



Non-Statutory Funding Guidance

Early Support Funding (ESF) and
SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX)



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Hillingdon SEND & Inclusion Service

Guidance and Procedures for Educational Settings
(Childminders, PVI's, Schools and Colleges)

Accessing Hillingdon Non-Statutory Funding

Early Support Funding (ESF)

SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX)

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Non-Statutory Funding from London Borough of Hillingdon

Introduction and Rationale

The Expectations on Educational Settings

The leaders of educational settings should establish and maintain a culture of high expectations that encourages those working with children and young people with SEN or disabilities to include them in all the opportunities available to other children and young people so they can achieve well (SEND CoP 2015; 1.31).

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, educational settings should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle of '**Assess, Plan, Do, Review**' (SEND CoP 2015; 6:44), implemented using a 'My Support Plan'.

An additional expectation is that settings will adhere to the Equality Act 2010 which states that 'schools are allowed to treat disabled pupils more favourably than non-disabled pupils, and in some cases are required to do so by making **reasonable adjustments** to put them on a more level footing with pupils without disabilities' (Equality Act 2010 and Schools 2014; 1.25).

Where support is required, over and above what is expected to be provided for all Children & Young People, including those with SEND (expectations are outlined in the '[Ordinarily Available Document](#)') then additional funding may be requested from the Local Authority, where specific criteria (outlined below) is met.

Early Support Funding (ESF)

What is Early Support Funding (ESF)?

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015 tells us that 'the responsible local authority should provide additional top-up funding where the cost of the special educational provision required to meet the needs of an individual pupil exceeds the nationally prescribed threshold' (SEND CoP 2015; 6.99).

ESF is the process Hillingdon uses to allocate High Needs Block Funding for individual children who have significant barriers to learning and so require special educational provision which costs more than the nationally prescribed threshold. It is for children whose needs are best met within a mainstream provision but who require resources outside of what is 'ordinarily available'.

Hillingdon has adopted an approach used by other local authorities who also delegate high needs funding to educational settings as a way of incentivising educational settings to be more inclusive and allowing them to use funding creatively' (London Councils - inclusive practice; 2019:25).

Utilising a flexible funding approach advocates early intervention and allows the necessary resource to be deployed in a timely manner. This approach supports settings to meet the needs of children and young people who are experiencing challenges within the mainstream setting.

The Principles underpinning the development of Early Support Funding (ESF)

- To allow educational settings to access funding quickly, which will enable them to intervene early and have the greatest impact for children/young people.
- To embed a person-centred approach, using the 'Team Around the Child/Young Person' (TAC/YP) model to develop co-produced My Support Plans with parents/carers, children and young people.
- All Educational settings will continue to receive support from the SEND Advisory Service (SAS) further enabling children and young people to make progress and meet their agreed outcomes.
- Supports the inclusion of children and young people in mainstream settings as per UNCRC (1989) and UNESCO (1994).
- It is '**needs led**' therefore the amount allocated is specific to the Child/Young person (CYP), as deemed appropriate by the multi-disciplinary panel. There is no ceiling or specified range.
- Parents will retain the right to apply for an Education and Health Care needs assessment (EHCNA) as outlined in the SEND CoP 2015.
- The information in this document is designed to provide a decision-making process that is consistent, objective and equitable. Hillingdon SEND & Inclusion acknowledge that there will be occasions when exceptional circumstances & variables are present and such cases will be considered on an individual basis that may deviate from the prescriptive criteria

Further Clarification on distinction between ESF and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

- ESF through a 'My Support Plan' is not a replacement for an Education Health and Care Plan.
- Children and young people with **severe and long-term** needs will continue to have their needs met through an Education Health and Care Plan in line with the Code of Practice 2015.
- ESF is not an additional influx of resources available to the Local Authority and is funded through the same stream as Education Health and Care Plans.
- It is expected that as the number of children and young people who access ESF increases, due to an early intervention approach we will see a relative reduction in the total number of Education Health and Care Plans.

Accessing Early Support Funding (ESF)

Most children and young people in Hillingdon with SEND have their needs met within local mainstream early years providers, schools or colleges from within the resources normally available to them. To do this, educational settings must make a range of '*ordinarily available*' provision for all children and young people, including those with SEND from the totality of financial resources available to them.

