

The Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

Code of Practice
(Guernsey & Alderney)

The Short Guide



States of Guernsey
Education

Version 1.0
JANUARY 2026

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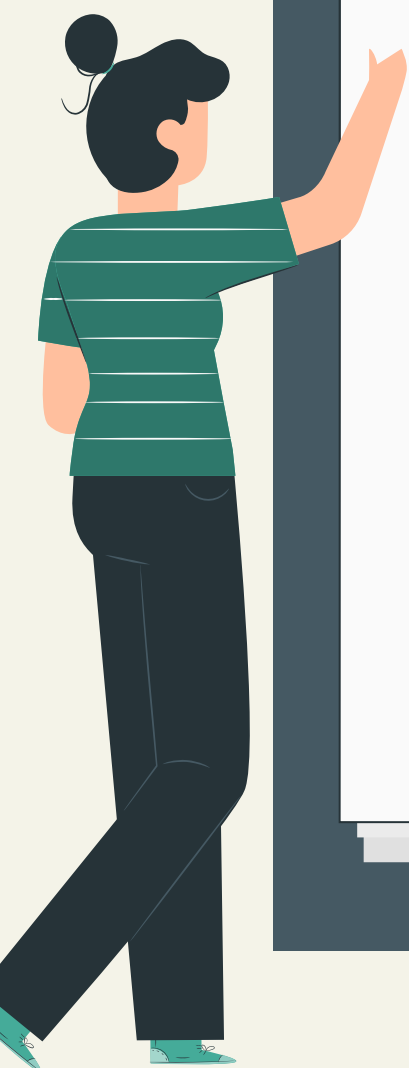
Some key terms used in this guide

Learner: A learner is someone who is receiving education. The Code covers learners between the ages of 0 and 25 and receiving early years (0-5 years), primary, secondary or further (post-16) education.

Education setting: An education setting is where a learner receives their education. For example, this could be a pre-school, a school or further education college, etc.

Inclusion: Inclusion is about making sure all learners can take part in learning, leading to the highest possible level of achievement.

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The glossary on the last page explains some other important terms.



1 Introduction

 See Chapter 1 of the Code for more information.

The Additional Learning Needs Code of Practice (Guernsey & Alderney) ('the Code') describes how additional learning needs (ALN) should be identified, assessed and supported in education. It covers learners from birth to the age of twenty-five (0-25 years).¹

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture ('the Committee') and the Committee *for* Health & Social Care work together to help support learners with ALN.

The Code takes relevant laws and policies into account.²

This guide is to help people understand the Code. Each section of this guide tells you where more information can be found in the full Code.

¹ Code processes cover learners who are in post-16 'further' education, but not those in 'higher' (university, etc.) education.

² This includes Education laws, as well as other important laws about discrimination, children and data protection, etc.

What do we want the Code of Practice to achieve?

The Code aims to ensure that learners:

- are treated with respect,
- have their needs recognised, and
- are given the support they need to help them develop towards their fullest potential.

The diagram below shows what it is intended the Code will support learners with ALN to be:

³ These are the outcomes sought by the Guernsey Curriculum and Children and Young People's Plan.

Figure 1. The outcomes wanted for all learners³



2 Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

See Chapter 2 of the Code for more information.

