

# Royal Greenwich Children's Services

## Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund & Disability Access Fund (DAF)

### Guidance and Information

Provision of funding for children with additional needs accessing their early entitlement in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

Revised Feb 2026



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## Introduction

This booklet explains the special educational provision Royal Greenwich (RBG) expects to be made available to all children within Early Years Settings, through a graduated approach of support and intervention. It should assist settings in developing a consistent approach in their provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

This document should be viewed as good practice guidance which settings are expected to work towards. It has been produced to provide support and clarity on inclusive practice to all those involved in including and supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities in Early Years Settings in Royal Greenwich.

## Legislation

**Provision and support must** support the principles in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#) including:

- **The early identification of needs** so that professionals can intervene early with the most appropriate support for a child and their family.
- **High expectations and aspirations for what children and young people** with SEN and disabilities can achieve, including a focus on working towards paid employment, living independently with choice and control over their lives, and support for participating in society.
- **A focus on the outcomes that children and young people and their families want to achieve**, so that all decisions and plans are informed by these aspirations.
- **Ensuring that the views and participation of children and their parent/carer and young people are central** and supported throughout the system, that person-centered planning is used to place children and young people at the heart of the system.
- **Giving choice and control to young people and parents** over the support they/their children receive
- **Ensuring that education, health and social care partners collaborate**, so that coordinated and tailored support can be provided to children, young people and their families.

## What is a Special Educational Need?

All children learn and develop at different rates and have areas of strength and interest, and areas of difficulty. A child may have a special educational need if, despite appropriate activities and differentiated planning and support, they continue to experience greater difficulty than their peers in learning and developing skills.

A child has an identifiable SEND if their needs are such that the provider must put in support that is additional or different from what is normally available to all children in the setting, as defined in the 'Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

### **Areas of Special Educational Need and Disability.**

Children may have needs in more than one of the following categories:

- **Communication and Interaction:** - Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) - Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- **Cognition and Learning:** - Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) - Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD)
- **Social, mental and emotional health:** - Emotional and Social Development (ESD)
- **Sensory and/or Physical:** - Visual Impairment (VI) - Hearing Impairment (HI) - Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI) - Physical Disability (PD)

A child may have needs which span two or more categories, for example a child with a hearing loss may also experience difficulty interacting with their peers. Each child should be considered holistically, so that all their needs can be identified. Also consider the environment of your setting as this may be impacting on their learning.

Any needs identified should be prioritised so that targets and provision can be focused upon achieving measurable progress. All approaches and support detailed in the descriptors of SEN should be made in collaboration with those professionals who support the child (internal to the setting and external professionals if appropriate), in full partnership with their parents/carers.

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion is about the quality of children's experiences; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in their early years setting. It requires positive attitudes towards children who have difficulties in a greater responsiveness to individual need and an expectation amongst all staff to play their part.

## Royal Greenwich expectations of inclusive practice

The principles behind educational inclusion stress the importance of all pupils being educated alongside their peers in their local communities. The emphasis is on settings/schools meeting individual needs, including those of children with additional needs, through personalised learning and a graduated approach.

Royal Greenwich's expectations of good practice are based upon a child's entitlement to be educated alongside their age equivalent peers. The responsibility for addressing individual needs lies with the setting through an appropriately differentiated and modified Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum. Personalised learning is at the heart of ensuring that the provision that is made meets the individual child's needs. In EYFS there will be a nurturing environment with continued opportunities for learning through play.

## Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2014)

Four guiding principles should shape practice in Early Years settings, these are:

- Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.
- Children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents, and/or carers.
- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.

The EYFS framework includes two specific points for providing written assessments for parents and other professionals- when the child is aged two and when the child completes their reception year and moves to Key Stage 1 (some children will be 4 when they have the EYFSP). When the child is aged between two and three, early years practitioners **must** review progress and provide parents with a short-written summary of their child's development focusing in particular on communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. This progress check must identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is slower than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns (or identified SEN or disability) practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support the child, involving other professionals such as, the setting's SENCO or the Area SENCO, as appropriate.

