

Education Secretary outlines proposed implementation plan for new additional learning needs system in Wales

The details have been published ahead of the final debate on the Bill in Plenary tomorrow [12/12/2017].

The consultation, which was conducted between 27 February and 9 June 2017, sought views about how the Bill should be implemented if it receives Royal Assent and what transition arrangements should be put in place to help local authorities and education providers facilitate the introduction of the new system. It received a total of 89 replies, some of which were collaborative responses representing the views of multiple individuals and organisations.

Additionally, between 28 February and 9 March 2017, the Welsh Government held eight stakeholder events across Wales to engage with professionals and the public to raise awareness of the proposed additional learning needs system. These events included workshops on the consultation and its implementation options and were attended by a total of 629 participants.

The responses from both the consultation and engagement events have been used to inform the development of the proposed approach to implement the new system.

In publishing the consultation summary and outlining her proposals for how the new system will work in Wales, Kirsty Williams said:

“This Bill is at the heart of our programme to transform the education and support for young people with additional learning needs. We have engaged heavily with partners, stakeholders and – crucially – children, young people and their families to ensure their views are captured and reflected in our proposals for how it will be delivered if passed by the Assembly tomorrow.”

The key elements of the approach we will take include:

- A mandatory phased approach to the introduction of Individual Development Plans (IDPs), which will provide tailored support to the learning needs of each individual and replace current statutory and non-statutory plans including the statement of Special Educational Needs; with those with the most severe learning needs prioritised.
- The new system should commence in September 2020. This will allow sufficient time for the range of supporting measures, subordinate legislation and the Additional Learning Needs Code (which will sit alongside the Bill), to be developed and put into place, and a comprehensive programme of multi-agency training and development, to aid a smooth transition to the new system.

- The implementation of the new system should last three years, with completion expected by the end of 2023.

The Cabinet Secretary added:

“We will be investing £20m to support the implementation of the new additional learning needs (ALN) system. Following analysis of the consultation responses, we have restructured our funding commitments to better align them with the needs of the sector.

“We will focus more resources on implementation training, planning and strategic support, through increased grant funding to the ALN transformation leads. These key posts will support services to put in place detailed implementation planning arrangements at a regional level, across the further education sector and roll-out training to all those who will support learners with additional learning needs to deliver the new system.

“We will of course continue to work with partners on the implementation approach of this new system if the Bill passes tomorrow to ensure the new system provides the best level of support for our most vulnerable learners.”

The [report and proposed approach to implementation](#) are published on the Welsh Government's website.