

# **CEREDIGION SCHOOLS SERVICES**

## **CEREDIGION PRINCIPLES AND EXPECTATIONS OF MAINTAINED SCHOOLS FOR PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS 2021**

**THE PROVISION THAT IS REASONABLE TO EXPECT  
MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS TO MAKE AVAILABLE FOR LEARNERS  
WITH ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS.**

**THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND EDUCATION  
TRIBUNAL (WALES) ACT 2018**



Cyngor Sir  
**CEREDIGION**  
County Council

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## Introduction

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In 2017 the Welsh Government committed to a renewed focus of success for all learners and embarked on a comprehensive transformation programme which is captured in the document [Education in Wales: Our national mission, Action Plan 2017-2021](#). There is a recognition that in order to achieve the national vision there is a need to create strong and inclusive schools that are committed to excellence and well-being. The central message is clear in that ***every learner matters and matters equally***.<sup>1</sup>

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (2018) Act Wales is a part of this transformation programme. This provides a new statutory framework for supporting children with additional learning needs (ALN), and is accompanied by a mandatory Code which makes sure that the new system has a set of clear, legally enforceable parameters within which schools, local authorities and other partners responsible for the delivery of services to children and young people with ALN must act. The aim of the new approach, as stated in the Code is as follows<sup>2</sup>:

*“To support the creation of a fully inclusive education system where all learners are given the opportunity to succeed and have access to an education that meets their needs and enables them to participate in, benefit from, and enjoy learning.”*

The new statutory framework is underpinned by the following 5 principles:

**A rights-based approach** where the views, wishes and feelings of the child, child’s parent or young person are central to the planning and provision of support; and the child, child’s parent or young person is enabled to participate as fully as possible in the decision making processes and has effective rights to challenge decisions about ALN, additional learning provision and related matters.

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<sup>1</sup> UNESCO (2017). A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education

<sup>2</sup> The Additional Learning Needs Code <https://gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-code>

**Early identification, intervention and effective transition planning** where needs are identified and provision put in place at the earliest opportunity and where possible interventions are put in place to prevent the development or escalation of ALN.

**Collaboration** where services work together to ensure ALN are identified early and appropriate co-ordinated support is put in place to enable children and young people to achieve positive expectations, experiences and outcomes.

**Inclusive education** supporting participation fully in mainstream education, wherever, feasible and a whole setting approach to meeting the needs of learners with ALN.

**A bilingual system** where all reasonable steps are taken to deliver additional learning provision in Welsh when this is required.

## Ceredigion's ALN Vision Statement

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Ceredigion is dedicated to creating educational environments that nurture resilience and promote independence, enabling all children and young people to thrive and flourish, live full and meaningful lives, and become valued members and contributors within their local community.

### Ceredigion's ALN Goals

As part of our transformation to the ALN system we aim to build on our existing good practice as Wales' most inclusive authority and to incorporate the principles of all Acts that impact on children and young people's learning and wellbeing.

We aim to ensure that all of Ceredigion's children and young people feel safe, valued, have their voices heard and feel a sense of belonging to their educational setting which will be as local as possible while meeting their needs appropriately to enable them to make progress and enjoy their learning by ensuring that the following are available in schools:

high quality, inclusive and differentiated teaching for all learners who have learning difficulties, including those identified as having ALN;

a person-centred approach to service delivery and arrangements where learners and parents or carers are involved at every stage;

a range of targeted intervention programmes to support all learners who have learning difficulties, including those identified as having ALN ;

effective systems for monitoring the progress and achievement of learners with ALN and their inclusion in the everyday life of the school;

collaborative working arrangements for involving specialists in cases where it is appropriate to do so;

arrangements for reviewing the effectiveness of interventions used to support learners with ALN and the skills and expertise of staff.

### **What is the purpose of this guidance?**

Under the new ALN system local authorities have a duty to review the arrangements made by schools to meet the needs of learners with ALN. This document outlines Ceredigion Authority's principles and expectations for educating children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). It also provides clarity on what is expected of mainstream schools in meeting the needs of learners with ALN and will be reviewed by the authority. The purpose of the review is to establish whether or not the overall provision available for learners within Ceredigion is sufficient to meet the overall needs of its population of learners with ALN.

This document is an integral part of the authority's framework for meeting the needs of all children and young people between the ages of 0 and 25. It plays a vital role in the authority's work to ensure high standards for all and is closely allied with policies for school improvement and inclusion.

### **What does this guidance cover?**

Every school should expect, in exercising its functions under the ALNET Act and adhering to its underlying principle of inclusive education, to take all reasonable steps

to secure provision to meet the needs of learners with ALN. This document outlines what would be reasonable to expect in mainstream schools for learners with ALN. It is divided into three areas as follows:

**Inclusion** – creating inclusive learning environments and using inclusive pedagogy to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

**Additional Learning Needs** – identifying barriers to learning and accurately determining additional learning needs.

**Additional Learning Provision** – minimum standards for providing support which is additional to or different from what is generally made available.

## Inclusive education

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### What is it?

Inclusion in education is about equity for all children whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment, learning difficulty, disability, language and background. It ensures particular attention to the provision made for, and the achievement of, individuals and different groups of learners within the school. In fully inclusive schools, all children and young people are engaged and achieving through being present, participating and making progress with their learning. Therefore, inclusive provision and practices are essential in order to achieve equity.

Central to this is participation – listening to children, their parents and young people, and taking their views meaningfully into account. Person centred practice (PCP) is one of the main principles of the ALN Code.

“The principles underpinning the ALN system aim to support the creation of a fully inclusive education system where all learners are given the opportunity to succeed and have access to an education that meets their needs and enables them to participate in, benefit from, and enjoy learning” (ALN Code Chapter 3 (3.1.) 2021).



## What makes an inclusive school?

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**Every learner matters and matters equally** . This message will need to be considered carefully:

*Developing school policies that are inclusive and equitable requires the recognition that students' difficulties arise from aspects of the education system itself including: the ways in which the education system is organised currently, the forms of teaching that are provided, the learning environment, and the ways in which students' progress is supported and evaluated.<sup>3</sup>*

*UNESCO (2017). A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education*

The national mission recognises this and expectations for securing inclusion and equity are a cornerstone of the reform agenda.

