

Information
for parents

School Funding for Additional Learning Needs

Cardiff Council is changing the way we fund our schools to support children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

This leaflet has been produced to explain the changes.



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What will change?

Under the previous SEN system, Cardiff has provided every school with a budget for learners at 'School Action' or 'School Action Plus', and a 'Complex Needs Enhancement' budget for named learners with a statement of SEN.

From April 2023 this will change. Schools will have a single ALN Support budget to **make** Additional Learning Provision (ALP) for all learners with ALN.

The ALN Support budget will no longer be based on named learners but will be determined by a formula.

Schools will no longer need to apply to the Local Authority panel for a funding decision before deciding on the support your child will need; decisions can be made at school level in discussion with you.

Moving away from 'one to one' support

As part of the funding changes, the local authority is encouraging schools to review how they are supporting children.

While there are many learners in our schools who need high levels of support - in some cases throughout the school day - 'one to one' support is not usually the best way to provide this.

Many schools have found that a combination of shared support, small group work, and some individual intervention, is the most effective way to make sure pupils with ALN:

- Have opportunities to learn through interaction with other children.
- Are supported to develop independence for learning.
- Are safe and feel safe in school.
- Avoid becoming over-dependent on one named adult in the school.

What does this mean for your child?

Schools must ensure that every child with an ALN receives effective support to meet their needs.

This includes children who were directly funded under the old SEN system AND children whose Additional Learning Needs have been identified after the implementation of the ALN approach.

Schools may decide to change the way they are providing this support, to include more opportunities for group or shared support.

Any changes must be discussed with you and your child or young person and should take into account of any professional advice about your child's needs.

What if my child has a statement of SEN that includes funding for one-to-one support?

When planning support for your child, schools must ensure the provision set out in statements of SEN is delivered.

In some cases, schools may have decided to employ a teaching assistant to provide one-to-one support, even though most statements of SEN specify a more flexible, mixed approach to support.

For example, many statements say that schools should use the funding to:

‘Target the development of (the child’s) identified learning needs

through small group support, individual support, or to enable (the child) to access any other appropriate educational opportunities which would benefit (the child) and help (the child) to make progress’.

If schools decide to change the way they provide support, this will be discussed with you and your child/young person. The school should explain how they will continue to ensure your child/young person is well supported in line with their statement.

Is the level of ALN funding being reduced?

No!

The ALN budget delegated to schools in 2023-24 is higher than the amount distributed to schools during 2022-23.

The proportion of the budget allocated to ALN will be kept under review and agreed with schools each year through the Schools Budget Forum.

Working together with schools, Cardiff Local Authority will:

- Support schools to plan, monitor and review additional learning provision. This will be done through raising awareness, training and the sharing good practice across schools.
- Develop working groups to look at communication, whole school provision planning and early years transition.

Frequently Asked Questions

If my child transfers from one school to another, will ALN funding transfer with them?

School budgets will no longer be linked to individual named children, so there will be no funding adjustment when children transfer from school to school.

Every school has a statutory duty to identify and implement additional learning provision for every child with ALN, so the new school must ensure your child continues to receive support.

What can I do if I'm not happy or I have a question about how the changes affect my child?

In the first instance speak with the school or setting, either your child's teacher, or the ALNCO to discuss your concerns.

Cardiff also has an ALN Advice and Help line you contact with any questions or queries:

Phone: 02920 872731

Email: ALNHelpline@cardiff.gov.uk

We have organised drop-in sessions for parents/ carers, to explain the changes from SEN system to ALN approach, so come along and speak to one of the Inclusion Team.

Under the ALN Code, children and young people (or their parents/ carers, acting on their behalf) have the right to ask the local authority to Reconsider a school decision if they are not happy about:

- A decision of ALN made by the school
- The content of the Individual Development Plan

If you are not happy with a school decision, you should first talk this through with the school.

If you have been unable to reach agreement, you can then make a Reconsideration request via the ALN Helpline.

When we receive a Reconsideration request, we:

- contact the family to find out why there is concern,
- contact the school to talk about the reasons for their decision,
- consider whether to gather further professional advice,
- make a decision and inform the family and the school.

Information about the new ALN system and processes can be found on the council's website.



www.evenbright.com



www.cardiff.gov.uk/ALN