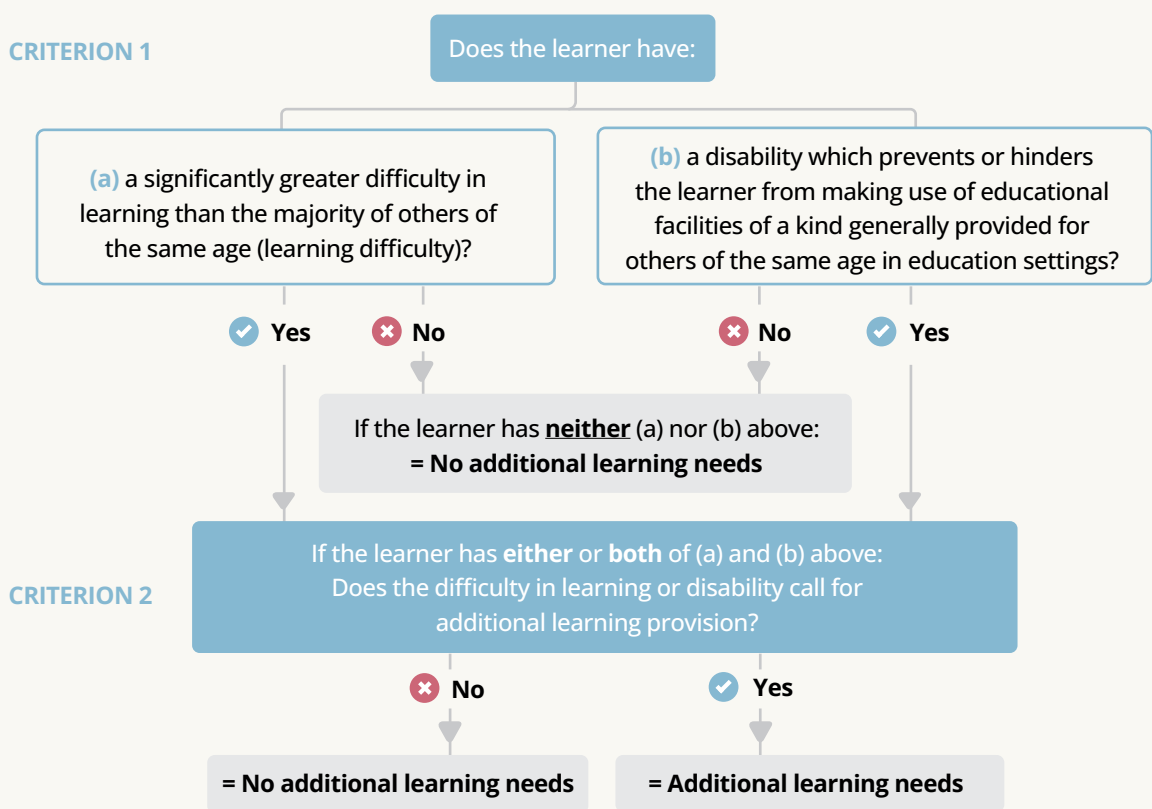
What are additional learning needs?

Additional learning needs (ALN) are barriers to learning and participation that make it harder for a person to learn, compared to others of the same age. Education settings can help most learners succeed with changes to how they teach and do things and the resources they provide. But some children and young people will need provision that is additional to or different from the high-quality inclusive practice that should be available to every learner.

The cause of a learner's difficulty, or barrier to learning, may include a disability or medical condition (see sections 2.3 and 2.12 of the Code).

The diagram below shows how to tell if a learner has ALN:

Figure 2. How to tell if a learner has ALN. This assumes that high quality inclusive practice is already in place.



Disability and reasonable adjustments

Education settings must not treat any learner unfairly because of a disability.⁴ They must also make reasonable adjustments to help reduce any substantial disadvantage⁵ that a disabled learner might face compared to other learners.

⁴ Prevention of Discrimination (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2022.

⁵ More than minor or trivial.

What is 'reasonable' will depend on the circumstances. It is important that adjustments should meet the learner's needs. Other things to consider include available resources and impact on other learners. Adjustments might include, for example, changes to teaching approaches, learning materials, or the classroom environment, etc.

If a learner's first language is not English, does that mean they have a learning difficulty?

The law says that learners do not have learning difficulties just because their first language is not English, although, of course, some of these learners may also have ALN.

Other (non-ALN) needs

Some children may have other, non-ALN, needs – for example to do with their wider health and development, or family or environmental factors. There are separate systems and processes to support other needs. If setting staff think that a learner might benefit from early help from other local services, they can speak to parents about doing a simple 'Early Help' assessment to look at this.



Principles



See Chapter 3 of the Code for more information.



