Cyfarthfa High School

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Additional Learning Needs Policy

POLICY DATE

September 2026

SCHEDULED REVIEW

September 2027

Policy Lead

Louise Morgan | Assistant Headteacher (ALNCO)

Approval date 08.10.26

Approval

Role	Name and signature	Date
Chair of Governors	D. Williams	08.10.26
Headteacher	B. Davies	08.10.26
Designated SLT member	L. Morgan	08.10.26

Additional Learning Needs Policy

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1. Introduction and purpose

At Cyfarthfa High School, we are firmly committed to providing an equality of educational opportunity for all pupils that takes account of their individual abilities, aptitudes, interests and experiences. The majority of our children will learn and make progress within these arrangements. However, there will be a number who may have trouble in doing so for a variety of reasons. These children may have additional learning needs (ALN). We are committed to identifying additional learning needs (ALN) as early as possible and ensuring that appropriate support is planned, delivered, monitored and reviewed to ensure all learners can progress accordingly.

All teachers share responsibility for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). Cyfarthfa High School promotes inclusive teaching, early identification and access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We value each learner's strengths, aspirations and voice, and work in partnership with families and relevant professionals.

Our approach respects the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). The governing body will comply with statutory duties and have regard to the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021 (the Code). This policy applies to the identification and support of ALN and operates alongside our equality, accessibility, safeguarding, assessment and data protection arrangements.

Legal and policy framework

- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (the Act), the Code and regulations made under the Act.
- Equality Act 2010; Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021; Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, where relevant.
- Current Welsh Government ALN guidance and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council's published ALN arrangements, insofar as consistent with statutory requirements.

2. Aims and objectives

- To create a fully inclusive school where the needs of all learners are identified and supported to enable them to experience success and enjoy learning, regardless of their need, through a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum.
- To ensure early intervention of needs so that appropriate high-quality support and provision can be provided at the earliest opportunity.
- To ensure the Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales is fully implemented to support the needs of all learners.
- To ensure the responsibility for educating children with ALN lies with the whole staff and Governing Body.

- To work in close partnership with the child, parents/carers and appropriate outside agencies, ensuring everyone's voice is heard and that the needs and views of the child are at the heart of decision making, using a person-centred approach.
- To work proactively with the Local Authority and other agencies, including Social Services, parent support groups, psychologists and medical services, in identifying, assessing, and meeting any additional learning needs.
- To maintain and develop a range of expertise within the school.
- To monitor, review and evaluate policy and provision on a regular and systematic basis.
- To ensure relevant documents are in place to support individual needs such as individual targets, learning plans, behaviour plans or Individual Development Plans (IDPs).
- To ensure high expectations are set for learners, regardless of need, through an accurate understanding of the child's strengths and potential.
- To ensure effective planning and delivery of Additional Learning Provision (ALP) which supports children to work towards achieving positive outcomes based on ambitions and aspirations, using a fair and equitable system.
- To empower children by celebrating their achievements and abilities, focusing upon the possibilities whilst acknowledging and working towards overcoming any barriers.

3. Understanding ALN and ALP

A person has ALN if they have a learning difficulty or disability, whether arising from a medical condition or otherwise, which calls for additional learning provision (ALP). Both parts of this test must be considered.

For a child of compulsory school age or a person over that age, a learning difficulty or disability means significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or a disability under the Equality Act 2010 which prevents or hinders use of educational or training facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream further education institutions.

ALP is educational or training provision additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools in Wales, mainstream further education institutions in Wales, or places in Wales where nursery education is provided. The comparison is not confined to what Cyfarthfa High School happens to provide.

A learner does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language of teaching differs from a language used at home. A diagnosis, medical condition, disability, low attainment or slow progress does not automatically establish ALN; equally, attainment at an expected or high level does not rule it out. A diagnosis is not a prerequisite for an ALN decision.

Universal provision includes high-quality teaching, adaptation and support ordinarily available to learners. Whether a particular intervention is ALP depends on the statutory test, not its label, funding source or location. Reasonable adjustments are a separate Equality Act duty and may be necessary whether or not a learner has ALN.

