

Flintshire County Council

Policy Framework for Children with additional learning needs (ALN)



2023 - 2026

Overview

Policy	Policy framework for children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)
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Related documents	

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1. Policy Frameworks for children with Additional learning Needs (ALN)

1.1 Purpose

The aim of this policy, and the practice which it informs, is to maximise the educational opportunities of all Flintshire's pupils who are identified as having ALN. This will be achieved by offering all children a relevant and worthwhile education, which is designed to enable them to be included, and participate fully, in the society to which they contribute and from which they benefit.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all children in Flintshire who are identified as having additional learning needs.

1.3 Principles

The following principles are fundamental to the work of the council and that of our schools in relation to children and young people with ALN:

- Flintshire County Council is committed to a policy of inclusion for everyone, with a drive for the ongoing development of inclusive cultures and communities in and around our schools to ensure all children and young people have access to high quality education which supports them to ultimately become active citizens.
- As a council, we are committed to supporting and delivering the principles underpinning the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) system as described in Chapter 3 of The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales, 2021. We recognise the importance and relevance of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) across all areas of our work.
- We recognise that the child/young person's needs and wishes are of paramount importance and that early intervention is a key to providing relevant strategies and interventions to support individuals to develop, progress and achieve their desired outcomes.
- We believe there is a collective responsibility to maximise the educational opportunities of all Flintshire children and young people who are identified as having ALN. Barriers should be identified and removed, enabling all learners to participate and benefit from learning, each building on their particular areas of strength.
- We have a culture of high expectations of ourselves, our schools, children and young people and offer a broad continuum of provision for children with ALN. This continuum will be reviewed to ensure that it is responsive to the nature and extent of ALN experienced by our children and young people.

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- The council has a strong commitment to supporting access to Welsh medium education for all through its school network and also the availability of appropriate support services for children and young people with ALN, commissioning these where necessary.
 - Person-centred practice is an important, integral part of our approach and as such, will be embedded across all services and settings to ensure the views, wishes and feelings of children, their parents and young people are at the heart of decision making and planning. The council and its maintained settings will continue to work closely with parents, children and educational staff to ensure all children, parents, young people and staff feel equally valued.
 - The council recognises the importance of, and positive impact of collaboration and multi-agency working. Support and consideration will be given to facilitate effective participation and collaboration of all parties including providing access to information, advice and advocacy to support the full participation and engagement of children, young people and parents in processes and services relating to ALN.
 - We will work collaboratively with schools to proactively promote parental knowledge and understanding of ALN system, including funding mechanisms, to enable parents to make informed choices and support their contribution to person-centred practices.
 - The vast/greater majority of Flintshire children and young people will have their educational needs and ALN identified, met and monitored within mainstream schools or local further education institutes (FEIs). This will be through differentiation and access to appropriate strategies and targeted interventions within a universal offer of high quality education. Most children and young people with ALN will therefore have their Individual Development Plan (IDP) prepared and maintained by the school or FEI.
 - Settings should make full use of the Flintshire ALN Toolkit, when planning and making provision for children and young people with ALN. Parents should be made aware of the Toolkit and its purpose to facilitate their engagement and understanding of the provision to be made for their child.
 - The council is in agreement with the principle of children attending their local school and becoming an integral part of their community. To facilitate and support this, funding for ALN is delegated to all maintained settings. It is the expectation of the council that the additional learning provision (ALP) required to meet the majority of individual needs will be met through the delegated budgets which includes the provision of specialist resource centres, specialist schools and Pupil Referral Units.
 - Given the school budget formula and model of delegation for ALN, schools are normally expected to meet the staffing requirements of pupils with ALN. In cases where an individual's needs are significant, necessitating a high level of targeted, highly specialist intervention, e.g. specific therapeutic intervention not reasonably provided by an educational setting, then consideration will be made to provide additional funding to support the school to deliver.

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- Settings are expected to provide access to IT equipment such as laptops, iPads etc in response to individual needs. Schools or the Council will be expected to purchase other specialist equipment in line with the Council's policy.
 - All placements in Flintshire maintained specialist provision are determined by the Council's ALN Decision Panel following IDP consideration/reconsideration. In most circumstances, Flintshire County Council will prepare the IDP for these learners and direct the school to maintain the IDP.
 - Placements in independent specialist settings are also agreed/commissioned by the council and schools are not required to contribute funding towards these; a budget to fund provision in specialist settings not maintained by Flintshire is retained centrally.
 - Flintshire County Council will prepare and maintain IDPs for children and young people with ALN who are Looked After, dual registered, attend out of county schools or placed in a specialist independent setting.
 - The council retains a central budget to fund a range of specialist services to support children and young people with a range of individual needs including ALN. These are free at point of access to all Flintshire maintained settings. The extent and duration of advice is particular to each service area and also the individual's needs. Additional information on services is available on the Flintshire County Council Hwb pages.



