Early Years Inclusion Funding from April 2017

1.0 Context
1.1 A new Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) for 3-4 year olds takes effect from April 2017. As part of this, there is a requirement for authorities to establish a special educational needs inclusion fund for early years in order to help providers address the needs of individual children with special educational needs.
1.2 The value of the fund takes into account the number of children with SEN in the local area, their level of need, and the overall capacity of the local childcare market to support these children. It is combined from the early years block and high needs block of the DSG.
1.3 The DfE expect local authorities to pass the majority of their SEN inclusion funds to providers in the form of top up grants on a case by case basis.
1.4 The EY SEN Inclusion Fund has a focus on emerging SEN, since those with more complex SEN may receive support via an EHC Plan.
1.5 The current RBC EY cluster allocation funding process will allocate the EY Inclusion Fund, described below.

2.0 Budget
2016/17 EY Inclusion Fund is £110,000. School Forum in January 2017 agreed to expand this fund.
2017/18 EY Inclusion Fund £150,000 per year.

3.0 Eligible providers
All early years providers who are eligible to receive funding for the 3- and 4-year old early education entitlement are also eligible to receive support from the SEN inclusion fund. This includes child minders. The fund must be used to directly help the child access the EY curriculum or environment.

4.0 Criteria for EY Inclusion Fund for SEND
Criteria is:
- Emerging needs are those considered to be complicated special educational needs which are exceptional, i.e outside of the usual ‘average’ range of developmental needs, and which are shown to require resources outside of those usually available to the setting.
- Specific needs must be clearly described, in the three prime areas in the new EY Statutory Framework effective from 3rd April 2017: communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development
- Priority for allocating funding to early years settings will be given to children with ‘high need-low incidence’. Children who are already in receipt of additional funding, for example through an Education Health and Care Plan are not eligible for EYIF.
- The process is for Reading children only; Out of Authority children in a Reading setting should refer to the LA to which the child lives.
- Settings can provide the funded resources to the child when he/she is due for a transition. Thus, the resources do not only support settings into supporting
individual children but also follow the children into their new settings and support their transitions.

- Additional support may be in the form of: Resources to enable access, Staff training, 1:1 support, Specific programmes related to Early Years Foundation Stage, Individual education programmes & Specific interventions.

5.0 Allocation of the EY SEND Inclusion Fund
- Four EY Cluster Panels will allocate the EY Inclusion Funding to settings in their cluster. These decisions will then be discussed by a Moderation Panel to ensure additional robustness.
- Panel decisions are based on the quality of the application i.e. it must include sufficient detail to enable to the panel members to make informed decisions.
- The panel members will read the anonymised paperwork before the panel.
- During the panel the applicant must be present in order to answer questions about the child’s needs or interventions tried by the setting.
- The Nursery School Head Teachers chair clusters of EY settings to ensure funding is allocated in a robust and transparent manner, and to encourage sharing of good practice between settings.
- Settings must complete application forms, which must be discussed and countersigned by the child’s parent/carer.
- Evidence of what the setting has tried, the impact of interventions via the ‘assess, plan, do, review’ cycle, and a provision map must be included in the application.
- By applying for this additional funding a setting is also agreeing to comply with the LA’s audit processes and procurement regulations. The audit process may require the submission of invoices and / or evidence of quotes for equipment purchases.
- The funding can be allocated for 1-3 terms with reviews and evaluations of impact and outcomes.

6.0 Implementation
A programme of training and support for early years’ settings, led by the Nursery Schools, will:
- Ensure every child irrespective of setting has got equal access to inclusion funding.
- Ensure this Inclusion Fund is used effectively and robustly for improved outcomes for EY children with SEND, including school readiness (mainstream & special).
- To support settings to utilise the funding in the best and most appropriate way to support the needs and improve outcomes for the individual child.

7.0 Compliance
Local authorities must record the value of their SEN inclusion fund in their s251 return. The Government has committed to provide further guidance on how to evaluate best practice.

8.0 Relevant papers:
The DfE’s response to the EYNFF consultation and operational guidance for the new early years national funding formula for 2, 3 and 4 year olds can be read here: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/early-years-funding-changes-to-funding-for-3-and-4-year-olds


‘Early Years: Guide to the 0 to 25 SEND Code of Practice: Advice for early years providers that are funded by the local authority’ (Sept 2014), which outlines statutory duties that relate to early years provision: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-early-yearssettings