

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) - England

Additional Learning Needs (ALN) – Wales

Additional Support Needs (ASN) – Scotland

Education Universal

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Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
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Version No.	001
Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	Education

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval, or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.

Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
‘Establishment’ or ‘Site’	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Learner	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Service Head	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.
Tutor/Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at the school/college.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment’s location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.

1. Local School/College Profile

Cambian Whinfell School offers up to 52-weeks residential placements and day places for local students.

The School offers **OUTSTANDING** care and education for boys and young men aged 7-19. Students often arrive after difficult education and domestic experiences and are potentially lacking of confidence. Whinfell School provides stability, consistency and a sense of belonging within a safe and nurturing environment, whilst supporting students academic, social and emotional development to prepare them for the future.

Our young people have often experienced significant disruption to their schooling in the past and may come to us from multiple placement breakdowns. They may also present a risk to themselves or others due to high levels of challenging behaviour or deficits in personal development. Typically they are very disengaged, isolated and have little self-belief. By prioritising these deficits we create the conditions for young people to re-engage in education and achieve their full potential.

We believe that it is not enough to just provide a safe and happy school experience. We prioritise **connections before corrections**, recognising that strong, trusting relationships form the foundation for genuine growth and learning. In a supportive way, we want to challenge all of our young people to grow as individuals and acquire the skills, confidence, knowledge and qualifications to be as successful and resilient as they possibly can be when they eventually move on to further education or independence.

2. Purpose

This policy applies to **Whinfell School** and sets out the organisational standards for the safe, compliant and responsible identification of, and support for, learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

It provides a universal framework and outlines the expectations that apply to:

- Staff
- Senior leaders
- Learners
- Visitors and contractors (where relevant)

This policy enables **Whinfell School** to meet statutory duties, uphold safeguarding responsibilities, comply with data protection requirements, and maintain high-quality provision.

2. Scope (Universal Application)

This organisational policy applies across all education sites, services and functions. It establishes the universal standards and expectations that must be followed consistently throughout the organisation.

Each site implements these standards in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the nation in which it operates as set out in **Appendix A-C**.

3. Local Adaptation Requirement

Some sections in this policy are marked *Adapt Locally*. These sections are completed by each site to reflect local operational procedures or national equivalents (e.g., safeguarding framework, inspection remit, curriculum/quality framework, data protection contacts).^{**}

Where England-specific statutory references appear in the universal policy, sites in Wales and Scotland insert their own national equivalents into the marked *Adapt Locally* sections.

- All local additions must be:
- Accurate
- Up to date
- Consistent with national legislation and regulator guidance
- Fully aligned with the universal standards in this policy

Where no local adaptation or local equivalent is required, the universal content remains fully applicable.

4. Legal and Regulatory Context (Universal)

Whinfell School is governed by the statutory duties, safeguarding requirements and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it operates. The universal standards in this policy are implemented in line with the correct national frameworks set out in **Appendices A–C**, which summarise the legal, regulatory and inspection requirements for England, Wales and Scotland.

5. SEND Policy

Our school/college identifies and supports learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at the earliest opportunity so they can access a broad and balanced curriculum across all sites. We take a whole-organisation approach: all members of the staff team / education team / multi-agency team recognise needs, adapt teaching and assessments, and plan to remove barriers in advance. Teachers/tutors set high expectations for every learner, use appropriate assessments (for example GL or BKSB where used) to establish baselines and ambitious targets, and plan lessons that anticipate and address potential areas of difficulty. We are an inclusive school/college: learners who join us are offered appropriate support and reasonable adjustments to enable effective access and progress.

We work in partnership with parents/carers, social workers (where relevant) and learners themselves. Early identification and timely intervention improve long-term outcomes. High-quality teaching is the foundation of effective SEND support, and the quality of teaching and the progress of learners with SEND are core to performance management and professional development.

6. Definition and identification

A learner has SEND where a learning difficulty or disability calls for provision that is additional to or different from that generally available to peers of the same age. Indicators include significantly slower progress from the same baseline, failure to sustain/improve previous rates of progress, widening attainment gaps, or social/emotional needs that impede learning. Identification may arise through transition information, teacher/tutor observation, progress data, external professional advice, or concerns raised by the learner or parents/carers.

We distinguish language acquisition from SEND For England and Wales we refer to English as an Additional Language (EAL). We remain alert to other events (e.g., bereavement or bullying) which affect wellbeing and achievement; these do not automatically constitute SEND, but may require support.

