




## St Alban's RC High School

# ALN Policy

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COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE:	Wellbeing, Equality & Inclusion
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*St Alban's RC High School is a voluntary aided school and the governing body is the employer of the staff who work there. The contract of employment is between the school's governing body and the employee. The governing body has all the employment responsibilities that this entails including the appointment and dismissal of staff.*

## ALN Policy

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### Definition and Causes

This document outlines Torfaen County Borough Council's strategy for educating children and young people with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

ALN is the term used by the Welsh Government (WG) to describe learner groups who may be identified as having more difficulty, or an increased vulnerability, because of the potential barriers they may face.

The WG's 2008 Inclusion and Pupil Support - Section 2- Supporting Pupils with Additional Learning Needs; Summary of guidance for schools; identifies fifteen specific groups of learners who are vulnerable to underachievement as outlined below:

- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- Pupils with a disability
- Certain minority ethnic pupils including those learning English as an additional language (EAL)
- Asylum seeking refugee children
- Gypsies and Travellers
- Children of migrant workers
- More able and talented pupils
- Those who are looked-after by the local authority (LAC)
- Pupils with medical needs
- Young parents and pregnant young women
- Young offenders
- Young carers
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender pupils
- School refusers and school phobics
- Pupils who perform or who have employment

Currently (14/15) the number of pupils with ALN needs in Torfaen is as follows:

certain minority ethnic pupils including those learning English as an additional language (EAL)	292 (EAL) 277(BME)  Total 569
asylum seeking refugee children	0
Gypsy Travellers	98
Pupils on SEN register	2953
children of migrant workers	93
those who are looked-after by the local authority (LAC)	283 school age

There is also a separate the Local Authority's (LA) policies and procedures for identifying and supporting Additional Educational needs (AEN), including the range of provision available. The AEN strategy is an integral

part of the authority's framework for meeting the needs of all children and young people between the ages of 0 and 19 years and plays a vital role in the LA's work to ensure high standards for all. The LA is preparing for implementation of the white paper with responsibilities extended from 0 – 25 years, which is currently going through the consultation stage and is expected to complete the statutory process during early 2016

The LA's educational priorities include promoting high standards for all learners, achieving high levels of attendance, preventing exclusion and providing high quality support for learners with individual needs. This strategy reaffirms the LA's commitment to maintain and improve on these priorities.

It is the LA's policy to educate all pupils within its mainstream schools as part of inclusion and belonging to community in order for them to achieve their potential and to ensure their well-being.

### **Policy and legislation**

The Policy supports the aims and objectives identified in strategies, policies and procedures produced by Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC).

The **Children and Young People's Plan** identifies specific priorities for children and young people with ALN and there are important links between the AEN Policy and the LA's ALN Strategy and Accessibility Strategy.

The strategy, policies and procedures set out in this document take account of all current legislation and guidance, including the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002) and the Equality Act (2010).

In line with the direction of national policy, the LA is committed to making provision for pupils with ALN without a statement wherever possible and is also mindful of the changes proposed in 'Forward in Partnership for Children and Young People with Additional Needs (Welsh Government, 2012) and the current consultation Draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill (Welsh Government 2015) which sets out proposals for a new legislative system for supporting children and young people, aged 0-25, who have additional learning needs.

### **Local Context**

Within TCBC there is a continuum of specialist provision that includes Crownbridge School, Special Needs Resource Bases (SNRB) attached to mainstream schools, and the development of the HUB. The HUB includes the special school, SNRBs, outreach working together to provide effective LA wide support and guidance for schools and parents. These facilities are appropriately resourced to meet the needs of children and young people that available in a mainstream school. The HUB provides a more significant support than the percentage of their school day.

The central ALN teams provide a wide range of support and training services to meet particular additional learning needs.

