

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales  
Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and  
Education Committee

Blaenoriaethau ar gyfer y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Priorities for  
the Children, Young People and Education Committee

CYPE 33

Ymateb gan : Afasic Cymru

Response from : Afasic Cymru

**Question 1** – Within the remit set out above: what do you consider to be the priorities or issues that the Children, Young People and Education Committee should consider during the Fifth Assembly?

You may be aware of an ongoing campaign by parents to save Meadowbank School in Cardiff from closure and retain its specialist provision for speech, language and communication needs (SLCN); with this in mind we consider that priority should be given to the Educational Provision of speech, language and communication support in Wales for learners aged 0–25.

Earlier this year the Welsh Government commissioned the People and Work Unit to map the educational provision of learners with speech, language and communication needs across Wales. The unpublished feedback on the research undertaken included comments on the

- complexity of the context,
- cross-cutting impacts on children and young people across the age range,
- capacity and workforce development issues,
- postcode lottery for services including specialist services.

A speech, language and communication need (SLCN) may be associated with environmental factors, general developmental needs, medical needs, learning disability, or be unexplained without an obvious cause in an individual where other skills are developing in a typical pattern.

A speech, language and communication need (SLCN) may affect a child or young person's ability to understand, join in conversations, manage their emotions, ask questions, learn to read and write, and develop their reasoning. CYPE 33 Afasic Cymru

Persisting SLCN can cut across the whole of an individual's development;

affecting learning, attainment, behaviour, self-esteem, inclusion, independence and long-term life prospects. (A Generation Adrift 2013 The Communication Trust)

[https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/31961/tct\\_genadrift.pdf](https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/31961/tct_genadrift.pdf)

**Question 2** – From the list of priorities or issues you have identified, what do you consider to be the key areas that should be considered during the next 12 months (please identify up to three areas or issues)? Please outline why these should be considered as key priorities.

In view of the serious and cross cutting impacts that SLCN has on children, young people and families, there is a need for action.

Although the development of the ALN legislation is a central component, it does not encompass the cross cutting nature of these needs and their impacts.

The commissioned research identified the need for a cross sectorial strategy to draw together policy areas and improve the outcomes and consistency of services for children and young people with speech, language and communication needs across Wales.

Afasic Cymru is concerned that the development of such a strategy may not be prioritised due to the complexity of the context and the known capacity issues.

The research by the People and Work Unit remains unpublished in the public domain and there is a need for an open and transparent approach by the Welsh Government.

Afasic Cymru would welcome the scrutiny of whether and how this research will be taken forward to inform a strategy for the benefit of children and young people with SLCN in Wales.