2. General information on the practice and future developments for children with Additional Learning Needs

Flintshire County Council is committed to a policy of Inclusion for everyone. This principle is firmly held by the council and its schools.

Our aim is to create inclusive cultures and communities in and around our schools. We want all children, young people, parents and staff to feel equally valued. We wish to break down barriers to learning and foster full participation in school life.

Flintshire County Council recognises the duties placed on it by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALNET) and its work will be guided and defined by the legislation and the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021 in relation to children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

- 1) A person has additional learning needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise) which calls for additional learning provision.
- 2) A child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
 - a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - b) has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream institutions in the further education sector.
- 3) A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is, or would be if no additional learning provision were made, likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age.
- 4) A person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been used at home.

ALNET, Section 2

This framework contains information relating to policies and practices which we believe will help children with ALN to learn and thrive within our educational system.

2.1 A continuum of provision

Through its schools, Flintshire County Council will continue to provide a broad continuum of provision for children with ALN. This continuum will be responsive to the nature and extent of children's ALN. When making provision the council and its schools will have regard to the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021.

The greater majority of children with ALN will have their needs identified, met and monitored within mainstream schools. The council offers a number of centrally funded services to provide support, guidance and intervention to individuals, schools and parents in response to a range of individual needs.

A small number of children will have individual needs which cannot reasonably be met within a mainstream school. A number of Resource Bases have been established across the county to support a range of ALN, allowing children access to more specialist intervention and support within a mainstream setting. Specialist schools and Plas Derwen (Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit) offer provision for those with more significant or complex ALN.

2.2 Responding to change

The Council will keep its continuum of provision under review in order that it may continue to:

- reflect the changing pattern and nature of children's ALN;
- respond to the preferences of children and parents; and
- aim to use resources effectively to provide the best quality education.

2.3 Working in partnership

The council will continue to work closely with parents, children, young people and educational staff to improve outcomes for those with ALN. We also recognise the need to constantly review and develop our partnership working with Social Services, Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board, SNAP Cymru with regards to the delivery of the ALN Information & Support Service and the voluntary sector to maximise the impact on those individuals with ALN and their families.



3. Policy statement

3.1 A curriculum for all

All children should have the same curricular entitlement. The Curriculum for Wales will be followed by all children, unless meeting their ALN requires its modification or disapplication.

3.2 Meeting the wishes of parents and children

Whenever possible, the council will seek to place children in schools in accordance with their own wishes and those of their parents. Where it becomes necessary to access a change in educational placement as a result of an individual child's needs, parents, and children where appropriate, will always be consulted about the new placement. The child's views will be sought by the current school and will form part of the advice submitted by schools to the council.

The ALN Code for Wales 2021 places a duty on local authorities to educate children within a mainstream maintained school. There are three exceptions to this duty:

- (a) where educating the child in a mainstream maintained school is incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children;
- (b) where educating the child otherwise than in a mainstream maintained school is appropriate in the child's best interests and compatible with the provision of efficient education for other children; and
- (c) where the child's parent wishes the child to be educated otherwise than in a mainstream maintained school.

These factors will be taken into consideration where an alternative to a mainstream school is under consideration.

3.3 Additional Learning Needs Information and Advice Service (ALNISS)

ALNISS is an independent service available to all Flintshire children and their parents or carers and young people who have/or may have additional learning needs. It is delivered by SNAP Cymru who offer impartial information, advice and support. The service can help with general queries and advice or provide more in-depth support from a caseworker who will:

- Provide clear, reliable and straightforward information about options;
- Help parents and young people to confidently share their views, make informed decisions; and
- Help ensure everyone is focusing on the child or young person's best interests.

Contact information:

Helpline: 0808 801 0608

Email: enquiries@snapcymru.org

ALN enquiry: www.snapcymru.org/contact

Website: www.snapcymru.org

3.4 Support for the child / young person

Children and young people should be at the heart of the decision-making process with regards to their additional learning needs. Along with parents, children and young people have the right of appeal under the special educational needs (SEN)/ALN legislation. The council's priority would be to prevent disagreements arising or to resolve these as quickly and efficiently as possible. Support for children and young people in this situation is provided in the form of independent advocacy delivered via the Additional Learning Needs Information Support Service (ALNISS).

Where a child or young person is deemed to lack capacity, the individual can access a Case Friend to represent, support and take decisions on their behalf. Case Friends are appointed or removed by the Education Tribunal.

3.5 Mediation arrangements

Dispute resolution and mediation services are available via SNAP Cymru. The main aim of the service is to seek agreement between the child, young person, parents and service providers where they have been unable to agree about the needs of a child and how they should be met.

