

ALN Transformation and the wider educational reforms

Merthyr Inclusion Service

February 2021

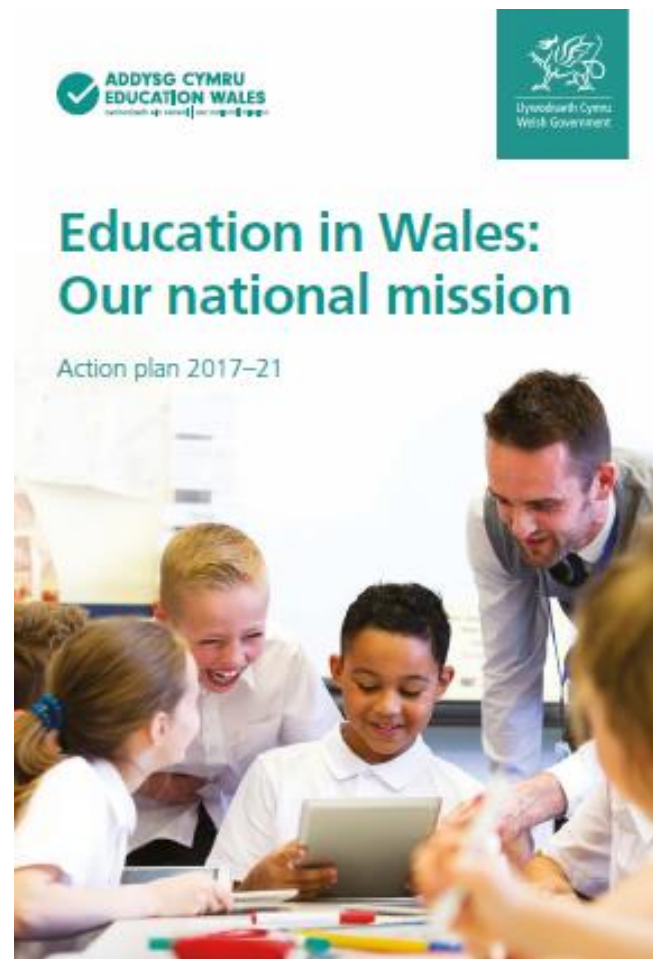
Liz Jones ALN Transformation Lead, Central South

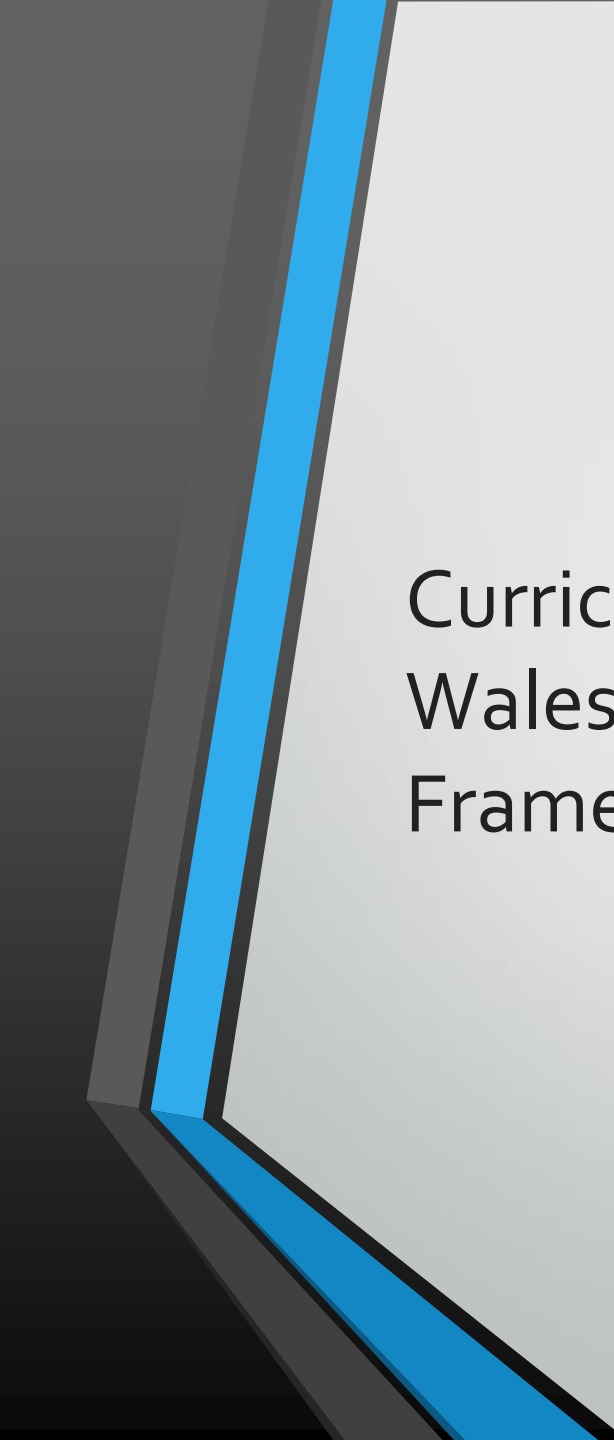
Education in Wales: Our national mission

Encompasses 5 policy areas:

- Curriculum
- Assessment and evaluation
- Equity, excellence and well-being
- Teaching
- Leadership

Curriculum change became the spearhead of this reform journey, with each of the other policy areas aiming to turn the new curriculum into a reality.