The summary must highlight areas where:

- good progress is being made.
- some additional support might be needed.
- there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate SEN or disability)

## Identifying needs in the Early Years

In addition to formal checks, early years practitioners working with children should monitor and review the progress and development of all children throughout the Early Years.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting, practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEND. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

Where a child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers, or a disability that prevents or hinders a child from making use of the facilities in the setting and requires special educational provision, the setting should make that provision. In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly reduce the need for more costly interventions at a later stage.

## High quality provision to meet the needs of children with SEND

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- Achieve their best
- Become confident individuals with fulfilling lives, and
- Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children. Some children need educational provision that is additional to or different from this. This is special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Settings must use their best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it

Most children will access and make progress within an inclusive curriculum where a range of flexible and responsive strategies are available as part of the general differentiation in the provision.

## Working in partnership with parents/carers

When a provider identifies a child as having SEND, they must work in partnership with parent/carers. Parent/carers must be involved in discussions and decisions concerning their child's individual needs and the strategies and/or interventions that will be used. They should also be actively supported in

contributing to intervention plans, assessments and if applicable an Education Health and Care plan. They should also be given information and guidance to participate in any such discussions and receive progression summaries as set out in the EYFS framework.

Children also have a right to participate in any decision-making process; however their views should be given due weight according to their age, maturity and capability.

It is important that providers seek the consent of parent/carers before introducing strategies to support the development of an individual child and listen when parent/carers express concerns about their child's development.

## The Local Offer

[The Royal Greenwich Local Offer](#) aims to set out in one place - clear, relevant and up-to-date information, advice and support. This support covers education, health & social care for children and young people aged 0-25 within the Royal Greenwich (RBG) with a Special Educational Need and/or disability.

Find out what's available for children, young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and their families and how they can access services and activities



## This guidance identifies three groups of children, and the provision they should receive in Royal Greenwich.

- 1. Universal EYFS Entitlement/ Provision** - support available to all children. (SEE **BAND 1** for details)
  - **Children who are not making expected progress**- targeted services for children and young people with SEND who require additional short-term support over and above that provided routinely as part of universal services and as part of the settings general practice in meeting the needs of all children in their setting (SEE **BAND 2- Intervention Support** for details)
- 2. SEN Support** - Specialist services for children and young people with SEND who require specialised, longer-term support. There would be an expectation that children would receive individual or group activities (if appropriate) that are planned and focused on the specific area of delay of the individual child.  
(SEE **BAND 3/4- Specialist SEND support** for details)

**Universal EYFS Entitlement/Provision- Children who are not making expected progress**

**Band 1**

- The SEND Code of Practice (2014) is clear about how settings should differentiate between children who are underachieving and need to catch up, children with a more specific special educational need which would justify the setting putting them on to 'Graduated Approach.'
- For a setting to decide that a child may have a special educational need and needs to be supported at SEN Support, there must be a strong indication that they require support which is "additional to" or "different from" the differentiated educational provision made generally for children of their age – the normal entitlement available to all children, as set out in the EYFS.
- Children who are not making expected progress will generally be expected to catch up with the appropriate support and should not automatically move up to SEN Support.
- Personal Learning Plans (PLP) are no longer routinely required for children who are not making expected progress, as long as there is good quality planning in place that cross references provision with the progress of the children.
- No specialist agencies will typically be involved at this stage.
- Settings will be expected to meet the needs of this group of children from within nursery resources with appropriately differentiated planning etc. (this includes providing support within the normal setting ratio of staff)