## **Aims**

Torfaen County Borough Council has the following key objectives for its ALN Policy:

- To ensure that children and young people with additional needs have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, and that all pupils leave schools with recognised/ approved qualifications.
- To celebrate success and share good practice: recognising and celebrating a diverse range of achievements in addition to conventional academic success, and supporting our special and mainstream schools to share strategies and interventions that are successful for children and young people with additional needs.
- To promote inclusive education: supporting schools and other education settings in extending their ability to include children and young people in mainstream education.
- To develop a fair and equitable system for providing resources that is matched to levels of need, enhances teaching and learning, promotes accountability at all levels and produces measurable outcomes
- To build on existing expertise and enhance professional development of all staff working with children with additional learning needs
- To encourage the use of partnerships with voluntary organisations, community groups, schools, services and, especially, with children and young people and their parents/carers in raising achievement for people with additional learning needs.
- To ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity for life-long development through the provision of appropriate learning experiences
- Co-construct in partnership with schools and parents our development strategy for ALN

## **Principles**

The Council remains committed to ensuring there is a continuing dialogue about how we as a whole community can take forward the ALN agenda. We want to ensure there is a suitable range of provision available for all children, which is made available in a timely manner, that is preventative wherever possible and support is delivered flexibly.

This ALN Policy is directed above all at ensuring that there is high quality special needs provision in all of our schools. It is about increasing the capacity of mainstream schools to meet these needs over time while ensuring schools have the

capacity to meet the needs of all learners. It is intended to give more real choice so that the best possible decisions can be made about meeting the needs of each pupil on an individual basis so that we make sure the right provision is in place to give that child the best possible start in life.

Torfaen LA recognises that there is a continuum of ALN and that this should be reflected in a graduated approach of provision. The LA also understands that good practice in ALN is central to good learning and teaching.

The ALN policy and practice will be governed by the following principles, which are consistent with the guidance in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales.

- **Partnership** – where possible services will be planned and developed on a multiagency basis and always in partnership with parents/carers.
- **Inclusion** – all children and young people will be valued equally, treated with respect and given equal opportunities.
- **Early Intervention** – all additional educational needs should be identified as early as possible and appropriate provision identified.

### **ALN Guidance**

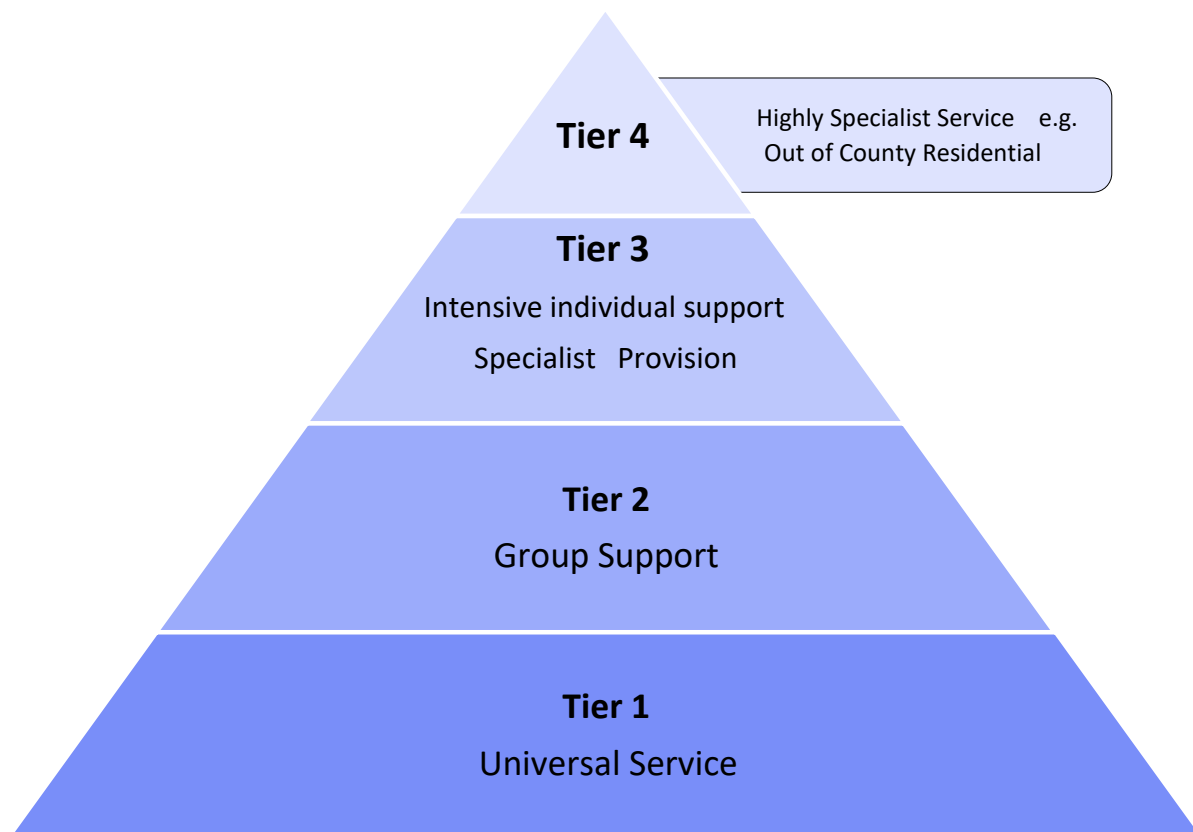
Schools have access to a folder on School Secure with a range of effective strategies to promote an inclusive environment which supports all pupils. These strategies will be updated and added to over time, to build a comprehensive resource virtual library for all schools. The majority of strategies will be school based, benefitting all children at a universal level (Tier 1). An example of a strategy at Tier 1 may be the use of assemblies to promote important messages regarding Equalities and Inclusion.

