



PARENT/CARER NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2025



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

For parents and carers of young people with additional learning needs

Welcome

Welcome to our autumn newsletter for parents and carers of young people with additional learning needs. In this edition we share tips on supporting your child in transitional years, provide an up-date on the ALNET Act and advice on how to prepare for Individual Development Plan (IDP) Reviews. Ben and his dad, Peter, share how our careers adviser, Sofia, supported them with choosing the best option after year 11. We also share some news from our recent What Next? Choose Your Future events. We hope you find our newsletter useful when supporting your child.

Supporting young people with Additional Learning Needs

Our careers advisers can:

- give impartial careers information, advice and guidance.
- help your child understand their strengths and reach their potential.
- share information about various options, including work and further learning.
- help your child set short-term and long-term goals related to their future options.
- support your child if they face setbacks and challenges.

Our experienced careers advisers tailor their approach depending on your child's age and needs. We have a careers adviser linked to each school but can also continue to support your child when they move on from school.

During the autumn term, careers advisers will be meeting young people in the leavers departments in schools across Wales to help them plan their next steps with many annual reviews taking place. If you would like to chat to the careers adviser working with your child, before the annual review, please [get in touch](#).



How we can help

Careers Wales is here to support you and your child to make the right decision about their future.

Our teams in schools include a careers adviser, business engagement adviser and a careers and work related experience (CWRE) co-ordinator.

ALNET Act

The ALNET Act aims to ensure that parents are partners in the process of identifying, planning, and supporting young people with additional learning needs, giving them a strong voice and clear rights throughout their educational journey in Wales.

A summary of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, known as the ALNET Act, reforms the way children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN) are supported in Wales.

The Act replaces the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) framework and the Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) system with a unified approach to address needs from birth up to the age of 25. The ALNET Act now applies to all age groups.

Parental Rights under the ALNET Act

Parents and carers play a central role under the ALNET Act. Notable rights and entitlements include:

- ➔ **Right to Request an Assessment:** Parents can request that their child is assessed for additional learning needs at any time.
- ➔ **Right to Be Involved:** Parents have the right to participate in discussions and decisions regarding their child's ALN and the support offered, including the development of the Individual Development Plan (IDP).
- ➔ **Right to Receive Information:** Schools and local authorities must provide parents with clear, accessible information about the ALN process and their child's support arrangements.
- ➔ **Right to Appeal:** If parents disagree with decisions made about their child's ALN or IDP, they have the right to appeal to the Education Tribunal for Wales.
- ➔ **Right to Advocacy and Support:** Parents can access advocacy services and independent advice to help them understand and navigate the system. Contact your local authority to find out more.



Key Features of the ALNET Act

- **Introduces the term "Additional Learning Needs" (ALN) instead of SEN and LDD.**
- **Requires a single, unified system for supporting individuals with ALN.**
- **Establishes Individual Development Plans (IDPs) for all learners identified with ALN, ensuring their needs are documented and met.**
- **Expands the coverage to include early years, schools, and further education settings.**
- **Strengthens the role of the Education Tribunal for Wales in resolving disputes.**

Moving on from school

Preparing for Individual Development Plan reviews

Thinking about your child moving on from school can be stressful, so planning for the transition is key. Don't leave it until the final year to raise questions – we recommend you use the IDP reviews in the years leading up to their final year to gather information and set plans in place

Here are some questions that you may want to ask:

- What are the options for my child when they leave school?
- What steps need to be put in place to help them prepare for leaving?
- Who will work with my child to help prepare them for leaving?
- What support is available to help my child decide what will suit them best?
- How do I find out more about the options?
- What support is available in each provision to meet my child's needs?
- What if the local college or provision isn't able to meet my child's needs?
- If my child goes to a local provision, how will they get there?

There are more suggested questions on our website



[Individual Development Plan review | Careers Wales](#)

A careers adviser may be invited to your child's review. If they attend, they can explain the options available and help you explore them further. If they are not present, you can arrange to speak with an adviser at another suitable time.

You can find out who your child's careers adviser is by asking the school, looking on the school's website or by [getting in touch with us](#) directly.

Options at 16



There are different options open to your child after year 11:

Stay in school

In some schools, students can stay until they are 19 years old. They could stay in the same school or move to another school.

Be a trainee

If your child wants to get a job but needs to learn more about work, a traineeship could be an option.

Go to college

In college your child could learn new skills, try new lessons and gain a qualification.

Be an apprentice

Apprenticeships in Wales are jobs that let you work towards a qualification and get paid at the same time.

Start work

If your child knows what they want to do, they could apply for a job once they've finished school.

Volunteer

Your child could develop skills and experiences by volunteering.

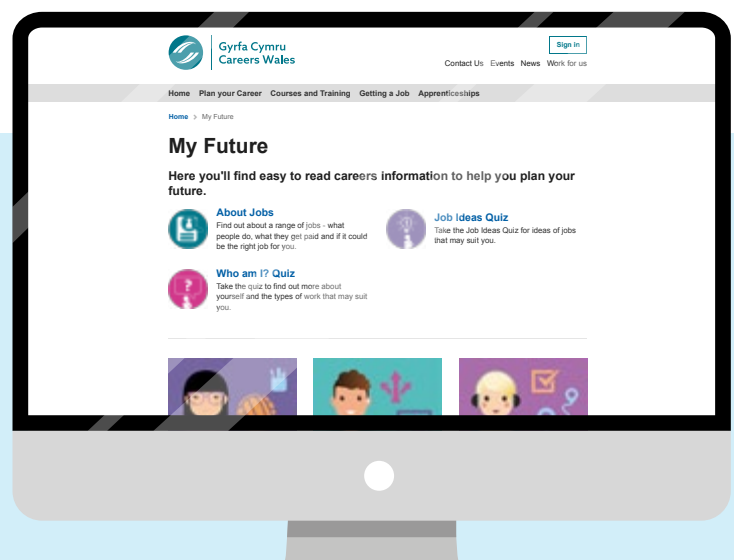
More information and advice can be found at



[Find out about your options](#)

My Future

is a dedicated section on the Careers Wales website for young people with additional learning needs and their families. You can explore our easy to read careers information, find out about different jobs, think about options and make decisions with your child.