### Possible description of child

<b>Cognition and Learning</b>	Some slow progress with language acquisition, early learning, play and personal independence skills. See <a href="#">Developmental Matters guidance 2021</a> check points, ages or stages, or <a href="#">Birth to 5 Matters (2021) ranges</a> .
<b>Social, Mental and Emotional Health</b>	Difficult to settle on entry into session over a number of weeks – seeks frequent reassurance of adult contact, tearful, wanders around etc. Lack of concentration but generally appropriately behaved and able to sustain relationships with supportive adults. Sits for a shorter length of time than peers. E.g., busy box or other adult led activity used at 'group activity time'. Disrupts play of other children by snatching, wanting to take over, sabotaging play e.g., breaking up of toys etc. Unable to take turns/share. Lacks confidence – holds back, reluctant or refuses to participate. Diverts attention by behaviour. Tends to play alone, and reluctant to engage with adults. (Overly compliant/controlled.) Some reluctance to explore objects or try new activities. Bladder/ bowel accidents more than once a week and may occasionally soil.
<b>Communication and Interaction</b>	Speech sounds unclear without a supporting context. Some difficulty following or understanding instructions and everyday language without an object/visual reference. Immaturity in socialisation – looks towards adults rather than peers. Some difficulties with communication and interaction e.g., chooses when to talk, some social and communication difficulties or possible difficulties relating to attachment. Fluency difficulties.
<b>Physical Development and Medical</b>	Delay in fine and gross motor development. Some difficulties with sequencing, visual and/or auditory perception and coordination. Delay in achieving continence – accidents more than once weekly. Difficulties (more than others at this age) dressing self. Difficulties (more than others at this age) cutting up food/feeding self, drinking from a cup.

	Physical impairment may require some special equipment but needs little intensive support. Some difficulties with spatial awareness or social proximity.
<b>Sensory, Visual and Hearing</b>	Family history of visual loss. Minor visual loss (squints) Minor hearing loss. Developing awareness of possible indicators of sensory differences i.e., tactile sensitivity, sensitive to sound or visual stimuli.
<b>Possible Interventions, Strategies and External Agencies</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear classroom routines should be supported by visual cues e.g., visual timetables to aid self-reliance and independence.</li> <li>• Additional support arrangements which may include: - Increased use of visual support timetables, or 'now and then' prompts, assessment and monitoring by key person, supported by the SENCo.</li> <li>• Use the 'next step' to plan learning experiences.</li> <li>• Flexible approaches to whole curriculum planning.</li> <li>• Small group activity or individual activity per session, planned and timed appropriately at the level of development of the child.</li> <li>• Minor adaptations and/or equipment e.g., non-slip surfaces for extra help in playground.</li> <li>• Staff will use a range of prompts and teaching methods may include the use of visual aids, signing and other visual strategies to support understanding.</li> <li>• Practitioner explanations should be at an appropriate level for the child, using repetition and pausing. They should be using appropriate techniques to check the child's understanding.</li> <li>• Training for staff on general SEN issues.</li> <li>• Children may require additional support to settle into the setting, with home/setting diaries.</li> <li>• Staff should consistently apply their behaviour management policies, in liaison with parents/carers.</li> </ul>	
<b>External Agencies:</b> Generalised advice with an Area SENCo at Planning and Monitoring level (PVI's)/ School SENCO.	
<b>Band 2</b>	

If a child continues to make little or no progress over a term and there is evidence the child is falling progressively behind the majority of children of the same age, despite reasonable adjustments and after receiving individualised support, then advice should be sought from external support agencies. Additional intervention in response to recommendations from outside services/ professionals should be available in small groups or individually as appropriate with a practitioner. Examples of such intervention could include:

- Language groups, social skills groups etc.

It is particularly important in the Early Years that there is no delay in making any necessary special education provision. Where a setting identifies a child as having SEN, they should adopt a graduated approach with 4 stages of action: assess, plan, do, review. This cycle of action (*Code, 5.36 onwards*):

- Is usually led by the key person, supported by the setting or Area/ School SENCo
- Requires parents engaged throughout
- Is informed by the child's views throughout.
- Can be revisited in order to identify the best way of securing good progress.