In this policy, a child is a person not over compulsory school age; a young person is over compulsory school age but under 25. The ALN system does not create an automatic entitlement to education or an IDP until age 25. Particular duties and eligibility rules apply to young people, including those not enrolled at a maintained school or further education institution.

4. Identification and decision-making

The school recognises the importance of the early identification of additional learning needs and is committed to identifying and responding to emerging difficulties as soon as possible. Early identification enables appropriate support to be put in place promptly, helping to remove barriers to learning, promote progress and prevent difficulties from becoming more significant.

Identifying emerging needs is a whole-school responsibility. Teachers and support staff have an important role in recognising learners who may be experiencing difficulties with learning, communication, interaction, emotional regulation, organisation, independence or access to the curriculum.

The school adopts a proactive approach to early identification through regular assessment, observation and monitoring of learners' progress and participation.

Information used to identify possible additional learning needs may include:

- information received from primary schools or previous educational settings;
- existing IDPs and reports from relevant professionals;
- transition and baseline information;
- reading, spelling, literacy and numeracy assessments;
- standardised assessments and appropriate screening tools;
- classroom observations and teacher assessment;
- scrutiny of learners' work;
- progress and attainment data;
- response to classroom strategies and targeted interventions;
- patterns of attendance, engagement or participation where relevant;
- concerns relating to communication, interaction, attention, organisation or independence;
- concerns raised by teaching or support staff;
- concerns raised by the learner or their parent/carer; and
- advice or assessment from external professionals and specialist services.

Particular attention will be given to transition points, including entry into Year 7, movement between key stages and preparation for post-16 education, training or employment. Information will be shared appropriately to ensure continuity of support and to identify learners who may require further assessment or provision.

The school recognises that additional learning needs may become apparent at any stage of a learner's education. Needs may become more evident as curriculum demands increase, greater independence is expected or a learner's circumstances change. Staff should therefore remain alert to emerging needs throughout a learner's time at the school.

Raising and responding to concerns

Concerns that a learner may have ALN may be raised by:

- the learner;
- a parent or carer;
- teaching or support staff;

- the ALNCo;
- another educational setting;
- the Local Authority; or
- a health, educational or other relevant professional.

Staff who identify an emerging concern should follow the school's agreed referral procedures and provide relevant evidence to the ALNCo/ALN team.

The learner and their parent/carer will be involved appropriately from an early stage. Their views, experiences and knowledge of the learner will form an important part of developing a full understanding of the learner's strengths and needs.

Staff must pass possible ALN concerns promptly to the ALNCo. Concerns can be raised orally or in writing; a particular form or professional diagnosis is not required to bring possible ALN to the school's attention.

Where it is brought to the school's attention, or otherwise appears to the school, that a pupil may have ALN, the governing body must decide whether the pupil has ALN, subject to the statutory exceptions and referral arrangements. The ALNCo will record the date this first occurs. Internal referrals, further assessment, universal support, intervention cycles or waiting for specialist advice must not postpone this trigger or restart the statutory clock. Support and evidence gathering continue alongside the decision process.

The school will check whether an IDP or relevant EHC plan already exists, whether a previous decision is subject to materially changed needs or new information, and which body has responsibility. Special rules apply to looked after children, dual registration, detention and cross-border residence; the ALNCo will apply the relevant Code provisions with the local authority.

Participation and consent

For a child, parental or child consent is not a general prerequisite to the school's statutory duty to decide whether the child has ALN or to prepare an IDP where required. The child and parent must be involved and supported to participate. Consent requirements for a particular specialist assessment or service are separate from this duty.

For a young person, the school will seek and record their consent to the ALN decision and, separately where needed, preparation and maintenance of an IDP. It will explain the process, benefits, consequences of withholding or withdrawing consent, and available support in an accessible way. Where capacity is in question, the statutory provisions on representatives will be followed; a parent does not automatically replace the young person's decision.

Timescales and communication

The school will designate a coordinator, normally the ALNCo, record the concern and notify the child and parent, or young person, that the decision process is underway. The notification will give contact details, information about local authority advice and information, and explain the process and expected timescale.