High quality inclusive practice as the foundation

Skilled educators should know each learner's abilities, believe that they can do well, and be able to identify ways to help them learn.



Inclusive education that focuses on removing barriers to learning

All learners should access shared opportunities in ways that meet their needs and give a sense of belonging. Learners with ALN should be included alongside those without ALN where possible.



A rights-based learner-centred approach

Learners' views, wishes, and feelings - along with those of parents/carers - should guide planning and support. They should be informed and involved in decision-making at every stage.



Early identification, intervention and review

Needs should be identified and addressed as early as possible, with regular reviews to assess the impact of support.



Joined-up working and clear responsibilities

Individuals and organisations supporting a learner should work together to provide coordinated, learner-focused support.



Effective preparation for the future

Support should aim for the best educational and other outcomes. Transitions should be well-planned and tailored to the learner's needs, preparing them for adulthood.



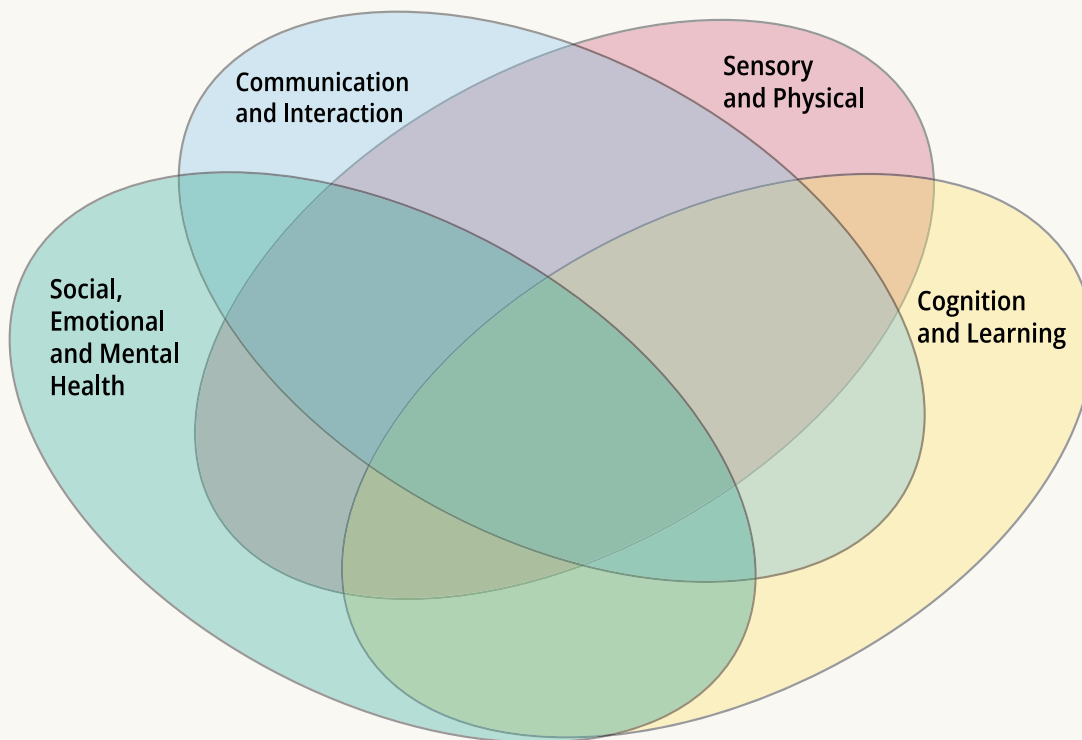
Resource constraints: Resources also have to be considered. The States of Guernsey provides many services to support islanders. It has a duty to use public money wisely. Support for each learner has to consider the resources available - such as funding, staff, and equipment - so that it remains fair, effective and sustainable for everyone.

4 The Broad Areas of Support

See Chapter 4 of the Code for more information.

Generally, needs that might require support through additional learning provision fall into four broad areas. These are shown in the diagram below and are explained on the next page.

