



## ALN (Additional Learning Needs) Policy

(Revised December 2023)

Prepared with reference to:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act 2018
- The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021

### Context

Cardiff Steiner School considers all children and young people as having individual needs and aims to meet these needs in the best way possible, taking into consideration the pupil's age, developmental stage and other circumstances. Our approach to supporting those with Additional Learning Needs is guided by the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, The Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021 and The Equality Act 2010. This policy is designed to ensure that the needs of all pupils enrolled at the School are met within allocated and available resources, and by making reasonable adjustments.

### Definitions

1. A child or young person has ALN if they have a learning difficulty or disability ((whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise)) which calls for additional learning provision.
2. A child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
  - a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
  - b) has a disability a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 (c. 15) which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.
3. A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is, or would be if no additional learning provision were made, likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age.
4. Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language in their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

**Additional Learning Provision (ALP)** means:

For children of three or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in the school.

## **Objectives**

The specific objectives of the ALN policy are as follows:

- To identify children and pupils with additional learning needs and disabilities as early as possible and ensure that their needs are met
- To ensure that we provide differentiation within our balanced and broadly based Steiner Waldorf curriculum, in a way that supports children with ALN
- To ensure that all learners make the best possible progress
- To ensure that there is effective communication between parents and school
- To ensure that learners have the opportunity to express their views and are, when possible and appropriate, involved in decisions which affect their education
- To ensure that pupils are supported by appropriately trained staff to ensure that a variety of communication methods are used to ascertain the wishes of all pupils
- To promote effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate
- To support disabled pupils
- To support all pupils whose learning needs differ from other pupils

## **Screenings, Identification and Assessment of ALN**

We aim to identify children with ALN as early as possible within their school career. Children are screened at age 5 at the end of the Spring Term in the Kindergarten for general development, balance, coordination and vision. Parents may be asked to arrange for their 5 year old children to have their hearing and eyesight tested by their family doctor.

Annual class screenings take place from Class 3 (age 8/9) as follows:

- Class 3 - Assessment of gross and fine motor skills, hearing, vision, handedness, spelling and numeracy. Broad assessment tool, looking for major obstacles to learning that might lead to a more refined assessment. This assessment uses a mixture of tools designed by the ALNCo, in consultation with the class teacher, as well as elements taken from standardised tests, such as

Dyslexia Screening Test (Phonemic segmentation, Rapid Naming, Verbal Fluency, Semantic Fluency), WRAT 4 – single word spelling and reading.

- Class 4 to 5- Numeracy and literacy (WRAT 4) – spelling, word reading and maths computation. Vocabulary.
- Class 6 up - Numeracy and Literacy (WRAT 4) – spelling, word reading, maths computation. Writing task.

Where it is deemed necessary or helpful, individual pupils may be assessed by the ALNco or referred to outside specialists. Prior to this pupils may be advised to have their vision and hearing tested in order to rule out physical rather than neurodevelopmental differences.

### **Learners with an EHC Plan/Statement/ Individual Development Plans (IDPs)**

The School can be named by the Local Authority (LA) in an EHC Plan/Statement with the School's agreement. Whether the School is named or not, a place will only be offered by the School once it is established that the School can support the provision specified on the EHC Plan/Statement/ Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

### **Graduated Approach**

The School uses a graduated approach of 'assess, plan, do, review', for pupils with ALN, focusing on early identification of the need for intervention and a sliding scale of support and intervention, starting with classroom differentiation (universal support) followed by increasingly individualised intervention of School implemented support (Targeted support), and then utilising the resources of the Local Authority, external professionals and clinicians, specialists, etc. (Specialist including multi-agency support).

The triggers could be:

- A teacher's concern about a pupil's behaviour or learning abilities
- Parent'(s)' concern about a pupil's behaviour or learning abilities
- The results of vision, hearing or class screenings

As a consequence of these triggers:

- A teacher will complete a 'Flag it' form which will be passed to the ALNCo
- The Kindergarten/Class Teacher will investigate the pupil's progress and obstacles to learning and report to the ALNCo
- The teacher and ALN team need to consider all possible causes of poor school performance including discrimination, bullying or abuse. This needs to be identified and pupils involved before parents are contacted
- Parents are contacted and the pupil's needs are discussed
- A vision screening, hearing screening or further assessment for learning difficulties may be recommended
- The School and the ALN team will hold an internal list of individual learning needs and adjustments and shall assist all teachers to meet those needs
- Concentrated differentiation, in class support or one to one lessons can be explored along with parents' support at home
- In the Kindergarten the teachers will work mainly through differentiated activities, one to one with teacher or assistant and in close liaison with the parent/guardians
- In all cases, where a learning challenge has been recognised, an Individual Development Plan (IDP) or a Targeted support plan or a well being/safety plan will be drawn up by the ALNCo, in consultation with teachers, parents and student.