For school decisions, the process must be completed promptly and within 35 school days of possible ALN first being brought to attention or appearing to the school: either the decision that there is no ALN must be notified, or, where required, the IDP must be prepared and a copy given. This is not 35 calendar days. The Code's specific exceptions apply, including where compliance is impractical because of circumstances beyond the school's control. Any exception must be recorded, explained to the learner and family, and the process completed as promptly as possible. Referrals and local authority decisions have their own requirements and timescales.

A no-ALN decision must be communicated in writing with reasons and the required information about advice, disagreement resolution, independent advocacy and local authority reconsideration, including relevant contact details. Where an IDP is prepared, the copy and accompanying notification will include the required information about rights and support. Decisions will explain the evidence and application of both parts of the statutory test. The school will discuss appropriate ongoing support even where ALN is not identified.

5. Universal provision and targeted support

High-quality teaching and learning is the foundation of the school's approach to inclusion.

Teachers will use a range of approaches to reduce barriers to learning, which may include:

- clear learning objectives and success criteria;
- explicit teaching;
- chunking instructions;
- modelling and WAGOLL;
- visual supports;
- dual coding;
- pre-teaching vocabulary;
- repetition and overlearning;
- scaffolding;
- appropriate reading materials;
- assistive technology;
- alternative methods of recording;
- additional processing time;
- structured routines;
- appropriate seating;
- sensory or environmental adjustments;
- checking understanding;
- opportunities for retrieval and consolidation.

These strategies form part of effective inclusive classroom practice and do not necessarily constitute ALP.

Where appropriate, learners may access targeted intervention.

This could include support relating to:

- literacy;
- reading;
- spelling;
- numeracy;
- communication and interaction;
- social communication;

- emotional regulation;
- organisation;
- preparation for examinations;
- transition.

Interventions will have a clear purpose and expected outcome.

Their effectiveness will be monitored using appropriate baseline and review information.

Intervention should complement, rather than replace, access to a broad and balanced curriculum wherever possible.

These approaches do not replace a required ALN decision or IDP. The school will not require a learner to exhaust a fixed sequence of interventions before considering whether they have ALN.

6. Person-centred practice

The views, wishes and feelings of the learner and, for a child, their parent are central to planning. The school will support participation through accessible information, preferred communication methods, suitable meeting arrangements and time to prepare. Young people will be supported to decide how others are involved, subject to applicable legal requirements.

A One Page Profile records what people appreciate about the learner, what matters to them and how best to support them. It can help staff understand the learner, but it does not replace a statutory IDP or the provision specified in it.

Person-centred meetings will consider:

- What matters to the learner now and in the future.
- Strengths, aspirations, barriers and the views of the learner and family.
- What is working, what is not working and relevant professional evidence.
- Outcomes, the ALP required, responsibilities and arrangements for review.
- Questions, disagreements and next steps, recorded clearly and shared appropriately.

The school will offer opportunities to comment on a draft IDP before finalisation. Agreement will be sought, but waiting for consensus must not prevent compliance with statutory duties or deadlines.

7. Individual Development Plans

Where the school decides that a learner has ALN, it must prepare and maintain an IDP unless a statutory exception or referral arrangement applies. IDPs are for all levels of ALN, not only the most complex needs. School-maintained and local authority-maintained IDPs have the same statutory status.

IDPs must use the mandatory standard form in Annex A of the Code, or Annex B where the looked after child provisions apply. The plan will describe the learner's ALN and the ALP required to meet it, with clear outcomes and review arrangements. Provision must be detailed, specific and, where appropriate, quantified, including frequency, duration, staffing expertise and how and where it will be delivered. Vague commitments such as "access to support" will not substitute for a clear description of required provision.

The school must secure the ALP described in an IDP it maintains, except provision which an NHS body is required to secure under the Act. Where an NHS body has identified a relevant treatment or service as ALP under the statutory process, that body is responsible for securing it. The school will coordinate delivery and raise concerns about gaps promptly.

While a learner with ALN does not yet have an IDP, the school must take all reasonable steps to secure the ALP called for by their needs. Where the local authority maintains the IDP, the school must take all reasonable steps to help it secure the ALP. Learners and parents will not be charged for ALP the school is required to secure.