Figure 3. The Broad Areas of Support



The diagram shows how areas can overlap - learners may have needs that fall into more than one area. Every learner is different and any support that is put in place should carefully consider their specific individual needs and what will help them to be successful in their learning.

Emphasising strengths and positives

Support should help learners grow by building on what they are already good at, while also guiding them through areas that are more challenging. Every child learns and expresses themselves in their own way, and it is important that support reflects that.

Cognition and learning

Some learners may learn at a slower pace than their peers or have specific difficulties (like with reading or maths). They might need help with organisation or memory skills.

Communication and interaction

Some learners may find it hard to understand or use language, or to interact socially. Support should match how they communicate and help them take part in learning.

Sensory and/or physical needs

Some learners may face challenges related to their senses or physical development. These can range from mild to complex. Support should ensure they can access learning and are included.

Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)

Learners may have difficulties getting on with others, managing/dealing with feelings, or with their mental health/wellbeing. This can affect behaviour. Support should look at these areas and consider any underlying reasons.



5 The Continuum of Support

 See Chapter 5 of the Code for more information.

To help all learners succeed, any additional learning needs (ALN) should be identified as early as possible. This helps remove barriers to learning and development. Settings should regularly check how learners are progressing to help spot any needs early, as well as listen to any concerns from learners and parents/carers.

The foundation for every learner

Settings should make sure **high quality inclusive practice** is in place for every learner. This means that skilled educators should know each learner's abilities, believe that they can do well, and be able to identify ways to help them learn. More information can be seen on the Education pages on the States of Guernsey website, at gov.gg/HQIP. Every learner should be able to learn about a wide and balanced range of subjects.

Additional/different support that suits the learner

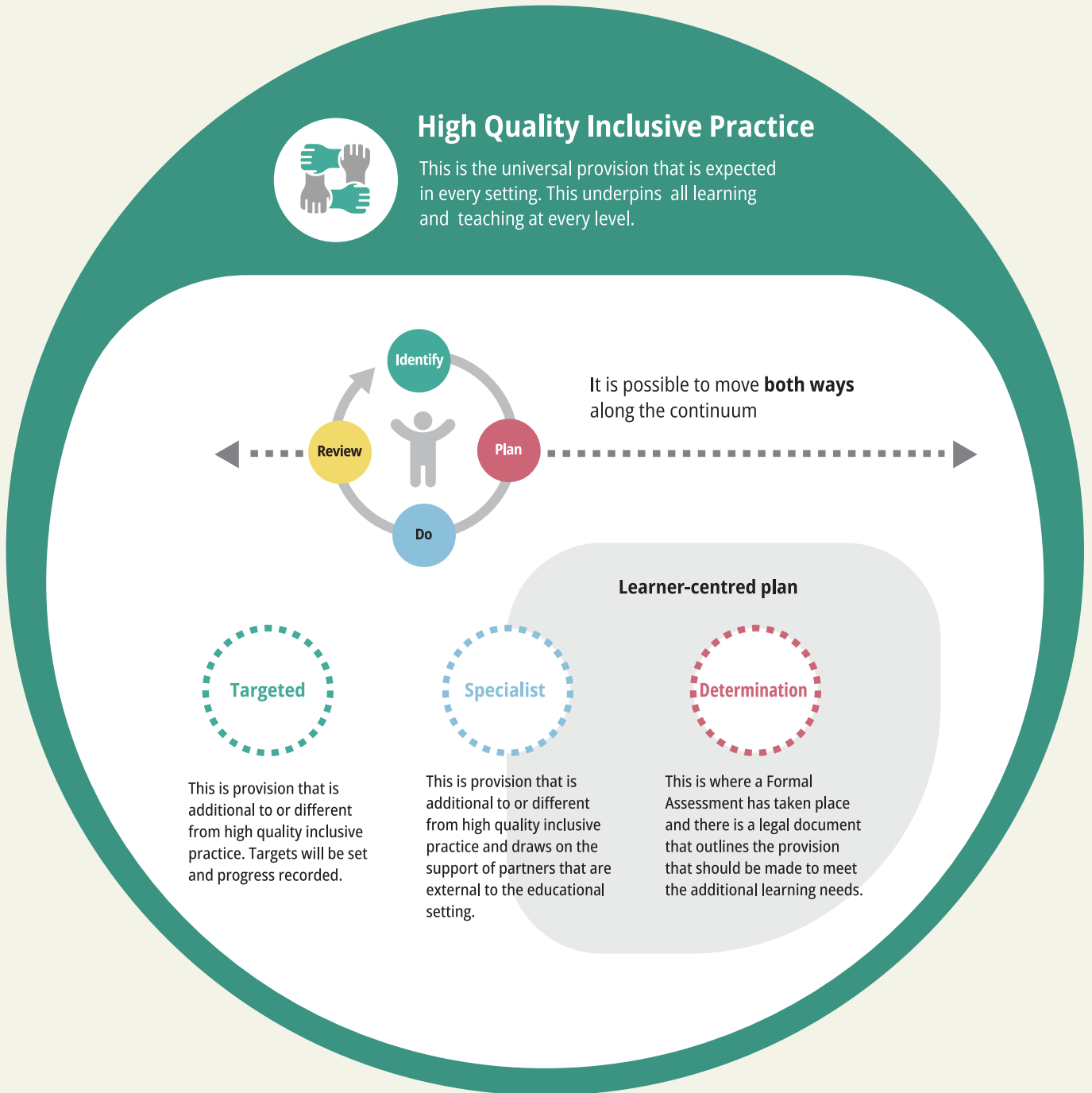
There are different types of support for learners who need more than high quality inclusive practice. Support should match each learner's needs. Needs can change over time, so support should be flexible. Learners may receive:

