



Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) Guidance 2023/24

Criteria and process



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This document is based on the Early Years National Funding Formula, outlining the guidance for local authorities and early years providers when allocating additional funding to support settings/schools to meet the needs of children with additional needs and disabilities:

1. A targeted Disability Access Fund (DAF), paid as an annual sum to providers in respect of children eligible for the three and four year old early education entitlement and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) taking up a place in their setting.
2. All local authorities are required to establish a SEN Inclusion Fund in their local funding systems for 3- and 4-year-olds with lower level or emerging SEN, taking the free entitlement.

Any existing SEN EY Inclusion Funding models must comply with the new guidance.

[Early Years National Funding Formula: Operational Guidance](#)

The Council believes by supporting settings with SEN EY Inclusion Funding for children in the early years, from their earliest start or when identified with need, we are enabling early intervention to enhance the development and ultimate outcomes for the children. This funding is also available to Childminding services who are educating or caring for children with SEND.

An allocated pot of funding would enable an Early Years setting to enhance their environment or run targeted interventions or develop specialist resources to best meet the needs of a number of children across the setting.

The funding has been available for those children who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), however in some cases funding has been deployed to settings as a top up to enable them to support a child with high levels of need, in the absence of the Notional £6k that schools have access to.

This funding is used towards purchasing specialist equipment to enable children in need to attend an early years setting.

Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund model in Hillingdon

Whilst reviewing the previous allocation process, feedback from EY settings identified a preference for a year's allocated funding rather than termly. This would positively support application processes for settings. The EY offer has also been adapted to support settings and the linked LA advisor to monitor progress for children on Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) through setting reviews.

Eligibility

The requirement from the 'Early Years National Funding Formula': *Changes to funding for three- and four-year-old's (government response)* is 'to provide funding for 3- and 4- year old's who are taking up any number of hours of free entitlement'. The document explicitly states that it does not require local authorities to provide funding for 2-year-olds, but that they may wish to decide for themselves to use a similar approach.

If it is clear from an early stage of assessment and identification that a child's needs will require a more intensive level of support, a practitioner should consider compiling evidence that will support an application for Early Support Funding (ESF) or, for children with long-term and severe disabilities, an EHCP. If applying for either, the application should demonstrate clear and well documented Assess, Plan, Do, Review evidence over a period of time. This should be done in partnership with parents and evidenced clearly on a My Support Plan (MSP) that is outcome driven and person centered. If ESF or EHCP funding is allocated, any outstanding Inclusion funding will cease. Settings must notify the LA if the child moves on to any other stream of funding (ESF, EHCP) and complete the following form <https://forms.office.com/r/sRtTmqPyRd>

Most children with a High Level of Need will already be known to other services e.g., Portage. These children will already have a high level of supporting documentation in place that will enable this process to be smooth and swift. Early Years SEND advisors will be able to offer some guidance as to which funding route may be the most suitable to pursue (funding allocation is not guaranteed).

Funding from this route is for children who sit at the SEN support level where their emerging needs require targeted intervention and intensive support, beyond what would typically be provided in good quality Hillingdon provision.

This would mean that the following groups would be eligible:

- Children aged 0 – 3 years of age where parents/carers are paying the cost of placement or other funding streams are supporting their placement
- 2-year-olds in receipt of 2-Year-old Funding
- 3- and 4-year-olds in receipt of any number of hours of Early Education Entitlement

The following groups would not be eligible:

- Early Years children with SEND who attend an out of borough setting
- Children who have access to High Needs funding through an EHCP or Early Support Funding
- Children who are eligible or in receipt of Disability Living Allowance from the age of 3, including those accessing Disability Access Fund
- Children who are in Reception classes

Children with SEND accessing 30 hours:

- The LA will allocate EY Inclusion Funding to support children in receipt of 30 hours of early years education
- Settings supporting children with SEND through their 30-hour entitlement alongside another Early Years setting may receive EY Inclusion Funding, even if the child's additional setting is already in receipt of it.
- The funding allocated will be decided on by the panel, according to the needs of the child

Basic Criteria

EY Inclusion Funding will support early years children with a level of need identified in two or more of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) prime areas, (Personal, Social & Emotional Development, Communication & Language and Physical Development) or have complex needs in one area. EY Inclusion Funding also supports children who present behaviour that challenges due to various reasons, or sudden changes in their development due to their SEND.

It is intended that the SEN Inclusion Fund should 'target' children with lower level or emerging SEND' (SEND Support) to support early identification and intervention. However, the Council recognises the good practice in early years settings in the inclusion and support of children with more significant and complex needs.

Therefore, the funding should also be used to support children with more significant and profound needs to access early years education during the initial assessment of needs. Where there are thought to be severe and complex needs which require significant assessment and support to access learning, then the supporting professionals from SAS may refer the case for consideration at a higher rate. This referral will be considered at the newly developed multi-disciplinary EY tracking and Health Notification Panel which meets a week after the EYIF panel.

The criteria outlined above acts as a guidance when allocating funding however there may be anomalies and exceptions to the rule which will be carefully evaluated by the EY or multi-disciplinary panel. The Chairperson will make the final decision on all funding allocations.

