

Staffordshire County Council

# Disability Access Funding (DAF)

Guidance for Childcare Providers 2018-19

**Additional funding for providers to support  
children with Special Educational Needs &  
Disabilities aged three and four**



# Contents

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<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Definition of 'Access' and responsibility to make 'Reasonable Adjustments'</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Definition of 'Disability'</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Eligibility</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>Making an application</b>	<b>5.0</b>
<b>Utilising DAF to support children with SEND</b>	<b>6.0</b>
<b>Purchasing equipment and undertaking adaptations</b>	<b>7.0</b>
<b>Keeping evidence/proof of spend</b>	<b>8.0</b>
<b>Further documents and publications that providers may wish to refer to</b>	<b>9.0</b>
<b>Contributors</b>	<b>10.0</b>
<b>Resource list</b>	<b>Appendix 1</b>

## 1.0 Introduction

Childcare providers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments and ensure they support the equity of access of all children to their provision under the Equality Act 2010. Staffordshire County Council is committed to ensuring that all children have equal access to learning and as part of this commitment, we are implementing a new government initiative called Disability Access Funding (DAF). The fund is for childcare providers/schools (providers) with three and four year olds who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and taking up Early Education Funding (EEF).

The purpose of the fund is to help providers make those reasonable adjustments within their provision to support children with a disability. DAF is not based on an hourly rate and will be paid as a one-off payment of £615 per year to the Provider of each eligible child.

For the purpose of this guidance, 'provider' refers to any establishment offering Early Education Funding for three and four year olds as defined in Staffordshire's Early Education and Childcare Provider Agreement 2017-18.

## 2.0 Definition of 'Access' and responsibility to make 'Reasonable Adjustments'

For the purpose of DAF and early years, access refers to:

- the means or opportunity to enter the provision of space where early education is to take place. This includes either domestic or non-domestic premises<sup>1</sup>.
- the means or opportunity to engage with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)<sup>2</sup> with reference to the seven areas of learning and development and welfare requirements.

Substantial disadvantage can be avoided by making reasonable adjustments for disabled children. This means making positive steps to ensure that disabled children can fully participate in early education and enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services offered by the provision.

The reasonable adjustment duty comprises of three requirements:

- Provision, criteria and practices
- Auxiliary aids and services
- Physical features

<sup>1</sup> As determined by Ofsted (p4 & 5) [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/616082/EY\\_and\\_childcare\\_reg\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616082/EY_and_childcare_reg_handbook.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596629/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

### 3.0 Definition of 'Disability'

A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. (Equality Act 2010).

A physical or mental impairment includes learning difficulties, mental health conditions, medical conditions and hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism and speech, language and communication impairments.

It is important to note that because a pupil has a disability; it does not necessarily mean that he/she has special educational needs.

### 4.0 Eligibility

- 4.1** Providers in Staffordshire are eligible to receive DAF where a three or four year old child is taking up a place and;
- the child is in receipt of DLA<sup>3</sup>; and;
  - the child is taking up EEF (either some or all hours of their entitlement)
- 4.2** Four year olds in primary school reception/foundation stage classes are not eligible for DAF.
- 4.3** Providers are encouraged to raise awareness of DAF with parents in order to identify eligible children. The parent declaration form should be used to ascertain if a child meets the relevant criteria for DAF. This will also ensure that providers have gained the necessary consent from parents to support an application.
- 4.4** If a child, eligible for DAF, is splitting their free entitlement across two or more providers their parent(s) will need to nominate the provider to whom they wish the payment to be made. This will usually be the provider where the child is accessing the majority of their free entitlement hours.
- 4.5** A DAF grant will only be paid once a year for an eligible child (this can be from any date within a term). If a child receiving DAF moves from one provider to another, the new provider is not eligible to receive DAF until a year after the date that the council approved the original application. If an eligible child remains with the same provider for more than a year, that provider can re-apply for a second grant a year after the original application.

<sup>3</sup> Criterion as determined by the Department for Education, April 2017. More information about applying for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/eligibility>

## 5.0 Making an Application

- 5.1 Providers can now apply for DAF via the Early Years Provider Portal. Technical guidance to support this process can be found on the portal.
- 5.2 The Early Education and Childcare Team will continue to allow paper based applications until the end of Autumn term 2018. These can be sent to the following address: Early Education and Childcare, 2nd Floor, Staffordshire Place 1, Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH (Due to data protection, completed forms/evidence should not be emailed). Applications should be marked as confidential.
- 5.3 Parents with an eligible child must provide a copy of their child's DLA award letter to support a DAF application. Providers should scan and upload a copy of this letter via the portal. Providers who do not have the facility to scan documents can continue to send supporting evidence to the above address. Providers should include the portal reference number with the supporting evidence to allow us to match to the application.
- 5.4 Staffordshire providers can submit DAF applications for eligible children who attend their provision but reside outside of the county boundaries.
- 5.5 Applications received and approved before the 20th of the month will be paid by no later than the 20th date of the month thereafter.<sup>4</sup>