As part of these reforms the curriculum in [Wales is changing](#) and the Welsh Government has set out a clear statement of what is important in delivering a broad and balanced education for all learners. It sets out expectations for schools that the curriculum, built around [four purposes](#), is accessible to all learners. In the process of curriculum and assessment design, schools will need to consider what the four purposes mean to their learners and how their curriculum will support all learners to realise them.

The Welsh Government considers that an inclusive education, where individual pupils receive a tailored teaching and learning experience and additional support to reach their full potential, is of benefit to all.

In the first instance, Local Authorities, in exercising their functions under Part 2 of the Act in relation to a child of compulsory school age who should be educated in a school,

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<sup>3</sup> UNESCO (2017). A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education

**must** secure that the child is educated in a mainstream maintained school (namely, a maintained school which is not a special school or a pupil referral unit (PRU)).

This reflects the principle that mainstream schooling will be in the best interests of the child in most cases. The exceptions to these are limited (See section 51 of the Act).

This means that the starting point is that the school includes all pupils with ALN fully in all the activities of the school.

Meeting the needs of pupils with ALN ought to be part of a **whole school approach to school improvement**. The way in which a maintained school meets the needs of all children or young people has a direct bearing on the nature of the ALP required by pupils with ALN, and the point at which ALP is required.

*The ALN system relies on the knowledge and experience of teaching staff to identify ways of providing appropriate access to the curriculum for every child and young person. Meeting the needs of learners with ALN ought to be part of a whole school or institution approach to school or institution improvement. The key to this lies in the teaching staff's knowledge of each child and young person's skills and abilities. Consequently, improvements in the teaching and learning of children and young people with ALN cannot be isolated from improvements in the teaching and learning for children and young people across a School or FEI as a whole.<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> Additional Learning Needs Code Wales p.3.19

## Statutory duties

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As well as being a moral purpose for schools, inclusive practices are explicitly supported by law and the corresponding statutory duties of the Equality Act Wales (2010) and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act (2018) Wales (ALNET).

The Equality Act (2010) mandates schools to make reasonable adjustments and take positive actions for learners with protected characteristics to ensure equal access to education provision. It goes beyond the formal education provided covering all school activities such as extra-curricular and leisure activities, afterschool and homework clubs, sports activities and school trips, as well as school facilities such as libraries and IT facilities.

The reasonable adjustments duty is an anticipatory and continuing one that is owed to disabled pupils generally. This means that a school should not wait until it has disabled pupils on role to make the necessary adjustments and should plan ahead through the mandatory *Strategic Equalities Plan*. It is expected that schools take action to tackle the particular disadvantage, different needs or disproportionately low participation of particular pupil groups known as positive actions provisions and publish its intentions through its *Accessibility Plan*. It is recommended that schools consult widely with appropriate stakeholders, including Local Authority (LA) specialists and health professionals, to create the [Accessibility Plan](#).

### How to achieve fully Inclusive Education

To be fully Inclusive all Ceredigion schools will need to embed the following nine universal elements as part of the graduated response to meeting the needs of learners:



Schools need to embed these nine inclusive elements to ensure they meet the principles of the ALN Code which will support:

early identification of need;

identifying the best support to meet a pupils needs;

the removal of learning barriers so every pupil can achieve;

meeting the needs of the majority of pupils;

the majority of pupils to study the full curriculum using only the aids which they use as part of their daily life.

## What makes an inclusive classroom?

Teaching each one and everyone

This is the challenge in our classrooms with an increasing population of diverse learners. Fundamentally, successful inclusive education is a combination of school leaders providing the conditions for an inclusive and innovative environment to flourish and teachers having the right skills and knowledge to create inclusive classrooms. All schools **must ensure** that **ALN is everybody's business**.

### **Professional learning opportunities**

Planning and ensuring effective regular professional learning and guidance on inclusive pedagogy and skill development will impact on positive attitudes and beliefs by emphasising that it is within their professional role and capability to include all children in their classroom, rather than the responsibility of specialists.

### **Evaluating teaching practices**

Teachers play a critical role in the actual implementation of inclusive education. Understanding and evaluating teaching practices is of the utmost importance. In its simplest form inclusive classroom practice means that every child, no matter what their barrier to learning may be, has equal access to learning and opportunities to succeed. Therefore, a teacher needs to create a learning environment that works for all pupils whether they speak English/Welsh as a second language, are members of a minority group, have a disability, have a medical condition, come from a low socio-economic background, have been subjected to adverse early experiences, or for whatever reason find it harder to learn and achieve.

### **How to create an inclusive environment?**

An inclusive classroom/setting is the end result of inclusive design combined with management, operation and maintenance, and positive well-trained staff. Inclusive Learning Provision forms the foundation for all other support or provision in schools, and comprises good teaching and learning that is made available to all. It is based on inclusive approaches to teaching and learning which benefit all pupils, whilst being

essential for those with ALN. To support pupils with emerging needs or identified needs schools should explore targeted teaching strategies and/or standard targeted interventions to ensure the pupil can make progress with their curriculum.

Planning for and delivering inclusive education does not need specialist or expert knowledge. However, it does not come by accident and is achieved only through design. To support this process, all schools have access to the local authority and its wider partners for additional guidance on creating inclusive environments. Taking the learning needs of all into account when designing the curriculum and learning environment will eliminate the need to 'retrofit' teaching for most learners. Integral to high quality teachers' planning would be the expectation that learners would engage in multiple ways, record work through a variety of means and express learning differently. This then allows for the natural variation present in all classrooms to be recognised and taken into account during the original design and subsequent monitoring of the effectiveness of the provision.

Before a child sets foot in any given classroom the fundamentals of the learning environment itself should to be taken into account. These relate to:

the organisation of the classroom environment,

deciding on simple management techniques,

establishing a basic set of standard operating procedures, and

ensuring that all staff are suitably trained and positively promote effective inclusive approaches.

### **What does an effective teacher do?**

The starting point for any teacher is understanding the inter-dependency between well-being and learning. An effective teacher will ensure that every learner feels

valued, respected, and nurtured, has a sense of belonging and experiences success and recognition. Therefore, the quality of the relationship between a teacher and their learners is of critical importance and as the Strategy for Equity and Excellence identifies:

***Research confirms that where learners feel valued, respected and nurtured as an individual and have a strong sense of belonging and connectedness they are more likely to engage meaningfully in learning. The curriculum, teaching and learning must therefore be inclusive and engaging where teachers have expectations of high achievement and provide plentiful opportunities for success for all learners (pg 7)***

An effective teacher will take it for granted that children will progress at different rates and therefore there cannot be a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to teaching. There is an assumption that the destination in a given classroom should be the same for every learner, the pathway taken by each child may however be different with the class teacher providing differentiated and personalised support to enable this to happen. An effective teacher will assume that some children will struggle to learn certain aspects of what is being taught, and that it is their responsibility to find strategies to both identify and overcome these barriers to learning.