Welsh-language provision

The school will consider whether ALP should be provided in Welsh and record required Welsh-language provision in the IDP. Where the IDP specifies ALP in Welsh, the responsible body must take all reasonable steps to secure it in Welsh. This consideration applies in an English-medium school and will be revisited as needs and circumstances change.

Local authority involvement

The school will refer cases where required by the Act and Code, including the applicable dual-registration and looked after child arrangements. It may refer where it cannot adequately determine the extent or nature of ALN, cannot adequately determine the ALP required, or considers it would not be reasonable for the school to secure the ALP. Reasons and supporting evidence will be recorded and the learner and family informed.

Referrals will be made promptly; the Code indicates that school referrals on these discretionary grounds should normally be made within 20 school days of possible ALN coming to attention. Referral does not itself establish that the local authority will maintain the IDP. The school will comply with the authority's decision or direction and continue its applicable support duties. The ALNCo will use current local authority forms and confirm responsibility, deadlines and communication arrangements for the individual case.

Records and confidentiality

IDPs and associated records will be held securely in the school's approved systems. Staff will receive the information needed to understand and deliver provision, with access to full records restricted according to role and need. Teams, Class Charts and Edukey access permissions will be managed accordingly; full IDPs will not be made indiscriminately available to all staff.

Information will be accurate, relevant, shared lawfully and retained in line with the school's data protection and retention arrangements. The ALNCo will work with the school's data protection lead to review access and secure transfers. Families and learners will receive accessible information about how their information is used.

8. IDP review, transition and cessation

Each IDP must be reviewed before the end of the applicable 12-month review period. The period runs from the date a copy of the initial IDP was given, or the relevant subsequent revised IDP or notice of a decision not to revise was given, in accordance with Chapter 25 of the Code. The school will track these dates and arrange reviews early enough to complete the required actions and notifications in time.

An earlier review will be considered when needs, provision or circumstances change, progress is insufficient, new advice is received or transition requires it. Where the child, parent or young person requests a review, the responsible body must review unless it considers a review unnecessary. A refusal will be explained and notified with the required rights information.

For a requested review undertaken by the school, the review and required copy or notice must be completed promptly and within 35 school days of the request, subject to the Code's exceptions. Local authority review timescales differ. Reviews will involve the learner and appropriate family members and professionals, evaluate outcomes and delivery of ALP, and consider Welsh-language needs. The

school will issue a revised IDP, a notice of a decision not to revise, or the appropriate cessation notification, with reasons and statutory rights information as required.

Transition and transfer

Transition planning will begin early enough to secure continuity of provision between primary and secondary school, between settings and towards post-16 education or training. It will involve the learner, family, receiving setting, local authority and other relevant professionals. Where appropriate, a team around the child meeting will agree responsibilities and an action plan.

Responsibility and records will transfer in accordance with Chapters 27 and 28 of the Code. Moving setting or reaching a particular birthday must not be treated as automatic grounds to remove provision. The school will liaise with the responsible body to establish who maintains the IDP and secures provision during and after transition.

Ceasing to maintain an IDP

The school will cease to maintain an IDP only on a lawful basis and through the required process in Chapter 29. Progress achieved with ALP does not, by itself, show that ALP is no longer needed. Relevant views and evidence must be considered.

Where the school decides that the learner no longer has ALN, it must give the required notification, reasons and reconsideration information. It must continue maintaining the IDP during the four-week period for requesting local authority reconsideration and, where a request is made, until that process is concluded. Where a local authority decision is appealable, the applicable appeal period and any appeal must also be respected before cessation takes effect. The ALNCo will check the precise statutory position before ending provision.

9. Monitoring and self-evaluation

Our cluster of schools use the software ‘Edukey’ as our provision mapping tool. This enables us to map all the provisions (interventions) our pupils (ALN and non-ALN) are accessing, then monitor and evaluate them on a termly basis. We also use faculty, year group and skills based tracking systems to analyse data and monitor progress.

Intervention progress is collated by key members of staff running the intervention programmes. The ALNCO with SLT and the ALN governors committee are responsible for analysing this information to ascertain the impact of these interventions and assess the progress of all learners with ALN; where progress is not meeting expectations, interventions should be reviewed by the ALNCO and staff then adjusted as necessary.