Application Process

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The 'Early Years National Funding Formula: Changes to funding for three- and four-year-olds (government response)' states 'that local authorities should pass on funds to providers in the form of top-up grants on a case by case basis'.

The Council will allocate SEN EY Inclusion Funding (top-up fund) through an application route. The application will go to a panel consisting of SEND Advisory Service advisors an EY Inclusion Funding will then be allocated to the setting to help meet the needs of children applied for.

SENCOs will be asked to outline the needs of the child, the level of support required, strategies they have already implemented and how funding over the coming year will enhance the setting's ability to help the child reach their intended outcomes. The setting will be expected to provide evidence of the child's attendance, and this will also be monitored by the linked SAS advisors. All applications are reviewed on a person-centered basis and the decision to award funding is at the discretion of the Panel.

To apply for EYIF please submit the following form <https://forms.office.com/r/wa6PH9sjyC>

Funding Allocation:

The following calculations have been based upon the total amount available and the number of applications received last academic year, allowing for an increase of 2%.

Up to 10 hours = £390
 11-15 hours = £585
 16-20 hours = £780
 21-25 hours = £975
 26-30 hours = £1,170

For Example: Tom attends Nursery for 17 hours per week he would receive £780

When do we apply for EY Inclusion Funding?

EYIF applications will be accepted monthly. Please see dates for application submission and panel dates below. Clear dates will be communicated as to when applications have to be submitted to the LA. If a setting application is submitted after this date, there will be a requirement for them to defer their application to the following panel date and payment will not be backdated.

Settings must seek consent from parents or carers to inform them that they intend to apply for the Early Years Inclusion Fund and ensure they are on the settings SEND/Inclusion Register. Settings should ensure parents are aware that consent for only EYIF can be provided or consent for EYIF and support from an Early Years Advisor. Settings should record written consent from parent for auditing purposes which can be requested by the Local Authority. [Please see example copy of consent form.](#)

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE TOTALITY OF FUNDING AVAILABLE FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR IS £200,000. ONCE THIS FUNDING HAS BEEN EXHAUSTED, NO MORE APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Term	Panel dates	Deadline for submission
Autumn Term Application date	24 th October 2023 21 st November 2023 19 th December 2023	17 th October 2023 14 th November 2023 12 th December 2023
Spring Term Application date	23 rd January 2024 20 th February 2024 19 th March 2024	16 th January 2024 13 th February 2024 12 th March 2024
Summer Term Application Date	23 rd April 2024 21 st May 2024 18 th June 2024 23 rd July 2024	16 th April 2024 14 th May 2024 11 th June 2024 16 th July 2024

Early years providers will be notified of the multi-disciplinary panel's decision within a week of the multi-disciplinary panel. Funding will be sent to setting's bank accounts or transferred to maintained schools (nurseries) via the LA finance and tech support teams.

Monitoring progress:

EYIF is intended for children presenting with emerging needs and therefore funding will be provided for a maximum of 1 year. The progress of the child will be captured through the [EYIF Impact Form](#). This will usually be completed at the end of the academic year when funding is due to cease. However, if a child moves setting or accesses a different funding stream e.g., EHCP, ESF. EYIF will stop and you will be required to complete the EYIF Impact form. Progress will also be monitored by the linked LA advisor through the setting reviews. You will also be invited to list out key strategies that were used to support progress or other ways the money was deployed to support these children in your setting. The LA will monitor the impact of the EY Inclusion Funding that each setting receives as well as influence how funding is allocated.

All children accessing the Early Years Inclusion Funding will be discussed at setting review meetings with the Early Years Advisors. This is to ensure funding has supported the child in the setting and the progress that has been made.

The Council is committed to supporting children within the Early Years to achieve their full potential and be supported with effective strategies, teaching, interventions and transitions.

Expectations and Stipulations
SEN Support

Stipulations for use of EY Inclusion Funding

1	Resources and equipment to enhance the setting's capacity to better meet the needs of children with SEND. Providing and setting in place 'reasonable adjustments' in order to make a space, activity or provision accessible for children with SEND.
2	Additional adult support provided for an individual or group of children to enable them to better access the Early Years provision.
3	Adaptation of Environment / Areas (sensory, calm, physical development, heuristic play etc)
4	To develop or purchase visual strategy resources to enable the practitioners to support children's social, communication and cognitive development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of high quality visual support materials (timetables, 3D objects, visual or tactile objects of reference (haptic) story/song boards or learning area instruction cards) - Developing of social stories to support understanding of and participation in nursery activities as advised by your linked Inclusion Facilitator - To set up the use of PECS within the nursery as modelled by the child's Speech and language Therapist and / or your linked Early years Advisor.
5	To attend a speech and language therapy session to observe ideas and strategies that could be implemented in nursery.
6	To enable staff to engage targeted child/ren in intensive interaction to develop language, listening and engagement as modelled by your linked EY SEND Advisor / SAS Advisor.
7	Resources or additional personnel put in place to support a child in reducing the frequency of behaviours that challenge.
8	To provide specialist care, intervention or resources to support children who have sensory impairment (VI/ HI)
9	Specialist training for staff to enable them to better teach, support and care for children with SEND.
10	Specialist and time bound interventions or group sessions to support children's development in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal, social or emotional development - Attention and Listening - Cognition and Learning - Speech, Language and Communication - Physical development