

Guidance Notes for Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund Support. Completing application and evaluation forms. (Updated February 2024)

Eligibility

- In line with government guidance Derbyshire's Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund is available for children who attend maintained or non-maintained early years settings and who receive their funding from this council. This means it is not necessarily available to all children resident in Derbyshire.
- Children are eligible for Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund if they are aged 2-4 years old until the end of their last term (usually Summer 2) in nursery/preschool **and** in receipt of a funded place – either a two-year-old funded place, or a 15 or 30 hour funded 3- and 4-year-old funded place. If the setting becomes ineligible for government funded nursery places, then the children would no longer be eligible for Early Years SEN Inclusion Funding.
- Children must have significant barriers to learning and require more support than that which can be provided through normally available resources. Learning needs may be temporary or long term.
- If a child moves to a different Derbyshire Early Years setting whilst in receipt of EYIF the setting must notify finance so that the funding can be transferred with the child to their new setting. If there are changes to the number of funded hours accessed or changes between term-time and stretch funding when a child moves to a new setting, then the new and old settings must jointly complete and submit an early evaluation as part of their transition work.
- Early Years Inclusion Funding is a top-up funding to the hourly funded rate that settings receive for a child's attendance. It is intended to enable the setting to provide enhanced staffing so that learning outcomes can be worked on through interventions either 1:1 with a child or as part of a small group. It is not intended to cover the salary of a member of staff.
- Early Years Inclusion funding is rarely awarded for all of the funded hours that a child attends a setting. A high proportion of 1:1 support is only awarded to children with life threatening medical needs or profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). Good provision balances individual intervention with independence and inclusion.
- If funding is sought to support medical needs so that a child can access their play and learning within a preschool setting, an Individual Healthcare plan (IHCP) should be submitted with the funding application. (see 'Derbyshire County Council Guidance Schools and Early Years Providers: Supporting Children with Medical Needs' document on the Local Offer website: <https://www.localoffer.derbyshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/supporting-children-with-medical-needs/supporting-children-with-medical-conditions.aspx>) Please note that funding is not awarded for self-care outcomes as this support should be provided through the settings normally available resources.

- The Local Authority will usually only consider a request for an Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) which may result in an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) when a child has already received additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided. As part of their Graduated Approach, settings should have made provision through their normally available resources and Early Years Inclusion Fund *before* an EHCNA is considered.
- If an EHCNA is agreed whilst the child is in receipt of EYIF, then the EYIF award should continue to be evaluated and further funding requested if needed until the outcome of the EHCNA. If the child transfers to school whilst waiting for the outcome of an EHCNA, then funding through Inclusion Panel funding should be applied for.
- Children with an EHCP are not eligible for Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund
- Maintained Nursery Schools can apply for Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund but will be expected to fund the first five hours of a child's support from their own budget.
- The EYs SEN panel has the discretion to make an emergency 3-month award for children who may appear in setting/school and whose needs are so significant that they are at risk of exclusion. This award is based on time to gather information about the child and put some measurable interventions in place. It is anticipated that a future evaluation will contain more detailed information about the child and include evidence of the graduated response.
- Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund will usually be agreed for periods of six months. Where appropriate a new request can be made for further support by submitting an evaluation.

Completing the form (see also EYIF Handy Hints and sample forms available on the Local Offer and DCC schools.net)

- Only evaluations on the latest forms (available on the Local Offer) will be accepted. Applications are now made online using this link: [Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund - Application Form - Information - Self \(achieveservice.com\)](#)
- Settings will be expected to provide a summary of a child's Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND), and information about the child's level of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) development. A selection of developmental profiles is available. Use of the EYSEN Celebratory Checkpoints is advised. When completing this section, we advise you use the checkpoints and foundational skills surrounding the checkpoints and build your narrative around them. When identifying a checkpoint please include the icon (see example form)
- This section may also include any diagnosis the child has. Please be cautious of using diagnostic terminology before it is confirmed.
- Settings will be expected to evidence their use of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Early Years Descriptors as part of their Graduated Approach. This evidence will be shown as learning outcomes and evaluation of those outcomes (i.e., assess, plan, do, review model)
- Settings must detail the learning outcomes and interventions they will use if Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund is agreed and provide an estimation of the time interventions will take to support the learning.
- Clear, measurable outcomes for **the child** must be included in the referral.

- The only exception to the point above may be regarding children with a hearing impairment when staff time must be in place to check equipment, thus reducing the barriers to learning.
- The Early Years SEN panel strongly recommends that parents have been consulted about the referral. Included in this package is a parent consultation form.
- To promote timely responses the EYs SEN panel request that evaluations are submitted by email and include an email address. Submission of evaluations in this way is at the discretion of the settings GDPR policy. However, decision information will be shared in this way from September 2021. Schools can submit and receive applications via Perspective Lite.
- It should not be necessary to provide any additional reports if the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund referral form has been filled in correctly. Please do **not** submit additional sheets or attachments. The exceptions are the parent/carer voice sheet and an individual healthcare plan (IHCP) if funding is requested to support medical needs.

Joint applications

- If the child attends more than one setting as part of their nursery entitlement the application must be submitted jointly. If one of the settings is maintained, they should take the lead in making the application.

Moderation of Requests

- Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund requests are moderated weekly. Local Authority representatives will evaluate requests, ensuring parity and equity of resource distribution, consistency of approach and allocation.
- If requests are agreed, practitioners will be informed, and funding allocated. Settings are responsible for implementing the provision and ensuring progress towards outcomes and including parents/carers in this process.
- If refused, the setting is informed of the reasons for this and any further steps they may need to take.

Evaluation of Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund

- At least a month before the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund funding end date specified by the LA, the setting **must** review the interventions with parents/carers and complete the Evaluation Form and return this to the email address as detailed at the bottom of the form.
- In addition to the guidance notes, Handy Hints and sample forms training is provided on submission of EYIF applications during DCC SENCO/Foundation Stage Inclusion Leads training and training on Celebratory Checkpoints.

Starting school

- Schools who require additional funding to continue when a child starts in reception will need to apply for Inclusion panel funding:
[Inclusion Panel - Derbyshire Local Offer](#)