### **Universal Support**

The foundation for meeting the educational needs of all children is to provide high quality first teaching. Universal Support involves all teachers planning for effective differentiation in their presentation of material to the Class and in how they ask the pupils to demonstrate their learning and understanding. Resources and guidance for creative and effective differentiation will be part of team meetings and it is the role of the ALNCo to support an ethos of quality differentiation.

At this stage, our first approach is to use strategies and differentiation in the classroom to enable a child to access the curriculum. However, for some children small group 'catch up' support may be appropriate.

### **Targeted Support**

If, despite high quality first teaching, the child does not make sufficient progress, the teacher will consult with the ALNCo to plan next steps. Supportive action may include:

- Internal learning support assessment by the ALNCo

- Discussion within the Teaching Team meeting where strategies and/or suggestions for actions may be identified
- The development of an agreed IDP, with involvement from teachers, parents/carers and the child where appropriate. This will outline the child's strengths and challenges, areas of need, agreed outcomes and support strategies
- Support strategies that are varied and tailored to the child's needs and may include; in class support, short term small group or 1:1 'catch up' support with a Teaching/Learning Support Assistant or ALNCo, parent/carer support and/or successful strategies to manage behaviour

### **Specialist Support**

Where there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, more specialist assessment and advice may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, children's service or other agencies outside of our School. Our ALNCo may also recommend a full individual assessment for a pupil. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the ALNCo or parents/ guardians should contact them (the former with the parents'/guardians' agreement). When needs involve additional assessment or support in the class, financial assistance may be possible from the Local Authority (LA) for children under 5 years (compulsory school age). Funding of specialist involvement through the LA after compulsory school age is not available to us as an independent school. As a small independent school, we have limited resources and any costs of further external assessments in this case must be met by parents/carers. A reasonable level of learning support is provided throughout the School to those pupils who need it and the cost of this is included in the standard School fees. However where a pupil needs more substantial support the cost of this will need to be met by parents/carers.

### **Individual Development Plans**

The IDP will include:

What is working well, what are the challenges

- Personalised, specific and reachable targets
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Resources to be used
- Success Criteria
- Evaluation of progress

IDPs and targeted support plans should be created with parents and the child (if appropriate), with the ALNCo and Class Teacher, and then shared to the rest of the teaching team.

Lesson planning should provide opportunities for the child to work on these targets, and achievements should be celebrated.

IDPs and TSPs are reviewed on an as needs basis.

## **Provision for learners with EHC Plans/Statements/Individual Development Plans**

Provision for learners with EHC Plans/Statements/ Individual Development Plans will be made with due regard to the ALN Code of Practice. The school will co-operate with the LA and parents to work towards the provision set out in the EHC Plan/Statement/ Individual Development Plans, and to review the plan as required.

## **Class Pupil Profiles**

The School has class Pupil Profiles for every pupil with an ALN, which will outline background information; diagnoses (if applicable); medication (if applicable); their ALN, exhibited behaviours and the recommended approach when teaching them. The Class Teacher and ALNCo will create the profiles, and ensure that visiting and subject teachers access and read these to support their teaching with the pupil.

## **Role of the Learner**

As part of a person-centred approach, learners are encouraged to be part of the decision making process. All plans for intervention are discussed with the learner who will discuss their Pupil Passport with either the class/support teacher.

## **Common Assessment Framework**

In accordance with the *'Every Child Matters'* Green Paper there are cases where we use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to support children with ALN and their families. This enables us to work in unison with a variety of outside agencies, assess the child's needs and set targets for them.

## **Access to the Curriculum**

Our curriculum is rich and broad with many opportunities for all children to be engaged, motivated and learn with joy. Teachers use a variety of teaching strategies to enable all children to succeed.

Lessons have clear objectives and success criteria, they are differentiated to ensure all learners and learning styles are included. Weekly planning forms include a section for specific actions for children with ALN and these are linked closely to the child's IDP targets. During lessons, where necessary, children are given adult support to aid their learning. Teaching Assistants (where applicable) have access to the teachers' planning and their role during lessons is made clear.