Monitoring and self-evaluation will mirror the school Quality Assurance Calendar, include termly pupil progress meetings, learning walks, book looks, listening to learners and classroom based observations.

Monitoring will also check statutory deadlines, the actual delivery and effectiveness of ALP, participation, Welsh-language requirements, record security and access to information and challenge routes. Governors will receive appropriate information without unnecessary disclosure of identifiable learner records.

10. Assessment and access arrangements

The school is committed to ensuring that learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), disabilities or other identified needs are able to access internal and external assessments as fairly and independently as possible.

Assessment arrangements will seek to remove unnecessary barriers while maintaining the integrity of the assessment. The purpose of an access arrangement is to provide a learner with appropriate access to an assessment; it is not intended to provide an unfair advantage or compensate for gaps in knowledge, skills or preparation.

Reasonable Adjustments

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners where appropriate to prevent them from being placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments may be required during everyday teaching, internal assessments, mock examinations and external examinations. The adjustment required will depend upon the individual learner's needs and the nature of the activity or assessment.

Examples may include:

- additional time to process information or complete tasks;
- supervised rest breaks;
- modified or enlarged materials;
- appropriate seating or room arrangements;
- use of assistive technology;
- word processing;
- a reader or computer reader where permitted;
- a scribe or speech recognition technology where permitted;
- coloured overlays or appropriately formatted materials;
- prompts where permitted;
- alternative methods of recording; and
- other adjustments appropriate to an individual learner's established needs.

The support available will depend upon the requirements and regulations governing the particular assessment.

Examination Access Arrangements

Formal examination access arrangements for external qualifications will be determined in accordance with the current regulations and guidance issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation.

The school will ensure that applications for access arrangements are based upon clear evidence of need and meet the requirements in force for the relevant examination series.

Access arrangements may include, where the relevant criteria are met:

- 25% extra time;
- supervised rest breaks;
- use of a word processor;
- a reader or computer reader;
- a scribe;
- speech recognition technology;
- a practical assistant;

- modified papers;
- enlarged papers;
- a prompter;
- alternative rooming arrangements; and
- other arrangements permitted under current regulations.

The school will follow current JCQ requirements when determining, recording and applying for arrangements.

Where required by JCQ regulations, an access arrangement must reflect the learner's normal way of working within the school.

11. Roles and responsibilities

Governing body and senior leadership

The governing body retains responsibility for the school's statutory ALN functions, including decisions, IDPs, securing provision and designating a suitably qualified ALNCo. It will ensure sufficient resources, oversight and staff development, have regard to the Code and review this policy annually.

Named governor with responsibility for ALN: [to be confirmed by the Governing Body].

Senior leaders will support and challenge identification, provision and review arrangements, remove barriers to participation and ensure the ALNCo has the authority, time and support needed to fulfil the role. The school's ALNCo forms part of the senior leadership team.

Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo)

The role of the additional learning needs coordinator includes:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy, ensuring an agreed and consistent approach is adopted.
- Coordinating the provision for ALN, including deploying and supporting staff and being involved in decisions around budgets and resources to plan appropriate provision.
- Liaising with and advising other staff, working in partnership with them to support pupils with ALN.
- Ensuring IDPs and other associated records are maintained and kept up to date and have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child, the child's parent, or the young person.
- Securing relevant services that will support the learner's ALP as required and this may involve liaising with specialist external services and providing a link between agencies, teachers and parents.
- Preparing and reviewing information required to be published by the governing body pursuant to the additional learning needs Code.
- Supporting class teachers in devising strategies, drawing up IDPs and liaising with parents.
- Maintaining the school's ALN register.
- Assisting in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils with ALN through the use of the school's assessment systems and report this to SLT.
- Contributing to in-service training for staff and governors.
- Liaising with ALNCos at feeder schools to ensure high quality transition arrangements are in place.

- Advising teachers about differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils or students with ALN.
- Promoting inclusion and monitoring the effectiveness of ALP.
- Providing the necessary documents and notices needed in relation to ALN to relevant parties e.g. letters to parents.
- Overseeing the day-to-day operations of ALN across the school and monitoring ALP.