Planning considers the four broad areas of need: Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; and Sensory/Physical. To reflect national usage, we write SEMH (England & Wales) and recognise that individual profiles vary, may cross areas, and change over time. Specific profiles such as SLCN, Autism/ASC, dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia are supported through targeted, evidence-based approaches.

7. Admissions

We welcome learners with additional needs and apply our duties not to discriminate and to make reasonable adjustments. Baseline assessment appropriate to phase/FE (for example English, maths, cognition/aptitude) is undertaken on entry. Where needs are known, families share relevant reports at enquiry/admissions; the SENDCo may meet the learner and parents/carers/social worker. Learners are admitted where appropriate support and reasonable adjustments can be provided.

England: EHC plan naming/consultation duties apply.

8. Roles and responsibilities

- **The Principal** ensures strategic oversight, compliance and appropriate resourcing.
- **The SENDCo** provides strategic and operational leadership for SEND coordinates the graduated response, maintains accurate records and registers (including EAL where relevant), advises staff, liaises with external specialists, leads training, and quality-assures impact.
- **Teachers/tutors** are responsible for the progress and development of learners they teach, integrate targeted support into classroom practice, and collaborate with support staff and specialists.

For support roles we use LSA (and, where used, Support for Learning Assistants) to deliver in-class support and time-limited interventions aligned to agreed outcomes; daily debriefs and weekly planning ensure support links to the taught curriculum.

9. Graduated response (Assess–Plan–Do–Review)

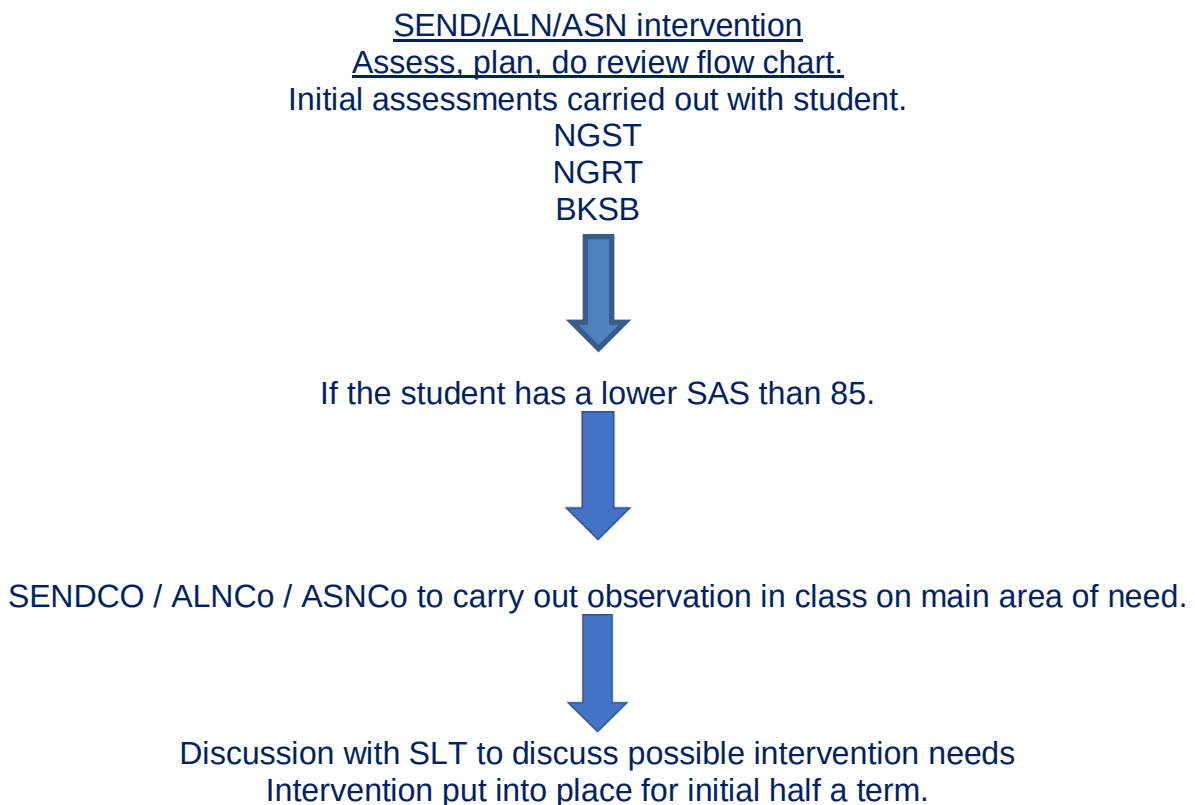
We follow an evidence-based cycle.

