Early Years Inclusion Fund
2017/2018
Inclusion Fund Guidance and application form.

Attached to this document is:

A document providing background information and describing how support from the inclusion fund can be accessed by Providers of Early Years education and childcare.
Early Years Inclusion Fund

Information and Guidance

1. Context and background

Local Authorities and providers must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equalities Act 2010 and be able to demonstrate how they are implementing a graduated approach to support all children with special educational needs or a disability to fulfil their potential.

5.4 providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEND or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. (SEND Code of Practice, January 2015 update)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework states:

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. (EYFS P.5)

The government has therefore introduced new measures 2017-18 to support children with SEND or disabilities, one of which is the Inclusion Fund.

2. Introducing the new Early Years Inclusion Fund

All local authorities are required to establish an inclusion fund for 3 and 4 year olds with SEND who are taking up on their free entitlement. The purpose of the fund is to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children. The fund will also support local authorities to undertake their responsibility to strategically commission SEND services under the Children and Families Act 2014.

3. Eligibility

In the London Borough of Havering the Early Years Inclusion Fund is for 2, 3 and 4 year old who are taking up any number of hours of early education and childcare funding.

4. Eligible Providers

All early years’ providers who are eligible to receive funding for 2, 3 and 4 year old early education childcare funding are also eligible to receive support from the Early Years Inclusion Fund for children taking up their early education and childcare funding. Applications can therefore be made by:

- An Ofsted registered childcare provider
- An Ofsted registered childminder
- A school providing registered nursery provision
5. Value

The value of the Inclusion fund for the financial year 2017-2018 is set at £100k.

The inclusion funding payment is based on:

- The paid funded hours of the free early education and childcare funding for the relevant term (£4.39 per hour)
- The Inclusion Fund element will be £3.50 per hour up to 30 hours per week.
- Total funding available will therefore be £7.89 per hour comprising £4.39 (base rate) + £3.50 (inclusion fund)
- In exceptional cases an additional higher rate of £2.31 per hour will be available for children with a high level of complex needs so that the total funding would be: £4.39 (base rate) + £3.50 (inclusion fund) + £2.31 (complex needs element of the inclusion fund) = £10.20. This equates to the current London living wage hourly rate.

6. Applying for the Inclusion Fund

Most Young children will be able to participate in a mainstream setting and make progress through the Early Years Outcomes and the Early Learning Goals of high quality provision, referred to as Quality First Teaching which includes effective differentiation. ‘Quality First Teaching’ means appropriately planned, quality experiences and provision based on observations of children’s starting points and interests in order to develop their learning.

Every provider will expect to have some children with additional needs at some time. With careful planning and organisation most of these children are able to participate fully in the activities provided. Practitioners can ask for support and advice from their Area Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator. (Area SENDCo).

There is an expectation that Providers are planning for inclusion (e.g. through their SEND or inclusion policy) and are allocating staff resources e.g. SENCo time. There may be times when providers need some extra support.

The SEN Support Pathway

Where a child is not making expected progress in their development, the child is to be placed on the **Universal plus pathway**, children may not require any additional funding at this level, and the Provider should put effective strategies and interventions into place which are having a positive impact to the child’s outcomes.
If the child does not make progress and is moved onto the **targeted pathway**, the Provider may require additional funding to be able to support the child to make progress.

Where a Provider identifies a child that may benefit from additional funding, they should seek support in the first instance from their allocated Area SENDCo/ Advisory teacher if a Private, Voluntary or Independent setting (PVI), if they have not requested Area SENDCo support, they should complete a ‘Request for Visit’ form.

If the Area SENDCo/ Advisory teacher in discussion with the setting SENCo considers that the child would benefit from additional funding to enable the Provider to be able to provide the specific support and additional differentiated teaching, they should complete the **Inclusion Fund application form**.

**7. Types of ways Inclusion funding can be used**

Funding can be used flexibly; some possible uses are listed below:

- **a)** Staff training specific to the child’s needs, for example Makaton, understanding autism, working with children with complex needs and/or specific training from a health professional; e.g. EpiPen training or how to manage a child’s feeding tube etc.. This may be London Borough of Havering training from local SEND professional or external training.

- **b)** Increase ratios to support the well-being of a child and support the child to access the learning environment.

- **c)** Increase the ratios to support the child’s specific needs at particular times of the day.

- **d)** Liaising between dual settings the child may be attending, working and sharing ideas across settings.