An effective class teacher will create educational provision that is accessed by all learners, in all lessons, at all times without exception. This is the day-to-day practice of inclusive learning provision, which happens in every classroom to secure learning and is the foundation of all learning. This is often described either as good, routine, inclusive or quality-first teaching. Where good, routine, inclusive, quality-first provision is really strong, this should reduce the need for remediation or additional interventions at a later stage for a number of learners.

A recent international collaboration has undertaken a critical analysis of what constitutes effective teaching and published as [The Great Teaching Toolkit Evidence Review \(2020\)](#). This provides extensive and comprehensive details on the components and approaches to improve teacher effectiveness in securing accelerated learning for all children, identifying four priorities for doing so as follows:

understand the content they are teaching and how it is learnt;

create a supportive environment for learning;

manage the classroom to maximise the opportunity to learn;

present content, activities and interactions that activate their students' thinking.

### **Where does differentiation fit in routine teaching?**

Differentiation is a cornerstone of day-to-day classroom provision and is part and parcel of routine teaching. Differentiation has a broad meaning, because it includes any way in which modifications are made to the content, presentation, environment or expectations of teaching and learning. It can range from something which has been carefully planned, for example a specific activity, but it can also be something that occurs in the moment, such as a pupil's response to teaching.

Differentiation can occur on many levels, it can be resource-intensive for example, using a Teaching Assistant to support a particular pupil, or it can be low-key and inexpensive, for example re-phrasing a question to make it more accessible for learners. Crucially, though, effective teachers ensure that differentiation is continuous and permeates all aspects of the lesson and is not a one-off activity such as the use of a bespoke worksheet or specific materials.

**Differentiation should be integral to all lessons** and particularly so for those learners who are streamed or grouped according to ability, as this does not in itself, constitute differentiation.

### **Targeted interventions as part of routine Inclusive practice and teaching**

In the event that learner progress is not as anticipated, targeted 'catch-up' interventions to supplement differentiated teaching may well be needed to address specific areas for development. This is a fundamental element of high-quality, but routine, teaching. A combination of high-quality teaching with effective, short, time-limited catch-up interventions will be enough for most pupils to ensure that their progress is in-line with their potential.



*“The first response to inadequate progress would often be teaching targeted specifically at pupils’ areas of weakness. All education settings are expected to put in place differentiated teaching or other targeted interventions designed to secure better progress where appropriate, for all pupils. This is a fundamental element of high quality – but routine – teaching.”*

ALN Code 2021 - Chapter 20

Ceredigion relies on the consistent and effective implementation of its **Graduated Response** procedures and recognises that:

children learn in different ways and have different kinds and levels of additional learning needs;

all teachers are teachers of children with additional learning needs;

pupils may need help through the Graduated Response for just a short time or for many years;

the range and style of support can be increased or reduced according to pupils’ individual needs; and

where a child’s progress continues to cause concern, additional support and expertise must be made available as part of a continuous cycle of planning, action and review.

In many cases the additional learning provision (ALP) initially made will mean that the child or young person’s needs are fully met or resolved. Only for those children or young people whose progress continues to cause concern is increased or different ALP likely to be needed. Some children or young people may gradually require less rather than more ALP if the interventions are a success.

An effective teacher will see any child that struggles as ‘typical’ until proven otherwise. Where additional support is needed to develop school practice, all mainstream schools have access to Ceredigion Local Authority and its wider partners,

including NHS Health services, for advice on early identification and a wide range of interventions to address emerging learner needs.

The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis.

Where interventions are put in place by others, the teacher should liaise closely with all support staff.

The ALNCo should offer support for planning and problem-solving. It is expected that in almost all cases, Inclusive Learning Provision will have been effectively implemented and evaluated before ALP are considered. Only when there is well-documented evidence, that shows that a child has not responded to the inclusive, whole-group or individual strategies and support available within the classroom, should consideration be given to investigating the possibility that the child may have significant barriers to learning.

## Additional Learning Needs

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### Identifying Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

The authority places great importance on the early identification of ALN, to ensure that all children and young people have access to effective support and teaching as soon as possible.

The authority provides a range of specialist services for children and young people with ALN, their families and their schools. These services focus on enabling early years settings, schools and FEI to identify and meet the additional learning needs of individual children and young people as early and as effectively as possible.

In addition, the close connection between specialist services and the authority's Advisory school support officers is designed to ensure that priorities for whole-school improvement are fully aligned with those for inclusion and ALN.

### Early Identification- Early Years

When it is deemed likely that a child will or may have additional educational needs they will be brought to the attention of the authority via the extended support teams within Social Services or via a direct referral from any health professional.

Identifying whether a child or young person has ALN will need to be based on a wide range of evidence gathered over time.

*Applying the definitions to children under compulsory school age is slightly different for establishing whether a child under compulsory school age has ALN*

***(a) Does the child have a learning difficulty or disability?***

The first test is still whether the child has a learning difficulty or disability, but the meaning of that is slightly different. It is whether the child, when of compulsory school age, is, or would be if no ALP were made, likely to have:

***a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or***

***a disability (within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010) which prevents or hinders the child from making use of facilities for education or professional learning of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools.***

***(b) Does the learning difficulty or disability call for ALP?***

2.14 The second test is also the same as that for older children and young people, **namely whether the learning difficulty or disability calls for ALP.**

However, for children aged under three, ALP **means educational provision of any kind**. For those aged 3 and over, ALP has the same meaning as for children of compulsory school age and young people. The definition of ALP for children aged under three is slightly different to reflect the fact that these children are not at an age where maintained education is routinely available.

ALP for those aged under three can take many forms; for instance, group work or individual support - where it is educational provision of any kind. This might include, for example, educational provision or specialist health, physical, communication or sensory support. This can take place in an education setting or elsewhere.

### **Early Identification- Schools and Settings**

Where progress is less than expected, inclusive provision, high-quality teaching, including differentiation, and standard, routine interventions or reasonable adjustments may not be sufficient to meet the needs of all learners. Such learners may well be identified as having additional learning needs (ALN) and it will be necessary for the school to take some additional or different action to secure progress.