3.6 A policy for inclusion

Flintshire County Council will actively promote the inclusion of all children with ALN and believes that where possible, a child's needs should be catered for within their local mainstream school.

Where this is not a possibility, then a suitably resourced alternative mainstream school will be considered. Where an individual's additional learning needs cannot be met fully and appropriately within a mainstream setting, alternative provision, part or full-time, will be made available for them in a specialist setting.

3.7 Education through the medium of Welsh

Mainstream education is available at all phases for children who wish to access their education through the medium of Welsh. The council is committed to supporting access to Welsh medium education for all through the availability of appropriate support services for children with ALN, parents and schools, commissioning these where necessary.

3.8 Equity of funding/provision

All children with educational needs are entitled to have their needs met irrespective of where they access their education. Flintshire County Council has delegated funding to all schools who are therefore required to develop and implement a range of interventions and support to meet the needs of their cohorts. Support may be offered at universal level or via an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for those individuals in need of additional learning provision (ALP) unless the ALP cannot reasonably be met by a school and a more specialist provision is required.

The council maintains decision-making panels that consider the need for extra provision above that which is available within the school. All decisions are based on the consideration of individual needs.

3.9 Allocation of additional resources

Schools are resourced to meet the educational needs of most children through their delegated budgets. Some children, with very significant levels of physical and/or medical needs may require a level of support that a school cannot reasonably be expected to provide using their delegated funds. A decision has been taken with schools to top slice the delegated budget and retain that separately as an additional resource fund which all schools can draw down to support those with these high-level needs. In such cases, the council has been designated as the decision-making body on behalf of the school network with regards to access to the additional resource fund. This additional provision, if allocated, will be identified either in children's Health Care Plans, Statements of SEN or Individual Development Plans. Provision will be monitored through regular reviews and will be subject to change in response to the individual's needs.

3.10 Provision of free transport

In some cases, the council will provide free transport for children with ALN. The criteria for free transport are laid down in the council's transport policy. A copy of this policy is available on the Flintshire County Council website.

3.11 The Inclusion & Progression Service

Flintshire County Council maintains an Inclusion & Progression Service which aims to provide an efficient, effective and co-ordinated service available to all schools, children and their families. Access to these services will be prioritised according to severity or urgency of need. More details of this Service can be found on the Flintshire County Council website or Hwb.

3.12 Working with other agencies

Flintshire County Council, with its schools and support services, will continue to develop co-operative working arrangements with Social Services, Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board and the voluntary sector to support children, young people and their families. Officers will actively engage with the Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO) within the relevant local Health Boards to ensure a holistic approach to support.

3.13 Training

Flintshire County Council recognises the importance of training in relation to building capacity within our educational establishments. A range of training opportunities are provided for all staff working with children with ALN and the council works collaboratively with other agencies to ensure effective and efficient use of resources in relation to training. Further details may be obtained from Flintshire County Council's Hwb site or direct from individual services.

3.14 Monitoring

Flintshire County Council will assist its schools to set and monitor meaningful outcomes for their pupils with ALN and will provide support to ensure adequate systems are in place in all schools for monitoring the progress of these pupils.

4. Promotion of high standards of education for children and young people with ALN

By these means the council will monitor and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the provision made available for children with ALN. Each school will have a named Learning Advisor, who will undertake an annual support and monitoring visit with the ALNCo. Liaison with the regional school improvement service (GwE) will also take place as required.

With its schools, the council is committed to promoting high standards of education for pupils with ALN.

It seeks to achieve this by the following means:

- The work of its Inclusion & Progression Service to provide a range of support and provision for children with ALN, their parents and schools;
- The monitoring role of the Education, Culture & Youth Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
- Support, advice and guidance to Headteachers and Governing Bodies;
- Implementation of Flintshire County Council's Strategic Equality Plan;
- Effective training for educational staff to assist them in meeting individual needs appropriately;
- Continuing to encourage and support the development and implementation of preventative measures in schools;
- Regular training, advice and support for ALNCoS;
- Advice and guidance on general ALN related management and policy issues from the Inclusion & Progression Service and other council central services;
- Consultation with school staff and parents about the needs of pupils and groups of pupils;
- Allocation of delegated budgets to schools to support them to deliver ALP as identified in IDPs;
- Access to specialist facilities where appropriate;
- Encouraging schools to have high expectations of their pupils with ALN; and
- Access to an advocacy service for children and young people.



5. Encouraging children and young people with ALN to participate fully in their education

Flintshire County Council strongly endorses the intention of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002, the ALN Code for Wales 2021 and the Pupil Inclusion and Support guidance, to encourage children and young people to be fully involved in their school and communities and to take part in decisions being made about their education.