A small number of children/young people will need a higher level of support than educational settings feel they can provide from their normal budget. These will be children and young people who have already

received a high level of support within the setting (SEN Support) however, they are not progressing or not progressing sufficiently well. For this group, all educational settings can apply for ESF.

Applications cannot be considered if the MSP is not signed by the parent/carer or young person (where appropriate). This indicates informed consent for sharing of information.

The following criteria **must** be adhered to.

The Child/Young Person **must**:

- Have significant barriers to learning which require support over and above what is considered 'Ordinarily Available' and thus incurs costs which are over and above any SEND notional budget
- Have a person-centred Hillingdon 'My Support Plan' (or similar documentation including sections listed in Hillingdon's My Support Plan) in place which has been created through the TAC/YP process
 - **Early Years:** This **must** contain clear evidence of the four-part cycle, Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR). Ensure there is a **minimum of 1 cycle** of APDR - properly reviewed for impact
 - **From Reception onwards:** This **must** contain clear evidence of the four-part cycle, Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR). Ensure there is **minimum of 1 cycle** of APDR - properly reviewed for impact. (Notional Budget should be used to support the assessment process).
- A Hillingdon provision map, with costings at LBH current rate of £12.70 for personnel
- Live in the London Borough of Hillingdon
- Be accessing a mainstream Early Years, including Private, Voluntary, or Independent settings (PVI), School or Post 16 setting within the London Borough of Hillingdon
- Be **on roll** and actively **attending** the educational setting which is making the application.
- Have a **clearly** and **correctly** costed provision map in place, in line with Hillingdon's expectations (see below).

Please note: Where a child of compulsory school age is not attending full time, the funding allocated will reflect the approximate hours of attendance. This can only be reviewed on a termly basis.

The Child/Young Person **must not**:

- Be in the process of applying for statutory assessment, undergoing statutory assessment or have an existing EHCP
- Have significant barriers to learning which are considered **severe** and **long-term** and are likely to result in the need for an EHCP
 - Where panel feel this is the case, the application will initially be declined, and the SEND team will be alerted. It is the applicant's responsibility to complete an EHCNA application form and submit any further evidence if appropriate
 - The SAS outcome letter should contain a link to enable the applicant to complete the EHC Needs Assessment request form with parental consent
 - All evidence previously submitted with the ESF application, will be made available to the SEND team
 - If the EHC Needs Assessment is declined, the SEND team will return the application to the SAS panel for further consideration for ESF
 - If ESF is agreed following a 'no to assess' letter from SEND Team, ESF will be backdated to the original ESF application date

The following implementation criteria also applies:

- If a CYP is in receipt of Early Year's SEND Inclusion funding (**EYIF**), then the LA must be notified through the ESF application form – EYIF will cease if the ESF application is successful
- A **SAS practitioner** will be allocated for all successful ESF applications to offer support / guidance on SEND provision and review progress
- Assessment of **impact** will be expected for **all** successful applications, through:
 - the regular, numerical review of 'My Support Plans'
 - the half-termly SAS advisor review
- Assessment of **impact** will be expected for **some** successful applications (to be discussed with SAS advisor), through the implementation of
 - The SCERTS Progress tracker for schools
 - The Developmental Journals for PVI's
 - see the Thresholds of support documents for more information – available in the SEND & Inclusion newsletter
- The Unique Pupil Reference Number (**UPRN**) must be provided (where applicable), which will allow academic progress tracking
- If a child is on a **reduced/part-time timetable**, this must be made clear as to why this is in place and how the hours are going to be increased. Successful applications will be awarded for 1 term to ensure stability of attendance. If your provision map is asking for full time hours:
 - If successful, funding will be *usually* be provided for 50% of agreed payment for 1 term – this will provide an average (attendance is likely to be less to start with and more to finish with) and is **not** subject to change during this period.
 - Applications can be made for subsequent terms at a higher rate providing evidence is provided to demonstrate the CYP is attending full-time. You should consult with your linked advisor to complete a renewal form

Requesting Early Support Funding (ESF)

To apply for ESF or for a continuation please complete the Google form which can be found via this link: [ESF Google Form](#) and send the documents listed below to saskeywork@hillingdon.gov.uk . Please send this information via a secure email, the following websites provide advice to enable you to check whether your email is secure <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/securing-government-email> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/set-up-government-email-services-securely> however if you are not sure, then items should be zipped (with encryption) and then emailed with the password being communicated a in a separate email.

