



Consultation on Additional Learning Needs, Social Inclusion Services and Funding Models

Consultation Document

21st September 2020 - 7th May 2021

Conwy County Borough Council

PO Box 1 (Education Services)

Conwy

LL30 9GN



1. Purpose of the Consultation

We are seeking your views on services and potential changes in the way we fund social inclusion and additional learning needs support for Conwy's children and young learners.

It is timely to review current funding models to ensure that statutory duties can continue to be met, and that provision for learners is resilient, sustainable and equitable.

We want to reassure you that the services will continue to be provided if the funding model is changed.

2. Background

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 sets out the legal framework within which local authorities (LA) allocate education expenditure to schools. The School Funding (Wales) Regulations 2010 (as amended) provide further detail. The Regulations require local authorities to allocate expenditure to the following three budgets (The Local Authority, School, and Individual School Budgets). The first two budget areas are retained centrally and administered by the LA.

3. The current situation

In response to Welsh Government's priority to increase the amount of delegated funding to schools to 80% by 2012-2013 and to 85% by 2014-2015, a significant proportion of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) and Social Inclusion (SI) Service budgets (retained and administered by the Local Authority), has been largely delegated to schools. This approach was undertaken on the premise of a full "buy back" of Services from the Local Authority.

Alternatively, under this model, schools can opt not to buy into the Local Authority's ALN and SI services and make their own arrangements to provide services for their learners.

Not all funding is delegated for reasons of efficiency, economies of scale or specialism, such as for the Sensory Support Service, which provides specialist advisory teacher support for learners with hearing, visual and multi-sensory impairment.

All of the service areas described below are now subject to individual Service Level Agreements, and have varying degrees of “buy back” from across the Local Authority’s Primary and Secondary schools.

- Educational Psychology and Inclusion Teacher Service
- Learning Support Service (Dyslexia)
- Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Outreach Service
- Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Teaching Assistants
- Conwy Education Centre: Y Ddraig Goch
- Conwy Education Centre: Penmaenrhos
- Conwy Education Centre: Penrhos Avenue

The established Education Funding Task and Finish Group recommended that formal consultation should be undertaken with all key stakeholders on a proposal to withdraw delegation of funding for identified service areas.

In some instances consultation on alternative funding models has started through projects established which focus on the ALN Teaching Assistants provision and Conwy Education Centres: Y Ddraig Goch, Penrhos Avenue and Penmaenrhos. The information and feedback from these projects will also be considered as part of this consultation.

For information, if the funding for all of the service areas being consulted on were to be retained centrally, the delegation rate in Conwy would change by 3.7% - from 83.5% to 79.8%.

4. Why is the Council consulting now on changes?

The Education Funding Task and Finish group established that in responding to current and changing legislation, it is timely to review the present funding models to ensure that the Local Authority can continue to meet its statutory duties, whilst also ensuring that provision for learners is resilient, sustainable and equitable. Further information on why we are reviewing the current position is included under section 6.

5. Who are the stakeholders for this consultation?

	Parents	Schools	School Budget Forum	Chairs of Governors	Outside agencies, e.g. SNAP Cymru; BCUHB	GwE	Local Authority Officers
Educational Psychology and Curriculum Inclusion Teacher Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Learning Support Service (Dyslexia)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Outreach Service	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Additional Learning Needs Teaching Assistants	No *	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Y Ddraig Goch	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Penmaenrhos	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Penrhos Avenue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Parents have already been consulted.

6. Services to be consulted on

Educational Psychology and Curriculum Inclusion Teacher Service	
<p>Aims of the Service: This Service provides Educational Psychology and Specialist Curriculum Inclusion Teacher consultation, advice, assessment, psychological intervention, training and duties associated with the Statutory Assessment process.</p> <p>The Service is made up of a team of Educational Psychologists and ALN/Inclusion Teachers who work in close collaboration to support schools in meeting their statutory and non-statutory functions. Ensuring the wellbeing and additional learning needs of children and young people in Conwy.</p> <p>The Service responds to direct referrals/requests for input agreed through Data Reviews and Planning Meetings. The Service currently provides for pre-school and statutory age learners attending pre-school settings and schools.</p>	
<p>Why we are reviewing the current position: The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 brings with it increased statutory responsibilities to a wider group of learners. The current delegation model for this Service does not reflect the increasing statutory duties.</p> <p>The Local Authority must retain sufficient monies centrally to deliver its statutory responsibilities towards all children and young people in Conwy with additional learning needs (aged 0-25).</p> <p>The Local Authority would like to be able to develop this service to respond to the changing duties under the new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, while improving on and strengthening the interventions and support provided to children, young people, their families and schools. Once this is established, the possibility of developing services which could be traded and commissioned would be explored further.</p>	
Current rate of delegation:	
Core Funding	Delegated Funding
11.3%	88.7%

Learning Support Service (Dyslexia)

Aims of the Service: The Learning Support Service provides Specialist Dyslexia teaching for children experiencing the most significant difficulties within this spectrum of need. The needs of many children and young people with Dyslexia are able to be well met from within their school's own additional systems of support. However, a smaller proportion of young people experience difficulties which have a significant impact on their access to the curriculum.