Under the new ALN system, for any learner identified as having an ALN, the school will need to create and maintain an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and take all reasonable steps to ensure that the necessary additional learning provision (ALP) to meet the assessed need, is secured.

The IDP is the document that contains a description of the ALN that acts as a barrier to the learner in achieving their educational potential and the ALP that is necessary to overcome or mitigate this barrier. It is created through collaboration with the learner and the learners' parents/carers in conjunction with any other professionals that might have involvement with the learner. It is a working document which is used to inform teaching and learning.

In most cases an IDP will be maintained by a School or FEI and a small number, where the complexity of the additional provision required to meet the needs of learners is unreasonable to expect a mainstream setting to provide, will be maintained by the local authority.

In most cases, the decision regarding whether a pupil has ALN and for preparing and maintaining an IDP, is taken by the maintained school. However, in some cases depending on the circumstances, this may be referred to and/or completed by the Local Authority. There are two instances in which a maintained school is required to refer a child's case to a local authority rather than decide for itself whether the child has ALN: dual registration; and if the child is looked after.

The duty to do so for a looked after child is explained in Chapter 14 of the ALN Code and that for a dual registered child, in paragraph 12.37 of the ALN Code.

A maintained school can refer a child's case to a local authority on particular grounds related to the nature of the child's apparent ALN. Where a school has decided that a child at the school has ALN, rather than prepare the IDP it may refer the child's case to the responsible local authority. But the school must not do this unless it considers that the child has ALN:

a) that may call for ALP it would not be reasonable for the school to secure,

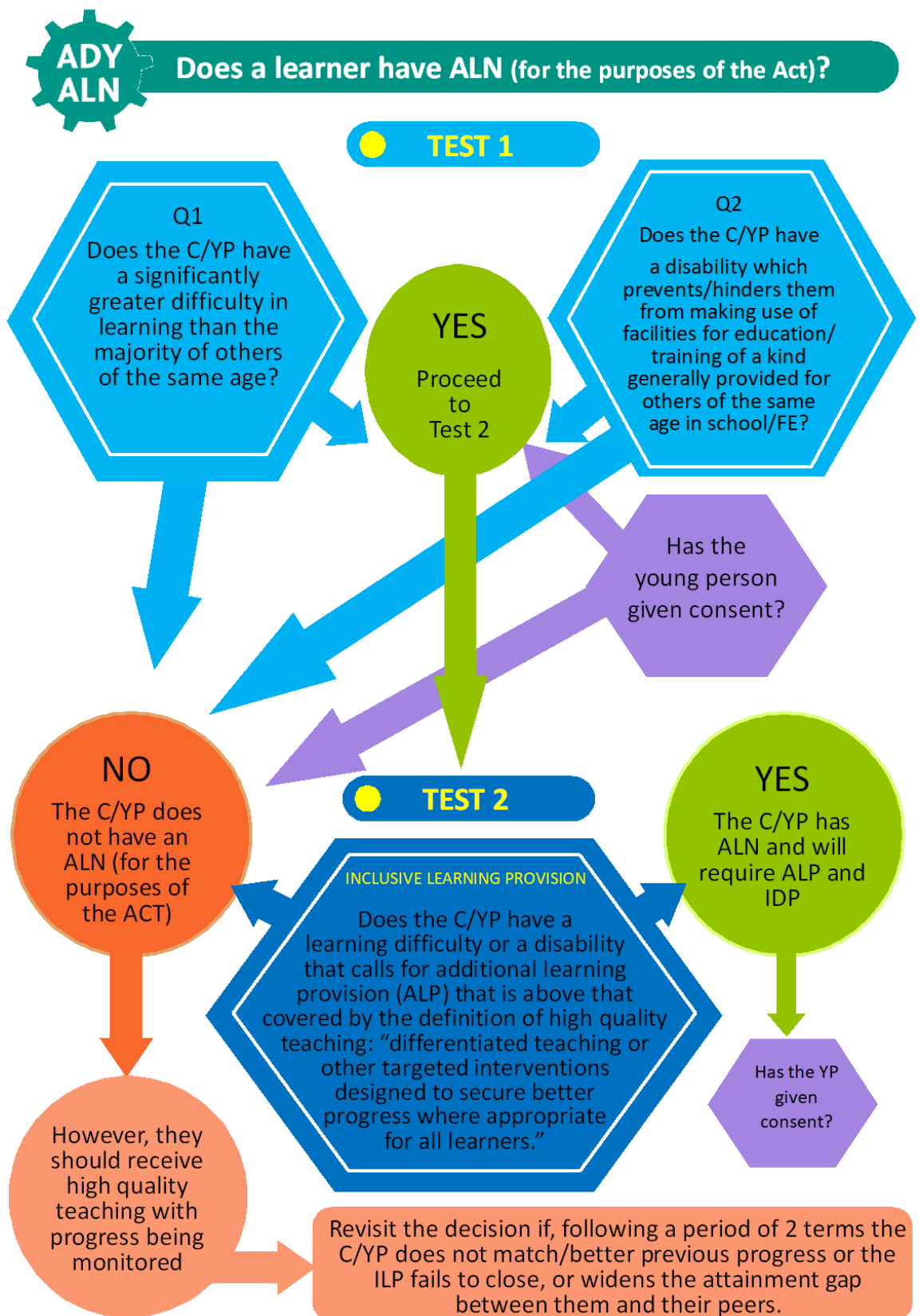
b) the extent or nature of which it cannot adequately determine, or

c) for which it cannot adequately determine ALP.

The school should be mindful of the need to make any such referral as early as possible so as to minimise delay in the IDP being prepared. Therefore where the school becomes aware that there is a ground for referral to the local authority, it should act promptly to consider whether to refer the child's case and in making any referral. In most cases, the school ought to be able to make the referral within 20 school days (if not earlier) from the date on which it is brought to its attention, or otherwise appears to it, that the child has ALN. ( Chapter 12 of the ALN Code)

The Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) along with the senior leadership team will have a critical role to play in deciding if techniques or strategies normally employed have in fact been used consistently over time without exception. Deciding if a child has ALN will be done by gathering evidence over time from a range of sources relating to progress in learning and will be based on the both qualitative and quantitative Information.

Schools in Ceredigion will use the following model to decide if a child or young person has ALN:



## When does the Decision Making Process begin?

Whilst in education pupils should always be immersed in the 'Universal Elements' of teaching and learning and have access to Inclusive Learning Provision as this ensures schools are fully inclusive.