- **e)** Planning and leading a staff meeting to share information about the child and strategies to support their inclusion in the setting.

- **f)** Releasing an experienced member of staff to work alongside peers to develop practice and support strategies.

- **g)** Releasing the SENCo to observe practice and to feedback to practitioners (to help plan focussed training for staff).

- **h)** Making adjustments to the learning environment.

- **i)** Making time to create resources and model how they should be used to best effect.
j) Liaising with other professionals involved to gather all information that will support the child to be included within the setting.

k) Purchase of specific resources e.g. sensory equipment

Providers are required to consider how their business will maintain on-going support for the child. This may involve considering how to sustain newly developed skills, how to embed inclusive strategies into everyday practice, or how deployment of staff will benefit all children.

8. Allocation of Inclusion Funding

Applications for funding will be considered by a multi-agency panel comprising of:

- Specialist early years SEND representative
- Early years Educational Psychologist
- Early years finance
- An early years provider representative

The panel meets twice termly. Applications can be sent via e-mail or by post. The dates of the panel meeting can be found on the SEND resource page on the education services portal. Providers are required to submit funding applications 10 working days prior to the funding panel. Applications received outside of these dates will be deferred to the next available funding panel.

Each application will be assessed jointly by the panel and funding decisions will be e-mailed within 10 days of the panel meeting.

Decisions are based on the information provided in the application form and the additional evidence.

Most funding will be agreed until the end of the academic year, and it will be the responsibility of the provider to comply with the review process in a timely manner if ongoing funding is required.

9. Criteria and evidence

Referral will be considered by the Inclusion funding panel where a child’s additional needs create a significant barrier to their learning and development.

This includes a child with complex and multiple needs, physical delay/disability, social communication delay, challenging behaviour, significant developmental delay or severe speech, language and communication difficulties, who have all been identified at SEN support and who have had input from appropriate agencies, but despite these interventions, continue to make limited progress. The panel recognise that every child is unique, and the attached grid should be regarded only as a guide to assist your application.
The panel also recognise that a child’s needs may emerge very soon after entry to the setting, and prior to external professional involvement, so professional reports may not always be available. However, evidence from within the setting, including documented evidence from the parents of the child’s needs on entry, one page profile, baseline assessments and any ongoing assessments, observations from the setting and an individual education plan for the child are all considered to be examples of appropriate evidence.

In the case of pre-entry requests providers should gather information from parent/carers and contact other professionals to obtain further evidence of the child’s needs and the potential barriers to learning and inclusion.

10. Inclusion funding for complex needs

In exceptional cases where a higher level of support is required to support the inclusion of a child, providers can apply for complex needs funding. This will be on a case by case basis in consultation with other professionals who are supporting the child. As part of a graduated approach the level and detail of the information provided must give a clear indication of the child’s ongoing education, health and care needs, the child will require continued support throughout their time in education and beyond. The funding will be allocated on the basis of the individual child’s needs, and could be used as a contribution towards increasing staff ratios.

Funding at this level will be agreed on a termly basis. It will be the responsibility of the provider to comply with the review process in a timely manner if ongoing funding is required.

11. Appeals

If you disagree with the panel decision you must make your concerns known in writing and the Panel will respond to you in 10 working days.

Appeals must be made in writing to the Children and Disabilities Support Team, 0-5 within 10 working days of the setting being notified of a decision.

Please state specific reason for the appeal and enclose any additional/new information relating to the child’s needs with the appeal to provide the panel with further evidence.

12. Monitoring of Inclusion Fund

All providers must be able to evidence the level of provision/need of the child during visits from the Children and Adult Disabilities (CAD) Support Team, 0-5 or Education Advisers. Evidence can include Individual Support Plans, Individual Education Plans/Pupil Passports, provision maps and developmental checks.

Whilst providers can decide on how the funding is spent (e.g. Staffing, resources, SENCo non-contact time etc.) they will be closely monitored on the impact of their support to the child or children. If no appropriate impact is evidenced, London
Borough of Havering will request evidence of appropriate spend, and may decide to withhold funding.

Good provision mapping and the tracking of the outcomes of any interventions offered to the children will ensure that settings have this evidence at hand.

13. **Completing the Early Years Inclusion Funding application**

Providers should include all documentation listed on the application checklist. The panel is not able to make a decision without a complete set of evidence. The application will be returned before the panel meets if the evidence is not complete.

A new application must be submitted at the start of the academic year.