For those children who need a more intensive level of support, additional specialist teaching is available through the Learning Support Service. This service is able to offer enhanced specialist teaching for those learners who continue to experience significant difficulty with their literacy skills despite appropriate school based intervention over time.

Why we are reviewing the current position: The Local Authority would like the opportunity to look at the current model of service delivery, ensuring maximum, evidence based and equitable impact for this group of learners.

The Authority seeks to make certain that the model of funding ensures that provision can be flexible and responsive to changing need across the county, and that the funding/resource is always directed where it is needed.

The Authority would also seek to extend the remit of the funding to provide not only for learners with dyslexia, but to those experiencing a wider range of specific learning difficulties, to include dyscalculia for example.

Current level of delegation:

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
0%	100%

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) Outreach Service

Aims of the Service: The ASD Outreach Service aims to support Conwy schools in their understanding of and provision for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and those undergoing neurodevelopmental assessment of their social communication difficulties. The service responds to direct referrals for advice and support around specific areas of identified need associated with ASD.

The ASD Outreach Service comprises a team of Teaching Assistants who can provide support and advice to schools through the medium of Welsh and English. The Service's focus is to provide support and advice for all teaching and support staff, helping to set appropriate targets/objectives and advising on appropriate environmental adjustments and specific interventions that will help learners to achieve these objectives.

Why we are reviewing the current position: The Local Authority seeks the opportunity to consider how it can develop the continuum of support and provision available for learners with autism. Responding to the increasing need and complexity of challenges faced by this group of learners during their education.

The Local Authority seeks to ensure that the continuum of provision for learners with ASD in Conwy is based on sound evidence of impact for learners and improved outcomes.

Current level of delegation:

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
0%	100%

Additional Learning Needs Teaching Assistants

Aims of the Service: As part of the provision of additional support for learners with ALN, Conwy developed the Curriculum Inclusion and Social Inclusion Teaching Assistant Services. These Services were set up to support the needs of pupils with additional learning needs (Curriculum Inclusion) and social, emotional and behavioural needs (Social Inclusion). Curriculum Inclusion Teaching Assistants support children identified through Conwy's ALN Moderation Panel as requiring this support to facilitate their access to the curriculum. All

pupils will have a School Action Plus Contract for this support, or for those children with more complex needs and other support in place, a Statement of SEN. The generalised categories of additional learning need for which these children and young people receive this support are as follows:

- Physical/medical needs
- Emotional/behavioural needs
- Autistic spectrum disorder
- Speech and communication
- Visual/hearing impairment
- Moderate/severe learning difficulties

Social Inclusion Teaching Assistants are used more flexibly and preventatively. They are moved around Conwy schools under the direction of the Social Inclusion Service Lead/TA Manager according to need. This Service forms part of the continuum of support for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties provided by the wider Social Inclusion Service.

Why we are reviewing the current position: Following an earlier review of this service area, the Local Authority considered sustainable options for providing equitable, effective and quality support of children and young people with additional learning needs in Conwy. It was agreed that a cluster model of service delivery would be pursued in order to promote early intervention, evidence based good practise and consistency across transition stages.

The Local Authority seeks to ensure that ALN Teaching Assistant provision in Conwy is:

- 1) Based on sound evidence of impact for learners and improved outcomes;
- 2) Is consistently moderated and reviewed to ensure its appropriateness and impact on progress and skills acquisition, and
- 3) Provides each cluster of schools with a team of consistent, skilled and experienced ALN Teaching Assistants, working across all key stages and schools. Supplementing existing staffing and to work under the direction of the ALNCO, class and subject teachers to support learners with ALN through the implementation of evidence based strategies and interventions.

In order to do this, the Local Authority aims to use this consultation to establish the appropriate funding model to fully and sustainably support these aims moving forward.

Consultation on alternative funding models has started through the ALN Teaching Assistants in Conwy project. The information and feedback from this project will be considered as part of this consultation.

Current level of delegation:

Curriculum Inclusion Teaching Assistants

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
16.55%	83.45%

Social Inclusion Teaching Assistants

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
33.29%	66.71%

Conwy Education Centre: Y Ddraig Goch

Aims of the Service: Y Ddraig Goch and Outreach Service delivers support and alternative education provision for young people in Key Stage 2 with severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, whose difficulties have significantly impacted on their ability to effectively access a mainstream primary school.