The ALNCo will also track statutory triggers and deadlines, oversee notifications and rights information, consider Welsh-language provision, coordinate referrals and transfers, and ensure secure, proportionate access to records.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for the day-to-day process of supporting every learner with additional learning needs. The class teacher will:

- Work closely with the additional learning needs coordinator to assess the child and to track child's progress in order to provide a differentiated learning programme.
- Appropriately support the needs of pupils in class or help facilitate additional learning provision where needed.
- Make effective use of teaching assistants deployed to support learners.
- Write effective Learning Plans (if required) and contribute to the development of IDPs for pupils with ALN.
- Attend any relevant training or review meetings.
- Work closely with the ALNCO to prepare and gather any information necessary.
- Develop positive relationships with parents.

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

LSAs will:

- Work with pupils or groups of pupils as directed by the teacher, ALNCo and/or SLT.
- Keep regular records of support and intervention where required.
- Contribute to and participate in writing Learning Plans or IDPS.
- Attend review meetings as requested.
- Contribute to, and participate in, INSET and any other training that may further their skills in supporting pupils with ALN.
- Work in partnership with outside agencies.

Learners and families

Learners and families are partners in identifying needs, shaping outcomes and evaluating provision. The school will invite them to share concerns and information, participate in planning and reviews, and ask questions about decisions. Support will be provided to enable participation; statutory duties do not depend on a family's ability to attend a meeting or obtain a private assessment.

Local authority and other agencies

The local authority exercises its statutory decision-making, IDP, reconsideration and review functions where applicable. It also provides arrangements for impartial information and advice, avoiding and

resolving disagreements, and independent advocacy. The school will cooperate with these arrangements and with health and other services, while remaining accountable for its own duties.

12. External advice and educational psychology

The ALNCo and teachers will work with relevant professionals, including educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, health and wellbeing services and social care. Existing advice will be considered at entry and transition, and further advice sought where needed to understand needs or plan provision.

Educational psychology involvement may support understanding of learning, development, communication, behaviour, wellbeing and social interaction. The ALNCo will follow the current Merthyr Tydfil Educational Psychology Service referral arrangements, agree the purpose of involvement and obtain any assessment-specific consent required. The nature of assessment, observation, consultation and written advice will depend on the agreed work.

Local service pathways support access to advice; they do not replace the statutory ALN decision process. Neither completion of a graduated intervention sequence nor an educational psychologist's assessment is a universal prerequisite to an ALN decision or IDP. Seeking external advice must not create an unlawful delay. Relevant professional recommendations will be considered and decisions about ALP explained and recorded.

13. Communication, disagreements and advocacy

Communication will be timely, courteous, accessible and clear. The school will explain evidence, decisions and next steps, invite questions and keep a professional record of relevant discussions and correspondence. The ALNCo is the school contact for ALN concerns; families may contact the school office to arrange a discussion.

The school will seek early resolution through open discussion and person-centred meetings. It will help learners and families access Merthyr Tydfil's impartial information, advice and disagreement resolution arrangements, including SNAP Cymru. Taking part in informal discussion or disagreement resolution is not a condition of requesting statutory reconsideration or exercising appeal rights. The school's general complaints procedure does not replace those rights.

Statutory reconsideration and appeal

A child, their parent or a young person may ask the local authority to reconsider relevant school decisions about ALN or a school-maintained IDP, and may request that the authority take over responsibility for the IDP in accordance with the Act. The school will provide records and cooperate promptly.

Appeals on matters specified in section 70 of the Act are made to the Education Tribunal for Wales, normally following the relevant local authority decision. Applications concerning a child's capacity to understand are governed by section 72. Decision notices must explain the applicable rights, route and deadlines. The ALNCo will signpost current Tribunal guidance and will not suggest that informal negotiations stop a statutory time limit. Appendix B sets out the route and contacts.

Independent advocacy and representation

Children and young people will be told about access to independent advocacy under the local authority's arrangements. Advocacy can help them understand their options, express views and participate in disagreements and appeals. Information will be kept current and provided accessibly.

An advocate is not automatically a case friend. A case friend is a separate statutory role for a child who lacks the relevant capacity under the Act. Separate provisions apply to representatives of young

people or parents who lack mental capacity. The school will follow Chapters 30–33 of the Code and support access to appropriate advice rather than treating these roles as interchangeable.