Please include the following information documents/information:

- A 'My Support Plan'.
- A provision map detailing expenditure to date (or projected costs) in line with Hillingdon's expectations (see below)
- Any professional / medical reports outlining the resources the child/young person will require to meet the outcomes outlined in the My Support Plan.

Guidance for Effective Applications:

- Consider the suitability of the different funding options – choosing the correct route initially will prevent having to resubmit through different avenues:
 - Early Years SEND Inclusion funding
 - Pre-school / nursery children with emerging/unidentified needs – this allows for adjustment to an educational environment
 - SEND Exceptional Funding – see full criteria

- Short term funding (max 26 weeks), primarily suitable for unidentified significant, long-term, and complex needs
 - Early Support Funding – see full criteria
 - Significant barriers to learning which could be readily addressed through intermediate funding to provide intensive SEND support
 - EHC Needs Assessment and EHCP
 - Severe and long-term needs which require extensive, professional, long-term support through statutory funding
- Always adhere to criteria in this ESF guidance
- Exemplar applications are available to demonstrate effective applications: [PVI MSP exemplar](#) [School MSP exemplar](#)
- Submit a clear and concise 'My Support Plan' which clearly outlines the strengths/weaknesses of the child / young person. Click here for '[My Support Plan](#)' guidance
 - Use effective and holistic, SMART outcomes
 - Provide details of academic attainment and progress
 - Provide details of cognitive or therapeutic attainment and progress (where appropriate)
 - Evidence that strategies given have been incorporated and impact reviewed for at least 1 term
 - Ensure there is minimum **1 cycle of APDR** – properly reviewed for impact
 - Where the panel feels more evidence is required, they may request another round of APDR with an option to resubmit when achieved
- **Ensure the Provision map is costed for person-centred provision.** Click here for further details on provision mapping which is embedded in [MSP Guidance](#)
 - How to Cost:
 - Always use the LBH current rate of £12.70 for personnel
 - Provide hourly rate x no. of hours per day x no. hours per week x no. of weeks per year = total
 - Support for Early Years children can be costed up to 30 hours
 - Provide details of **all SEND support provision** in place and the panel will consider all elements and then deduct the notional budget (where applicable)
 - Duration of intervention/support which will be applied when calculated by LA
 - 1 academic year = 39 weeks
 - 1 term = 13 weeks
 - 2 terms = 26 weeks
 - What **CAN** be costed for:
 - An initial assessment by an Educational Psychologist can be included (up to maximum 1.5 days @ £550 per day). It is expected that the relevant recommendations are then transferred into the child's MSP and reviewed regularly.
 - Full-time 1:1 support is not guaranteed therefore personnel costings should be broken down e.g., intervention support / subject support required / lunchtime support
 - If 1:1 support is needed to access specific SEND interventions e.g., Attention Hillingdon, then in **exceptional** circumstances, the other adult leading the group can be costed on a ratio basis (only 1 other adult)
 - Ensure groups have been costed to the ratio of adult: child e.g., if CYP is attending a Lego-therapy group with 4 other children, the staffing cost would be divided by 5
 - Costings for physical resources will be considered

- Those which are purchased for the sole use of the child / young person will be considered for full costing – expectation is that these transition with the CYP
- Those which could be considered SEND specific, and will benefit others (e.g., Handwriting Without Tears) will be considered for partial costing (20% of total cost)
- What **CANNOT** be costed for:
 - SENCO / Head Teacher / Deputy / Core teaching
 - Do not cost for direct support from the above
 - Do not cost for meetings, preparing paperwork etc.
 - Assistance with personal care support (e.g., toileting, putting a jacket on)
 - Intervention Preparation time
 - On-going Educational Psychologist (EP) intervention, assessment, or support (beyond initial assessment)
 - Assessment or ongoing Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy or Occupational Therapy input
 - Before or After School clubs
 - Additional staffing support for off-site activities
 - Staff training e.g., Team Teach, understanding ASD (an extensive list of free training is available through SAS, but does not include positive handling)
 - Health training should be sought through Health
- Lunchtime 1:1 support will only be considered where the CYP:
 - Attends an organised lunchtime club – (this should be costed on a ratio basis) OR
 - Presents an extreme danger to self / others
 - Requires close medical supervision at all times
 - Requires intensive feeding (partially cost)