## 6.0 Utilising DAF to support children with SEND

- 6.1 Providers should consider what reasonable adaptations are required to ensure the child has the same equity of access to the provision as any other child. Resources required to ensure basic entry and reasonable adjustments to the learning and physical environment should be the priority for DAF. If a child is identified as needing specialist equipment as assessed and recommended by an Occupational Therapist, Physio or Nurse, then the providers must refer to Guidance on Supporting the Needs of Children and Young People with Physical/Need or Disability which can be found at: [https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/staffordshire/hub/files/guidance\\_on\\_supporting\\_the\\_needs\\_of\\_cyp\\_with\\_physical\\_need\\_or\\_disability\\_v10\\_-\\_march\\_18\\_1.pdf](https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/staffordshire/hub/files/guidance_on_supporting_the_needs_of_cyp_with_physical_need_or_disability_v10_-_march_18_1.pdf)

For further advice please contact: [senis@entrust-ed.co.uk](mailto:senis@entrust-ed.co.uk)

- 6.2 Providers should involve the child's parent(s) and engage with other professionals working with the family to ensure DAF is spent appropriately. This is not limited to, but may include: Area SENCO (Entrust), Health Visitor, Paediatrician, Local Support Team (LST) Child and Family worker, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Visual Impairment team, Hearing Impairment, Autism outreach.

<sup>4</sup> Applications received and approved after the 20th of a month may not be paid until two months after ie. for an application approved on 25th June, payment may not be received until 20th August.

- 6.3** Providers who have more than one child eligible for DAF at the same time may wish to 'pool' DAF<sup>5</sup>. This may provide an opportunity to support an adjustment or purchase of equipment that benefits more than one child.
- 6.4** Providers are encouraged to forward plan in utilising DAF to ensure a child's needs are met for the duration of time that the child will be attending their provision before they start school. However, providers are advised to spend DAF within the term it is awarded.
- 6.5** Any resources purchased as part of DAF remain the property of that particular provider. However, if a child is moving onto another provider, they may wish to make arrangements for the transfer of any resources.<sup>6</sup>
- 6.6** Providers may wish to allow parents to take resources home for weekends and holiday periods if they feel they would benefit the child.<sup>7</sup>
- 6.7** Providers are encouraged to spend the entire £615 on the child eligible and meet the shortfall for any items over this amount. Staffordshire County Council will not meet any additional requests for funding above the standard DAF grant.<sup>8</sup>
- 6.8** DAF should not be used to fund trips, assessments, 1:1 support or additional staffing, staff training or any other activity outside the definition of 'access' as outlined in section 2 and clause 6.1.

## **7.0 Purchasing equipment and undertaking adaptations**

- 7.1** A list of potential resources which could be purchased with DAF are included in Appendix 1. This section should not be treated as an 'exhaustive' list but should provide some ideas and suggestions on how funding can be used to support eligible children.
- 7.2** Providers must ensure that any equipment purchased meet the relevant (safety requirements). Electrical items must be PAT tested yearly.
- 7.3** Providers must ensure any building adaptations meet the appropriate regulations and standards.

## **8.0 Keeping evidence/proof of spend**

Providers must keep receipts and proof of spend for audit purposes by Staffordshire County Council/Entrust.

5 If providers choose to 'pool' funds with other providers, they may choose to enter into an agreement regarding ownership, use and maintenance of resources.

6 This may only be possible for non-static items and is at the discretion of the provider who purchased the resource.

7 As above

8 Providers may need to contribute towards costs of resources required for children requiring specialist resources/apparatus that are not eligible for DAF.

## 9.0 Further documents and publications/links that providers may wish to refer to:

SEND Code of Practice 0-25 January 2015

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

Statutory Framework for EYFS 3 April 2017

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/596629/EYFS\\_STATUTORY\\_FRAMEWORK\\_2017.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf)

Equalities Act 2010

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

SEND Family Partnership (for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0 to 25, with special educational needs and disabilities) (SEND)

<https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/education/welfareservice/SpecialEducationalNeeds/spps/Staffordshire-SEND-Family-Partnership.aspx>

Staffordshire County Council Accessibility Strategy 2017-20 (to follow in Local Offer pages)

## 10.0 Contributors

The Early Education & Childcare team in Staffordshire County Council would like to thank the following professionals for their advice and specialist expertise in developing this guidance:

### **(Burton/Tamworth)**

Sue Perry, Hilary Dorman, Sue Morgan, Becky Tyler, Sandie Mathews, Marnie Aston, Nicola Swallow, Jane Allman

### **(Stafford/South Staffs)**

Erica Scriven, Jo di Castiglione, Jane Coleman, Lucy Morris, Caroline Gilliland, Maxine Harden, Gill Turton