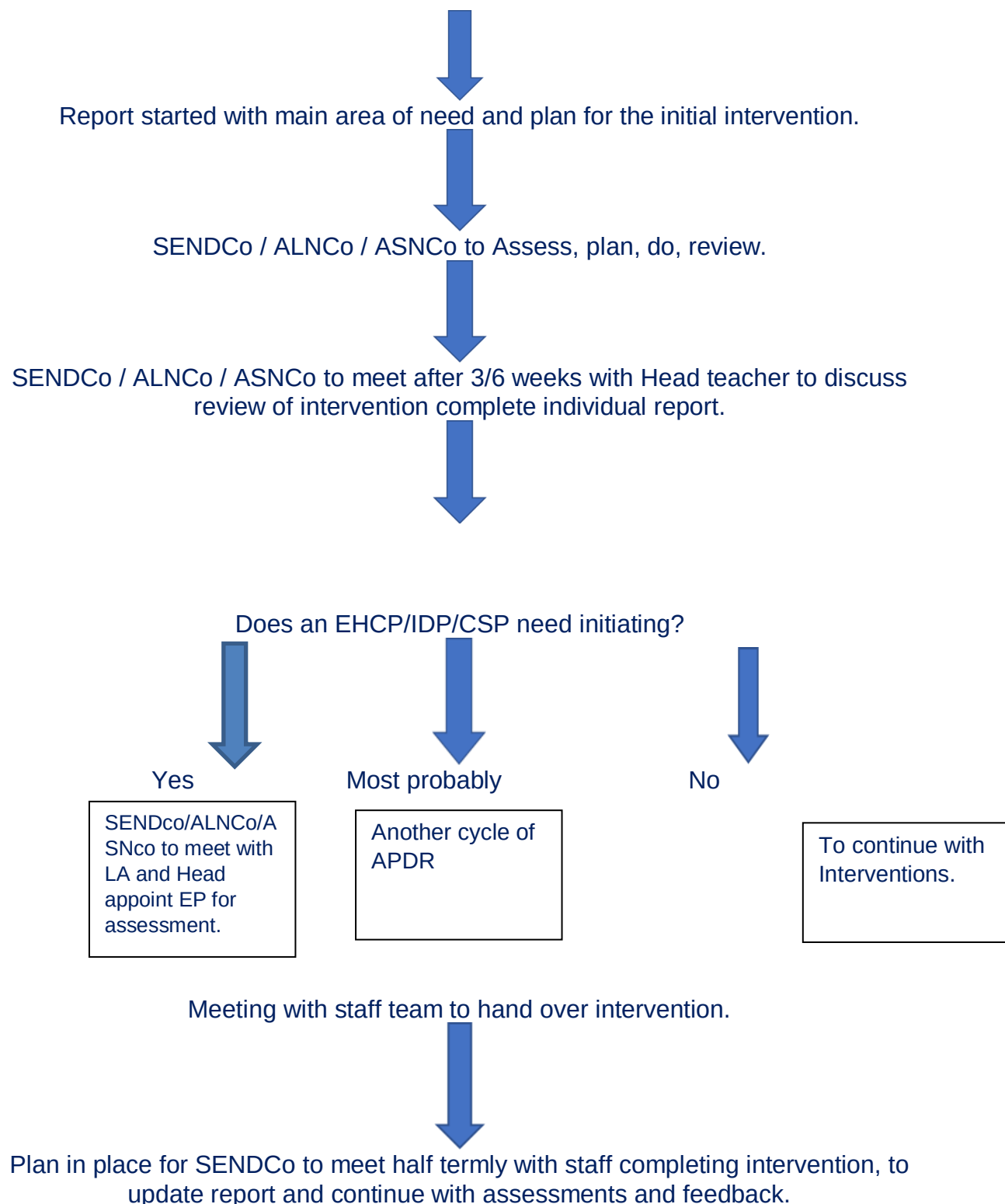
Assess. Teachers/tutors and the SENDCo build a rounded understanding of need using assessment information, progress data, observation, screening tools (e.g., GL/BKSB where used), learner views, parent/carers input and specialist advice where required. We consider reasonable adjustments (Equality Act) and, for EAL learners, the interaction between language acquisition and potential SEND.

