

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Bil Anghenion Dysgu Ychwanegol a'r Tribiwnlys Addysg (Cymru)| Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill

ALN 11

Ymateb gan: Unigolyn

Response from: Individual

I am writing this evidence submission in reference to the additional learning needs bill that is being proposed here in Wales. There are many things wrong with this bill and I wish to raise my concerns further to this I also wish to seek clarification on a number of issues.

Firstly in my community work as an Independent Catholic Bishop I get a lot of emails and letters on the subject of special educational needs and the delivery of the provisions within primary and secondary schools. A lot of the correspondence I receive makes me believe that the ALN bill is the wrong way to deal with the matters the Welsh Government are trying to sort.

The bill itself is a one size fits all approach to an issue that certainly isn't textbook and my biggest fear is that children and young people will not be getting the support they need as it will not be tailored to their individual needs. As you maybe aware there are several types of Autism and provisions of support that work for one person might not work for another. Which would lead to that person being impeded.

I don't just want this evidence submission to be focused on Autism but I also want to touch on other conditions such as pupils that maybe epileptic. This illness is serious and there needs to be provisions of support in the additional learning needs bill for this as well, simply because a child or young person sometimes will not get warnings as to when they might have a seizure.

Teaching staff will need to be specially trained to deal with seizures and auras that occur during epilepsy related episodes and these can again hinder learning of children and young people. I don't see how a one size fits all approach is going to work on this issue being that there are so many different types of epilepsy.

I have heard of a case where a young person was having an epileptic seizure and the teacher in the classroom asked that young person to stop messing around and to take his seat again, The member of teaching staff wasn't trained so he didn't actually realise that the student was in fact not mucking around. My fear is that with insufficient training and the sketchiest guidelines of the ALN bill this situation could occur again.

I am sure I do not need to remind the committee that an epileptic seizure can kill, if I do then it highlights a severe lack of education amongst our legislative law makers which is worrying.

Ok what do I think needs to happen, that is the million dollar question, An Autism Act was the answer in respect of the first issue and then another Act for Epilepsy would be the ideal answer.

I would be interested to hear the feedback from the committee on the issues I have raised however I am pretty certain that you will disagree with majority of what I have said in my evidence submission to the committee.