Support at Tier 2 would be targeted at groups of children and may include for example; Circle of Friends or Silver Seal.

Within the context of a graduated response, support at Tier 3 would be targeted intervention at an individual pupil level for example, focussed input from specialist services, or placement in a specialist resource base.

In exceptional circumstances children's needs may warrant support at Tier 4, requiring for example; specialist CAMHS assessment and in a very small number of cases, consideration of low incident/ high cost provision such as a residential placement, highly specialist service e.g. out of county residential or therapeutic input

The tiered model described above is illustrated below. Examples of interventions and strategies at each level are given in **the accompanying ALN handbook** including the range of specialist and alternative provision.



Within the context of a whole school approach and across the tiers of support, the quality of the pastoral support systems throughout the school is critical to the outcomes of all learners. Structured intervention strategies are required in order to meet the needs of vulnerable children/young people.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The following principles underpin good provision which serves to remove potential barriers to learning. These principles will underpin all future developments

- Provision will be based on equality of opportunity, so all children and young people, irrespective of ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, impairment, emotional or social needs, care status or personal circumstances have an equal right to develop their skills and abilities.
- Children and young people will not be labelled and/or educated away from mainstream because of the way the adults around them have chosen to structure the environment. Specialist resources could often only be accessed in a Specialist Resource Base (SNRB) thereby making the child or parent's choice of a mainstream school very

difficult to realise and we acknowledge this has to change. We will all work together to remove any attitudinal, organisational and curriculum barriers that may exist.

- All children and young people have a right to play and to learn together within their local community. We will aim to ensure that all children and young people with and without ALN, have the opportunity to learn together in mainstream pre-school provision, schools and colleges with adequate specialist support that meets their needs
- Including all pupils involves changing the LA, schools and other education settings to ensure that we all welcome and celebrate diversity and enable all children and young people to develop socially and academically to their full potential with access to an appropriately differentiated curriculum across all areas of learning in order to match the child's need
- All children and young people have a right to have their views heard and to have a say in the decision making that effects them - their views should be sought and taken into account.
- All partners need to work in partnership with children, their parents, guardians and / or carers ensuring they have access to information about their child's needs and difficulties and, where appropriate, access to independent advice and support. Parents/carers have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education.
- All children and young people have a right to access a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, including an appropriate curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum.
- Schools, other education settings and the Council will ensure they review their policies, procedures and practices on an ongoing basis to ensure they do not discriminate against pupils with ALN.
- The Council will constantly measure the success of interventions for children and young people with additional needs by looking for improvement in the child's learning and their social development.
- Interventions should aim to be preventative and to be offered as early as possible in order to meet identified need.
- Schools and other education settings have a responsibility for the continuous improvement of teaching and learning for children and young people with additional needs. The National Curriculum is clear that all teachers have a responsibility for ALN within their classroom. However the responsibility for providing support



- All staff working on ALN or inclusion issues should have access to a coherent framework for professional development.
- Assessment and provision should not be based on a deficit model<sup>1</sup>, but should empower children and young people so that they can make a contribution to decision making, and take control over their future.
- Schools must identify an appropriate person from the governing body, to take responsibility, along with the Head teacher, for ensuring the setting or school maintains provision for pupils with AEN according to the SEN Code of Practice
- Schools and the LA will work in partnership to ensure that delegated resources for ALN are allocated fairly, efficiently and address identified needs

## **Partnerships**

### Pupils and Parents / Guardians / Carers

Local Authorities are required under Section 332A of the Education Act (1996) to arrange for the parent, guardian or carer of any child with SEN residing in their area to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to their child's need.

