is responsible of this role. According to Welsh Government (2021) The ALENCO will now undertake additional duties and be the responsible person who must make the decision as to whether the individual child has an Additional Learning Need or not and if so, it will be their job to create the IDP and ensure this is kept up to date if any changes come from the child/ young person. Believed by Provision Map (2019) they say that the setting ALENCO would usually be part of the senior management team using additional support staff to support their responsibilities and tasks. To ensure the ALENCO is effectively completing their job specific training is required. However, stated by National Assembly for Wales Research Service (2016) they believe that the identification of a protentional Additional Learning Need does not only have to come from the settings ALENCO this can come from many other people.

Conclusion- To conclude, within the new reformed legislation as referenced throughout there has been many changes made and preparation to ensure effective future practice for all individual children and practitioners. As it shows there has additionally been many implications to practitioners and current practice with the changes causing some misunderstanding and challenges for practitioners, from ALN term changes to extra intense workloads and undertaking effective training. There is found to be both advantages and disadvantages to this change.

Further Reading:

Snap Cymru: [How the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal \(ALNET\) Act will be implemented. - SNAP Cymru](#)

ESTYN: [Local authority and school readiness to meet the demands of the new ALN Bill thematic survey report \(pembsinclusionsservice.wales\)](#)