Ben's Story

Real life stories

With tailored support, Ben found the right college course and feels more confident about his future.

Ben wasn't sure what to do after his GCSEs. At first, he thought about going to sixth form. But after talking to his careers adviser, Sofia, he realised he was more interested in a level 3 course in computer games design at college.

Finding the right fit

Ben enjoys 3D printing and playing video games, especially VR games like Blade and Sorcery. After hearing about his interests, Sofia suggested a games development course at college.

Ben said: "Sofia asked me about my interests, what subjects I liked, and what I enjoyed doing. Then, she gave me a recommendation for the course I'm doing now. She explained what would be happening there and how to apply. I absolutely love my course."

Support for parents

Ben, who is autistic, found the support especially valuable as did his dad, Peter.

Peter explained: "Sofia managed to draw out his hobbies and interests, even though he's quite introverted and doesn't say much. Because she knew the local colleges so well, she knew this course existed and suggested it. At the time, we were only thinking about sixth form and A levels. But this was a completely different option that really suited him."

"She's been fantastic. From the first meeting right through to him starting college, she's stayed in touch. Over the summer she checked in and counted down to results day with us. At times I felt she was as excited as I was. She's gone over and above."

"For autistic young people, change can be hard, especially moving from school to college. Sofia helped smooth that path. She worked well with the school, with us as parents, and with the college. She made a big difference."



Ben

Looking ahead

Ben has started his games development course and is enjoying it. He hopes to progress to higher levels in the future and eventually work in the gaming and 3D modelling industry.

He said: "It's given me something I really enjoy and want to do as a career. It's set me on a clear path."

Advice for others parents

Peter said: "As a parent, I can't praise the support enough. Careers Wales has been brilliant for Ben, and it's given us confidence that he's on the right track."

Top tips for parents and carers



Parents and carers have a big influence on a child's choices for the future.

Here are some of the ways that you can help your child plan for the future:

- Discuss their future career ideas and encourage them to think about all the options available.
- Encourage them to develop their skills through education, hobbies, interests, work experience and part-time jobs.
- Encourage them to make full use of the help available to them in school, college and from Careers Wales.
- Use [Future Jobs Wales](#) to find out about the job market, skills employers are looking for and employment trends.
- Encourage them to use the [My Future](#) section of the website to help them find out more for themselves.
- Encourage them to explore careers and options related videos on the [My Future YouTube channel](#).
- Prepare for, and attend, [transition planning](#) review meetings.
- Support them to visit colleges or other provision that they may go on to from school. Showing them different places will help them to decide.
- Talk to the careers adviser if you want any more information.
- Attend Careers Wales events or transition events put on at school.

What Next?

Choose Your Future event

Our What Next? Choose Your Future events provide an opportunity for pupils with additional learning needs to explore what they'd like to do after leaving school.

Pupils are given opportunities to take part in fun activities, meet a range of employers to learn about different careers and discover vocational courses offered by colleges and training providers. Our careers advisers are also on hand to provide advice and guidance.

The first two What Next? events for the 2025-26 academic year were held in north Wales and Powys in October.

Martin Webber, business engagement adviser at Careers Wales organised the north Wales event and said:

"Over 200 pupils from 10 different schools attended our What Next? event at Ysgol y Gogarth, Llandudno. It provided pupils with the opportunity to chat to representatives from 22 different employers, organisations and training providers. In addition, many pupils participated in activities, including building wind turbines with Bute Energy."

Invites will soon be shared with schools for the next series of events planned for Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, South East Wales and South Central in early 2026.



careerswales.gov.wales/events



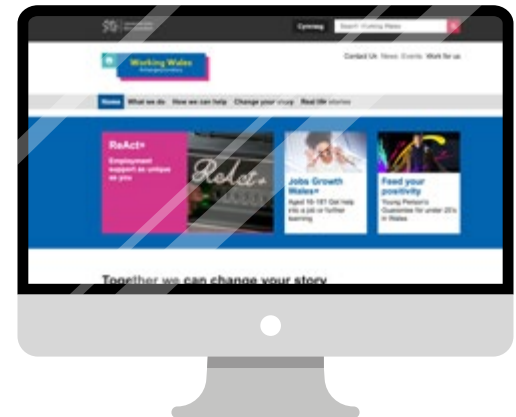
Cymru'n Gweithio Working Wales

Our Working Wales service supports anyone aged 16+ to find a job or access opportunities to upskill through courses and training.

The service is tailored to each individual's personal circumstances - whether they are a school leaver, facing redundancy, have recently been made redundant, or are looking to change careers.

We also support anyone wanting to upskill, build confidence, create a CV, develop interview skills or overcome barriers to work.

You can access free support from Working Wales at a Careers Wales centre, our outreach venues, over the phone or digitally. [Find out more](#) or [book an appointment](#).



www.workingwales.gov.wales



We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. If you would like to share your feedback on our work with parents, please complete our



[parents questionnaire](#)

Contact us:



You can contact a careers adviser at school or by phoning **0800 028 4844**



We have a Wales-wide live chat facility available via www.careerswales.gov.wales



Drop into one of our [careers centres](#)



Email post@careerswales.gov.wales

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