



Additional Learning Needs Policy

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This policy has been updated to reflect the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act for Wales 2021. It has also been written with reference to:

- The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021
- The Person-Centred Reviews Toolkit
- The ALN Reform National Steering Group (3 July 2025)

Introduction:

Children and young people in public care are estimated to be six to eight times more likely to require an Individual Development Plan (IDP) than those in the general school population. Many more may have needs that remain unidentified due to disrupted schooling and unmet needs prior to care.

It is important not to assume that all looked-after children will have Additional Learning Needs, (ALN). Each case must be considered individually, ensuring that needs are identified and met in a supportive, non-stigmatising way.

United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):

Our Additional Learning Needs Policy has also been written with due regard for the UNCRC demonstrating our commitment to the promotion and protection of children's rights ensuring that the voice, welfare and dignity of all our pupils is paramount to the work that we do. Our admissions and induction policy encompasses the UNCRC in the following ways.

Article	Theme	Links
Article 2	Non-discrimination	This policy ensure that no child is denied support or treated less favorably because of disability, social background or emotional / behavioural need.
Article 3	Best interests of the child	All decisions about identification, provision, and review of ALN must be guided by what is best for the learner, not administrative convenience or resource limitations.
Article 6	Right to life, survival and development	ALN provision must promote learners' full development; educational, social, emotional, and physical.
Article 7	Right to name and identify	Children with complex care arrangements or who are looked after (CWLA) must have their personal details handled with sensitivity and accuracy.
Article 12	Right to be heard and taken seriously.	Pupils should be invited to IDP meetings, express their views, and have their wishes considered when setting targets or support plans.
Article 13	Freedom of expression	Ysgol Y Rhos will ensure that children with communication or language difficulties can express themselves freely.
Article 14	Freedom of thought, belief and religion	Provision for pupils with ALN will be culturally sensitive and respect beliefs and family values.
Article 15	Freedom of association	Pupils with ALN should have equal opportunities to socialise, join clubs and participate in all aspects of school life, ensuring inclusion beyond the classroom.
Article 16	Right to privacy	Information about a pupils ALN, assessments, or personal circumstances must be stored confidentially and shared only with those directly involved in supporting the child.
Article 17	Access to appropriate information	Parents, carers, and pupils will be given clear, accessible information about: How the school identifies ALN, what support is available and how to appeal or request a review
Article 19	Protection from all forms of harm	Pupils with ALN may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or Bullying Ysgol Y Rhos will ensure that these pupils receive enhanced safeguarding support, supervision, and personal safety education.

Article 23	Rights of children with disabilities	Ysgol Y Rhos will ensure reasonable adjustments and Individualised provision enables all pupils to participate and make progress.
Article 24	Right to the highest attainable standard of health	The school will collaborate with health professionals (e.g., speech and language therapists, CAMHS, occupational therapy) as part of ALN provision.
Article 28	Right to education	The policy ensures barrier-free access to the curriculum and reasonable adaptations to teaching and assessment.
Article 29	Aims of Education	The policy ensures education supports self-confidence, life skills, and preparation for adulthood, as emphasised in the ALN Code for Wales.
Article 30	Minority culture, language and identity	ALN provision will respect and promote a child's home language, culture and/or ethnicity.
Article 39	Recovery and reintegration	Many pupils with ALN may have experienced trauma, anxiety, or disrupted education. The policy will ensure therapeutic and nurture-based support to rebuild confidence and enable positive engagement.
Article 42	Awareness of rights	Pupils should be aware that they have a right to support, participation, and equal access to learning.

Children and Young People with LA Maintained Individual Development Plans (IDPs):

Ysgol Y Rhos is committed to providing all students with full access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including careers guidance. Placements are available for learners with IDPs, and education is offered for most disabilities.

- The school will make reasonable adjustments to meet accessibility needs and will publish an Accessibility Plan. Any accessibility needs that cannot be met will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Where a child has an Individual Development Plan, (IDP), the school will liaise with the placing authority to ensure all requirements are maintained.
- Where health-related Additional Learning Provision, (ALP) is required, the school will work with the Local Health Board. The Designated Education Clinical Lead Officer (DECLO) will coordinate health input. NHS-secured ALP will be recorded in the IDP and cannot be amended without NHS agreement.
- IDPs will be reviewed annually in partnership with the relevant authority, carers/parents, and the young person.
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This process is a joint effort involving education, social care, health, carers/parents, and—crucially—the pupil.

The ALNCo:

The school has appointed an Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo). The ALNCo is responsible for:

- Identifying ALN and coordinating IDPs
- Monitoring the effectiveness of ALP
- Leading staff CPD
- Liaising with external professionals (including the DECLO and careers services)
- Advising on budgets and resource allocation
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The school notes the ongoing national review of the ALNCo role and will update this policy to reflect any future changes affecting independent schools.

Looked-After Children:

For looked-after children in Wales, the local authority is responsible for preparing, maintaining, and reviewing the IDP within the statutory 12-week timescale.