Plan. Needs, outcomes, strategies, interventions and review dates are co-produced with the learner and parents/carers, recorded on our information system and shared with relevant staff. Provision is selected on the basis of the best available evidence and staff competence.

Do. Teachers/tutors retain accountability for progress, integrate targeted interventions with classroom learning, and coordinate with support staff and specialists. The SENDCo supports problem-solving, fidelity and further assessment where needed.

Review. Impact is evaluated with the learner and parents/carers; provision is refined or escalated as appropriate. Where a learner has a plan we meet statutory timelines: EHC plan (England) at least annually.





10. Statutory plans and external specialists

Where assessment indicates the need for statutory planning, we work with the local authority on EHC plan processes and deliver all specified provision, making reasonable adjustments. Where progress remains limited despite well-matched support, we involve appropriate specialists (for example educational psychology, SaLT, OT, medical or therapeutic services), record decisions and actions, and share

them with parents/carers and relevant staff. Information on services and access routes is provided via the Local Offer (England).

11. Curriculum access, timetabling and provision mapping

All learners are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers/tutors set high expectations, adapt teaching and assessment, and use small-steps approaches through individual plans where helpful. Classroom inclusion is the default; withdrawal is used only when it is demonstrably the most effective, time-limited route to agreed outcomes, and loss of core learning is avoided wherever possible. In some circumstances, adjustments (for example reducing a modern foreign language) may be considered where this is in the learner's best interests and aligned to agreed outcomes.

We maintain a termly provision map that captures targeted interventions and reasonable adjustments across sites, and we monitor effectiveness so provision remains purposeful. Learners' targets are **SMARTER**—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Evaluated and Reviewed—co-produced with learners and parents/carers, integrated with assessment/recording systems, and shared with relevant staff. We avoid common pitfalls (imprecise wording, unclear ownership, lack of learner voice, weak linkage to assessment) and build on strengths (secure knowledge of the learner, strengths/interests, realistic timeframes, resourcing, and parent/carer involvement).

12. Data, records and information sharing

We maintain accurate, current records of needs, provision, outcomes and impact, and can evidence progress and effectiveness during inspection (Ofsted). We share information with parents/carers in accessible formats (for example plan trackers aligned to EHC plan objectives) and retain robust evidence of support over time. All data processing complies with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

13. More able learners and SEMH/SEBN

Exceptionally able learners are supported through differentiation, enrichment, stretch and, where appropriate, specialist programmes. SEMH (England & Wales) needs are supported through effective pastoral systems, targeted interventions and multi-agency collaboration, alongside reasonable adjustments to sustain engagement and wellbeing.

14. Partnership with parents/carers and learner voice

Parents/carers are partners in decision-making. We meet regularly—ordinarily at least three times per year or in line with plan cycles—to set outcomes, review progress and agree responsibilities. Meetings are led by a teacher/tutor who knows the learner well (for example class teacher or tutor), supported by the SENDCo. Learners contribute their views directly or through structured preparation. Records of decisions, actions and support are kept and shared with staff and parents/carers, and our management information system is updated accordingly.

15. Complaints, appeals and governance

Concerns should be raised with the teacher/tutor or the SENDCo in the first instance. Formal complaints follow the Complaints Policy. Statutory appeal routes apply for plans: England—Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal; Leaders review identification patterns, progress data and provision quality (including comparisons to national trends) to strengthen practice. The Principal reviews this policy at least annually, or sooner if statutory guidance changes.

16. Equality, accessibility and continuous improvement

We comply with the Equality Act 2010, make reasonable adjustments (including auxiliary aids and services), and maintain an Accessibility Plan and Single Equality Policy. We plan proactively to remove barriers so learners with SEND can participate fully, achieve their best and make a successful transition to adulthood—whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

Appendix B – Legal and Regulatory Framework in Wales

Appendix C – Legal and Regulatory Framework in Scotland

Appendix A — England

England's SEND framework is grounded in statutory duties, government regulation and Ofsted inspection expectations.

1. Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3 — SEND)

What this means:

- This Act is the legal foundation for SEND in England, establishing the duties around Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), local authority responsibilities, and rights for children and young adults up to age 25.

What this requires:

- Sites must identify SEN, arrange appropriate provision, participate in multi-agency working, and adhere to statutory timelines and processes for EHC assessments and plans.
- **Link:** Children and Families Act 2014
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents>

2. SEND Regulations 2014 (Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014)

What this means:

- These regulations outline the statutory processes for EHC needs assessments, EHC plans, consultation duties, reviews, transfers, and the provision of advice and information.