Discussion with parents should cover:

- The outcomes they are seeking for the child.
- The interventions and support to be put in place.
- The expected impact on progress, development, behaviour
- Date for review (*Code, 5.40*)

Advice from the Speech and Language Therapist or Area/ School SENCo may be sought in order to target these appropriately. All staff working with the child should be aware of the nature of these interventions and have clear strategies to generalise this learning into all setting environments. If the child uses alternative means to communicate their own wants and needs or requires these to support their understanding, all staff within the setting should be made aware and trained in using these modes. This could include Makaton signs and symbols, PECS, communication book etc. Agencies may include Local Authority or external specialist services, Health Services including Speech and Language therapists (SALT), Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service (OT), Paediatric Physiotherapy Service (Physio), etc. Alternatively, the child may have sensory or physical needs that require additional specialist equipment, or regular advice, or visits by a specialist agency, such as the Sensory Service.

### Possible description of child

<b>Cognition and Learning</b>	<p>Developmental delay on entry: see <a href="#">Developmental Matters guidance 2021</a> check points, ages or stages, or <a href="#">Birth to 5 Matters (2021) ranges</a>.</p> <p>Significant expressive and receptive language delay - as above</p> <p>Reinforcing and modelling by adult does not result in children engaging with learning activities e.g., completing an inset puzzle, putting teddy to bed, rolling a car along the floor etc.</p> <p>Does not retain concepts over time e.g., size, colour, under/ over etc.</p>
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	Ability to learn concepts, but difficulty with the understanding
<b>Social, Mental and Emotional Health</b>	<p>Separation difficulties e.g. attachment, which persists throughout the session (crying, distressed, clingy) and persist for more than half a term and is severe compared to peers. Child who is unable to regulate emotions, needing adult intervention.</p> <p>Social immaturity for their age affecting appropriate independence or interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Significant reluctance to engage with routine and activities by withdrawal or exhibiting challenging behavior.</p> <p>Inappropriate behaviours that require: - calming strategies - specific behaviour strategies</p> <p>Needs adult support to sustain concentration and build relationships with peers.</p> <p>Anxiety expressed through behaviour that creates a barrier to learning.</p> <p>Unusual behaviours e.g., rocking, mouthing, hiding, inappropriate preoccupation with bodily fluids.</p> <p>Attachment to key carers not securely established.</p> <p>Difficulty in coping with changes to routine or unfamiliar transitions.</p>
<b>Communication and Interaction</b>	<p>Little or no speech.</p> <p>Disordered expressive language e.g., word order including severe phonological difficulties/delay i.e., production of sound as identified by a speech and language therapist.</p> <p>Significant difficulty with understanding spoken language which may also have been identified by a speech and language therapist.</p> <p>Actively withdraws from engagement and does not seek out others – e.g., averts eyes, does not respond to name, solitary play, often seeks out own space.</p> <p>Significant difficulties in processing information, specifically verbal information</p>
<b>Physical Development and Medical</b>	<p>Not achieving continence – accidents almost daily. Needs frequent, individually timed reminders.</p> <p>Delay with physical coordination which may also have been identified by relevant professionals e.g., occupational therapist, physiotherapist, mobility officer etc.</p> <p>Physical impairment required some special equipment e.g., needs some adult support to follow up/supervise.</p> <p>Adults may need training in specialist areas.</p> <p>Movement (unstable or slow movements) requiring support and interventions.</p> <p>May need to sit in buggy to have to rest during session at Pre-School/ nursery.</p> <p>Dressing/feeding difficulties.</p> <p>Child wears splint needing occasional intensive support</p>
<b>Sensory, Visual and Hearing</b>	<p>Associated speech and language difficulties.</p> <p>Mild to moderate hearing impairment affecting other areas of development.</p> <p>Hearing in one ear.</p> <p>Mild to moderate visual loss.</p> <p>Significant difficulty with sensory processing.</p>

## Possible Interventions, Strategies and External Agencies

Additional support arrangements which may include:

Specific interventions to develop non-verbal communication/interaction including:

- [Intensive interaction](#)
- Sensory based programmes i.e., sensory circuits
- [Picture Exchange Communication system \(PECS\)](#) at an appropriate level
- Objects of reference
- Symbols and photographs
- [Attention Autism](#)

Increased differentiation of activities/material to support specific targets:

- Differentiation of expectations e.g., reduced carpet times; limited attendance at whole room gatherings
- Adaptations of group size for activities e.g., one to one, paired, small group
- Specific modelling of social behaviours e.g., turn taking; teaching joining in phrases.
- Explicit teaching of age-appropriate independence skills/ support in self-care skills, such as toileting, feeding and dressing

Particular consideration should be made for transition for pupils who have difficulties managing change e.g.