The school will:

- Provide timely evidence to support the process
- Participate in care and PEP reviews
- Implement the ALP detailed in the IDP

The local authority will provide copies of the IDP to the learner, parent/carer (where appropriate), and the Independent Reviewing Officer. Learners and families will also be signposted to advocacy, disagreement-resolution, and appeals services. Concerns will be addressed as early and locally as possible, with access to independent mediation if required.

School Maintained IDPs:

In addition to statutory IDPs, the school creates its own IDPs maintained by the school for all learners, regardless of ALN status.

- For learners with an IDP, school maintained IDPs are written alongside the IDP and aligned with its targets.
- School maintained IDPs include academic, social, emotional, and behavioural goals written as SMART targets.
- All ALP recorded in IDPs/School maintained IDPs will be detailed, specific, and measurable (e.g., frequency, duration, responsible staff, training requirements).
- Students, carers, and professionals are fully involved, with termly reviews to track progress.
- School maintained IDPs are shared with Ysgol Y Rhos, home staff, social workers, and local authorities.

The impact of ALP is regularly monitored, with progress reported to governors/proprietors. Staff receive regular CPD in ALN and Person-Centred Practice (PCP).

Needs and Expectations:

Most students will have experienced disrupted education, leading to gaps in learning, reduced confidence, and underachievement. While many will have IDPs, others may not, often due to missed referral opportunities or frequent placement changes.

The school provides:

- A structured, caring environment to build stability, self-confidence, and independence
- High aspirations and personalised, high-quality teaching as the first step in meeting ALN
- Small classes with strong individual support
- Regular multi-disciplinary meetings and input from the school's clinical team
- Support through the therapeutic program.

As a school specialising in children who are looked after who may have experienced trauma, or significant adverse childhood experiences we embed trauma-informed approaches across all teaching, behaviour management, and ALN practice. This includes predictable routines, minimising repeated trauma narratives, offering choice and voice, safeguarding links, and ongoing staff training.

Where ALP is specified in Welsh, the school will take all reasonable steps such as commissioning Welsh-medium specialists or working with the local authority to deliver provision through the medium of Welsh.

Transition and Progression

We maintain positive links with local authorities and aim, where appropriate, to support pupils back into mainstream settings. We also develop strong partnerships with local colleges, providing both full-time and part-time vocational courses.

Students attending external learning providers, schools or colleges receive ongoing learning support, with weekly liaison between our staff and course leaders.

Our goal is to enable learners to progress into Further Education and, ultimately, towards greater independence.

Appendix – Annual Review Process:

• On Entry

- The Headteacher contacts the placing authority to confirm the pupil's status and request IDP documentation.
- Once received, the Headteacher and ALNCo create an ALN profile based on long-term IDP objectives.
- The pupil is added to the ALN register, which records:
 - Originating authority
 - Date of IDP issue
 - Dates of reviews
 - Category/area of need (as defined in the ALN Code)
 - Next review date

• Baseline Assessment

- Teachers complete initial assessments (CATs, spelling, reading, comprehension, etc.).
- Teacher judgements establish attainment levels (Grades F–A* or 1–9), plus social, emotional, and learning-style baselines.
- If concerns are raised (e.g., literacy, numeracy, social skills, speech/language), learners are referred for further assessment.
- Provision maps are created using a three-wave model:
 - Wave 1: Differentiated classwork
 - Wave 2: 1:1 support
 - Wave 3: Specialist intervention

• Graduated Response

- The school records the date ALN first appears and acts within the Code's specified timeframes.
- ALP is implemented at the lowest effective level first.
- Over time, ALP may be reduced if interventions succeed.
- If ALP remains ineffective, external specialist advice will be sought.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans – England:

For learners from England with an EHC Plan

- The school arranges annual reviews in partnership with the home local authority.
- A range of professionals are invited. Questionnaires are used where attendance is not possible.
- Outcomes of reviews are submitted to the originating local authority.

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) – Wales:

For learners in Wales

- The local authority convenes IDP reviews for looked-after children.
- Annual reviews follow the ALN Code, with a person-centred approach.

Annual Reviews – General:

The purpose of any annual review (EHC or IDP) is to

- Assess progress against objectives
- Celebrate achievements
- Confirm whether ALP remains appropriate
- Set new SMART targets

All reviews will be person-centred, ensuring learners' voices are central, especially for looked-after children who may have experienced trauma.

Rights, Advocacy and Appeals:

The school will ensure that learners and families receive accessible information about:

- ALN processes
- Advocacy services
- Disagreement-resolution arrangements
- Rights of appeal to the Education Tribunal for Wales

Reporting:

Parents, carers, social workers, and placing authorities will receive termly reports and an end-of-year report.

- Where parents do not hold parental responsibility, updates will be shared only with the agreement of social workers and placing authorities.
- Where parents retain parental responsibility, they will always be informed unless otherwise directed by the local authority.

This policy is reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. However, where there are changes to legislation/guidance or in response to recommendation from any significant incident, review of the policy will take place immediately.

Policy Created By	Sam Thomas	17/11/2025
Policy Approved By	Catrin Jones	18/11/2025