## **Improving strategies to support children with ALN**

Cardiff Steiner School is committed to improving its provision of an all-round education to all children. For pupils with ALN, the ALNCo is responsible for ensuring that best-practice is shared between teachers and other members of staff. Some of the ways in which this is achieved are:

- Regular ALN department meetings, to review provision
- Developing an extra lesson planning and assessment framework
- Using online storage facilities to support information gathering and sharing e.g. photographic evidence of work may be stored and shared online, as are support lesson plans and IDPs
- The ALNCO is responsible for ensuring that IDPs are reviewed in a timely manner.
- An open-door culture is adopted in the School, allowing the ALNCo to observe and work with pupils in the context of the classroom.
- Regular time is put aside for the ALNCo to share observations and information at faculty meetings
- This policy is kept under regular review

## **ALN Register**

All pupils with identified additional needs will be on the School's ALN Register where their needs, and extra help will be documented. Children who are clearly functioning 'well below the average standard of their peers in the areas of literacy (WRAT), numeracy (WRAT), movement and coordination (teacher observation and INNP test), artistic and practical skills (teacher observation) will be considered for support and for placement on the ALN register.

## **Types of ALP the School will make for pupils with ALN**

The School can make additional learning provision for pupils ages 3-18 with mild or moderate additional learning needs. This covers all specific types of needs, provided that taken together, the learners needs are mild or moderate rather than complex.

Class sizes are capped at 16 pupils and we have a dedicated ALNCo, as well as 2-3 classroom assistants who can each provide 1-1 and small intervention support. Our Upper School Learning Support Teacher is part of the British Psychological Society and also the Higher Education Association.

We can provide the following range of ALP where learners have a specific or more significant difficulty and or/disability in this area

#### **Limited attention span**

- Dedicated movement or frequent small concentration periods
- Sand timers, so the learners know they only have to focus for a comfortable amount of time
- Scaffolding work, providing information in smaller chunks and/or using modified language
- Use of headphone and ear defenders
- 'Quiet desks'
- Stand up desks

#### **Organisational difficulties**

- Continuous enhanced support to develop personal organisation in response to timetabling/managing equipment/independence skills.

#### **Early Years Speech and Language**

- Specific and enhanced use of questioning that matches the child's level of understanding
- Providing an additional method of communication such as using ICT
- Information shared with staff around selective mutism
- Enhanced and continuous 'thinking time' when responding to questions

An Early Years SALT is available on request to provide training and guidance to Early Years staff on implementing strategies to support speech and language development, and how to confidently identify and refer for early diagnosis or intervention.

#### **Access to learning environment**

Reasonable, specific and individualised adaptations to the school environment

Availability of recorded voice materials from lessons

- **Difficulties in understanding or the use of social rules of communication**
- Use of learner specific prompts and visual cues, such as photo cards in Kindergarten
- Develop understanding of emotions/social skills through modelling and well being check ins



### Difficulties with social communication and developing relationships

- We are a restorative school with staff trained to hold restorative conversations

### Difficulties with sensory processing and/or sensory regulation

- Ear defenders and/or noise cancelling headphones
- Sensory diets discussed with kindergarten staff
- Weighted blankets to provide sensory feedback
- Resistance bands and wobble pads available

### Anxiety

- Specific and enhanced mentoring support, including wellbeing check ins
- Reduced timetables
- Weekly meetings with trusted adult
- Enhanced specific support given during unstructured times or times of transition.
- Ongoing staff CPD training, including training on anxiety, early trauma and attachment and pathological demand avoidance

## Key Personnel

School ALNCo	Jamie May
EY ALNCo	Jamie May
Trustees with responsibility for ALN	Richard Knight

The ALNCo is a member of the School Management Team

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### Issue date

This policy was last reviewed June 2023

### Review date

This policy will be reviewed and revised by the ALNCo at least every two years

### Endorsement

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name: Brigid Bowen

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Position: Chair of Trustees, Cardiff Steiner School

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Signed:



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Date:

5 December 2023

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### **Related policies**

This policy should be cross-referenced to related School policies including:

- Admissions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- School Access Plan

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<sup>i</sup> Scores of 90 – 110 are average so scores of 89 and lower will qualify for inclusion on the ALN register.