- **Targeted support** for specific needs – this is additional or different support provided by the setting
- **Specialist support** for more complex needs – this is where services from outside the setting also provide input/support to help the learner
- **A Determination** if their needs are very complex – this is where the Education Office is involved and issues a formal document⁶ that says what provision the learner needs, and makes sure they can receive it. (This is talked about more in section 10 of this guide.)

⁶ Issued under Education law. (Section 7 of The Education (Amendment) (Guernsey) Law, 1987.)

This is shown in the diagram on the next page and is called the 'Continuum of Support'.

Figure 4. Continuum of Support



6 Roles and Responsibilities

 See Chapter 6 of the Code for more information.

Everybody in education is responsible for ensuring that the law is followed.⁷ This includes helping to make sure that processes or behaviours are not discriminatory to learners with disabilities.

⁷ This includes Education laws, as well as other important laws about discrimination, children and data protection, etc.

The following roles are particularly important in supporting learners with ALN.



Educators

Teachers, Lecturers, Early Years staff

- Teach all learners inclusively
- Know learners' rights and needs
- Follow the Graduated Approach (section 7 in this guide)
- Work with parents/carers
- Talk with the ALNCo and specialists



ALNCo (Additional Learning Needs Coordinator)

Staff member in charge of ALN support at a setting

- Help make sure inclusive teaching happens
- Help create ALN policies
- Coordinate ALN support in the setting
- Work with families, educators, and services
- Lead learner-centred planning and assessments



Headteacher or Principal

Leader of the school or setting

- Lead inclusive practice
- Make sure the ALN Code is followed
- Ensure staff are trained and inclusive
- Give the ALNCo time to undertake their role
- Manage budget for ALN resources
- Support staff development



Governance Board for the setting

People that help to support and challenge the setting

- Ensure the setting supports learners with ALN



Education Office*

Officers who support education settings and services

- Have an oversight of provision and policy for learners with ALN (within settings and services)
- Promote inclusion, equal opportunities and wellbeing
- Share the ALN Code of Practice
- Provide and monitor Education support services
- Build partnerships (with families, settings and services/other organisations)
- Undertake Formal Assessments and issue Determinations

* Acting on behalf of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture.