What this requires:

- Clear, timely SEND procedures; compliance with EHC assessment and review duties; and coordinated information gathering across education, health and care.
- **Link:** Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/contents>

3. Equality Act 2010 (Education Duties)

What this means:

- Sites must eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations for disabled learners. SEND provision supports these duties by ensuring reasonable adjustments, inclusion and accessibility.

What this requires:

- Inclusive, accessible SEND practice; anticipatory adjustments; and curriculum adaptations for diverse needs, including in FE.
- **Active link:** Equality Act 2010 — Education Guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

4. Ofsted — Education Inspection Framework (EIF)**What this means:**

- Ofsted evaluates curriculum quality, inclusion, personal development, behaviour and safeguarding. SEND provision directly affects the Quality of Education and Personal Development judgements.

What this requires:

- A coherent SEND-inclusive curriculum; evidence of adaptations; effective support for learners with SEND; and strong safeguarding culture.
- **Active link:** Education Inspection Framework (Ofsted)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-use-from-november-2025>

5. Safeguarding — Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**What this means:**

National safeguarding expectations require education settings to support learners' understanding of safety, risk and help-seeking, with SEND learners recognised as potentially more vulnerable.

What this requires:

- SEND-inclusive safeguarding education; risk awareness; digital resilience; clear information on reporting, boundaries and protective behaviours.
- **Active link:** Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Appendix B — Wales (ALN) — Integrated for Schools and FE

Wales's ALN framework creates a unified 0–25 system applying to schools, PRUs and FE providers.

1. Additional Learning Needs (ALN) System — Curriculum for Wales Integration

What this means:

- The ALN system establishes a unified process across 0–25, while the Curriculum for Wales (3–16) sets the national framework for wellbeing, personal development, relationships and safety. FE providers are expected to maintain continuity of these principles post-16.

What this requires:

- A coherent wellbeing/ALN-inclusive curriculum aligned to the four purposes; clear progression; continuation of wellbeing and personal development in 16–19 programmes.
- **Link:** Curriculum for Wales — Health & Wellbeing (Hwb)
<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales>

2. Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (ALNET)

What this means:

- Establishes the statutory ALN framework for children and young people 0–25, replacing the former SEN system and LDD arrangements, including in FE settings.

What this requires:

- Use of Individual Development Plans (IDPs); collaborative assessment and planning; consistent ALN processes across schools and FE; and rights to appeal.
- **Link:** ALN Transformation Programme (Welsh Government)
<https://www.gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-transformation-programme-frequently-asked-questions-html>

3. Additional Learning Needs Code for Wales 2021

What this means:

- The statutory ALN Code sets out duties for identification, assessment, planning, review and provision for ALN, including FE responsibilities.

What this requires:

- Consistent implementation of IDPs; inclusive planning; learner-centred approaches; and alignment with wellbeing and progression principles.
- **Link:** Additional Learning Needs Code 2021
<https://www.gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-code>

4. Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) — Equality Act 2010 (Wales)**What this means:**

- All Welsh education providers must eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations. ALN provision supports these duties by ensuring inclusion, accessibility and anti-bullying culture.

What this requires:

- Accessible content; inclusive practice for learners with ALN; proactive equality planning.
- **Link:** Public Sector Equality Duty for Schools in Wales
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/ehrc_psed_guide_for_schools_in_wales.docx

5. Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021**What this means:**

- Places the Curriculum for Wales into law and sets statutory requirements on progression, assessment and curriculum design for 3–16 education. FE providers must ensure continuity of wellbeing, inclusion and personal development beyond 16.

What this requires:

- Schools must demonstrate alignment to the Act's expectations; FE providers must build upon these principles in 16–19 curricula to ensure continuity for learners with ALN.
- **Link:** Curriculum for Wales — Summary of Legislation
<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/summary-of-legislation>

6. Safeguarding & Online Safety (Welsh Government / Hwb)

What this means:

- Welsh Government guidance identifies digital risks such as misinformation, grooming, and harmful content. ALN learners may require enhanced protective education.

What this requires:

- Strengthening digital resilience, safe decision-making, responsible behaviour and help-seeking routes.
- **Link:** Hwb — Online Safety & Safeguarding Guidance <https://hwb.gov.wales>

7. Estyn — Inspection Expectations for Wellbeing, Inclusion & Personal Development

What this means:

- Estyn evaluates how schools and FE providers promote wellbeing, safety, inclusion and personal development. ALN provision is a core component of these judgements.