When a child is placed on the school's SEN register the school's ALNCO must seek the parents' permission and inform them of the availability of all parent partnership services. Educational Psychologists, ALN team and ALN Link Officers are always available to support and advise schools and parents.

It is recognised that occasionally, parents, guardians or carers may not agree with the authority on the level and / or type of support or the placement their child may need and may need support with regard to understanding the AEN process. In order to address these issues, in addition to ALN staff, the LA will continue to work alongside SNAP Cymru who can offer accurate, impartial and confidential advice, support and information regarding the additional needs of their children and young people from birth to 19 years.

The authority also recognises the needs and rights of their pupils to have access to an independent person who will work in an open and accessible manner to promote and realise their rights.

*'Children who are capable of forming views have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any*

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<sup>1</sup> The deficit model views the child as having something wrong with them which in turn leads to them being placed in segregated provision. In other words the child has to fit with what is typically provided or the child has to move rather than the provision around the child changing and adapting to meet that child's needs.

*matter affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to the age, maturity and capability of the child ‘*

(U.N. Convention on the Rights of the child)

## **External agencies**

The LA recognises the contribution of external agencies in improving outcomes for pupils with special educational needs by enhancing teaching and support for all pupils, in accordance with the statutory requirements of the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002 and the Equality Act 2010.

The LA works in partnership with a wide variety of agencies, including:

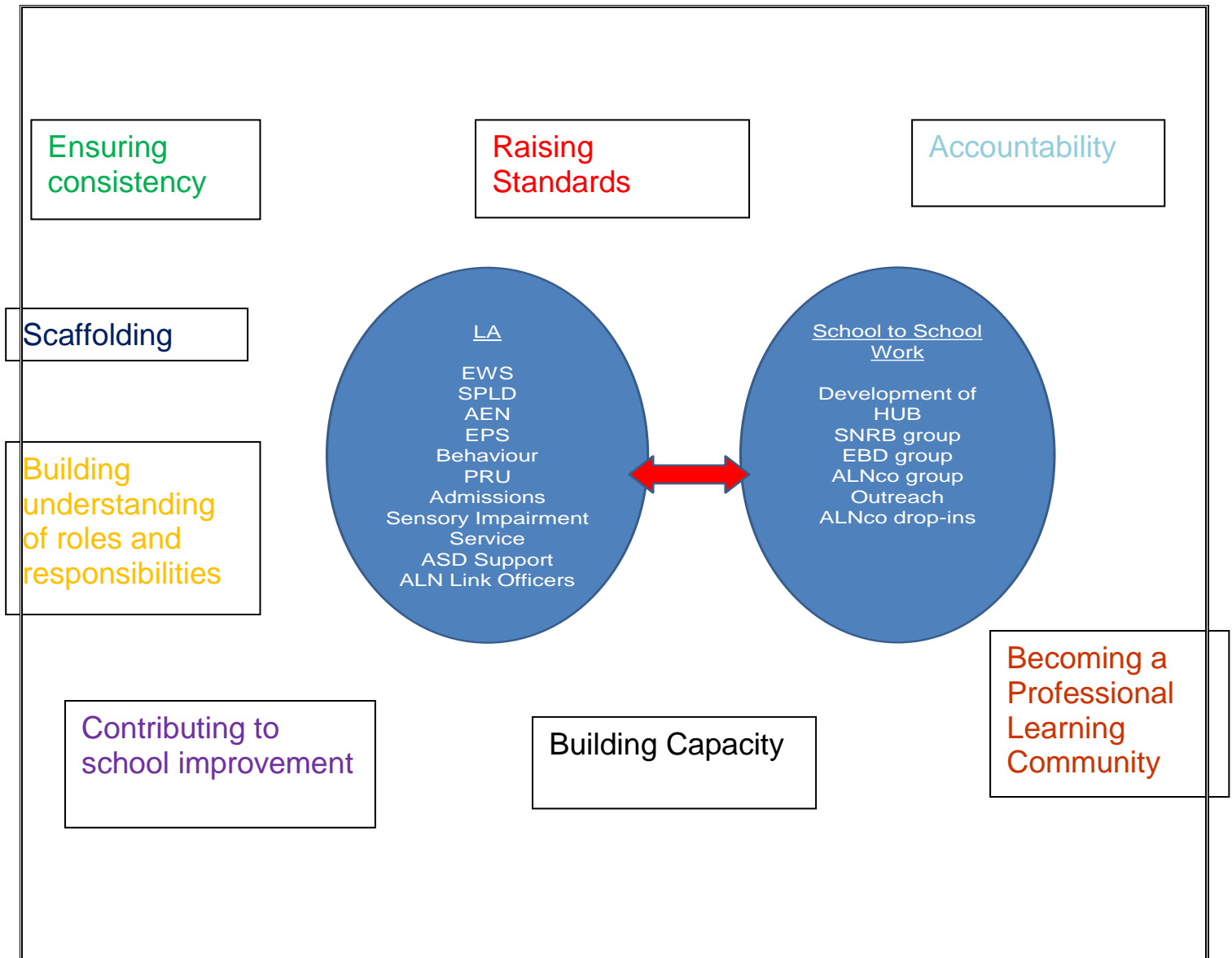
- Health Service;
- Specialist Child and Mental Health Service (CAMHS);
- Speech & Language Therapy Services;
- Social Services Department;
- Families First
- Prevent and Engagement Team
- Youth Offending Service
- Sensory Impairment Service which will include ComIT, Visual Impaired Service, Hearing Impaired Service