It seeks to achieve this aim by:

- Promoting person-centred practices across schools and council services, offering regular training to school-based staff;
- Advising schools to invite children to attend meetings where they are able and willing to do so;
- Asking schools to consult with children about their views on their needs and wishes as part of ALN processes;
- Educational Psychologists and other specialist services seeking and recording children's views about their needs and wishes as part of their individual assessments;
- Encouraging schools to consider how pupils with ALN are represented on the school council;
- Providing access to an independent advocacy scheme; and
- Working with the Youth Forum to actively incorporate Learner Voice into service development and review.

6. Encouraging schools to share their practice in providing for children and young people with ALN

- Identification of effective practice through visits and dissemination of this through a range of forums;
- When schools appoint key staff such as ALNCoS they are encouraged to seek experienced practitioners from other schools to act as mentors for the new post holders; and
- Establish specialist schools, Portfolio PRU and resourced provision as centres of expertise to be accessed and utilised by mainstream staff.

7. Working with other statutory agencies and voluntary bodies

Flintshire County Council recognises the value of working in close partnership with other agencies and voluntary organisations in support of children with ALN. This recognition is enacted within a variety of different settings and means, examples are listed in the following table.

TITLE OF FORUM	MAIN FUNCTION	MEMBERSHIP
Local Authority Decision-making Panels	To make key decisions relating to the statutory assessment/ consideration process	Inclusion & Progression Service Officers, school representatives, Children's Services, Health Board
Out of County Panel	To agree and monitor placements in non-Flintshire maintained settings.	Children's Services, Inclusion & Progression Service Officers, Health Board
Child to Adult Panel	To facilitate transition from Children's to Adults' Services	Children's Services, Adult Services, Inclusion & Progression Officers, Health Board, school representatives, Careers Wales
Speech, Language & Communication Panel	To review pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties and plan the admission of children into Language Resources.	Speech and Language Therapists, Inclusion Officers, Language Resource staff
Education & Youth/ Social Services Strategic Group	To encourage effective joint working practice.	Managers of both Portfolios, Education & Youth Officers and SS Officers
North East Wales Speech & Language Services (NEWSALS)	To coordinate provision for children with speech, language and communication difficulties	Speech & Language therapists, Inclusion & Progression Officers (Wrexham & Flintshire)
Emotional Wellbeing Strategic Group	To coordinate and oversee the LA's policy and practice relating to emotional health & wellbeing	Education & Youth officers, CAMHS, Headteachers, Education Psychologist, representatives from health board services, children's services, third sector, GwE, Healthy Schools, and Young People counselling

8. Flintshire County Council's general arrangements for meeting children and young people's ALN

8.1 Provision for inclusion

Flintshire County Council's strategy for inclusion is set within the overall context of the work of the Education & Youth Portfolio and the Flintshire County Council Plan.

8.2 Inclusion Strategy

- Flintshire County Council will pay due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990, the Salamanca Statement, the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002, the ALN Code for Wales 2021, the Welsh Government Circular 203/2016: Inclusion and Pupil Support and the Equality Act 2010.
- Inclusion is fundamentally an issue of equal opportunities and should be incorporated into every aspect of daily life to ensure that children and young people are supported to fulfil their potential as citizens within their community;
- Everyone has a right to access suitable educational provision, services and experiences of the highest quality;
- An inclusive ethos means that everyone feels valued, safe, respected and an integral part of their local learning community;
- All children, young people and their parents are entitled to be treated with respect and should be actively encouraged to make their views known so that they can be taken into account;
- Care should be taken to consider children and young people within the context of their home language, culture and community;
- The inclusive curriculum must be sufficiently diverse, differentiated and adequately resourced to match the individual learning needs of children and young people;
- Inclusion involves increasing and maximising participation for children and young people in cultures, curricula and communities of local schools and the wider society;
- Schools will need to ensure that their cultures, policies and practices are fully inclusive to support Flintshire children and young people to access their local provision;
- Inclusion is an ongoing process rather than a fixed state.

This strategy includes everyone within the school community, adults as well as children and young people.

We are committed to:

- Removing barriers that exclude children and young people from any opportunity to reach their full potential in any and every setting;
- Promoting an inclusive educational system across all types and all phases of schools and other providers at all stages of education from early years to adulthood;



- A preventative approach that includes early identification of need, early intervention and support for children and young people;
- Building capacity within our schools to support the development of more inclusive practices;
- Supporting effective leadership that generates clear direction and supports the implementation of change;

Adopting protocols and practices which help us make effective use of outside agencies to help develop and sustain inclusive practice;

Having the interests of the child, young person and family firmly rooted at the core of our work;

- Making strategic decisions regarding the deployment of funding and resources based on well informed principles relating to local, regional & national developments and priorities;
- Creating highly specialised teams that work effectively and collaboratively to ensure the raising of standards for all children & young people;
- Listening to, and acting upon feedback from a range of service users including children and young people;
- A culture of high expectations of ourselves, our schools and the children and young people we support.