- Individual visual timetables matched to the child's level of understanding
- Transition books
- Plans for transitions such as changing rooms
- Visual systems to signal unavoidable change
- Support to manage moving around setting

Developing fine and gross motor skills where these are part of a general pattern of difficulties e.g., Occupational Therapist or Physio programs incorporated into children's daily setting routines.

Structured tailored programs may be necessary to develop literacy and maths skills e.g., Numicon maths etc.

Staff training on specific SEN issues.

Smart targets in the form of PLP's should be in place, including specific targets for the child received from specialist agencies.

Risk Assessments and Healthcare plans may be in place, including an audit of the environment to ensure safe passage around the setting.

Specialist equipment may be required to support children with Physical Disabilities.

Behaviour plans in agreement and liaison with parents/carers, should be in place for children with challenging behaviour.

Thought should be given to group sizes, and more individualised work is expected at this level.

Work on emotions and support to gain positive relationships with peers.

At circle/story time the child may need adult support to maintain concentration, and this should be built up slowly over time.

All activities should be supported with visual prompts and size of the group at circle/story time should be carefully considered.

**Resources:**

- Individual visual timetables
- Specific environmental adaptations for sensory needs
- Clear signs and symbols around the setting

Possible additional supervision to ensure health and safety of all children and adults is maintained.

The child may require SEN Inclusion Funding which is made available via Early Years Inclusion Team- for more information contact [SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk).

**External Agencies:**

Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings would be appropriate to encourage a consistent and holistic approach.

Support and advice from some of the following agencies below be involved to inform on-going, more intensive, specific child programmes:

Early Years Inclusion Service, Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy, Paediatric Physiotherapy Service, STEPS, Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service and Sensory Service

**Band 3 – This band of children are likely to require an Education Health Care Plan**

The child's level of need will be progressively more delayed and significant.  
Children at SEN Support will be complex and likely to be known to multiple agencies.

**Possible description of child**

<b>Cognition and Learning</b>	<p>Developmental delay on entry: Significantly delayed expressive and receptive language - see EYFS or use settings own system for tracking development and/or assessments by relevant professionals. Reinforcing and modeling by adult does not result in child engaging with learning activities e.g., completing an inset puzzle, putting teddy to bed, rolling a car along the floor etc.</p>
<b>Social, Mental and Emotional Health</b>	<p>Episodes where extreme aggression is a danger to self and others. Very aggressive to staff and/or peers. No response to calming strategies. Totally withdrawn and uncommunicative. Diagnosed severe attachment disorder.</p>
<b>Communication and Interaction</b>	<p>Speech and language disorders severely affecting communication Regular episodes of challenging behaviour endangering self and others. No spoken language. Severe interaction difficulties.</p>
<b>Physical Development and Medical</b>	<p>Unstable, unpredictable or restricted movements with potential secondary problems e.g., muscle spasms, soreness to joints. Entirely dependent for all self-care needs. Moving and handling needs. Medical needs requiring a medical plan and significant adaptations</p>
<b>Sensory, Visual and Hearing</b>	<p>Dual sensory loss/complex need. Visual or hearing loss resulting in severe impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ social communication skills</li> <li>➤ difficulties in accessing cognitively appropriate learning and development activities</li> </ul>

## Possible Interventions, Strategies and External Agencies

### **Strategies:**

Possible additional support available to increase ratios for intensive support and interventions.

Opportunities for intensive support/teaching, including from outside agencies (e.g., Hearing Impaired team)

Intensive support is required for Personal, Social and Emotional development (e.g., self-esteem and positive relationships.)

Intensive support is required to manage basic hygiene and personal needs.

Significant attention to the provision and maintenance of a range of personal equipment.

