



Ein cyf/Our ref - OQ59246

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Dear Russell,

Thank you for your questions during Plenary on 14 March and for providing me with the opportunity to further discuss this important issue with you.

Although the additional learning needs (ALN) system is quite different to the special educational needs and disability (SEND) system in England, the ALN Code provides guidance on how cross-border matters should be dealt with.

In cases where a child has moved to Wales from England and an Education, Health and Care ("EHC") needs assessment has begun but no plan is yet in place, the school or local authority in Wales (depending on the particular circumstance) is expected to use the information available to them to provide early support for that child.

The additional learning needs co-ordinator (ALNCo) in the school or the relevant local authority staff member will be expected to work with the child's previous school across the border to gather evidence and ensure the right provision is available to appropriately support the learner.

Schools and local authorities in Wales must decide if a child has ALN where it is brought to their attention, or otherwise appears to them that the child might have ALN (except in some specific circumstances). Where the school or local authority has decided the child does have ALN, they must then prepare and maintain an individual development plan (IDP) for that child. The school must make the decision on ALN, prepare the IDP and give a copy of it promptly, and in any event within 35 school days. Local authorities are given more time but must still do so promptly.

In cases where a child at a school in Wales has been identified as having ALN but has not yet been issued with an IDP, the school must still take all reasonable steps to secure the additional learning provision (ALP) called for by the child's ALN. The same duty applies to

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

the local authority in cases where it is the local authority that has made the decision that the child has ALN.

Early identification, intervention and prevention is a key principle of the ALN system. The importance of timely identification and of providing appropriate provision as soon as possible for a child or young person with ALN cannot be over-emphasised.

We are aware of the increasing demand and waiting times for assessment and diagnosis of all neurodevelopmental conditions and we are taking action to improve services. On 6 July, in a written statement the Deputy Minister for Social Services made a commitment to deliver a new Neurodevelopment Improvement Programme, backed by £12 million to improve waiting times, services and support for families.

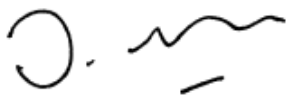
However, a formal diagnosis is not required to ensure support is provided to a learner when they need it, and support should not be delayed whilst waiting for any diagnosis if needs and relevant support can be identified.

As we continue to implement these important reforms and embed the principles of person-centred practice and increased collaboration, my officials have established a national task and finish group to address common themes and queries resulting from the practicalities of implementing the new system, including cross-border issues.

I recognise the significant task our delivery partners have in implementing the ALN system whilst continuing to deliver high quality education to all our learners. To acknowledge and support this, I have recently announced I am almost doubling the funding available to education partners, investing £12m in 2023-24 and 2024-25 to boost resources that are required to successfully embed the ALN reforms. I have also extended the implementation period by a year to help effectively deliver the new legislation.

I hope this letter provides you and your constituents with the assurances you are seeking; that support is available to embed the ALN system across Wales and ensure all our learners can achieve their full potential.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a horizontal line.

**Jeremy Miles AS/MS**

Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg  
Minister for Education and Welsh Language