SEND Advisory Service Panel – Decision making

- ESF requests will be considered on a **weekly** basis as part of the SEND Advisory Service panel.
- Representatives will consist of ASD, Language, Early Years Advisors, Hearing, Visual, Multi-Sensory Specialist, Key Workers and Team Managers.
- All submitted paperwork will be reviewed in line with the Ordinarily Available documentation.
- Particular attention will be made to the agreed outcomes with the My Support Plan, the use of the four-part cycle approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) and the provision map.
- A decision will be made based on the evidence provided and the recommendations of those involved and the professional judgement of those who sit on the panel.

Resubmissions

If an ESF application is declined, then it may be appropriate for the setting to make a resubmission once they have implemented the feedback stated on the decision letter with support from the linked advisor. Once the adaptations have been made, it is the setting's responsibility to complete:

- the [SAS Resubmission Form](#)
- the [ESF Google Form](#)
- email the SAS resubmission form and supporting documents to saskeywork@hillingdon.gov.uk

It would be appreciated if settings could carbon copy in the linked advisor to this email. Resubmissions need to be submitted by 1pm the Friday before panel to be considered.

Please send this information via a secure email, the following websites provide advice to enable you to check whether your email is secure <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/securing-government-email> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/set-up-government-email-services-securely> however if you are not sure, then items should be zipped (with encryption) and then emailed with the password being communicated in a separate email.

Reviewing and Renewing Early Support Funding:

ESF is designed to be short/medium term support (approximately 2-3 years) to enable students to accelerate current progress in targeted areas and is not intended to be long-term. Please consider whether funding is still required before submitting a renewal request. Repeated renewals will be monitored and evaluated for appropriateness.

Educational settings should hold termly reviews and we encourage a 'Team Around the Child/Young Person' (TAC/YP) approach.

As stated on the ESF decision letter, the funding will cease on the date given. If settings feel that funding is still required, then it is their responsibility to reapply for ESF. This requires the setting completing:

- the [SAS Renewal Form](#)
- the [ESF Google Form](#)
- email the supporting documents to saskeywork@hillingdon.gov.uk

It would be appreciated if settings could carbon copy in the linked advisor to this email. Submissions need to be submitted by 1pm the Friday before panel to be considered.

Please note that ESF renewal applications should be made at least three weeks before the current funding is due to cease. If the funding cease date is at the start of the academic year, then settings may submit the renewal at the end of the summer term so they can appropriately plan for the new academic year.

The renewal applications will be reviewed via the multidisciplinary SEND Advisory Service panel. When reviewing the funding the panel will consider:

- The progress the child/young person has made towards the agreed outcomes.
- Whether the child requires the same level of support to continue to make appropriate progress.
- Whether the child/young person still requires ESF to make appropriate progress.
- Whether an increase or decrease in funding will be sufficient to meet the needs of the child/young person.

Please send this information via a secure email, the following websites provide advice to enable you to check whether your email is secure <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/securing-government-email> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/set-up-government-email-services-securely> however, if you are not sure, then items should be zipped (with encryption) and then emailed with the password being communicated in a separate email.

Phase Transfers and Transitions:

In Hillingdon we recognise the importance of effective transitions for all children and in particular children and young people with SEND. We know that well planned transitions support continuity of learning and development. Due to difference in how Early Years and Reception and above years groups are funded, it is not possible to transfer funding between these transition points.

From Nursery:

Successful ESF applications for Early Years children who will be moving into Reception within the year, will be allocated pro-rated funding up until the end of the current academic year. Applications for Early Years children who will be moving into Reception within the year will close after May half term.