Manual handling and hoist training for staff where applicable.

All staff should be aware of the child's issues to ensure consistent application of strategies across the session.

Health Care Plan and Risk Assessment should be in place for children with complex medical needs, including an audit of the environment to ensure safe passage around the setting.

### **Resources:**

All previous resources and a Teacher from the Sensory Service.

### **External Agencies:**

Opportunities to follow specialist programs and approaches advised by external professionals.

#### **Band 4- This band of children are likely to require an Education Health Care Plan**

The child's level of need will be progressively more delayed and significant lifelong complex medical/physical needs. Children at this level will be very complex and likely to be known to multiple agencies.

#### **Interventions, Strategies and External Agencies**

PLP's reviewed every term/ 12 weeks.

If there is a need for on-going funding at this level, we would expect the setting to be working towards submitting an NA1 request for an EHCP assessment, to the SEN Assessment and Review Service as soon as you have the required evidence of response to interventions etc.. (but definitely before the 3<sup>rd</sup> review). If this does not happen, it will be assumed that you do not think the needs this level of support on an on-going basis, and the level of funding is likely to be reduced

Adult:

- Support is required for child throughout to support all aspects of development.
- Access to specialist staff from health or education.
- Manual Handling issues and training for staff specific to child.
- Strategies will be very individual to the child, due to their complexity.

#### **External Agencies:**

In addition to ones previously mentioned, frequent input from Health Services and possibly Social Care.

- Medical safety issues

## **National Context/ Background**

There are currently two main sources of SEN funding available to support children with SEND in early year's settings WITHOUT an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP):

### **1. SEN Inclusion funding for the youngest children**

Local authorities are required to have SENIFs for children with special educational needs (SEN) who are taking up the free entitlements, regardless of the number of hours taken. These funds are intended to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEN.

**A child may be eligible to receive support from the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund if they:**

- Are in receipt of the Free Entitlement to Early Learning (FEEL) funding\* and attend a child-minder, PVI setting or nursery school/ school in Royal Greenwich.

\* For further information on whether a child is entitled to the Free Entitlement to Early Learning (FEEL) provision click on the RBG Children Families Directory link [Early Learning and Childcare](#)

The **Guidance- Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2024 to 2025** states that local authorities should target SENIFs at children with lower level or emerging SEN.

*'Children with more complex needs and those in receipt of an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) continue to be eligible to receive funding via the high needs block of the DSG'*

### **2. In addition, providers are able to claim the Disability Access Fund (DAF)**

From April 2017 providers will be able to access additional funding (separate to Inclusion Funding) to support children with disabilities or SEN. The DAF aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting 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 as a whole attending the setting).

A child will be eligible for the DAF if: the child is in receipt of [Disability Living Allowance \(DLA\)](#) and the child receives one of the following:

- the universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4-year-olds
- or
- the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds
- or
- from April 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 2 years of working parents
- or
- from September 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 9 months to 2 years of working parents

- **Note:** Four-year olds in primary school reception classes are NOT eligible for DAF funding
- Early years providers are ultimately responsible for identifying eligible children.

Children with established SEND needs can apply for an EHCP, typically once they have had a period of support in school/nursery. The above funding is in place to support children with emerging needs, or a lower level of SEND over a longer period of time.

### Early Years SEN Inclusion Funding in the Royal Borough of Greenwich

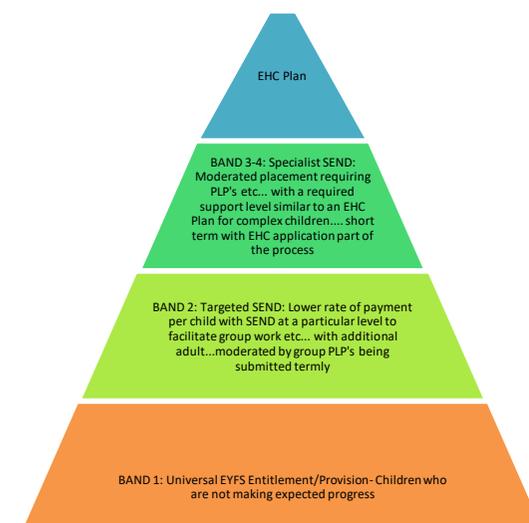
Many children will not require any additional funding at SEN support level, and the child-minder, setting or school will be able to put effective strategies and interventions into place which are having a positive impact upon the child's outcomes. However, there will be some children who will require additional funding to enable the setting or school to be able to support the child to make progress.

