

P-06-1494 Welsh Government to protect funding in education from WG and Local Authority cuts - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 13 October 2025

I would like to thank Members of the Senedd and the Petitions Committee for debating our petition, which gathered over 11,000 signatures calling on the Welsh Government to protect education funding and ensure that children with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) are not left behind.

While I welcome the Cabinet Secretary's acknowledgement of the pressures schools are facing and her commitment to supporting ALN provision, the reality shared by families, teachers and professionals across Wales remains stark. Every week, parents contact us describing children who are without the right support, unable to access learning, or experiencing "school distress" because their needs are unmet. These are not isolated cases, they are systemic symptoms of a system under strain.

We recognise and appreciate that education funding has been prioritised at a national level. However, as many Members noted in the debate, money is not always reaching the children who need it most. There is little transparency in how local authorities allocate funding to schools, and significant variation in how the ALN Code is applied. Parents continue to face exhausting and expensive tribunal processes simply to secure basic support. That is not an equitable system.

We strongly urge the Welsh Government to go further by:

Ring-fencing ALN funding to ensure it reaches the learners it is intended for.

Publishing clear data showing how ALN funds are distributed and spent by each local authority.

Investing in professional training for teachers and support staff to better meet neurodiverse and complex needs.

Reducing waiting times for assessment and diagnosis, which directly affect school attendance and mental health.

Listening to families and learners as partners in reform not as adversaries in legal disputes.

Children with ALN are entitled to thrive, not merely survive, in our education system. Wales has an opportunity to lead the way in inclusive education but that can only happen when funding, accountability, and compassion align.

We remain ready to work with the Welsh Government, the Senedd, and local authorities to ensure that the promises made to Wales's most vulnerable learners are turned into real outcomes on the ground.

Catherine Drews

Petitioner – ALN Reform Wales