If the receiving school feels funding is still necessary, they will need to make an application once the child has commenced their education at that school (please refer to the application criteria above). We would encourage the school and setting to hold a transition planning meeting prior to the start date. Existing APDR will be **considered** as evidence for awarding funding to the receiving school however the panel may request further APDR conducted by the receiving school. **The application cannot be made until the child is actively attending the school.**

Other Phase transfers:

For children in Reception and above, ESF can transfer from one Hillingdon setting to another, including across phases. To support this, the following steps are vital:

- When a child receiving ESF leaves the educational setting, the setting must notify the local authority immediately using the [ESF transfer form](#).
- The funding will transfer to the child's next placement or cease if appropriate (for example if the child is moving out of the borough).
- For children transitioning to a new Hillingdon school (i.e., at secondary transfer) and whose ESF is running from September to July, you will need to follow the process of review via the SAS Panel.
- Educational settings have a responsibility to inform the Local Authority once a child or young person transitions to an out of Borough school.

SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX)

What is SEND 'Exceptional' Funding?

SEND Exceptional funding (SENDEX) is allocated from the High Needs Block and is reserved for applications from settings where children/young people are presenting with **exceptional** and **unexpected** circumstances and their needs have not been fully identified due to unknown factors. The amount of SENDEX funding will be allocated using the EHCP banded model.

Children accessing Early Years provisions are often new to educational establishments and little is known about their strengths and needs. They may be presenting with emerging or significant needs; however, these children will not meet these criteria unless their needs are **severe, long term**, and usually **complex**. Where the needs are unclear, but not thought to be severe and long term, then an application for Early Years Inclusion funding should be considered as an alternative.

Further Clarification on distinction between SENDEX and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

SENDEX is a short-term funding allocation for a maximum of 26 weeks and is a non-statutory funding source. The EHCP is a statutory process which is a long-term plan of funded provision, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

Accessing SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX)

Educational settings may ask the local authority to provide **urgent and immediate financial assistance** to help educate a pupil who requires **immediate support for the short to medium term** for accessing the curriculum, and where such access is likely to be at additional cost to the school's budget.

This assistance may be needed due to **exceptional circumstances** in which the setting cannot access support through regular pathways such as Early Support Funding or special educational needs provision through the Education Health and Care Plan (usually where there is no specific evidence of *Assess, Plan, Do, Review*).

Exceptional funding can support a pupil **who is not the subject of EHCP** but is **likely to meet the threshold** for needs assessment or those whose Educational Health Care Needs Assessment has been just initiated. The SEND Exceptional Funding is allocated to the **setting** on the short-term basis and does not move with the pupils when they change setting.

SENDEX criteria is stringent, declined applications which will be submitted for an EHC Needs assessment request or ESF, must follow the APDR cycle in line with specified criteria.

The following criteria **must** be adhered to.

The Child/Young Person **must**:

- Be attending an educational setting (in any borough) and **live in the London Borough of Hillingdon**
- Be likely to require **an immediate and high level of support** due to **severe and long-term needs** which are likely to result in an EHCP
- Have no effective assessment of educational needs within a mainstream school/college, nursery or PVI.
- Started at the setting within the last 10 weeks
 - Where a child is not of compulsory school age, Early Years SEND Inclusion funding will be recommended instead (unless significant medical evidence is provided and/or the child is actively being provided significant input through CITS and/or Portage service).

OR

- Have a need which has arisen urgently and unexpectedly.

The Child/Young Person **must not**:

- Have a draft or finalised EHCP in place
- Be in receipt of Early Support Funding (ESF)

The following implementation criteria also applies:

- If a CYP is in receipt of Early Year's SEND Inclusion funding (EYIF), then the LA must be notified through the SENDEX application form – EYIF will cease if the SENDEX application is successful.
- A projected provision map **must** be submitted with the application

Examples of situations when exceptional funding would be considered:

- CYP moves into or within Hillingdon, clearly meets the legal test for a needs assessment and the services need time to fully assess their needs.
- CYP is not compulsory school age yet, who has significant long-term needs that will require resources through an EHCP.
- CYP is school age and has never accessed compulsory education, has significant long-term needs and the agencies/ services require time to fully assess their needs.
- CYP suffers a serious accident or deterioration in a physical/sensory, mental health condition, which requires immediate support for the medium to long term, to access the curriculum.
- CYP's behaviour shows **sudden and serious** deterioration and there is supporting evidence that external, professional advice has been sought **and** implemented (including a recent My Support Plan if appropriate) however there is a need for an immediate support before long term support is put in place. Although the full APDR cycle is not required, some assessment of needs must be projected.