Funding is currently only available to children in receipt of the Free Entitlement to Early Learning (FEEL) funding.

Any application for funding will need to demonstrate that existing provision /resources have been effectively implemented and other non-financial support including specialist advice has been sought. Despite taking relevant and purposeful action to identify, access and meet need the expected progress has not been made.

Not all of children at SEN support will need additional resources. There is an expectation that needs would be met within the early years provision.

Where a child-minder, setting or school identify a child who they feel will benefit from additional funding, they may apply for Inclusion Funding.



Click on the image to watch a short SENIF & DAF Information Brief

Alternatively, scan the QR code using a mobile device



### Applying for Inclusion Funding

Early years settings and schools can access application forms through the SEN Inclusion Funding page on the [Royal Borough Greenwich Local Offer](#)

Once completed the form should be sent either by email to [SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk) or sent by post to:

**SEND Outreach Services, Discovery School**  
**Battery Road, West Thamesmead, London**  
**SE28 0JN**



Marked FAO: **Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund**

The SEN Inclusion Fund application/ review will be considered by the Early Years Inclusion Fund virtual panel and the setting will be sent a decision by email within two weeks of receiving the paperwork.

### Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund panel

Decisions regarding applications and reviews will be made in a range of ways:

Panel	Members	Frequency	Decisions
SEND Inclusion Fund Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Early Years Inclusion Service Team Leader</li></ul>	Daily	Panel members will consider applications/ reviews for Inclusion Funding that fall within all 3 bands of support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEND Childcare Officer</li> </ul> <p>Further advice sought as needed from SEND Outreach Support Service Manager, Early Years Specialist Educational Psychologist</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>clarify the nature of the child's additional needs</li> <li>consider the interventions and strategies that have already been put in place.</li> </ul>
Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund steering group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Years Inclusion Service Team Leader</li> <li>SEND Childcare Officer</li> <li>SEND Outreach Support Service Manager,</li> <li>Early Years Specialist Educational Psychologist</li> </ul>	Annually	Review annual SEN Inclusion Fund report and processes/ procedures

When agreed settings will be sent an outcome letter for the child and one for the parent- settings should ensure the parents receive their copy.

**Evidence to support applications should include:**

**MUST SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLES IN THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY CODE OF PRACTICE: 0 TO 25 YEARS**

It is particularly important in the Early Years that there is no delay in making any necessary special education provision. Where a setting identifies a child as having SEN, they should adopt a graduated approach with 4 stages of action: assess, plan, do, review. This cycle of action (*Code, 5.36 onwards*):



- is usually led by the key person, supported by the setting SENCo/ Area SENCO
- requires parents engaged throughout
- is informed by the child's views throughout
- can be revisited in order to identify the best way of securing good progress.

There will be clear and well monitored evidence that the child is not making expected progress, despite the interventions and strategies put in place, and that the child is now significantly delayed in relation to their peers. There are also likely to be clear agreements across professionals that the child does require increased differentiation and direct teaching to help them make progress.

An application will need the support and involvement of parents and should always made with a parent/ carer's consent.