8.3 Details of the range of specialist provision available

Flintshire County Council recognises the importance of access to a continuum of provision for individuals with ALN. The great majority of this provision is made in ordinary classrooms in local mainstream schools through access to high quality teaching and differentiation and access to universal and targeted intervention.

Typically this provision consists of:

- Adaptation of the curriculum through differentiation, modification or disapplication;
- Adaptation of the learning environment;
- Access to special equipment or materials;
- Access to additional adult support.

Some individuals require provision which is more specialist in nature. The following section lists the extra provision which is available in Flintshire.

Resourced Schools

The following schools have Resourced facilities. Given the highly specialist nature of these facilities, children and young people will normally have a Statement of SEN/Individual Development Plan to be admitted to these.

SCHOOL	FORM OF NEED	Key Stage
Ysgol Maes Y Felin	Social Communication Difficulties	KS2
Ysgol Ty Ffynnon	Moderate Learning Difficulties	FP/KS2
Ysgol Bryn Coch	Moderate Learning Difficulties	KS2
Ysgol Mynydd Isa	Specific Language Impairment	FP/ KS2
Ysgol Glanrafon	Range of SEN through the medium of Welsh	KS2
Ysgol Maes Glas	Behaviour, emotional and/or social difficulties	KS2
Alun School	Hearing Impairment	KS3/4/5
Argoed High School	Specific Language Impairment Social Communication Difficulties	KS3/4 KS3/4
Elfed High School	Social & Emotional Difficulties	KS3/4
Hawarden High School	Specific Learning Difficulties	KS3/4/5

All high schools are in receipt of delegated funding to support the education of pupils with a range of difficulties, including moderate learning difficulties. All high schools are in receipt of delegated funding to support the education of pupils with a range of difficulties, including moderate learning difficulties.

Plas Derwen Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit

Plas Derwen consists of a range of facilities for children with behavioural, emotional and social needs.

Facility	Location	Needs Met	Key Stage
Plas Derwen @ Canolfan Enfys	Mold	Provision for children with a range of significant additional learning needs	FP
Plas Derwen	Queensferry	Severe and complex behavioural, emotional and social difficulties Mental health and anxiety related difficulties	KS2, KS3 & KS4 KS3 & KS4

Specialist Schools

Flintshire’s specialist schools have been built and resourced to cater for pupils with significant and complex difficulties relating to cognition and learning. Pupils who are allocated places may also have associated difficulties, e.g. Autism, BESD. It is anticipated that pupils with moderate learning difficulties will access provision either within their local mainstream primary school, specialist primary resources or within their local high schools.

SCHOOL	Location	Key Stage
Ysgol Pen Coch	Shared site with Ysgol Gwynedd, Flint	Foundation Phase / KS2
Ysgol Maes Hyfryd	Shared site with Flint High School, Flint	KS3/4/5

All placements in Flintshire specialist provision are determined by the council’s ALN Decision Panel.

8.4 Flintshire County Council’s Inclusion & Progression Service

The Inclusion & Progression Service aims to assist parents, schools and other providers to meet the educational needs of children with ALN. It does so within the broader context of the council’s school improvement priority to maximise the educational progress made by all including those with ALN.

The Inclusion & Progression Service provides advice, guidance and support in relation to a wide range of ALN.

8.5 Provision for children in early years settings

Children in early years settings such as maintained and non-maintained nursery classes and play groups are also covered by ALN legislation and the ALN Code for Wales 2021. As such they are entitled to have any educational needs identified and met. In line with a graduated response, a One Page Profile will be drawn up for children identified as having educational needs and will indicate the provision to be implemented to support the child through the universal provision offer.

The Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer (EYALNLO) and the Early Years Entitlement Team play a key role in advising early years settings on their responsibilities and duties under the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021. The Early Years Entitlement Team employs a teacher with knowledge of the Code who assists staff in these settings to identify and meet educational needs. Where a child has severe and complex needs, the council will undertake a consideration of ALN in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Code. Where a child is considered to have ALN, a local authority IDP will be generated.

9. Identifying children with ALN

Every school is required to be compliant with the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021. Where it is brought to the attention of the school that a child or young person has ALN, they must consider and decide whether they have ALN or not (subject to exceptions). The arrangements for identifying those with ALN will usually involve a selection of the following:

- Observation by the class, subject or pastoral teacher;
- Parental observations;
- Criterion referenced assessment;
- Baseline assessment
- Standardised tests; and
- Information from other professional observations/reports where available.