In Ceredigion schools, all provision will be mapped using a provision mapping tool. The school's provision map will monitor the progress of learners in relation to the provision being provided and provide impact evidence to support decisions, at the key decision points.

A child or young person may at any point start displaying emerging needs or have a learning difficulty and/or disability that requires further planning.

At this point the school will refer to the **Test Decision Making Process** where early, evidence based, collaborative decisions can be made to identify any needs and what support and/or provision is required to meet these needs.

## What key decisions need to be made?

During the Decision Making Process key decisions that are likely to be made, which will be specific to both the pupil's needs and aspirations and the school the pupil attends, include:

Does the pupil have an emerging need?

How best to support the emerging needs?

Does the child or young person have an identified need/s (learning difficulty and/or disability)?

Are there any changes to the Inclusive Learning Provision (ILP) needed to better meet the needs of the pupil including:

does the child or young person require any targeted teaching strategies?



does the child or young person require any targeted interventions as part of the schools Inclusive Learning Provision? **Or** are there any changes needed to be made to the targeted interventions currently being received?

is advice required to identify the child or young person's need/s?

Is further advice required to identify how best to support the child or young person's need/s?

Does the child or young person have Additional Learning Needs for the purposes of the ALN Act i.e. they have identified need that calls for an Additional Learning Provision (ALP)?

If the pupil has ALN, does the agreed support and ALP move the pupil close to their outcome?

If the pupil has ALN, have they achieved their outcomes? Do the outcomes need to be developed further, amended or changed?

In some cases, the school will need the Local Authority (LA) to make the decisions regarding identification of the additional learning needs and the ALP required. This will be when:

the ALN calls for an ALP where it would not be reasonable for the school to secure,

school cannot adequately determine the extent or nature of the pupil's ALN, or

school cannot adequately determine the ALP that the child or young person's ALN may call for.

At any decision-making point we must always consider the following:

For Young People (16 and over) do they consent to the decisions being made?

Does the pupil need any support with future transition?

## Involving and Supporting Children, Young People and their Parents

Local Authorities and schools are required under Section 2 of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 to involve and support the child and their parent or young person when exercising those functions.

A person exercising functions under the Act which relate to an individual child or young person must have regard to:

the views, wishes and feelings of the child and the child's parent or the young person, the importance of the child and the child's parent or the young person participating as fully as possible in decisions relating to the exercise of the function concerned, and the importance of the child and the child's parent or young person being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.

Schools and Settings **must** involve pupils, young people and their parents from the beginning in all decision making processes. This is person centred practice (PCP).

Local Authority staff- Educational Psychologists, Advisory Teachers and Inclusion Officers are always available to support and advise schools and parents.

An authority based, Parent Drop is held and is available to all parents, carers and guardians of pupils with additional learning needs who may be experiencing difficulty with their child or, their child's provision. This service affords parents the opportunity to discuss their concerns with appropriate authority staff and work together with schools towards a positive outcome for the child or young person.

It is recognised that occasionally, parents, guardians or carers may not agree with the authority on the level and / or type of support or the placement their child may need and may need support with regard to understanding the ALN process.

In order to address these issues, in addition to central staff, the authority works in partnership alongside SNAP Cymru (PPA) and Tros Gynnal.

These partnerships will ensure that all parents, guardians, carers and children with educational needs will have the opportunity to freely access accurate, impartial and

confidential advice, support and information regarding the additional needs of their children and young people from birth to 19 years.

The authority also recognises the needs and rights of their pupils to have access to an independent person who will work in an open and accessible manner to promote and realise their rights.

*‘ Children who are capable of forming views have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to the age, maturity and capability of the child ‘ ( U.N Convention on the Rights of the Child )*

### **External Advice to Support Decisions**

External agencies can support the process of deciding whether a person has ALN and determining the ALP required in a number of ways. They can offer advice and support staff by suggesting strategies or obtaining more information, undertake assessments and/or observations to provide more information about the child or young person’s needs, and suggest interventions and alternative forms of provision.

External agencies might also be the appropriate body to directly provide the ALP required.

ALNCoS must secure relevant services that will support a pupil or student’s ALP as required. Some learners with ALN will need the support of external agencies and professionals. It will be the responsibility of the ALNCo to liaise with these specialist services and when there is agreement to provide such services, ensure that these are secured.

Lots of different agencies, professionals and individuals have a role to play in identifying and supporting children and young people who may have ALN, including:

Health Service

Specialist Child and Mental health Service (CAMHS)

Disabled Children’s Team                      Speech & Language Therapy Service

Social Services Department                  Team Around the Family

Occupational Therapists                      Physiotherapist

### **Do learners with ALN require specialist or different pedagogical approaches?**

There is no evidence to support the assumption that specialist pedagogy is needed to secure improvement for learners with ALN. The 2020 review on effective mainstream practice for learners with ALN conducted by the [Education Endowment Foundation](#)<sup>5</sup> analysed international research and consulted with teachers and experts in the field, concluding that teachers should prioritise familiar but powerful strategies. This involves understanding the needs of individual pupils and incorporating specific approaches into everyday routine classroom teaching and ‘being inclusive by design – not afterthought’.

Without doubt, some learners need more time, more practice, more repetition, fewer tasks etc. However, the strategies that provide good results are the same for all learners. The review identifies five universal strategies that have a strong evidence base for effectively supporting the learning of pupils with ALN as follows:

scaffolding

explicit teaching

technology

cognition and metacognition

flexible grouping

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<sup>5</sup> Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Guidance Report (2020), Education Endowment Foundation

## **Is a diagnosis of any kind important in identifying pedagogical approaches to support learners?**

For most learners with ALN, a diagnosis is not necessarily of use to a teacher when attempting to identify actual barriers to learning in the classroom. Diagnostic labels can sometimes be beneficial in providing a general understanding of the characteristics of a condition. They may also help some children in understanding why their experiences of the world are as they are and may be a necessity, particularly in securing support from some specialist services.

The key however, to securing accelerated learning for any learner with ALN is pedagogy and how skilful the teacher is in understanding and addressing the particular barriers for the learner. Consequently, when trying to make day-to-day decisions on teaching, a diagnosis is unlikely to help inform the learning experiences to be provided for a learner and will not give sufficient details of the support and adjustments needed to enable that individual to learn and flourish. Ceredigion schools should consider conducting the WOW! (Working on Wow!) professional learning programme to promote a whole school approach to consistent inclusive practice to support all learners.