Education Support Services

Specialists from Education, Sport & Culture

- Help staff improve inclusive teaching
- Support early identification and interventions
- Give expert advice
- Work with families and professionals
- Help with assessments and reviews
- Share useful information with settings and families



Non-Education Support Services & Other Organisations

Health & Social Care services, charities, commissioned services

- Help identify learners' needs and give advice
- Tell families and schools if a learner may need ALN support
- Listen to learners and families
- Work with other services
- Provide inclusive support
- Help learners prepare for adulthood

7 The Graduated Approach

See the following chapters in the Code for more information:

- **7** - Early Years (0-5 years)
- **8** - 5-16 Years
- **9** - Post-16 Education⁸

⁸ Code processes cover learners who are in post-16 'further' education, but not those in 'higher' (university, etc.) education. Chapter 9 does though include some information about support available for higher education.

If staff think a learner may have additional learning needs (ALN), they will talk to the learner and their parents or carers. Parents/carers or learners can also raise concerns themselves.

If ALN is identified, the setting will take steps to remove barriers and provide appropriate support. This support should follow a four-step cycle called the Graduated Approach, which is shown below:

Figure 5. The Graduated Approach

Review

At the agreed time, check how well the support is working. Everyone involved looks at whether the goals are being met and decides if any changes are needed.

Do

Put the support into action. Educators work with the learner, while the ALNCo and other staff help monitor how things are going.



Identify

Find out what the learner needs help with. This includes talking to the learner, parents/carers, educators and checking records. If needed, ask specialists for advice.

Plan

Agree on what the support should help the learner to achieve. Everyone involved (the learner, parents/carers, and staff) should help decide what kind of support is needed. Set a date to review progress.

Everyone who works with the learner should be made aware of their needs and the support that should be provided.

Learner-Centred Planning and Reviews

 See Chapter 10 of the Code for more information.

Learner-centred planning ensures the learner's voice is central. It helps make sure each learner gets appropriate support for their individual needs.

Learner-centred planning meetings and reviews should happen for learners with more complex needs where more people are involved. This includes all learners needing Determination-level support (see section 5), and some learners needing specialist support. Learner-centred planning meetings and reviews for these cases should include:

The People



- Learner (as appropriate)
- Parents/carers
- Other people the learner would like to be there to support them
- Key staff (e.g. educators, ALNCo, support service staff)
- A 'Facilitator' to guide and support inclusive discussion

Key Questions



- What is important to the learner now and in the future?
- What is working/not working?
- What can be done to change things from 'not working' to 'working'?
- What support is best?
- What provision will be put in place and how?
- What progress has been made on targets set at the last meeting?

Everyone should share information and their thoughts about the key questions. A clear plan should then be agreed, including who will do what, and when things will be reviewed. A record of the meeting should be sent to everyone who attended.

9 Transition

See Chapter 11 of the Code for more information.

It is very important to carefully plan for when a learner moves from one environment to another. This may be between classes, year groups or settings. The Graduated Approach (explained in section 7 of this guide) should help everyone involved to think about changes that are coming up.

Some learners with ALN may need more support with transitions than other learners. Planning for transition should include everyone involved and all relevant information should be shared. Planning should start far enough ahead of the change to make sure the learner can be fully supported.



Formal Assessment and Determinations

 See Chapter 12 of the Code for more information.

Most learners with ALN get the help they need through targeted or specialist support. But if a learner is not making suitable progress in their learning despite this help, the Education Office may need to carry out a 'Formal Assessment'. This assessment helps decide whether a formal plan, called a 'Determination', is needed to ensure the learner receives appropriate support.

Most requests for a Formal Assessment will be made through the learner's setting, but parents may also ask the Education Office for one. The Education Office will carefully look at all the information available to see if a Formal Assessment is needed.

A Formal Assessment gathers information from educators, specialists, learners and parents/carers. It considers the learner's strengths, learning needs and any relevant health or care factors. The Education Office looks at what kind of support is required and what resources are available, before making a decision.