Where it is brought to the attention of the local authority that a child or young person may have ALN, the LA also has a duty to consider and decide, however the LA may decide that the school is best placed to undertake the ALN consideration. In some cases where a school has decided that the individual has ALN, rather than prepare the IDP it may refer the case to the LA. They should only do this if they consider that the child or young person has ALN:

- a) that may call for ALP it would not be reasonable for the school to secure,
- b) the extent or nature of ALN which it cannot adequately determine, or
- c) for which it cannot adequately determine ALP.

In line with the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021, The LA considers and makes decisions about the needs of children and young people and the required provision on an individual basis. The LA has agreed a range of principles, which can be found in section A1 of this document or on the Flintshire website.

9.1 Organising a local authority ALN consideration

The Additional Learning Needs Service coordinates the process of an ALN consideration as laid down in the Additional Learning Needs Act (2018), Code for Wales 2021, and the accompanying Regulations.

9.2 Requests for a local authority ALN consideration and decision

Where a child or young person is perceived to have significant and long term ALN, a request may be made to the local authority for an ALN consideration and decision. This request can be made by parents, schools or other agencies and has to be considered by the local authority (subject to exceptions). Flintshire County Council has established decision-making panels to consider all such requests. This panel process can also be referred to as the moderation process. A Designated Coordinator is identified for each child presented to panel. If a request is not accepted an explanatory letter is sent to parents and the child. If it is accepted, the process is initiated immediately with requests sent to relevant agencies seeking advice on the child. An initial meeting is offered to parents to explain the process. A person-centred meeting is also arranged with all involved parties.

9.3 The assessment / consideration process

When all the advice is received, it is made available to members of the decision-making panel prior to the meeting. At the meeting, each panel member expresses their view on the child's need for an IDP and, if an IDP is needed, what ALP is required along with which responsible body should prepare and/or maintain it. Children, young people and parents have the right of appeal local authority decisions.

Who is on the decision-making panels?

The decision-making panels consist of a number of the following professionals:

- ALN Learning Advisors
- a representative from a school
- one or more local authority Inclusion & Progression Service officers
- an educational psychologist
- a representative from the Portfolio PRU
- Health representative (pre-school panel)
- Children's Services representative (pre-school panel)
- Local authority Early Years' service representatives (pre-school panel)

Panel members are chosen because they either have expert knowledge of children with additional needs or because they are responsible for the allocation of the council's resources. The panel may discuss the needs of several individuals at each meeting. They look at the evidence provided and work together to decide on the action that is required.

The decisions made by the panel are always reported to the parents and child or young person who may then discuss the decisions between themselves, or with the designated support services, e.g. Case Friend, SNAP Cymru ALN Information Support Service.

How often to panels meet?

The decision-making panels meet weekly during the school term, with fortnightly meetings during longer school holidays.

What do they talk about?

The panel will talk about the child or young person's presenting and perceived needs. They will discuss the support that the setting has put in place and also any advice and support from external specialists that has been given. The rate of educational progress in response to such advice and support will be considered.

Outcome of local authority Statutory Assessment/consideration of ALN

Following the assessment/consideration, the decision-making panel will meet again to discuss the findings and decide on the support a child or young person should have. It may decide that the individual does not have ALN and would therefore not require an IDP.

If parents, child or young person disagrees with this decision, they can appeal to the Education Tribunal for Wales (Tel. 0300 025 9800).

If the decision-making panel decides that an individual has ALN, it will discuss the specific provision that the panel think will meet their needs. Parents and the child or the young person will be informed about the provision in a draft IDP. If they agree with its contents then the provision will be put into place and a Final IDP will be issued. If they do not agree with the proposed IDP, they can ask for changes to be made. The Named Learning Advisor will discuss their request, taking into account both the individual's best interests and the local authority's duty to make best use of its resources.

Part of the provision to be determined will include the school placement. Flintshire County Council's priority is to enable pupils to remain close to their home area and this is taken into consideration when determining an appropriate placement. Where a request for a non-Flintshire placement is made, either by the parent, child, young person or the professionals, the Named Learning Advisor will make representation in the form of an options appraisal to a joint commissioning panel comprising of representation from Education, Health and Social Services. The panel will consider the case and make a decision regarding the need for an external placement. Parents will be advised of the decision and the reason behind it.

10. Monitoring the admission of children and young people with ALN

10.1 Flintshire County Council's Admission Policy

Flintshire County Council maintains an admission policy for all its schools. This makes reference to the admission procedures for all pupils including those with ALN. A copy of the policy is provided to all Flintshire parents at the relevant times within their child's educational career and is also available on Flintshire County Council's website.

10.2 The range of Additional Needs Provision in Flintshire

The range of provision for pupils with ALN is kept under continual review. Admissions of individuals with statements of SEN / local authority prepared IDPs are monitored via the following:

- Decision-making panels monitor the admission of individual pupils with statements/local authority prepared IDPs to mainstream and specialist provision;
- Annual reviews of statements/IDPs monitor the continuing relevance of the child's placement; and
- Individual schools monitor children's placements via School Action or School Action Plus reviews/ School IDPs.

