



SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund

Eligibility Criteria

Context and background

Local authorities and providers must have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015 and the Equality Act 2010 and be able to demonstrate how they are implementing a graduated approach to support all children with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) to fulfil their potential.

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

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 measures to support children with SEND, one of which is an inclusion fund. All local authorities are required to establish an inclusion support fund for 3 and 4-year olds with SEND who are taking up the free early education entitlement

The purpose of the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund is to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children, support local authorities to undertake their responsibility to strategically commission SEND services under the Children and Families Act 2014 and to make it easier for families of children with SEND to take up their free entitlement.

This guidance is to inform all City of London Early Year providers on how to access support for a child in their care who does not have an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan but who may have additional support or equipment needs arising from their SEND.

Eligible providers

All early years providers in the City of London 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 (Early Years) Inclusion Fund for children taking up the free entitlement. Applications can therefore be made by:

- An Ofsted registered childcare provider
- A school where childcare falls outside of educational statutory provision

Applying to the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund

The majority of children with SEND do not require specialist resources or enhanced staffing to be successfully included in settings. Most settings meet the needs of children with SEND very well from within their existing resources and through their own high quality practice.

The City of London's SEND Panel will consider requests where there is evidence of a child being significantly delayed, particularly in any of the three prime areas of the EYFS in comparison to the expected outcomes for their age, or where there are significant medical needs which require a high level of adult intervention and supervision.

The Prime Areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

It is important to note that a delay in learning and development in the early years does not always necessarily indicate that a child has a special educational need that calls for special educational provision.

Careful regard should be taken when supporting children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL) who may present with similar needs in regard to their speaking and listening milestones. These children should not be regarded as having special educational needs on the basis of their difficulties with the English language and its impact on the child's development. Providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning.

It is expected that providers applying for support from the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund will provide information about how they have utilised the resources and staffing routinely available within their setting to maximise the support for individual children prior to submitting an application. However, children entering settings with existing evidence of a high level of need may be eligible for funding via a pre-entry request.

Supplementary resources and provision identified by other providers such as health and social care, will be determined in line with the funding allocation established by those agencies.

Parents must be involved in the decision to apply for support from the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund and be in agreement with the application.

Who is eligible to access the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund?

- All 2, 3- and 4-year olds identified with a level of SEND
- A child that attends an early years provider in the City of London that is Ofsted registered and providing government funded places, regardless of child's residency
- A child presenting with a level of special educational need as defined under one or more of the broad areas of need outlined in the SEND Code of Practice within the moderate to profound categories.

Who is not eligible to access the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund?

- A 4-year-old in maintained or academy primary school in reception class
- A City of London child attending an out-of-borough provision
- A child attending specialist provision
- A child with an Education, Health and Care plan
- A child whose development is age appropriate or presenting with a mild delay.

Types of support/provision available from the SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Fund

This is provision that is additional to the targeted support already in place. It is likely that this additional provision will have been recommended by professionals supporting the child or the setting. **Settings will need to show how they have supported the child up to now, and how the funding would be used to enhance the support and provision for the child to meet appropriate planned outcomes and improve progress.**

Applications may be submitted to the SEND Panel to request the following:

- Staff training specific to the child's needs
- Specialist resources which are over and above what would be typically found in an early years' environment;
- Specialist equipment, for example, a chair, standing frame or mobile ramp. This must be recommended in writing by the appropriate health professional, usually an occupational therapist, and include costs. In order to facilitate a positive transition for children with complex physical needs, the Panel will consider requests for specialist equipment in the half-term prior to the child becoming eligible for funding. Any equipment purchased will remain the property of City of London Corporation;
- Regular direct teaching sessions clearly planned for the individual child or individualised support for specific and planned activities;
- Funding as a contribution towards enhanced staffing for those children with a higher level of need. E.g. Regular supervision and individualised and consistent behaviour management approaches, support to maintain concentration and participation, additional supervision when accessing particular activities or equipment for safety, support to manage personal care, mobility or medical needs, support to gain positive relationships with peers, etc.

The support will be reviewed each term. On-going funding is dependent on the completion of a review report.

The purpose of the review is to inform the SEND Panel on how the funding has been used to support the child to meet their outcomes. It is the responsibility of the setting to ensure the request for on-going funding is submitted to Panel within the required timescales. Funding will cease if the termly review report is not submitted in time.

The fund does not contribute toward building or refurbishment costs, or towards the cost of toys or resources typically expected in an early years' environment.

Allocation of SEN (Early Years) Inclusion Funding

The SEND Panel will meet monthly during term time.

- Applications must be submitted via email **10 days before the Panel meeting**. This is to allow time for the applications to be distributed to the Panel members in advance of the meeting.
- Each application will be assessed jointly by the Panel and the outcome advised via email within 7 days of the meeting. For agreed applications, a formal agreement will follow, with the specific terms and conditions relevant to the individual application. This will include information regarding any funding agreed and expectations in terms of ongoing monitoring and evidence towards a review process.
- Where funding is awarded for enhanced staffing:
 - a) It will only be paid for the time the child is in the setting and up to an agreed period. Attendance registers may be requested as part of an audit process.
 - b) The majority of the funding agreed will be on a termly basis, and it will be the responsibility of the provider to comply with the review process in a timely manner if ongoing funding is required.
 - c) The setting will need to evidence the impact of this support, specifically how the 1:1 is supporting the child and ensuring they continue to be included in the setting and not increase their dependence on this support

Areas and levels of need

- Settings/Schools will need to explain and evidence the nature and severity of the child's difficulties, and how they impact on their development, learning and participation.
- The SEND Code of Practice has 4 broad areas of need that give an overview of the sorts of needs children may have;
 - communication and interaction
 - cognition and learning
 - social, emotional and mental health
 - sensory and/or physical needs
- Some children may have a diagnosis or have been assessed as having a specific area of need, e.g. autism spectrum condition, Developmental Language Disorder, etc.
- Some children may demonstrate difficulties across a range of areas of development others may have particular difficulties with one aspect.

- NB: Having a diagnosis does not automatically mean the child will need high levels of additional support, some children will make good progress within everyday high quality provision.

Examples of types of evidence to be provided by the setting

Evidence of planning, monitoring, assessment and evaluation cycles to support and extend aspects of development and learning

Evidence from:

- parents on entry to setting
- Key person
- Early Years SENDCo
- previous setting's key person and/or early years SENDCo
- individual planning
- Early Support Plan
- planning review
- risk assessment
- health care plan

Reports from:

- Paediatrician
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Dietician
- Early Years Advisors/Area SENDCo
- Health Visitor
- Community Nurse
- Social Care Services
- Early Help Service
- Educational Psychologist
- A costed provision map

Review request

For termly review, providers should ensure there is a clear cycle of review involving child, parents, staff and other professionals as appropriate.