

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill – survey for families, parents and carers

Background

This document provides a summary of responses received from families, parents and carers to the survey conducted by the Children, Young People and Education Committee as part of its stage 1 scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales).

Due to rounding, percentages may not always add up to 100%. 530 responses were received to the survey which represent the views of those who responded, not the public as a whole.

Do you think children and young people have their additional learning needs identified quickly and well enough at the moment?

- Yes: 5.9%
- **No: 90.1%**
- Don't know: 4.0%

*527 responses received

Once a child or young person has been identified as having additional learning needs, how good is the support available?

- Very good: 3.1%
- Good: 12.5%
- Fair: 30.7%
- **Poor: 36.7%**
- Very poor: 17.1%

*521 responses received



Should young people with additional learning needs who are in college, doing apprenticeships or training in the workplace, be included in the new system and receive support?

- **Yes: 95.6%**
- No: 0.8%
- Don't know: 3.6%

*527 responses received

Do you think families have enough of a say about how additional learning needs are met at the moment?

- Yes: 6.4%
- **No: 86.3%**
- Don't know: 7.3%

* 424 responses received

Do you think that families know what to do if they are unhappy with the education provision they receive?

- Yes: 4.5%
- **No: 89.2%**
- Don't know: 3.4%

*424 responses received



Should information and advice always be available from an independent person rather than only from the school, college or local authority?

- **Yes: 90.1%**
- No: 4.7%
- Don't know: 5.2%

*425 responses received

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

“The same system, support and development plan should be used for all ages up to the age of 25, instead of having separate systems in schools and in further education colleges”

- Strongly disagree: 5.9%
- Disagree: 9.9%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 13.8%
- Agree: 33.3%
- **Strongly agree: 37.2%**

*406 responses received

“The current system of giving statements to some children and young people with the greatest learning needs causes division and tension”

- Strongly disagree: 9.5%
- Disagree: 16.9%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 23.1%
- **Agree: 35.3%**
- Strongly agree: 15.2%

*402 responses received



“All children and young people should have their needs met within the same type of plan regardless of their level of needs”

- Strongly disagree: 9.5%
- Disagree: 17.8%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 12.5%
- Agree: 26.6%
- **Strongly agree: 33.6%**

*399 responses received

“Local authorities and health bodies should be made to work more closely together to provide services to children and young people with additional learning needs”

- Strongly disagree: 3.2%
- Disagree: 0.0%
- Neither agree nor disagree: 2.5%
- Agree: 20.2%
- **Strongly agree: 74.1%**

*405 responses received



Some examples of comments received:

Legal status of statement: “Dylid sicrhau bod plant sydd gyda datganiad ag anghenion dwys a chymhleth yn parhau neu mae perygl rhoi pawb ag anghenion o dan yr un cwrpas yn mynd i lastwreiddio'r holl system. Yn sicr dylai'r datganiad barhau gyda'r un statws cyfreithiol ag sydd ar hyn o bryd os nad mwy o statws gorfodol ar awdurdodau lleol i ddarparu ar gyfer y plant hyn.”

Accountability: “While I welcome the extension of support until the age of 25 for young people with additional needs, I have concern that the new proposals may make it more difficult for parents to get their voices heard in seeking appropriate provision for their children as it seems that lines of accountability will be less clear than they are at present, with the increased probability that parents will be passed between organisations (particularly between schools and LEAs), being told that this is someone else's responsibility.”

Accountability: “Our child is now 18 and we feel we have battled every step of the way and to have greater co lesion between the agencies would be wonderful. We find that each area has its own agenda and there is little over looking to see best outcomes. An independent person is so helpful.”

Accountability: “My child's SEN was identified by health, but education chose to ignore their request for help.”

Accountability: “LAs should work more closely together. My son moved authorities and all assessment were started again which meant valuable time was lost.”



Accountability: “The current system is frustrating for families and various departments do not co-ordinate the support of the family or individual.”

Accountability: “Very Poor experience of multi-professional team working...much more needs to be done in "joining the dots"”

Accountability: “I also have concerns that, if agencies have to work together, communication may break down and one agency may blame the other for any mistakes.”

Accountability: “We have been being told for the last 4 years by medical professionals that our child needed a statement only for LEA to tell us that they have no business telling us that but they are the people treating the child and getting to know them.”

One size fits all: I am also concerned that one document for all will lead to support being watered down for those with the most severe needs and that those with less severe needs and their families may see the new document as a stigma.

Resources and expertise: “I think that a lot of the problem is that any tension caused by families where statements are not issued under the current system is because schools and Local Education Authorities shy away from the process when they should actually be issuing them under current law and guidance. The problem seems to me to be largely one of lack of staff and resources put into helping these children and young people rather than a problem with the current law and guidance.”



Resources and expertise: “If you want an ed psych to see your child it is extremely difficult – the school only has a set, very small number of slots available and they decide priority. Getting medical assessment at CAMHS is a long slow process (it took us 3 years to get an initial appointment) and takes a lot of determination by parents and GPs. CAMHS services are totally overstretched and I feel for the staff as it must be totally demoralizing.”

Resources and expertise: “How will schools ensure needs are met without a statement? Lots of special schools are nearly full...how will children's needs be met?”

Resources and expertise: “Not enough funding is provided to schools to help support additional needs.”

Resources and expertise: “Funding needs to be put in place to meet their individual needs. The current system places them in mainstream schools with a lack staff and staff who have little or no training in this specialised field. These children are being failed on a daily basis.”

Resources and expertise: “There is not enough provision to meet demand.”

Resources and expertise: “Teachers are not trained or equipped to identify ALN in children and learning in most cases seems to be delivered to children with ALN by teaching assistants with little to no input from teaching staff.”

Resources and expertise: “As a teacher in a special school, much more needs to be done to ensure equality for all children with special and/or medical needs and support needs to be consistent for all children.”



Transition to adulthood: “When young people transition from school/childhood into adulthood their diagnosis/statement tends to be out of date when they need to apply for further benefits. Young people are finding it very difficult to prove that they still have a diagnosis and health professionals are rejecting requests for up to date evidence of diagnosis.”

Transition to adulthood: “In reference to having one system in place up the age of 25, this is imperative in order to ensure a cohesive and smooth transition within education and independent living skills; tracking progress and adapting to the needs of the individual.”

Referrals and assessments: “The process of referral needs simplifying. The time between referral and assessment needs shortening.”

Referrals and assessments: “The new bill has potential to improve the current system, but parents and schools need clarification about the criteria for assessing level of ALN and when the LA will take responsibility for IDP's.”

Groups to consider: “Type 1 diabetes should be recognised and the affects it can have on cognition and learning.”

Groups to consider: “Medical conditions e.g. type 1 diabetes should be covered under this provision of care.”

Groups to consider: “My son has Type 1 Diabetes and I feel that his needs have not been met because it is a medical issue.”



Groups to consider: “Please also consider children with medical conditions, not just disabilities.”

Groups to consider: “Young people in apprenticeships and other work based schemes should continue to get support through an IDP. This will support and encourage employers to take on YP with ALN.”