The ALP for a learner with ALN needs to be tailored to meet a specific and identifiable barrier to learning. Therefore, a diagnosis does not automatically lead to a better understanding of the barrier to learning because:

two learners with the same diagnosis are likely to have quite different learning needs as individuals;

not all learners with ALN will have a formal diagnosis;

learners may have different diagnoses but present with similar needs and, diagnoses can only provide broad suggestions for general support.

### **Typical areas of need**

There is a wide range of learning difficulties or disabilities, but they can be broadly classified into the following four areas:

- cognition and learning
- behaviour, emotional and social development
- sensory and/or physical
- communication and interaction

**The ALN Code provides clarification on these broad areas of need as follows:**

- **Cognition and learning** - some children and young people who demonstrate features of moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties or specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, may require specific programmes to aid progress in cognition and learning. Some of these children and young people may have associated sensory, physical and behavioural difficulties.
- **Behaviour, emotional and social development** - some children and young people will demonstrate features of emotional and behavioural difficulties. They may be withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive or lacking concentration; they may have under-developed social skills; or present challenging behaviours.
- **Sensory and / or physical needs** - this area of need includes the wide spectrum of sensory, multi-sensory and physical difficulties. The sensory range extends from profound and permanent deafness or visual impairment through to lesser levels of loss, which may only be temporary. Physical impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes that only require appropriate access to educational facilities and equipment; others may lead to more complex learning and social needs; some children and young people will have multi-sensory difficulties some with associated physical difficulties.
- **Communication and interaction** - some children and young people might experience difficulty in one, some or all aspects of speech, language and communication. This area of need may encompass children and young people with speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia and dyspraxia, hearing impairment and those who

demonstrate features within the autistic spectrum; it may also encompass some children and young people with moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties. The range of need will include those for whom language and communication difficulties are the result of permanent sensory or physical impairment.

For some learners, their identified need will fit clearly into one of these areas, but some have needs that span two or more areas, whereas for others the precise nature of their needs may not be clear at the outset. Ceredigion schools will need to adopt a solution focused approach, monitoring and reviewing the impact of the provision to ascertain ways of overcoming the barrier to learning. Improving provision and reviewing its effectiveness in securing progress, should be an integral approach that informs teaching and learning.

### **Overcoming barriers to learning**

Irrespective of the broad area of need, complexity, or the type of barrier to learning, the same process should be applied where schools will need to make a judgment in each case about what it is reasonable to expect an individual to achieve. Where appropriate the school will engage with external agencies to support the process of deciding if a learner has ALN. Then using evidence, gathered over time, through a graduated approach, and from a wide range of sources, it should be possible to identify learners who are making less than expected progress.

Less than expected progress in learning is described in the Code as follows:

- **Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline,**
- **Fails to match or better the child's or young person's previous rate of progress; or,**
- **Fails to close, or widens, the attainment gap between the child or young person and their peers, despite the provision of support aimed at closing that gap.**

## Additional Learning Provision

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Provision which is in **addition to or different from** what is normally made available in a mainstream school is considered additional learning provision (ALP). ALP will of course be an enhancement of what is available at a routine/inclusive level and will build on highly effective inclusive practices in the first place.

The impact of the ALP will need to be monitored in terms of how effective it has been in addressing the skill deficit, but also, crucially how these newly acquired skills have secured accelerated learning for the pupil across the curriculum. Choosing the right ALP is of critical importance.

### **What ALP would reasonably be expected to be made available in a mainstream school?**

It is reasonable to expect a school to provide specific strategies and adult-led interventions to address typical barriers to learning. All schools will need to provide the ALP which specifically addresses the identified barriers to learning for its own learners.

The ALP that a school provides will be unique, being contextual and reflecting the needs of its own community. When planning effective ALP schools will need to consider the following:

the effectiveness of the schools' current ALN provision

current and future cohorts

the need to address underperformance of different ALN groups

accessing expertise in different ways

or a decision to take a fresh look at what is happening in school.



Consequently, it will be the role of the Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator in conjunction with the senior leadership team to establish what educational provision needs to be in place to support their learners with ALN.

Although it is not possible, and neither should it be, to dictate to schools what and how much ALP should be provided, it is however possible to agree on minimum standards. In Ceredigion every school should expect, in exercising its functions under the ALNET Act and adhering to its underlying principle of inclusive education, to take all reasonable steps to secure provision to meet typical barriers to learning.

Here guidance is set out regarding what ALP it is reasonable to expect a Ceredigion mainstream school to make available, in addressing typical barriers to learning. Where a school considers the need to increase its capacity to provide ALP to meet typical barriers to learning, it will have access to a range of specialist support through the local authority Inclusion Service and its wider partners, including health professionals.

### Inclusive Learning Provision

Learning Provision	Approaches	Comments
Inclusive Learning Provision	High quality inclusive teaching for all learners. Differentiated teaching for those learners who require reasonable adjustments. Teaching targeted at areas of weakness.	These teaching approaches should be available as a matter of course for all learners who need them, whenever they need them.
	Standard targeted interventions (available to all learners who have a difficulty with learning and require a short term boost): to support development early literacy skills in English (satpin is recommended)	These standard targeted interventions should be employed for a period of one to two terms before progress is reviewed

