

Kirsty Williams AC/AM
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-(P)-KW/2501/18

Lynne Neagle AM
Chair - Children, Young People and Education Committee
National Assembly for Wales
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17 July 2018

Dear Lynne,

As you will recall, during your committees 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 fourth of these updates.

1. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

Since the last update in April 2018 my officials have continued to develop the draft subordinate legislation and the next iteration of the ALN Code which will be published for consultation later this year.

To support the development of the ALN Code we have commissioned two consultants who worked on the development of the Children and Families Act 2014 in England and the associated Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice. Two workshops were held on 13 and 14 June with a group of external stakeholders who participated in a problem-solving, solutions-focussed discussion around the following two themes;

- the boundary between local authorities' and schools' responsibilities in respect of Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- considerations for local authorities and further education institutions in respect of IDPs for post 16 learners

Officials have also been working with stakeholders through the various ALN expert groups to develop and refine our thinking in relation to particular aspects of the draft ALN Code, such as the role of the Additional Learning Needs Co-Ordinator (ALNCo), the Early Years ALN Lead Officer, and the IDP template.

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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.

2. Implementation/ transition support

2.1. ALN transformation leads

Since taking up post the ALN transformation leads have been building relationships both in their respective regions and across Wales. They have supported all local authorities and further education institutions in Wales to complete their first readiness self assessments, the results of which are now being used to develop implementation plans. The regional and further education implementation plans are due to be submitted to Welsh Government in September 2018.

2.2. ALN Innovation Grants and Expert Groups

In March 2018 the two-year pre-legislative ALN innovation grant funding concluded. On 19 June, to celebrate the work of the projects funded by the grant an ALN Innovation Fund Learning Day was held. The purpose of the day was for project leads to share their learning and experiences with other practitioners across Wales, including effective working practices within their region. The day has also helped shape the next steps for each of the expert groups and potential future work streams. The feedback received on the day has been extremely positive and the ALN Innovation Fund has helped local authorities to work collaboratively and deliver multi-agency projects in preparation for the implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education (Wales) 2018 Act 'the Act'.

2.3. Guidance on implementing the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

On 2 July I issued a written statement announcing the publication of the first in a series of guides which explain how the Act will be implemented. The guide published focuses on implementing IDPs for children of compulsory school age and under. It sets out the intended mandatory phased timetable for local authorities and school governing bodies to transfer children with special educational needs plans – such as statements and individual education plans - to the new ALN system. The full guide is available [here](#).

I also intend to publish further guides which will set out the arrangements for implementing specific aspects of the ALN system. This includes the arrangements for further education, including specialist post-16 education.

3. Workforce development

In June, based on bids received, a total of £262,689 was allocated to four regions over the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years to support the postgraduate training of local authority-based specialist and advisory teachers of learners with hearing impairment (HI) and multi-sensory impairment (MSI). This funding will also be used to facilitate training in Braille and British Sign Language for local authority-based specialist staff.

A further £26,329 has been allocated for the 2020/21 financial year to facilitate post graduate training for local authority based specialist and advisory teachers of the visually impaired (VI).

In order to ensure a continued supply of Educational Psychologists, we fund Cardiff University's Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DEdPsy) professional training programme. Negotiations with the University about arrangements from 2019-20 are continuing.

The Welsh Government and experts in the field have developed a draft framework that outlines the skills and expectations of ALNCos. The draft framework will help inform funding decisions in relation to the programme of skills development for the ALNCo workforce, as part of the £20m ALN transformation programme. It is also being used to develop our wider policy on ALNCos, including the proposed regulatory requirements to be introduced under the Act.

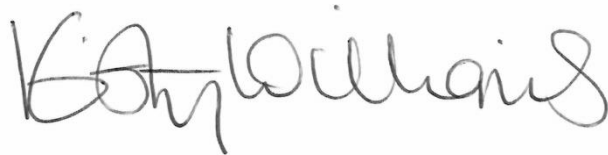
4. Awareness raising

4.1. ALN implementation training materials

The ALN implementation training materials being developed by Eliesha Cymru have been split into four levels, with each level targeting different practitioners. Level one of the on-line training programme is currently being reviewed by Welsh Government. This level is aimed at all professionals who support learners with ALN and will help raise awareness of the Act.

I am copying this letter to the Chairs of the Finance Committee and the Constitutional Affairs and Legislative Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education

cc Simon Thomas AM, Chair, Finance Committee
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cc Mick Antoniw AM, Chair, Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee
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