

Kirsty Williams AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Addysg
Minister for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Lynne Neagle MS
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee
Welsh Parliament
Ty Hywel
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15 December 2020

Dear Lynne,

During your Committee's scrutiny of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, a commitment was made to provide regular updates on the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) transformation programme. This letter is the tenth of these updates.

1. Legislation and statutory guidance

Early in the autumn I wrote to you and other key stakeholders regarding plans for laying the revised ALN Code and operational regulations; these will now be laid in the Senedd at the end February 2021.

In advance of the Code, in November I laid two important sets of regulations. Firstly, the draft Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator (ALNCo) (Wales) Regulations 2020 in relation to the statutory role of the ALNCo. This statutory role in our schools and FEI's, alongside the designated educational clinical lead officer (DECLO) within our health boards; and the early years ALN lead officer (EYALNLO) in the local authorities; is critical to the success of the new ALN system. The duty to designate these roles will commence on 4th January. I will shortly publish non-statutory guidance to provide information for individuals in these roles, to prepare their settings for the ALN system to commence on a phased basis from September 2021.

Secondly, the [Additional Learning Needs \(List of Independent Special Post 16 Institutions \(ISPIs\)\) Wales\) Regulations 2020 which confirm our intention to transfer responsibility for the provision of specialist post-16 placements to local authorities in the future. These regulations deliver the provision within the ALN Act that](#) Welsh Ministers must establish and maintain a list of ISPIs in Wales and England and set out the requirements that need to be met to be in the list. Local authorities will only be permitted to secure education or training provision for young people with ALN at an ISPI that is included in the list, thereby providing them with some assurance regarding the institutions selected.

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

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

Furthermore I will shortly be publishing information relating to the phased implementation of the Act from September 2021. In addition to consulting on the draft ALN Code, we consulted on a draft implementation plan. The overwhelming response from stakeholders was that we should focus on a phased move from the old SEN system to the new ALN system. The revised implementation plan will reflect this as well as providing further detail about the cohorts of learners that will transition in the three academic years of the implementation, from September 2021 onwards.

My officials continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that the revised Code and regulations meet their needs; working within the confines of the Act itself and the powers that it affords us for subordinate legislation.

2. Implementation / transition support

The ALN Transformation Leads have submitted regional and further education implementation plans for 2020-21 earlier this year. The plans set out high-level regional strategic priorities for ALN reform. The Transformation Leads continue to meet with officials on a weekly basis, providing an update on progress made in relation to their regional and further education plans and to highlight, discuss and resolve any issues.

We are also working with our stakeholders including the Third Sector Additional Learning Need Alliance (TSANA), to update and repurpose existing factsheets on ALN types so they can be used by those in statutory roles and by practitioners in a range of education settings to aid their understanding of their role and responsibility in relation to children and young people with ALN.

3. Workforce development

A central part of the ALN reform workforce development activity is the ALN learning programme that will support practitioners to further develop their skills and knowledge to enable them to turn the ambitions of the ALN legislation into a reality for learners across Wales.

Part of this programme of work includes the development of a professional learning offer for Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinators (ALNCos), aspiring ALNCos and interested teachers and college lecturers.

We are working with our ALN Transformation Leads, Welsh universities, local authorities, regional education consortia and other stakeholders to develop a recognised and an accredited route for the ALN professional learning offer. These will be available from September 2021.

The recognised learning option will be in-depth, online, formal learning that will require approximately 20 hours of practitioner time to complete. It will be available via the Welsh Government's Hwb digital learning platform and the Professional Learning Passport. It will be free for practitioners to access.

In the New Year, we plan to recruit online learning specialists who will work with the ALN Transformation Leads to author the recognised ALN learning programme. We also plan to run a procurement exercise to source a company to develop multi-media content to include in the learning programme with a view to making it as engaging and impactful to the learner as possible.


The other ALN professional learning option will be an accredited route. The accredited ALN modules will be available on a stand-alone basis or as part of the new all-Wales National Masters in Education, the National MA Education (Wales).

In addition to the ALN professional learning programme, we are providing funding for prospective ALNCoS in schools and settings to undertake the Middle Leadership Development Programme. We have also provided funding for a Further Education Middle Leadership Programme to be developed. The Middle Leadership Programme will support our prospective ALNCoS to further develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours that are needed to be a high-performing middle leader.

4. Awareness raising

Regional ALN Transformation Leads have submitted communications plans setting out how their regions will inform and engage stakeholders in the development of the ALN transformation programme. These communications strategies will help children and young people, parents, carers, and wider stakeholders to gain an awareness and understanding of the ALN reforms and ensure consistent and accurate messages are shared across Wales. In addition, the ALN Transformation Leads have submitted regional training plans to support practitioners by improving their awareness of and access to training and development opportunities and training continues to be delivered on a regional basis.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

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