	<p>to support development early literacy skills in Welsh (trandep is recommended)</p> <p>to support development early numeracy skills in English or Welsh (Cyfri Ceredigion is recommended)</p> <p>to develop attention skills (The Attention programme is recommended)</p> <p>to provide an autism friendly environment (Learning about autism programme accreditation and Autism Champion professional learning are recommended)</p> <p>to support development co-ordination and preparedness for learning (Sensory Circuits is recommended)</p> <p>to support development of Social use of language (Lego / Talkabout are recommended)</p> <p>provision of emotional literacy support (Emotional literacy in the classroom, ELSA/counselling are recommended)</p> <p>to support development of spelling skills in either English or Welsh (Personal Dictionaries or structured spelling within the classroom)</p> <p>to support development of reading skills in either English or Welsh (Catch Up/Dyfal Donc or any other individual or group reading)</p> <p>to support development of numeracy/Mathematical skills (Springboard Maths/Hwb Ymlaen</p>	<p>using the 4+1 person centred evaluation tool.</p> <p>Where the learner has made progress and no longer requires the intervention, they continue to receive the high quality teaching with differentiation and teaching targeted at areas of weakness where required.</p> <p>Where the learner has not made sufficient progress and continues to need the intervention for longer than two terms, this should be discussed with the ALNCo and a decision regarding whether their difficulty with learning constitutes an ALN should be reached.</p>
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	<p>Mathemateg or any other individual or group Maths intervention programme or Maths intervention within the classroom) to support with early language development (primary only) – Language groups (6 week vocabulary programme is recommended).</p> <p>Speech and language provision carried out by school staff (as advised by Speech and Language therapy service)</p> <p>Emotional and behavioural support (recommended: Hafan and Encil, ELSA support)</p> <p>Wellbeing provision (e.g. Mindfulness, yoga, Story massage etc.)</p>	
<p><b>Additional Learning Provision (ALP)</b></p>	<p>Interventions that are provided for all learners who have been identified as having an ALN (for more than a monitoring period of up to two terms):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to support development early literacy skills in English (satpin is recommended)</li> <li>• to support development early literacy skills in Welsh (trandep is recommended)</li> <li>• to support development early numeracy skills in English or Welsh (Cyfri Ceredigion is recommended)</li> <li>• to support development co-ordination and preparedness for learning (Sensory Circuits is recommended)</li> </ul>	<p>These interventions can also be additional learning provision where they are recorded as such on a learner’s individual development plan (IDP) for learners who have been identified as having an ALN.</p>

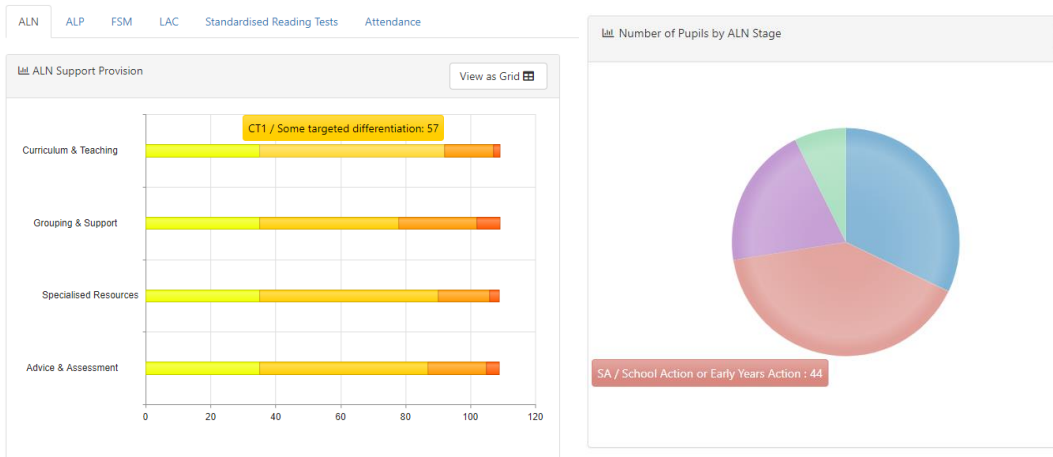
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to support development of Social use of language (Lego / Talkabout are recommended)</li> <li>• provision of emotional literacy support (ELSA/counselling are recommended)</li> <li>• to support development of spelling skills in either English or Welsh (Personal Dictionaries or structured spelling within the classroom)</li> <li>• to support development of reading skills in either English or Welsh (Catch Up/Dyfal Donc or any other individual or group reading )</li> <li>• to support development of numeracy/Mathematical skills (Springboard Maths/Hwb Ymlaen Mathemateg or any other individual or group Maths intervention programme or Maths intervention within the classroom)</li> <li>• to support with early language development (primary only) – Language groups (6 week vocabulary programme is recommended).</li> <li>• Speech and language provision carried out by school staff (as advised by Speech and Language therapy service)</li> <li>• Emotional and behavioural support (recommended: Hafan and Encil, ELSA support)</li> </ul>	
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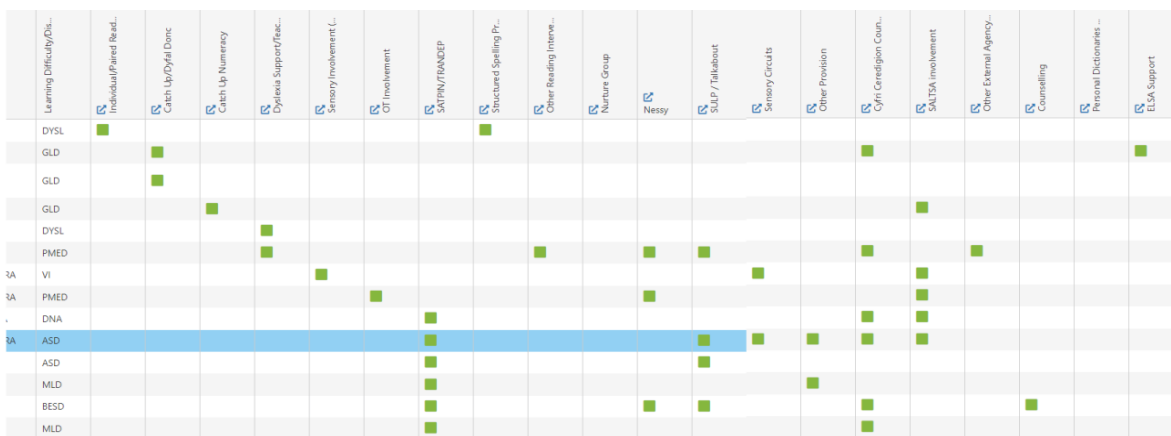
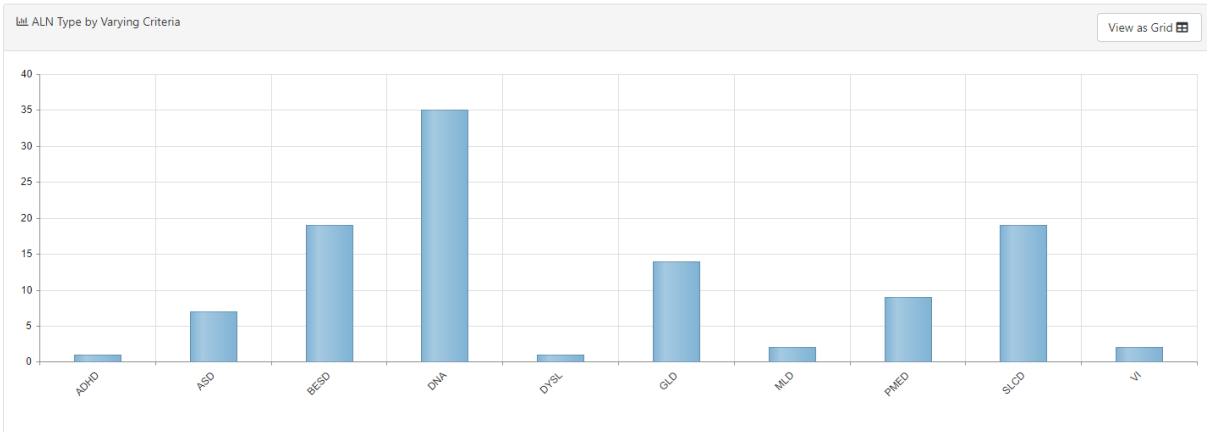
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellbeing provision (e.g. Mindfulness, yoga, Story massage etc.)</li> </ul>	
	<p>Speech and language provision carried out by SALTSA's</p> <p>physiotherapy provision carried out by school staff (as advised by physiotherapy or occupational therapy service)</p> <p>Nurture groups</p> <p>Life skills provision</p> <p>Alternative curriculum provision (only when the provision is arranged in order to meet the significant learning needs of the learner)</p> <p>Specific behavioural programme</p>	<p>These interventions will always be additional learning provision as they involve direct input and/or monitoring by professionals who are not based within the educational setting.</p> <p>These will need to be recorded as ALP on a learner with identified ALN's IDP.</p>
<p><b>Specialist Learning Provision</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specialist teachers (for hearing, vision or multi-sensory impairment)</li> <li>Long term advice and monitoring with a learner over a period of time from an advisory teacher or educational psychologist</li> <li>Speech and language therapist</li> <li>Occupational therapist</li> <li>Physiotherapist</li> </ul>	<p>Specialist learning provision is ongoing provision for learners which is provided by or monitored by specialist agencies outside of the school. This can include specialist professional learning for staff where specialist skills and strategies are shared in order to enable teachers to understand and meet the needs of learners successfully.</p> <p>Where advisory teachers or educational</p>