- Sometimes, a Formal Assessment will find that the setting may be able to help the learner make more progress by using what it already has, but in a different way. The existing support plan will be updated so this can happen.
- In other cases, a Determination will be produced. This is a formal document, issued under the Education Law. It describes what additional learning provision a learner should get and the Education Office makes arrangements for that support, unless parents make their own suitable arrangements.

A Determination may say that a learner can be supported in their current education setting, or it may recommend moving to a different setting that can better suit their needs. A detailed plan should be produced to show how the required support will be given.

Families are kept informed throughout the process. Where a Determination is thought to be needed, they have the right to share their views about the proposals, and to ask for a meeting.

In rare cases, a short-term placement may be offered at a setting, to help gather more information before deciding on long-term support (an 'assessment placement').

Where a Determination is in place, the learner's progress will be monitored through regular reviews, including a formal Annual Review. If their needs change, the Determination can be updated or even removed if it is no longer needed. The goal is always to ensure the learner receives appropriate help in a suitable learning environment.

11 Resolving Concerns and Differences of Opinion / Disagreements

 See Chapter 13 of the Code for more information.

There are various ways that differences of opinion may be considered, depending on the issue.

General concerns and complaints

In most cases, it will be appropriate to use the normal complaints procedures:

- For matters about education settings and other services provided by the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture: www.gov.gg/ComplimentsCommentsandComplaintsEducation
- For matters about services provided by the Committee *for* Health & Social Care: www.gov.gg/CCCHSC

Education settings that are not maintained by the States will have their own procedures.

Concerns about Determinations

If parents or carers disagree with any part of a **Proposed Determination**, they can share their views with the Education Office. Learners can also give their views, as appropriate. These views will be considered before any formal Determination is made.

For other concerns about a Determination (including where one is not issued), there is an appeals process available.

Appeals about arrangements for placement outside the jurisdiction

If the 'Children out of Jurisdiction Panel' has made decisions around placement of a learner outside of Guernsey and Alderney, that learner, or their parent/ other person with parental responsibility, can appeal the decision.

Discrimination on the grounds of disability

From January 2026, schools and education providers in Guernsey must not treat learners unfairly based on protected grounds, including disability. Complaints about discrimination can be made to an independent tribunal. The Employment and Equal Opportunities Service (EEOS) can also investigate concerns, even if no tribunal complaint has been made.

Differences of opinion between professionals

If the professional staff supporting a child have different views, they should try to work things out together, always thinking about what is in the best interests of the learner. If they still cannot agree, they should involve other relevant people. Complaints procedures can be used if needed.

Information, Guidance and Support

 See Chapter 14 of the Code for more information.

It is important that families have easy access to information and advice to help them understand the ALN system/arrangements, and their rights. Publication of information also helps promote a shared understanding between everyone involved.

Information published by the Education Office for learners and families can be found on the [ALN Information Website](https://www.gov.gg/education) (see [gov.gg/education](https://www.gov.gg/education)).



Learners in Specific Circumstances



See Chapter 15 of the Code for more information.

Learners being educated outside of States-maintained schools

The law says that parents have to make sure their child (5-16 years) is in suitable full-time education. This can be through going to school, or 'otherwise' (including home education). Wherever a learner is educated, any ALN must be supported. If there are concerns the education doesn't meet their needs, Education Officers (on behalf of the Committee) must take action.

Schools that aren't maintained by the States

Some learners go to a school that isn't maintained by the States. These schools should tell parents/carers how they support learners with ALN. If a learner is found to have ALN, the school should regularly check their progress and give them support that is suited to their needs.

If someone is worried about a learner's ALN, they can contact the Education Office. If the Office thinks a learner might need a Determination, it will carry out a Formal Assessment (see section 10 of this guide). A parent can request assessment.

If a learner has a Determination, parents may make their own suitable arrangements for provision. This could be at a school not maintained by the States. An Annual Review gives the opportunity to consider if the support is still suitable.

Home education

Some parents educate their children outside of a school. The Education Office should give information to families who are home educating or are thinking about it.

Visits by Education Officers should give parents the opportunity to show that the learner is getting a suitable education, and to talk about any concerns.