Curriculum for Wales Framework

A national framework has been created but implementing the curriculum and assessment arrangements requires school level design.

The school's curriculum is meant to be more relevant to the local context and thus more engaging for learners.

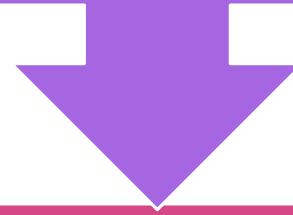
The curriculum is built around big ideas and based on broad competencies as opposed to curricula based solely on content knowledge or on skills.

Progression replaces more generalised stages of attainment and underpins the idea of a learning continuum that is more suited to those who experience the greatest challenges in terms of their learning.

Assessment is used to identify and meet individual learning needs through personalised learning.

Alignment

The reforms emphasise a fully inclusive education system which balances equity of access to the curriculum for all learners with addressing the needs of individual learners. Excellence and equity are not mutually exclusive goals.



Inclusive education is seen as the ability of teachers to adapt ordinary teaching methods in a way that supports learning but recognises difference. Its success is based on the ordinary actions of teachers who see themselves as capable of meeting the needs of all learners in their class. It is not therefore dependent on the use of specialised practices, but on the need to improve the quality of teaching and the development of rich contexts for learning that support the participation of everyone.

ALN and improving teaching and learning

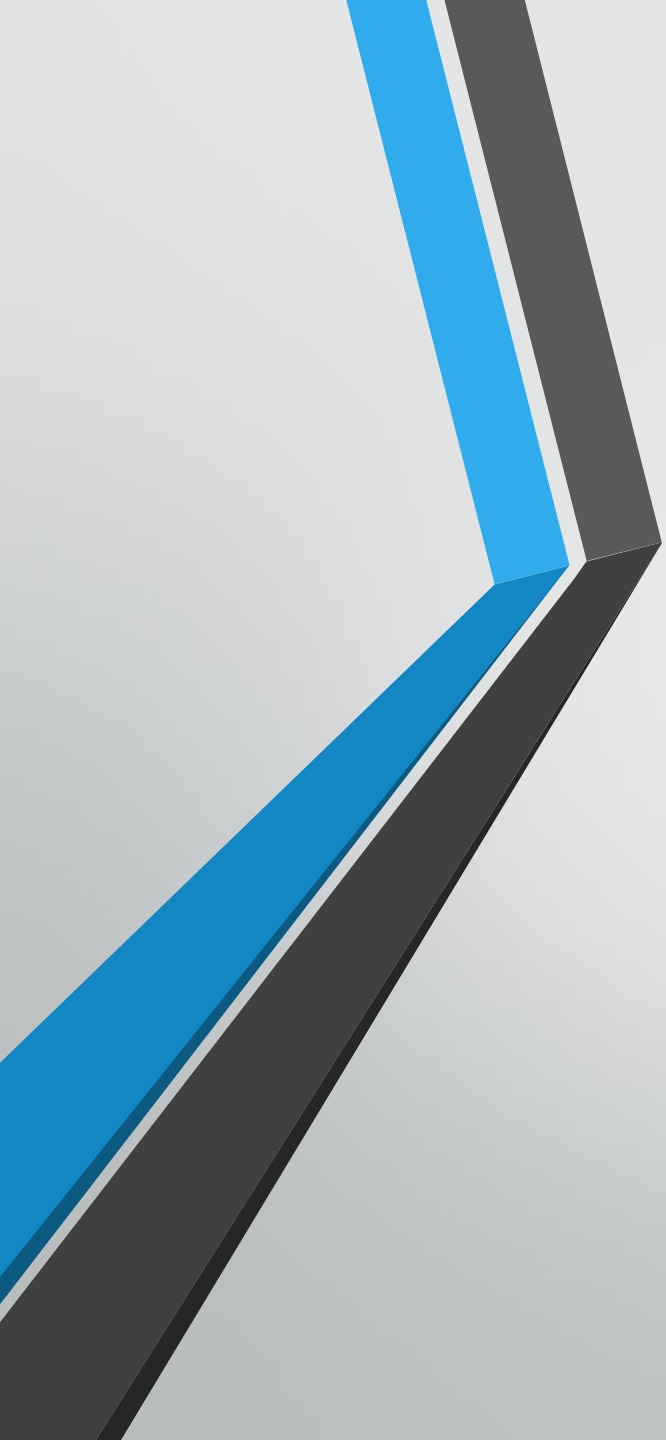
The key to meeting the needs of all children lies in the staff's knowledge of each child and ...