14. Safeguarding

Safeguarding pupils with ALN should follow the same school procedures for any child in school. However, children and young people with ALN may be more vulnerable to issues such as bullying, emotional, sexual and physical abuse as well as neglect. All those working with children must be highly alert to these issues and their responsibilities in accordance with the 'Wales Safeguarding Procedures and Safeguarding in Education' guidance and follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff will ensure communication and reporting arrangements are accessible, remain alert to barriers to disclosure, and avoid attributing indicators of harm solely to a learner's additional needs. Safeguarding action will not wait for an ALN assessment or review.

15. Policy oversight and review

Policy lead: Louise Morgan – Assistant Headteacher.

This policy is dated September 2026 and will be reviewed by September 2027, or earlier if legislation, statutory guidance or local arrangements change. The policy lead and governing body will consider learner and family feedback, staff experience, provision outcomes and compliance with statutory processes. Approval will be recorded on the cover.

The ALNCo will check current local authority referral forms, advice and advocacy contacts and Tribunal information when issuing notices. Staff will be briefed on the revised procedures and supported to apply them consistently.

Appendix A: School ALN decision checklist

1. Record the trigger

Record when possible ALN first came to the school's attention or appeared to the school. Send the concern to the ALNCo promptly; do not wait for an intervention cycle or diagnosis.

2. Check responsibility

Check existing plans, statutory exceptions, looked after status, dual registration and any cross-border arrangements. Apply the relevant Code chapter and refer to the local authority where required.

3. Inform and involve

Designate a coordinator. Notify the child and parent, or young person, explain the process and timescale, and give school and local authority advice contacts. Seek a young person's consent where required; do not impose a general parental-consent gateway for children.

4. Consider the evidence

Apply both parts of the ALN test. Include learner and family views, strengths, functional impact and relevant teaching and professional evidence. Continue appropriate support while deciding.

5. Decide and notify

Complete promptly and within 35 school days for the school process, subject to the Code's exceptions. If no ALN, issue the written decision, reasons and rights information. If ALN and school responsibility, prepare the mandatory IDP and provide the copy and required notice.

6. Specify and deliver

Describe ALP clearly and specifically; consider Welsh-language provision. Secure the ALP for which the school is responsible. Identify any statutory NHS provision and coordinate delivery.

7. Review and transfer

Track the 12-month review period and any earlier review request. Issue required review outcomes and rights information. Plan transitions and lawful transfers; do not end an IDP without applying the cessation safeguards.

Key Code references: Chapters 12 and 15 (school duties); 14 and 18 (specific circumstances); 20–24 (identification and plans); 25–29 (review, reconsideration, transition and cessation).

Appendix B: Advice and challenge routes

Start with the issue you want addressed

- Questions or concerns about support: contact the ALNCo through the school office. The school will explain its decision and seek early resolution.
- Disagreement with a school ALN decision or school-maintained IDP: request the relevant statutory reconsideration from Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council. A request for the authority to take over the IDP is also available under the Act.
- Disagreement with an appealable local authority decision: consult Education Tribunal for Wales guidance and submit any appeal within the applicable deadline.
- Need for help to participate: ask the local authority or SNAP Cymru about impartial information, disagreement resolution and independent advocacy.

You do not have to complete the school's complaints procedure or agree to mediation before using the statutory route. Read the decision notice promptly and seek advice about deadlines; informal discussion does not automatically extend them.

Contacts

Cyfarthfa High School: contact the school office and ask for the ALNCo. Policy lead: Louise Morgan, Assistant Headteacher.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council: 01685 725000 — ask for the Additional Learning Needs team. The council's ALN pages provide information about advice, support and disagreement arrangements.

SNAP Cymru: 0808 801 0608 | www.snapcymru.org

Education Tribunal for Wales: educationtribunal.gov.wales | educationtribunal@gov.wales

Useful official sources

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021

Welsh Government: ALN decision-making and communication (2026)

Merthyr Tydfil: Additional Learning Needs

Merthyr Tydfil: What if I don't agree?

Merthyr Tydfil: Educational Psychology Service

Welsh Government: Person-centred reviews — guidance for families