If a home-educating parent/carer thinks a learner may have ALN they can contact the Education Office. If the Office thinks they might need a Determination, it will carry out a Formal Assessment (see section 10 of this guide). A parent can request assessment.

If a learner has a Determination, parents may make their own suitable arrangements for provision. This could include through home education. If a learner is already registered at a States-maintained specialist school, the Committee has to consent for them to be withdrawn from the setting. An Annual Review gives the opportunity to consider if support is still suitable.

Learners moving to Guernsey (and Alderney) who have had a relevant support plan elsewhere

Some learners who move to Guernsey will have needs that have already been identified. Education support plans from other places don't apply directly in Guernsey.

Parents should share information about any known needs, and relevant documents, when applying for a place in an education setting. This will help people decide what support is needed. If a specialist setting might be suitable, the learner may be offered an assessment placement (usually two terms) to check this and help decide if a Formal Assessment is needed.

Families who want to home educate should inform the Education Office.

Children in care and care-experienced learners

Children who are in care may have ALN. They will also have experienced other challenges. All States Committees share responsibility for supporting the wellbeing, education, and development of children in care.

Care status and care needs should be considered when planning ALN support. Education settings should follow both the Code and any States of Guernsey guidance for promoting the education of children in care.

When a learner leaves care or is adopted, it does not change their earlier experiences. Support for any ALN should continue to consider and respect those earlier experiences, as appropriate.

Learners in 'alternative' provision (for learners registered at an education setting)

Alternative provision is education that takes place away from the main setting site during the school day. This may happen if a learner has barriers to receiving education at their setting.

Alternative arrangements should provide efficient education that is suitable to the learner, including any ALN. Part-time education may be appropriate in some cases. If a learner has difficulties with attendance, engagement or behaviour, staff should consider if they may have unidentified ALN. If a learner has a Determination, the provision must satisfy it.

The ALNCo from the registered setting should monitor support. Relevant staff from the registered setting and any specialists should work with the alternative provider, as appropriate, to support the learner. If the learner is returning to their registered setting, this should be carefully planned for.

Learners placed outside of Guernsey and Alderney

In exceptional cases, a learner may be placed outside of Guernsey and Alderney to get the support they need. This only happens where there are very complex needs and ALN is likely to be just one of multiple factors. Arrangements are made by a special Panel that has representatives from the Committees *for* Education, Sport & Culture and Health & Social Care.


Learners with ALN in secure settings

It is very rare for learners to be placed in prison or secure accommodation. If this happens, States Committees should work together to make sure the learner receives suitable education as soon as possible.

Plans should consider the views of the learner and their parents/carers (as appropriate), and any known ALN. If a learner has a Determination, the education provision must match it as closely as possible. ALN support plans should be reviewed and updated as needed.

If a learner will be returning to an education setting afterwards, this should be planned in advance, by a team of professionals.

Glossary of Key Terms (A-Z)

 More terms can be seen in the Glossary in the Code document.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN):

A learner has ALN if they have barriers to learning and participation that make it harder to learn, compared to others of the same age, and they need provision that is additional to, or different from, the high quality inclusive practice that should be available to every learner.

ALNCo:

Staff member overseeing ALN support in an education setting.

Committee (the):

The Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture.

Determination:

Formal document stating what support a learner with complex ALN should get. The Committee (*for* Education, Sport & Culture) will make arrangements for that support, unless parents make their own suitable arrangements.

Education Office:

States of Guernsey officers who support education settings and services.

Education Setting:

Place where a learner receives their education. For example, a pre-school, a school or a further education college, etc.

Formal Assessment:

Process to decide if a Determination is needed.

Graduated Approach:

Cycle of 'identify, plan, do, review' to support ALN.

Inclusive Practice:

Teaching that adapts to meet all learners' needs.

Inclusion:

Ensuring all learners can participate and achieve.

Learner:

Someone receiving education. The Code covers learners between the ages of 0 and 25 years and receiving early years (0-5 years), primary, secondary or further (post-16) education.



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