



Sheffield

SEND



Early Years Inclusion Fund Guidance

Background and Context

The special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0-25 years (2015) states that local authorities and providers must have regard to and be able to demonstrate how they are implementing a graduated approach to support all children with special educational needs and disability to fulfil their potential. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework also requires early years providers to have arrangements in place for meeting children's special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Purpose

Local authorities are required to have EYIF for all two, three and four year olds with SEND who are taking up the free early learning (FEL) educational entitlements. These funds are intended to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEND.

The fund also supports local authorities to undertake their responsibilities to strategically commission SEND services as required under the Children and Families Act 2014.

This guide is for:

- Maintained nursery settings
- Registered Childminders
- Private Voluntary & Independent early years providers

Please note Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) is not available to those children who are in Reception/FS2.

EYIF will be provided on a banding basis using the Early Years Sheffield Support Grid exemplification (EYSSGe). This will include the extended entitlement for children aged 2 of working parents (April 2024) and children aged 2 years and under of working parents (from Sept 2024).

However, if a child requires EYIF and they are not currently entitled to FEL, an application can be made as an exceptional case. Please see the EYIF FAQs document for more details.

Early Years Providers are also reminded to claim Disability Access Funding for eligible children to help to support them support within the provision:

A child who is eligible for free early years educational entitlement, aged 3 or 4 years and in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, the Early Years setting will be able to claim a Disability Access Funding (DAF) payment of £828 per year. This funding should be utilised in the first instance prior to claiming EYIF. Providers should consider the eligibility criteria for DAF when making an application for EYIF.

For more information on DAF please visit: [Childcare funding for children with SEND \(including Disability Access Fund\) | Sheffield \(sheffielddirectory.org.uk\)](#)

Eligibility for DAF

- The child is accessing 3 or 4 year FEL Funding in an Early Years Setting. This entitlement will extend to children aged 2 of working parents (April 2024) and children aged 2 years and under of working parents (from Sept 2024).
- The child needs significant interventions which are additional to and different from, what is ordinarily available within an Early Years Setting.

Application for Early Years Inclusion Funding

When making an application for EYIF for children who are within EYSSGe Level 3, Level 4 or Level 5, each application must include:

- Completed EYIF application form
- Evidence of assessment of the child's development against the relevant areas of the EYFS.
- Evidence of actions by the Early Years setting to meet the child's needs to date, including evidence of two completed cycles of the graduated response (Assess, Plan, Do Review), EY Sheffield Support Grid Levels detailed, arrangements made during group and individual activities to facilitate the child's access and inclusion and the Early Years Settings views (could be part of a support plan)..
- Evidence of reports from any specialist/medical services involved including their views, if appropriate.
- Support for the application from the parents/ carers, along with their views, who should consent the application form.
- EYIF applications and evidence should be sent to 0-5 anycomms (preferred) or 0-5SEND.SupportService@sheffield.gov.uk (documents sent by e-mail need to be password protected and a separate e-mail sent detailing the password). Please only send applications and evidence electronically.

EYIF Banded Funding:

The 0-5 SEND Service will review all applications and award funding in the following bands:

EYSSGe Level	Funding
1	The child's needs can be met through what is regarded as Quality First Teaching i.e. a level of provision that can be reasonably expected in a room / teaching environment. No allocation of additional funding.
2	The child has identified needs that may be recognised through the child's inclusion on the setting's SEN Register. Their needs are met in the room with access to some out of room intervention (1:1 or small group, Wave 2 intervention) to help them close the gap with peers in particular areas of their development. No allocation of additional funding.
3	The child will likely have identified needs which impact on their access to parts of the curriculum. The child is identified on the settings SEN Support Register. Children with complex or overlapping needs may have an Extended Support Plan at this level. The child is able to access the setting's curriculum offer, but requires a significant amount of intervention, within and outside of the classroom, specific to their needs (Wave 2 and 3 – planned small group and individual focus support) which will be led by adults in the setting and Outside Agency

	practitioners. This will be funded at £2.50 to match the hours attended e.g. £7.50 for 3 hours.
4	The child has more complex or severe needs, potentially spanning a number of areas of the grid, which impact on their ability to access the setting's curriculum offer. They access a highly differentiated timetable designed to meet their personal needs and structure their learning, using advice from Outside Agency practitioners. The level of need, and therefore provision required, indicates that in most cases whilst access to whole room-based learning opportunities may be limited, a mainstream education which utilises a highly personalised approach to whole child development will remain appropriate. This will be funded at £3.50 to match the hours attended. £10.50 for 3 hours.
5*	The child's needs are significant and severe and greatly impair their ability to access a mainstream setting or curriculum. In most cases a Level 5 child's exceptional level of need will require bespoke provision and input. This will include ongoing and completely bespoke support, in order to meet highly personalised learning, and personal life-long development, outcomes which are set by the family, setting staff and Outside Agency practitioners. This will be funded at £5.00 to match the hours attended. £15 per 3 hours. *Children placed at Level 5 on the grid are recognised as having exceptional levels of need. Where a child is placed at Level 5 need or provision, in any area of the Early Years Sheffield Support Grid Exemplification document, it is expected that this level will be allocated alongside moderation agreement from Local Authority representation (e.g. Locality SEND Manager, NHS Health services and/or Educational Psychology Service) – in conjunction with agreement from other professional outside agencies, parents/carers and setting staff

If a child attends two different Early Years settings, best practice is for a joint application to be submitted. EYIF can then be shared according to the hours attended at each Early Years Setting.

How decisions are made

- 0-5 SEND Service is made up of specialist SEND professionals who will review EYIF applications each month (except July and August). They will seek advice from other professionals if necessary.
- EYIF applications will need to be submitted by the 20th of every month to be considered for that month's application review. Applications received after the 20th will go forward into the next month's review. Any applications received in July or August will be put forward for September, if appropriate (setting will be advised).
- The 0-5 SEND Service bases its decisions on the information received on the EYIF application form, with the additional evidence to support the application.
- If the 0-5 SEND Service considers the information to be inadequate or incomplete, they will inform the Early Years setting's SENCO and advise the SENCO of the next steps. The application may be deferred until the next month, following receipt of the missing information and/or evidence. EYIF will not be backdated for these applications. Applications will only roll over once, if evidence isn't received then the application could be closed and the setting may need to re-apply.
- A decision will be made by the end of each month (except July and August).
- EYIF will be agreed for one academic year, but is paid termly, up to a maximum of 13 weeks. Then the EY setting will need to reapply for the following academic year.

- The Early Years setting SENCO will be informed of the 0-5 SEND Service decision within 2 weeks.
- Payments of EYIF will start from the 1st of the month the decision was made. There will be no retrospective funding.
- If the child leaves the Early Years setting the provider must notify the 0-5 SEND Service within 2 weeks for the transfer.

Monitoring of the EYIF:

- Early Years settings in receipt of EYIF will be subject to monitoring visits. The EYSSGe, the application form, and other evidence will be used during the monitoring visit. The outcome of the monitoring visit will be provided to the Early Years provider and the Panel.
- In circumstances where funding is not used effectively, or there are discrepancies in the information given by the provider, monies will be recouped from the setting.