Guidelines for Requesting SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX):

- Exceptional funding requests from settings will be presented to SEND Panel.
- The request for SEND Exceptional Funding does not preclude a request for an education health care needs assessment (EHCNA statutory assessment) at the same time or in the future.
- Applications should be made by completing the '[SENDEX Request Form](#)'
- SAS Admin Team will arrange for its consideration at SEND Panel and ensure an answer is provided as quickly as possible. Educational settings are invited also to discuss any concerns with the SEND Team Managers who chair the SEND Panel.
- The authority wishes not to be prescriptive about the types of need to be met by such financial assistance. Each case will be considered on its own individual merits.
- Funding will normally be granted for a single, non-renewable, period not exceeding 26 weeks, excluding the month of August.
- The authority reserves the right to enquire further and to inspect the provision at any stage before or during the provision of support.

- The school must inform the parent or carer of the child that such a request has been made and indicate this through the application process
- Applications for LBH residents attending Out of Borough settings will be considered for Exceptional funding only – Not ESF

SEND Panel – Decision making:

- The majority of successful SENDEX applications will result in an EHCNA therefore these applications will be reviewed at the SEND panel with a SAS representative
 - Representation from Health, Social Care and Education attend these panels, therefore judgment on long-term support needed can be more holistic
- Successful applications will be awarded for a **maximum** of 2 terms (26 weeks). This will allow time for:
 - Initial APDR and application for EHCP (where appropriate)
 - EHCP Needs assessment process
- SENDEX cannot be extended beyond the 26-week period
 - If a draft EHCP is in progress then, once finalised, the funding will be backdated to start when SENDEX has ceased
 - If Early Support Funding is to be pursued, a fully reviewed 'My Support Plan' should be submitted with an application for ESF

Guidance for Effective Applications:

- Always adhere to the criteria in the SENDEX funding guidance
- Exemplar applications are available to demonstrate effective applications: [Click here to see exemplar application](#)
- Provide supporting evidence if available, including evidence independent of the school where possible e.g. health reports.
- Clearly describe and quantify the use to which funding will be put. It should include a proposal for a date of review, if appropriate.
- **Ensure the Provision map is costed for person-centred provision.** Click here for further details on provision mapping which is embedded in [MSP Guidance](#)
 - How to Cost:
 - Always use the LBH current rate of £12.70 for personnel
 - Provide hourly rate x no. of hours per day x no. hours per week x no. of weeks per year = total

Resubmissions:

- Feedback letters will indicate if a resubmission will be considered
- If you disagree with the decision, then you can contact the panel chair as detailed on the feedback letter

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Early Support Funding (ESF)

Is the use of 'My Support Plans (non-statutory plans) and flexible funding legal?

Yes, the key is to implement it appropriately. Several other local Authorities are using a flexible funding approach as highlighted in the recent London Councils - Inclusive Practice publication (2019).

Does ESF and My Support Plans 'replace' an EHCP?

No, it is not a replacement. ESF may be appropriate for children/young people who do not have severe or long-term needs. It is expected that requests for EHCPs are likely to reduce as ESF becomes more embedded in the Hillingdon SEND pathway.

Is ESF an additional influx of resource that has been made available to the LA?

No, ESF is funded through the same stream as EHCPs.

Is the banding/funding consistent between ESF and EHCPs?

Funding is allocated on the presenting needs, regardless of whether the funding is allocated from ESF or EHCP.

If the child is provided with an EHC plan but they already receive ESF, will the ESF funding stop?

Yes. EHCP and ESF come from the same pot of money. When an EHCP is finalised, the ESF will stop.

What happens if there are any overpayments?