11. Providing support to schools on making provision for children and young people with ALN

11.1 Mainstream schools

Mainstream schools have several funding streams:

- A notional amount of funding is assumed to be used by schools for ALN provision from within the funding driven down by the age weighted pupil unit. The council recommends that a minimum of 5% of the whole school's budget is used to meet additional learning needs.
- Funding to support ALN sits within the overall delegated schools' budget. The majority of this funding is allocated to individual schools via formula. Additional funding can be accessed from the designated schools' Additional Resources budget in the form of a 'top up' allocation for children who meet the criteria for 'Band C' funding. This will be accessed in exceptional circumstances. The child will demonstrate a long term significant/severe health need resulting in a requirement for intensive adult supervision for medical, self-care, physical and mobility needs to support access to education. Access to the funding is authorised by the council's decision-making panels.
- The council maintains a system of ALN Resourced Schools which house specialist Resource Bases. Funding for these facilities is driven down according to a Service Level Agreement agreed with each school's governing body.

11.2 Special schools

Special schools are funded according to an annual audit which places children and young people in funding bands which vary according to the severity and complexity of their needs.



12. Auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing provision for children and young people with ALN

12.1 General

Flintshire County Council will work with schools to monitor the effectiveness of the funding allocated to ALN on actually meeting those needs. This will be achieved by the following means:

- Completion of PLASC, an annual census where schools identify the range and severity of individual pupil needs;
- The identification and sharing of effective practice with all schools;
- Annual focused visits to the specialist schools;
- Guidance to schools on outcomes which can be set; and
- Monitoring through a range of multi-agency meetings including interim and annual reviews.

12.2 Individual pupils

School maintained IDPs

The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021 provides guidance outlining the responsibilities of schools, the local authority and other partners in relation to children with ALN. The starting point is an identification of an individual's needs followed by the development of a programme of intervention (Additional Learning Provision) from the school which is targeted to support progress in the identified areas. Parents and carers have key roles to play in supporting their child with a partnership approach being integral to progress being achieved. In some cases, an individual may have more complex needs where advice, guidance and support from other professionals, external to the school, is required. Children, their parents and young people should be involved in generating and reviewing the IDP.

Children with statements or local authority IDPs

An annual review is conducted for each child. This review will focus on the progress made by the child. The council, either through its ALN service, Educational Psychology Service or other specialist services will normally be invited to attend annual reviews. The council specifically asks schools to invite officers to transitional reviews or to those where a child's progress or placement is causing concern. All annual review reports are scrutinised by the Named Learning Advisor. Where the report highlights any causes for concern the Learning Advisor will bring it before the decision-making panel for further scrutiny.

12.3 Supporting children and young people with ALN through school maintained IDPs

Guidance is issued by the local authority in the form of an ALN Toolkit to support schools. Additional support and guidance is available through the ALNCo Forum meeting, group consultation and cluster meetings.

12.4 Securing training, advice and support for staff withing with children and young people with ALN

School based Inset

Schools have funding delegated to them to fund training for staff to meet the needs of children with ALN. School Inset Coordinators prioritise the school's own training needs and will invite speakers or arrange for staff to attend appropriate courses.

Local Authority led Inset

The local authority provides a regular programme of ALN training for its schools. This programme is based on training needs identified via consultation with schools, evaluation forms of previous courses and through the council's own training priorities. The forms of training and advice from the council are as follows:

- Courses offered through the regular Inset programme;
- Training related to the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018;
- Training relating to the Equality Act;
- Single events on specific topics such as Autism
- Advice and guidance on individuals or groups offered by the central support services;
- E-mail support;
- ALNCo Forums; and
- Shared good practice.

12.5 Local Authority and school budget allocations for pupils with ALN

Funding/Resource streams for pupils with ALN

In mainstream schools there are four main sources of funding for pupils with ALN.

These are:

- A notional amount of the whole school's budget apart from that specifically allocated for children with ALN (recommended 5% of total budget);
- General funding delegated to the school for children with ALN;
- Funding delegated for Resource classes; and
- Delegated funding or resources allocated to specific pupils.

Funding of Special Schools

A formula is used to calculate the funding for special schools. Pupil funding is allocated against five categories of need with each category drawing down funding proportionate to individual need.

Funding which the local authority holds to meet ALN

The council holds back funding for pupils with ALN in the following areas:

- Educational Psychology Service;
- Engagement and Wellbeing services;
- Learning Inclusion Services;
- Administration of statutory assessment/ALN consideration;
- Senior Manager - Inclusion & Progression;
- Unpredictable pupil specific costs;
- Pupil Referral Unit facilities; and
- Non-maintained/Out of County provision.

