

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar gyfer yr ymchwiliad: [A oes gan blant a phobl ifanc anabl fynediad cyfartal at addysg a gofal plant?](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) for the inquiry: [Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare?](#)

AEC 10

Ymateb gan: Unigolyn
Response from: Individual

I am giving evidence as a parent of a child suspected of having autism. I am also a school governor [REDACTED]

My daughter is 9 and suspected of having autism, she has been on the waiting list for assessment since April 2021 despite requesting for her to be assessed from age 3. My [REDACTED] was an SENCO for many years and picked up she had autistic traits from a very young age. The doctors refused to refer her as only school can refer them for assessment and wrote a letter to the school to confirm this but school would not refer until she turned 6. Coronavirus delayed that referral until age [REDACTED]. The waiting list was 2 years when my daughter got referred last April (after covid) so she will not be seen until April 2024. The waiting list for assessment in my area is now 3 years.

Despite my g.p repeatedly writing to CAHMS asking them to take my daughter as she suffers with anxiety/depression (mostly due to her struggles navigating school) and her behaviour is very violent at home and threatens to hurt herself and saying she does not want to live anymore CAHMS will not accept her as she is on the waiting list for assessment. The g.p also wrote to CAHMS to request they prescribe my daughter melatonin as g.ps cannot prescribe it as she does not sleep well and it is affecting her school but this also got refused as she is on the waiting list for assessment.

As with many autistic children my daughter masks at school. She is very shy and quite and will not tell anyone when she has a problem in school even when she started her period at school she was too scared to tell anyone she waited and suffered until she knew I would be at the school later that day [REDACTED]. She will continually mask all day which exhausts her then let's out all her feelings (often violently) when she gets home as it is her safe space but due to this masking, not having bad behaviour at school, not struggling academically although she is quite a way behind her peers on maths she is refused access to the educational psychologist or to have an IDP despite stating she will need an IDP when she goes to secondary school and what really needs to be on her IDP is on her one page profile which has taken until a fortnight ago to even get a one page profile. School did agree to use a communication profile i devised for my daughter [REDACTED] but neither is strictly followed or the information passed to support or supply staff which often results in an incident such as my daughter

being made to move where she sits or forced to record herself in front of people which clearly states on both her communication and one page profile she cannot do. I feel if she had this on an IDP then it would be followed by all staff better.

The lack of support/school staffs lack of knowledge including the ALNCO on autism has resulted in my daughter refusing to go to school, going late to school as she locks herself in her bedroom crying or shutting down curled up in a ball staring into space, physical being sick, suffering anxiety and depression, threatening to harm herself and stating she does not want to live anymore. I fear without an IDP, access to support (such as CAHMS) and access to medication such as melatonin the g.p cannot prescribe and CAHMS will not see her due to awaiting assessment that when she goes to secondary school next year she will end in total school refusal and progress from threats of hurting herself to actually hurting herself and her violence at home get even worse. I already get punched, kicked and home smashed up on a daily basis.

Children are being refused IDPs on the basis schools do not listen to parents, not having basic training in autism including ALNCOs to understand masking and autism traits for eg I was told loud talking/shouting does not bother my daughter as she does not cover her ears and cower. This is not the case, my daughter cannot stand a TV on unless it's a news channel and then will sit in the corner of a room on a floor while it's on but she likes music.

Children are being refused support while on the waiting lists for years.

I have been on the training for the new ALN procedures as a school governor and was very disappointed in it as it seems as if it is designed to get less children on the ALN register which is certainly proving correct.

The decision if a child has ALN should be based on BOTH parent and schools observations and parents listened to more not just schools observations of these children as autistic children especially girls mask when they are around people or in a place they do not deem safe such as school then will completely break down when they get home to their safe space.

There needs to be more training on understanding autism in schools by teachers and support staff I have even had a dinner lady recently calling my daughter rude then messaging me calling my daughter the rudest child in 18 years and that there's been a change in her behaviour I do not believe this dinner lady has any understanding of autism and being labeled a naughty child due to it and I have been assured by my daughters teachers that she is never rude to any staff and there has been no change in her behaviour if there had and she was having bad behaviour in school then she could get the support I have been requesting as in educational psychologist phase B and an IDP but she is too well behaved so cannot have it.