The staff's capacity to then match this knowledge with identifying ways of providing appropriate access to the curriculum for every child is also critical. 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 the school or FEI as a whole. Improvement in one should be mutually supportive of improvement in the other (parag 2.23 draft Code)

Approach for achieving the reforms: The School as a Learning Organisation

This model identifies 7 dimensions and their underlying characteristics all of which are considered essential for transformation to be sustainable. The first dimension is developing a vision:

- A shared and inclusive vision aims to enhance the learning experiences and outcomes of all students
- The vision focuses on a broad range of learning outcomes, encompasses both the present and the future, and is inspiring and motivating
- Learning and teaching are oriented towards realising the vision
- Vision is the outcome of a process involving all staff
- Students, parents, the external community and other partners are invited to contribute to the school's vision



A vision that is centred on the learning of all pupils

Any vision to transform a school into a learning organisation should include two things: a front and centre commitment to making a difference in the learning and lives of *all* students, especially disadvantaged students; and a focus on learning and teaching that influences a broad range of outcomes – both cognitive and social/emotional – for today and the future. Each individual must be equipped to seize learning opportunities throughout life, to broaden her or his knowledge, skills and attitudes, and to adapt to a changing, complex and interdependent world

Statutory Duties: Maintained schools

- Decide whether a child has ALN
- The preparation, content, form, review and revision of IDPs
- Ceasing to maintain an IDP
- Provide information to children and parents/carers about the new ALN system

Schools will need to make a judgment based exclusively on the progress that learners make.

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.

Deciding on when a learner has ALN

If the learner has a significant learning difficulty or a disability that calls for additional learning provision then the answer is yes.

If the learner's needs can be met without ALP then the learner would not be described as having ALN.

So the question is dependent on *What constitutes ALP?*

Statutory Duties: LA

LA duties:

- Provision of advice and information (specific – in relation to individual learners, and general – to support the functioning and effectiveness of the ALN system, including keeping ALP under review)
- Avoidance and resolution of disagreements
- Provision of independent advocacy services.

Keeping ALP under review

Reporting on the evidence of the extent to which the following are available in schools for learners with ALN:

High quality differentiated teaching

Reasonable adjustments to enable access to the curriculum, environment and facilities

Targeted interventions and support

Effective systems for monitoring progress, achievement and inclusion

Involvement of specialists

Reviewing effectiveness of interventions, skill and expertise of staff

Involvement of children and their parents/carers

Guidance for schools: Draft Code

Local authorities may consider providing guidance to schools on these matters and on what provision schools would ordinarily be expected to make available for children and young people with ALN.

They could consider publishing details of the support schools can expect from the local authority and its partners within NHS bodies, for children and young people who require ALP.

They may also wish to set up moderating groups to support transparency and consistency in decision making in respect of referrals from schools for determination.

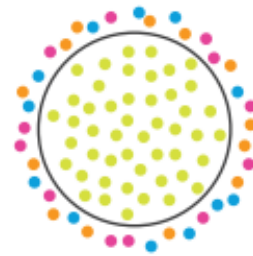
Principles

The LA should establish, in consultation with maintained schools, and publish a set of principles it will apply when determining whether it is reasonable for a school to secure the ALP required by a learner or whether the authority ought to do so. The principles should relate to:

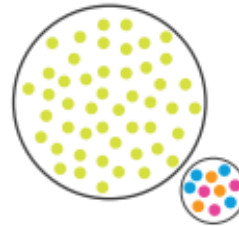
- The extent and duration of advice from external specialists that is likely to be unreasonable for a school to secure;
- The equipment that is likely to be unreasonable for a school to provide; and
- The intensity and duration of support and scale of internal engagement of staff at the school that is likely to be unreasonable for a school to provide.

Provision schools would ordinarily be expected to make available

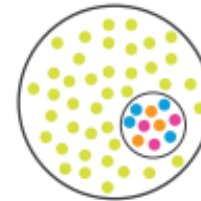
- How do LA officers currently hold schools to account for the quality of inclusive practice?
- What is practice like in schools?
- How do you know?
- What needs to happen next?



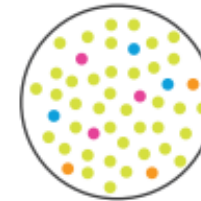
exclusion



segregation



integration



inclusion



teaching to diversity

Draft regional guidance

Leadership

Inclusive environments

Effective teaching and learning

Determining ALN

Evidence based practice for ALN

ALP

Inclusion, Additional Learning Needs and Additional Learning Provision:

Regional Guidance for Mainstream Schools

