

Appendix 4

The Early Years Inclusion Advice and Funding Panel

Information Guide for Parents/ Parent Carers

Why does Shropshire have an Early Years Inclusion Fund?

Early Education and Childcare Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities places a requirement on local authorities to establish an Early Years Inclusion Fund to support all providers delivering funded early years education in meeting the emerging needs of children with SEN and disabled children. In Shropshire this is Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) which will support all eligible children with special educational needs (SEN) who are taking up the new and existing Early Years entitlement funding.

Where a child has a disability, they may or may not have SEN however settings are able to claim Disability Access Funding (DAF). Funding can be used to support providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings and/or helping with building capacity, be that for the child in question or for the benefit of children attending the setting. A child will be eligible if they are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

By law, all providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN and/or disabilities (SEND). These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. Where a setting identifies a child with SEND, they must work in partnership with parent carers to implement any support that the child needs. Most children with additional or special educational needs and/or disabilities will not require special resources or enhanced staffing to be successfully integrated into settings; indeed, most settings meet the additional needs of their children very well. However, some children with more complex needs may benefit from enhanced provision or additional resources for a period of time.

What is the Early Years Inclusion Advice and Fund Panel?

The Early Years Inclusion Advice and Funding Panel is a meeting of Local Authority representatives and other professionals who have expertise in special educational needs within the Early Years. It has been developed for all Early Years Settings in Shropshire in order for them to access advice and additional funding to support children who attend their settings with special educational needs.

Settings must work with parent carers and children in a person-centred way, including parents in the application and review process. Parent carers are not required to attend the panel.

Which children can be discussed at the Early Years Inclusion Advice and Fund Panel?

All children from birth to 4-years old accessing Early Years education in a Shropshire setting including childminders can be brought to panel for a discussion to seek advice and support.

Children attending private, voluntary & maintained early years settings including childminders who are in receipt of Early year entitlement funding can be brought to panel to discuss an award of Early Years Inclusion Funding.

Children in receipt of Early Years Entitlement funding are:

- Babies and children 9 months to 2 years-old accessing working parent 15-hour funding.
- Children 2 years-old accessing working parent 30-hour funding.
- Children 2 years-old accessing 15- hour 24U funding.
- All children aged 3 and 4 years-old accessing 15-hour universal funding.
- Children aged 3 and 4 years-old accessing working parents 30-hour funding.

Where funding is being requested for a child, they must attend a setting in Shropshire.

The child will have notable barriers to learning that require support above what is already available through the setting's universal offer.

Funding is allocated to the individual child, if the pupil moves setting the funding is transferred if appropriate.

If a child has an Education, Health and Care plan in place then they cannot be discussed at the panel.

What happens at the Panel?

Once an application has been accepted the request will be taken to the next available panel. Panels are run on the first Wednesday of each month unless this falls within a school holiday when it will then be on the next Wednesday in term time. Panels will not run will not during August. Once the request has been received a member of staff from your child's early settings who knows your child well will be asked to come to a virtual panel to present the request. The panel will offer advice and support and make decisions on requests for funding. The panel members understand that all information shared about your child is to be kept confidential.

Where members feel there is a conflict of interest, for example they are aware of the child outside of work, then they will leave the panel while the child is being discussed.

Where funding is not agreed the setting will be given some next steps to consider. It may be that the setting is asked to continue to follow recommendations from external agency advice. When the setting is making an application for the EY Inclusion Fund, they must talk to you as the child's parent carer, so you know what they are asking for.

What support can funding be used for?

Requests need a clear rationale and based on specific outcomes. This may include, but not limited to, support services, therapy, positive play and or EY practitioners to provide specific learning programmes. Support must be appropriate for the child to meet the individual child's identified needs.

Settings must record the provision they put in place using an Early Years Person-Centred-Plan (PCP)

How are parents/carers, children and young people involved?

Parents carers should be involved in the whole process. Settings should talk to you about the support already in place and what they are proposing when requesting support from the Inclusion Advice and Funding Panel.

Settings will consult with parent carers on the proposed support requested. You should contribute to and have a copy of the EY Person-Centred-Plan (PCP) that is put in place. This should be completed in a person-centred way.

How is support from the EY Inclusion Fund requested?

Settings can apply using the templates and forms they have been provided with.

Settings are expected to involve parent carers and children before, during and after the application. Your views are recorded and returned with the application.

Settings will feedback the outcome of the panel with you. Where funding is agreed this will be available to settings within 10 working days.

Settings are asked to review a child's Person-Centred-Plan with parent carers at least three times a year and must review it with you before the date funding is due to cease.

Allocation of funding is early support; therefore, support should start immediately after it has been provided to settings.

Who to contact?

If you think your child would benefit from the support, contact your setting's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or Manager who will be able to provide further information.

If your child is accessing the funding and you feel support is not appropriate, please discuss this with the child's key person, setting SENCo and/or manager. Alternatively, you can talk to IASS (Independent Advice Support Service) on 01743 280019.