Overpayments of any funding must be reported to the relevant service immediately. All overpayments will be reclaimed through the finance team's process.

Is ESF only accessible through a 'My Support Plan'?

Yes, settings must evidence a graduated response to meeting the needs of children and young people through the implementation of a My Support Plan.

Are settings required to re-apply annually for ESF?

No, it is not a 're-application'. The My Support Plan and ESF are **reviewed annually**, and paperwork submitted to the SAS Panel. The Panel will make an informed decision whether to maintain, increase, decrease or cease the funding.

When are educational settings expected to review ESF/My support Plans?

We encourage a Team Around the Child (TAC/YP) approach which should take place **termly**. The impact and quality of the support and interventions should be reviewed with the child/young person, their family and any involved professionals where relevant.

Are those in receipt of ESF, still able to receive support from the SEND Advisory Service?

Yes, this support will be vital to assist settings in following the four-part cycle (assess, plan, do, review) to meet the needs of the child/young person. All successful ESF applications will be allocated an advisor.

If a parent/carer makes a statutory request for an EHCP assessment for a child/young person currently in receipt of ESF, is the funding withdrawn for the 20 week assessment period?

No, ESF funding will remain in place until the EHCP is finalised

Are parents/carers able to raise concerns regarding ESF?

Yes, these concerns should be dealt with directly by the setting who should follow their internal process.

Can parents/carers submit ESF applications?

No, the application must come directly from the school/setting

Are settings able to raise concerns with the LA regarding allocation of resources?

Yes
ESF funding applications will have a linked practitioner detailed on the outcome letter and initial queries should be directed towards this person, who will escalate where necessary

How do schools record children who are in receipt of ESF on the census?

Children should be recorded as K, as they are receiving SEN Support. Hillingdon's internal systems will identify children in receipt of ESF through their URN.

How does ESF show in the schools account?

It shows up on the school's cash advance statement as 'Early Support Funding'.

At what point in the year is ESF paid?

ESF is paid monthly and should start the month following the panel in the same way as top up funding.

What happens when a child/young person moves educational setting within Hillingdon?

Early Years Children: Funding will be allocated up to the end of the academic year and will cease when the child enters Reception. The school can use the existing documentation (which has been reviewed) to apply. Children in Reception and above: educational settings must notify the local authority (or your linked SAS Advisor) immediately, using the [ESF transfer form](#) as funding will need to be transferred to the new setting.

When the child or young person is transitioning between schools, i.e. infant to junior, junior high school etc. please share the child's My Support Plan as part of the preparation for this move.

If the funding is running from September to July, we ask that you follow the review process outlined within the guidance.

What happens when a child/young person moves to an out of borough school?

ESF is only available to children and young people who are on roll at a setting within Hillingdon. We expect settings to share information to enable the new setting to devise a thorough transition, they will then need to follow their internal process regarding funding allocation.

Is ESF available for children and young people who live outside of the London Borough of Hillingdon?

No, ESF is only available to Hillingdon residents.

If ESF is declined because the child/young person's needs are thought to be severe and long-term, does this influence the SEND panel decision to agree to a EHC Needs Assessment?

No. This is an independent and statutory process. The SEND panel will continue to make a multi-agency decision based upon the evidence provided by the applicant. If the EHC Needs Assessment is declined, the

SEND team will return the application to the SAS panel for further consideration for ESF. If ESF is agreed following a 'no to assess' letter from SEND Team, ESF will be backdated to the original ESF application data.

SEND Exceptional Funding (SENDEX)

Is SENDEX available for children and young people who live outside of the London Borough of Hillingdon?

No, it is for Hillingdon residents only

Is SENDEX available for children and young people who live in Hillingdon but attend an out of borough setting?

Yes, if the child's needs are severe and long-term

Does Exceptional Funding still exist?

Exceptional funding was incorporated into ESF however this now exists separately in the form of SENDEX with specific criteria

Are settings able to raise concerns with the LA regarding allocation of resources?

SENDEX queries should be addressed to the chairperson detailed on the outcome letter. Admin queries should be emailed to saskeywork@hillingsdon.gov.uk. Admin will answer admin queries or redirect to the Panel Chairperson for outcome queries