The provision for pupils with ALN which schools can expect from local authority retained funding

- Advice, consultation and guidance on children with ALN, according to the nature and severity of their needs;
- Where appropriate and essential, individual assessment of children with ALN, according to the nature and severity of their needs;
- Where appropriate individual or group work with children with ALN, according to the nature and severity of their needs;
- Direct specialist teaching where children meet criteria for this support via local authority specialist services;
- Purchase of very expensive items of equipment for individual children which a school could not reasonably be expected to provide from within its own resources. This is usually based on the recommendations of physiotherapists or occupational therapists;
- Placement in specialist local authority managed facilities for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; and
- Placement in specialist non-maintained facilities and schools for children whose exceptional needs cannot be met within our own schools and facilities.

12.6 Monitoring and review of central ALN support services

Central services for children with ALN belong to a single Inclusion & Progression Service. The Senior Manager Inclusion & Progression leads the service and forms part of the council's Education & Youth Senior Management Team, reporting to the Chief Officer Education & Youth.

Review of service impact is an integral role for all Inclusion & Progression managers. Pupil outcomes are monitored and reviewed and considered in relation to service budget to ensure efficient use of the local authority funding. Services are expected to consult routinely with their users and this information is used to develop and enhance the services.

Plas Derwen, the Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit (PPRU) has a Management Committee. It also has a similar role to that of a school governing body for all the facilities which make up the PPRU. Regular meetings are held and the impact / outcomes are considered along with service development.

The Inclusion & Progression Service is also subject to review through local and national performance indicators. This forms part of Flintshire County Council's monitoring and progress is reported quarterly and subject to scrutiny by Council members.

External monitoring is provided through Estyn as part of the inspection process for local authorities.

12.7 Monitoring and review of the independent ALN advice, support and advocacy services

Flintshire County Council is part of a regional North Wales contract with SNAP Cymru to provide ALN support to parents, children and young people. This service is reviewed via:

- An annual written report by SNAP Cymru. This report details the number and nature and outcome of the referrals received by the Service in the preceding year; and
- Regional review/contract management.

12.8 Taking account of current and predicted pupil numbers

Flintshire County Council holds information on all children with statements and local authority IDPs on a central database. This information can be used to predict future trends of children relating to severity and nature of need. The Inclusion & Progression Service works in the following way to improve practice in this area:

- close working with colleagues in the Health Board to gain information on very young children with needs so that provision and placement can be planned at a much earlier opportunity; and
- analysing baseline assessment data to project future trends.

The Inclusion & Progression Service is represented on the council's Schools' Admission Forum which oversees the provision of school places across Flintshire.

12.9 Monitoring of the kinds of needs identified and where children and young people are placed

All children with ALN are subject to a reviewing process, e.g. IDP reviews, annual Statement reviews, Pastoral Support Plan review etc., irrespective of whether they attend local mainstream or specialist independent provision. The council has an overview of progress on individual or group perspective through the roles of key officers or through joint services such as the School Improvement service GwE.

The range of provision required to meet the presenting need is reviewed, with information being drawn from the decision-making panels and Out of County Placement Panel. This is used to reconfigure or commission provision as required.

The impact of schools / Inclusion & Progression Service

Local, regional and national performance indicators are used at each educational phase to measure progress of all Flintshire learners and to evaluate the impact of specific support services.



Appendix 1 Glossary

ALN	Additional Learning Needs.
ALP	Additional Learning Provision - the support and intervention needed to help an individual with ALN to access education.
ALNCO	Additional Learning Needs Coordinator - All mainstream maintained schools in Wales must designate a person, or more than one person who will have responsibility for co-ordinating provision for learners with ALN. That person (or persons) will be known as an additional learning needs co-ordinator, or ALNCo.
BESD	Behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
Delegated	Funds that are 'delegated' are provided to the school for a particular purpose. The amount for each school is calculated using a formula.
Educational Psychology Service	Educational Psychologists promote child development, behaviour and learning. They work with children and young people, parents and carers, teachers and people who work with other agencies.
IDP	Individual Development Plan - this is a written plan with description of needs, outcomes and provision. Parents and the pupil should be involved in creating and reviewing the plan.
Betsi Cadwallader University Health Board	That part of the National Health Service which provides local health services to North Wales.
MLD	Moderate learning difficulties.
Notional amount	An amount that is intended for a particular purpose.
Parent	An person who is deemed to have parental responsibility for a child or young person.
PMLD	Profound and multiple learning difficulties.
Resourced class	A class in a mainstream school that receives extra funding to equip it for the pupils who will go there.
SEN	Special Educational Needs.
SLD	Severe learning difficulties.

