

Inquiry into the Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009



NDCS Cymru Response

22 November 2011

About Us

The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Cymru is the national charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

We represent the interests and campaign for the rights of all deaf children and young people from birth until they reach independence.

NDCS Cymru is concerned that many young deaf people experience difficulties in achieving employment. Indeed, research conducted with people who are severely and profoundly deaf in 2007 (a time of near full employment) showed that deaf people were four times more likely to be unemployed than the general population.¹

NDCS Cymru believes that education has a great influence over the life chances of children and young people, and we are therefore keen to ensure that post-16 learning opportunities in Wales are fully inclusive and accessible to the young deaf population.

Please note: NDCS represents children with mild, moderate, severe and profound hearing loss, as well those with a unilateral or temporary loss.

Response

NDCS Cymru welcomes the opportunity to respond to this inquiry. Although we are not in a position to comment on the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009, we would like to take this opportunity to highlight a couple of points, which we hope will be useful in reviewing this Measure.

Moving forward, NDCS Cymru considers it vital that Learner Support Coaches, Personal Support, and Careers advisors are able to provide appropriate support to pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). For example, efforts must be made to ensure that Learner Support Coaches working with deaf young people are able to communicate effectively with them. It is also important that such coaches are aware of Access to Work entitlements and of any specialist deaf FE provision that may be of benefit to the young people they are working with. NDCS Cymru would welcome further discussions with the Welsh Government on this matter.

¹ RNID (2007), Opportunities Blocked.

NDCS Cymru believes that deaf young people should be entitled to equality of opportunity, and in order to achieve this, it is imperative that individual support needs are met. Some deaf young people may require particular communication support in order to access mainstream courses, while others may require a placement at a specialist out-of-county FE college. NDCS Cymru wishes to highlight that, in light of the fact that there are no specialist deaf colleges in Wales, it is not always possible to meet deaf student's needs within the local region.