The LA values the skill and expertise of staff in Crownbridge School and the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and Outreach support is available for all Torfaen schools from both settings to support the process of inclusion. (See Outreach referral process)

## **Co-construction: schools and LA working in partnership**

Following the recent ALN Review commissioned in 2014 an effective partnership of Crownbridge, Torfaen schools and the LA has been able to come together to co-construct a set of improvement objectives for ALN services including:

- Ensure learning for all pupil is inclusive and accessible
- Promoting positive behaviour in schools so comparative outcome measures for behaviour can be measured and used to drive improvements.
- Further develop our ability to monitor and report upon the progress of vulnerable groups together with any additional provision that is made available to them to ensure all pupils and especially vulnerable groups, have effective provision in place that meets their needs.



**Listening to Learners**

The LA concurs with the views stated in the Welsh Assembly Government Document, ‘Listening to Learners’ (2007) and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (Chapter 3) that in all aspects children and young people should feel confident that their views will be listened to and valued. Where possible children and young people will be encouraged to participate in all the decision making processes that occur in education including:

- The setting of learning targets and contributing to Individual Education Plans/Behaviour Support Plans and pupil profiles and Individual Development Plans and actions
- Decisions about choices of schools
- Contributing to the assessment of their needs and to the annual review, reporting of progress and transition processes.

The LA has responded to the statutory requirement to enable pupils to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW) by commissioning an independent advice, support and guidance service via SNAP (CYMRU) Contact details can be found within **andbook)**

## **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review**

Torfaen LA regards the collection and recording of precise information and data for children with ALN as an essential factor in the development of policies and planning for effective provision.

The LA maintains an electronic ALN database, which includes information from schools', SEN registers, the annual PLASC SEN data records, individual and school-level progress data and pupil assessment information to enable the monitoring of trends and identify emerging areas of need.

Schools and ALN link officers are provided with reports to monitor and evaluate the progress of vulnerable groups through PRIME and LA collated ALN Profiles for each school available via School Secure. These profiles are used to facilitate focused link meetings.

Records are kept of:

- School link planning meetings between schools and ALN team members along with the resulting actions e.g. EP consultations, link planning meetings, EWS intervention logs etc.
- monitoring which takes place to evaluate the impact of interventions for individual pupils, groups of pupils and at school level
- monitoring and evaluation of the impact of additional funding, both delegated, including grant funding and centrally held funds, on outcomes for pupils with ALN