### **(Newcastle/Moorlands)**

Diane McVey, Rachel Hammond, Michelle Lane, Claire Smith, Anne Radcliff

### **(Lichfield/Cannock)**

Alison Manley

### **Staffordshire County Council**

Emma Dodd, Rebecca Knight, Matt Biggs

### **Childcare Providers**

Little People, Humpty Dumpty Day Nursery, Sandy tots

## Appendix 1 – Resource list

### PHYSICAL ACCESS

- Gates/child gates
- Tarmac area for smooth access
- Ramp
- Handrails
- Steps
- Box for feet
- Chairs/seating
- Walker/rollator
- Outside equipment – different swing seat, adapted trikes, trikes with waist straps, resources to support to access the outdoor area
- Soft play equipment
- Sitting wedges
- Corner seats
- Visual support for sitting e.g. carpet spot
- Equipment for marking steps etc.
- Different chairs
- Big physio balls
- OT equipment e.g. spinning mat, 'bilabos'
- Different types of scissors (eg. table top scissors)
- Gross motor skills equipment
- Hoists
- Recording switches
- Bibs/dribble bibs
- Complete waterproof suits etc
- Toughspots etc – allowing physical/sensory play
- Chunky crayons/finger crayons
- Rulers with handles
- Rompa helmets
- Early Pencil grips
- Suction grab rails
- High visibility jackets/bibs
- Shazbah trollies [John Care catalogue]
- Push chair for trips [McClaren]
- Happy pee bottle
- Resource booklet for PD (see local offer)

### COMMUNICATION NEEDS/ASD

- Feelings faces
- Visual support
- Sensory tent
- Sensory toys
- Portable dividers – create different spaces
- Autism friendly materials – social stories book, weighted lap blankets
- Boardmaker/Communicate in Print CD or Ipad app.
- Sound area – head phones and DVD player etc. – calming or S&L
- Communication support – Makaton symbols, choice boards,
- DVDs for songs, simple, picture books
- Big books and little books
- Story sacks
- Chunky books
- PECS books,
- Storage for symbols (boxes or shelves)
- Chewigems etc
- Mirrors for SLT
- Mini trampolines
- Persona dolls
- Enclosed chairs
- Key fobs – play doctor website
- Feely bags
- Early language objects (doll, brush, cup etc.)

## Appendix 1 – Resource list

### HEARING NEEDS

- Sign language books, cards and games
- Light and sound toys
- Interactive whiteboards,
- Soundfield system,
- Talking tins
- Acoustic modification
- Fabric for tables
- Curtains
- Hanging mobiles
- Acoustic clouds
- Carpet for a setting/rugs
- Felt pads for bottom of toy boxes to reduce sounds
- Audio equipment – listening checkers, listening leads, stettoclip, splitter cables,
- Sign and write – part of communicate in print software
- Velcro
- Story sacks
- Listening games
- Ipad – communication/pictures
- Subscription to ‘Twinkl’

### VISUAL NEEDS

- VI list – advice from VI team to settings
- Books with sound buttons, tactile patches
- Touch Braille letters
- Coloured glue sticks
- Giggly Wiggly balls/sensory balls
- Tactile books
- Story sacks
- Musical instruments
- Light and sound buzzers
- Scented playdough
- Scented pens and pencils
- Vibrating cushions
- Plate guard/plate surround
- Scooping bowl
- High contrast tape
- Dark tent/cosy cave
- Dark room kit
- Be Active box
- WOWee
- Tactile Vibrations Sensory Starter Tub
- Simple Switches
- UV Dark Den Multi Sensory Glow Kit
- Fibre Optics
- Lightbox
- Ipad
- Tactile letters with braille
- Torches
- Subscription for 3-d books
- Survival blanket/space blanket
- Talking Tins
- Wikki Sticks
- Braille Maths Blocks
- Braille ABC blocks
- NumericUpDown
- Desk slopes
- Ipad stands
- Subscription to ‘Twinkl’

## Appendix 1 – Resource list

### SELF CARE

- Toilet access, changing table etc., changing mats, kneeling pads for staff, storage, toilet frames, toilet steps, toilet inserts, potties with arms/backs [Smirthwaite]
- Feeding materials: non-slip mats, angled plates, cutlery, appropriate height tables, chairs, specialist cutlery, grasp bar, cups, mini food processor

### MEDICAL SUPPORT

- Secure box for medication, plus mobile box for trips etc

### BEHAVIOUR

- Sand timers
- Reward systems/charts/stickers

### GENERAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

- Sensory toys
- Cause and effect toys
- Stage-not-age toys e.g. cause and effect, inset puzzles, shape sorters.
- Large handled brushes
- Musical instruments/hand bells
- Light weight rattles
- Peg men/spring pegs
- Stacking toys with magnets
- Bubbles
- Switches and cause and effect toys
- Sensory materials
- Construction toys
- Treasure baskets – exploration toys
- Playdough
- Tactile materials/water beads/slime/semolina
- Posting boxes

### GENERAL

- Printer, Laminator, velcro!
- Environmental changes e.g. safe space, child gates, security doors, handrails, high vis tape for steps, non-slip paint for steps
- Digital camera
- Parachute
- Cookery equipment

### Further ideas

Birkdale trust can provide I-pads (Hi only)

RNIB can provide talking books

Staffordshire Special Schools may be open to you looking at their resources