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Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1532
Ein cyf/Our ref LN/01127/25

Carolyn Thomas MS
Chair - Petitions committee

17 November 2025

Dear Carolyn,

Thank you for your letter of 29 September in relation to Petition P-06-1532 in relation to early expert Input and safeguarding reform for Children with additional learning needs (ALN) in Wales. I would like to Apologies for the delay in responding.

Demand for Neurodivergence Diagnosis assessment and support has risen very sharply in recent years as the general awareness of neurodivergent conditions has increased. Early intervention and support for children in their early years is essential and a key aim of the ALN reforms which is in place across the age range 0-25.

Flying Start childcare provides an early intervention approach that allows emerging needs to be met with universal and targeted interventions. Flying Start settings support all children with emerging or ALN.

Our Flying Start childcare expansion has increased the numbers of two-year-olds who can access funded quality childcare. This has created opportunities for children to be supported with emerging needs and Additional Learning Needs prior to them starting early years education at aged 3 years.

Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officers (EYALNLO) are working successfully with parents and settings to ensure timely and beneficial support for young children with emerging or identified ALN.

In February 2025, the Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing announced a £13.7 million extension to the Neurodivergence Improvement Programme, continuing it until March 2027. This funding is focused on reducing waiting times, improving diagnostic pathways, and ensuring sustainable support for neurodivergent individuals.

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

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

The programme is addressing immediate pressures while developing integrated, needs-led services and building a skilled, resilient workforce. This includes support for schools and teaching staff, as well as enhanced advice and support for parents and carers through the National Neurodivergence Team.

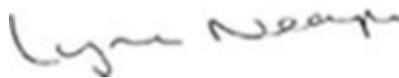
A Neurodivergence Ministerial Advisory Group has been established with representation from education and individuals with lived experience.

In addition to resources already available, work is underway across government to develop a learning programme for the education workforce, covering neurodivergence, child development, and the whole-school approach through modular training.

As I made clear in my Oral Statement to the Senedd of 14 October, I am determined that we have an education system where all learners' needs are understood and responded to with the right support in place. That means clear expectations, confident decision-making, and the right support in place for every learner, in every part of Wales.

I am strengthening national support with new professional advisors to drive quality and consistent delivery in early years, mainstream education and supporting healthcare needs. A new ALN innovation grant will support education settings to strengthen delivery of the ALN system, enhance specialist expertise and share best practice in inclusive education across the mainstream and specialist education sector.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle AS/MS

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