		<p>psychologists provide strategies and advice to school staff (via an ISRF) this does not constitute ongoing provision for learners.</p>
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### ALN Provision Mapping

Ceredigion’s ALN Provision Mapping tool is a management tool that provides an ‘at a glance’ way of documenting and showing a range of both Inclusive Learning Provision and Additional Learning Provision that schools make available for their children and young people. The school’s provision map will monitor the progress of learners in relation to the provision being provided. The ALN provision map will provide impact evidence to support decisions, at the key points of the Decision Making to maximise impact.





Ceredigion schools will need to record and publish both the Inclusive Learning Provision 'standard targeted interventions' and ALP planned for the current cohort on their provision map overview:

Area of Need	Standard Targeted Interventions ( as part of the ILP)	Additional Learning Provision (for learners with ALN)
<b>Cognition and Learning</b>		
<b>Communication and Interaction</b>		
<b>Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties</b>		

<b>Sensory and/or Physical</b>		
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All schools will need to regularly review their provision map to ensure the needs of the majority of pupils can be met in the current cohort and plan for future cohorts.

In some cases a child or young person may start at a school where that need has not been planned for. In circumstances such as these schools may find it useful to ask for advice/support from relevant external agencies/services.

It is important that all interventions/provisions are recorded against the pupil, so it is clear to anyone supporting the child or young person what support they've had previously and what support they are currently receiving. In addition, progress on all the interventions and provisions needs to be monitored, recorded and evaluated.

In Ceredigion we have developed the ALN 'Provision Map Online Tool' on Teacher Centre which allows you to map all of your ILP and ALP and record, monitor and evaluate individual pupil progress receiving both ILP and ALP.

### **Supporting learners that require more complex provision to meet their needs in mainstream schools**

Where a learner continues to experience difficulties accessing learning and making progress, despite high quality inclusive provision and the ALP provided through the school-based IDP, the school may be of the opinion that the learner's needs are more severe and complex and that the ALP it has provided is no longer sufficient.

In such instances the school can refer the case to the local authority Resource Panel. The Resource Panel is made up of representatives from the Local Health Board, Social Services (TPA), SNAP Cymru, Head Teachers and the LA.

Following the request from the school the ALN Panel will consider the evidence received and a set of principles will be applied in determining whether it is reasonable



for a school to secure the ALP required by the learner, or whether the authority ought to do so. These principles will relate to:

The extent and duration of support and advice from external specialists that is likely to be unreasonable for a school to secure;

The equipment that is likely to be unreasonable for a school to provide; and

The intensity and duration of support and scale of internal engagement of staff at the school that is likely to be unreasonable for a school to provide.

Where a school considers the need to increase its capacity to meet the needs of learners with complex ALN, support and guidance can be provided by specialist LA inclusion staff and where appropriate specialist health professionals.

### **Good Provision**

A school that has good provision will:

provide the 9 Universal Elements to all children and young people;

have a range of Inclusive Learning Provision available to all children and young people which will help identify needs quickly and provide the support necessary for most pupils to make progress;

be likely to have low ALN numbers in relation to the number of pupils with identified needs, as their needs are being met at an inclusive level and are making progress towards their aspirations.

children and young people will move across these stages of need (no identified need/emerging need/identified need/ALN) and not stagnate at a stage as their progress is continually being reviewed via a decision-making process.

## **Ceredigion Local Authority Support and Quality Assurance Process**

The Local Authority will, through quality assurance, ensure that the processes described above are in place. This will include:

Supporting schools by assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of education provision.

Supporting schools through LA and development work, including ALNCo networks and cluster working.

Review school provision maps and ALN quality assurance processes on an annual basis and identify areas of good practice and areas for development.

Conduct annual ALN school planning meetings.

Supporting schools in developing effective ALN provision.

Ensuring annual reviews for pupils with IDPs take place and are of high quality.

Reviewing and updating the LA arrangements for meeting the needs of ALN pupils, including updating the LA provision map.

Offering central and school-based professional learning.

Responding to feedback from professional learning and support to further enhance practice.

Supporting ALNCos to access the Welsh Government ALNCo Progression Pathway.

Support and Deliver the National Middle Leadership qualification in partnership with the EAS.

Strategies for Working in Partnership with Pupils, Parents, Early Years Settings, Schools and External Agencies