What this requires:

- Coherent, planned wellbeing/ALN curriculum; evidence of inclusion and progression; support for relationships, resilience and safety.
- **Link:** Estyn — Curriculum for Wales References <https://democracy.swansea.gov.uk/documents/s110851/Education%20Scrutiny%20Panel%20June%202025%20-%20Curriculum%20for%20Wales%20update%20v1.0.pdf>

8. Agored Cymru — Personal and Social Education Qualifications (Optional in FE)

What this means:

- These qualifications support wellbeing, resilience, citizenship and decision making. They can supplement ALN-inclusive personal development pathways in FE.

What this requires:

- Alignment of delivery to qualification outcomes; integrated use within wider ALN and wellbeing strategy.
- **Link:** Agored Cymru — PSE Qualifications <https://www.agored.cymru/Units-and-Qualifications/Learning-Core/Personal-and-Social-Education>

Appendix C — Scotland (ASN)

Scotland's Additional Support Needs (ASN) framework is grounded in statutory duties placed on education authorities, supported by national policy, guidance and inspection expectations.

1. Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

What this means:

- This Act establishes the statutory duties on Scottish education authorities to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of children and young people. It applies across early years, schools and colleges.
- ASN may arise from learning environment factors, family circumstances, health/disability, or social/emotional needs.

What this requires:

- Systems to identify ASN early and ensure appropriate assessment and support.
- Regular review of support and coordinated planning where multiple agencies are involved.
- FE providers must support transitions and ensure continuity of support where ASN are identified.
- **Link:** Education (Additional Support for Learning) — Scottish Government <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/additional-support-for-learning/>

2. Additional Support for Learning: Statutory Guidance (2017)

What this means:

- This statutory guidance provides the national code of practice for implementing the 2004 Act, covering identification, support planning, coordinated support plans and dispute resolution. [\[gov.scot\]](https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/additional-support-for-learning/)

What this requires:

- Sites must follow the Code when assessing needs, planning interventions and reviewing progress.
- Clear, consistent processes for multi-agency planning and communication with parents and carers.
- **Link:** Additional Support for Learning — Statutory Guidance <https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/additional-support-for-learning/>

3. GIRFEC — Getting It Right for Every Child (National Wellbeing Framework)

What this means:

- GIRFEC is Scotland's national approach to improving outcomes and supporting wellbeing. It underpins all ASN practice by ensuring needs are identified early and support is coordinated.

What this requires:

- Use of the wellbeing indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included).
- Consistent planning across agencies, including FE, to ensure continuity of support into adulthood.
- **Link:** GIRFEC (Scottish Government) <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

4. Equality Act 2010 — Education Duties (Scotland)

What this means:

- The Equality Act applies across Scotland and protects disabled learners from discrimination. Education providers must make reasonable adjustments and promote equality and inclusion. [futurelearn.com](https://www.futurelearn.com)

What this requires:

- Inclusive ASN practice; adjustments to teaching, environment and materials; and proactive promotion of accessibility.
- FE providers must ensure accessible learning, support plans and inclusive curriculum delivery.
- **Link:** Equality Act 2010 — Education Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

5. Safeguarding & Child Protection (Scotland)

What this means:

- National safeguarding expectations require settings to ensure all children and young people are safe, with recognition that some ASN learners may have increased vulnerability.

What this requires:

- Clear protective education; digital safety; awareness of reporting routes; and staff training responsive to diverse ASN profiles.
- **Link:** National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland
- <https://www.gov.scot/policies/child-protection/>

6. Inspections — Education Scotland (HM Inspectors)

What this means:

- Education Scotland evaluates how effectively schools meet learners' needs, including ASN identification, planning, wellbeing and inclusion.

What this requires:

- Evidence of planned ASN provision; effective use of assessment; strong partnership working; and learner-centred planning.
- FE providers must demonstrate inclusive practice, support for transitions and coherent learner support systems.
- **Active link:** Education Scotland Inspection Framework
<https://education.gov.scot>

7. Learner Healthcare Needs (Scottish Government)

What this means:

- Where learners require medication or health-related accommodations, settings must ensure safe arrangements, clear procedures and appropriate support. [\[gov.scot\]](https://gov.scot)

What this requires:

- Individual healthcare planning; training for staff; emergency procedures; and alignment with wider ASN planning.
- **Link:** Supporting Learners with Healthcare Needs
<https://www.gov.scot/policies/schools/additional-support-for-learning/>