The Service also provides outreach advice and support for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in their mainstream schools.

Why we are reviewing the current position: The core funding and current school buy back leaves insufficient funds to support the running of a full time provision to meet the current needs of the learners within the Local Authority. Thus the Local Authority is at high risk of breaching its statutory duty to provide education otherwise than at school.

The Local Authority has to be in a position to deliver a full time provision which can respond to the changing need of learners across all of Conwy.

Consultation on alternative funding models has started through the Social Inclusion in Conwy project. The information and feedback from this project will be considered as part of this consultation.

Current level of delegation:

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
16.32%	83.68%

Conwy Education Centre: Penmaenrhos

Aims of the Service: Penmaenrhos delivers support and alternative education provision for young people with severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in Key Stage 3, whose difficulties have significantly impacted on their ability to effectively access a mainstream secondary school.

Why we are reviewing the current position: The core funding and current school buy back leaves insufficient funds to support the running of a full time provision to meet the current needs of the learners within the Local Authority. Thus the Local Authority is at high risk of breaching its statutory duty to provide education otherwise than at school.

The Local Authority has to be in a position to deliver a full time provision which can respond the changing need of learners across all of Conwy.

Consultation on alternative funding models has started through the Social Inclusion in Conwy project. The information and feedback from this project will be considered as part of this consultation.

Current level of delegation:

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
13.99%	86.01%

Conwy Education Centre: Penrhos Avenue

Aims of the Service: Penrhos Avenue delivers support and alternative education provision for young people with severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in Key Stage 3, whose difficulties have significantly impacted on their ability to effectively access a mainstream secondary school.

In addition, Penrhos Avenue Education Centre provides home tuition for young people who are unable to attend school as a result of an identified medical need.

Why we are reviewing the current position: The core funding and current school buy back leaves insufficient funds to support the running of a full time provision to meet the current needs of the learners within the Local Authority. Thus the Local Authority is at high risk of breaching its statutory duty to provide education otherwise than at school.

The Local Authority has to be in a position to deliver a full time provision which can respond the changing need of learners across all of Conwy.

Consultation on alternative funding models has started through the Social Inclusion in Conwy project. The information and feedback from this project will be considered as part of this consultation.

Current level of delegation:

Core Funding	Delegated Funding
27.81%	72.19%

7. What happens next?

The following are key dates in the consultation and decision making process.

Consultation Steps	Indicative Timeframe
First Stage: Engagement with all stakeholders on existing services and delegated funding.	Between 21 st September & 4 th December 2020
Published first stage Consultation Report summarising responses.	1 st February 2021
Through existing forums (Head Teachers, ALNCOs, GWE, SNAP Cymru and School Budget) to consider first stage consultation report and proposals and options for 2 nd Stage.	Between 1 st February & 12 th March 2021
Engagement Phase Ends.	12 th March 2021
Second Stage: Formal Consultation Period - with Governing Body meetings happening during this stage. This stage will consult on any proposed funding models arising from the engagement phase.	Between 30 th March & 7 th May 2021
Feedback from 2 nd Stage formal Consultation to School Budget Forum.	Between 25 th May & 5 th June 2021
Report on the outcomes of the consultation and any related recommendations to the Joint Finance and Resources and Education and Skills Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	June 2021 (TBC)
Report to Conwy County Borough Council's Cabinet - Report on the outcomes of the consultation and any related recommendations.	June/July 2021 (TBC)
Publication of Decision (dependant on the consultation outcomes and Cabinet approval).	July 2021
Implementation of changes.	April 2022

8. How do I tell you my views?

The first stage of the consultation will take place between 21st September and 4th December 2020 inclusive. During this time we would like to hear your views.

The consultation will close at 4pm on 4th December 2020.

You can take part either by:

Completing the online consultation questionnaire at: www.conwy.gov.uk/ALNconsult2020

For parents hard copies of the consultation document and parent questionnaire will be available on request. For a copy please call us on 01492 575031. Sending your completed questionnaire to:

PO Box 1 (Education Services Consultation), Conwy, LL30 9GN.

We are happy to provide this document in large print, audio and braille.

If you have any questions or queries on the consultation, please email:
ConsultationALN&SI@conwy.gov.uk

9. The Decision

No decision has been taken yet. All of the consultation responses will be assessed and put into a report that will be considered by the Local Authority.

The first stage of the consultation reviews the existing situation and will inform proposed changes, which will be consulted on in stage 2.

Once stage 2 consultation has been completed, a report detailing any proposed changes will be considered by the Council's Education and Skills and Finance and Resources Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, before it is considered by the Councils Cabinet for a decision.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this consultation. Your response will be considered in full.

We will not be responding directly to your feedback but we will be producing a summary during and at the end of the process. This will be available on our website

www.conwy.gov.uk/ALNconsult2020