Application	Evidence -SEN Inclusion Funding will not be processed without the following	Attached if not, state reason
Completed application form	<b>Pages 2- 6, Appendix A sections 1 &amp; 2</b>	
Signed parental consent	<b>Appendix A section 3</b>	
<u>SEND Code of Practice 0- 25yrs</u>	Evidence	Attached if not, state reason
5.48 Where a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the child’s area of need, practitioners should consider involving appropriate specialists, who may be able to identify effective strategies, equipment, programmes or other interventions to enable the child to make progress towards the desired learning and development outcomes	<b>Relevant reports</b> (from other involved service providers) informing the PLP/IEP <b>-if reports are not available, please state clearly why</b>	
5.40 Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCO should agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review.	<b>Current PLP</b>	
We usually anticipate almost <b>all</b> children will receive Band 2 funding at the initial point of application and that applications for a higher level of support will be made after a period of intervention-based input as appropriate. However, in particular circumstances a setting may be asked to provide addition evidence due to the complex nature of the child’s needs.		
This may include:		
<b>One page profile</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>CIN/ TAC/ Parent meeting notes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Risk Assessment</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Health Care Plan</b> <input type="checkbox"/>		

If the application is successful the setting will be funded £103.27 per week term time only to provide intervention-based support, we anticipate almost **all** children will receive this level of support at the initial point of application to a setting and that applications for a higher level of support will be made after a period of intervention-based input as appropriate.

**Table below demonstrates the tiered continuum of support**

Band 4	Full time support  <b>£206.55 per week Term Time only (TTO)</b>	Typically for children with the most complex medical needs ONLY  We anticipate this level of support would be used for children ONLY where you are working up an application for a needs assessment for an EHCP and would typically be used for a maximum of 3 terms ONLY**
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Band 3	A level of support enabling some 1:1 intervention alongside group/paired based support and interventions  <b>£172.12 per week (TTO)</b>	For children with other complex developmental needs.  We anticipate this level of support would be used for children for whom you are working up an application for a needs assessment for an EHCP and would typically be used for a maximum of 3 terms ONLY**
Band 2	Intervention based support  (Mirroring SEN Support)  <b>£103.27 per week (TTO)</b>	For all children where response to intervention will be informing next steps.  We anticipate almost <b>all</b> children will receive this level of support at the initial point of application to a setting and that applications for a higher level of support will be made after a period of intervention-based input as appropriate.
Band 1  Universal EYFS Entitlement/  Provision	Children who are not making expected progress- settings will be expected to meet the needs of this group of children from within nursery resources with appropriately differentiated planning etc. (this includes providing support within the normal setting ratio of staff)	Children who are not making expected progress will generally be expected to catch up with the appropriate support and should not automatically move up to SEN Support.

**\*\* Children who reside out of the borough with complex needs who continue to require a higher level of support-** following a 12-week cycle of intervention, will follow the system for applying for a Needs assessment in their Borough of residence. The child's early years setting will be expected to request a Needs Assessment (NA1) from the Local Authority the child resides in. If this does not happen, it will be assumed that the setting do not think the child needs this level of support on an on-going basis, and the level of funding will cease, unless the child only requires interventions to be put in place at Band 2.

Support could be used to resource Band2/ Band 3/ Band4 and could include:

- Adult support for particular times when child would benefit e.g., lunchtimes, start/end of a session
- Adult support to group/paired based support and interventions
- Special equipment or resources
- Training – bespoke/INSET or attendance/cover to attend training.
- Staff covers for TAC meetings, time to write referrals, EHC requests or SENCO time

If funding is awarded, a setting must agree to the following conditions –

- Termly reviews
- Advise the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund when a child in receipt of funding is absent for longer than 2 weeks and the reason why (e.g., 2-week hospital admission)
- Advise the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund when a child in receipt of funding / for whom funding has been applied leaves the setting so that the funding can be adjusted if applicable.
- Advise the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund when a child has been awarded a FINAL Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) so that funding can cease from the SEN Inclusion Fund. At this point funding for a child with an EHCP should be claimed from Royal Greenwich SEND Assessment and Review Service.

### Who can apply for Inclusion Funding?

The application should be made by any professional working with the child based at the setting, but it is expected that the named SENCO alongside the key person who knows the child and family best would make the application.

In some situations, other professionals supporting the child/ family may provide information prior to the child starting a setting that can support the setting make an initial application.

In addition,

- The panel will prioritise those applications to support children with the most complex need, ensuring they have access to their entitlement to Early Education
- There is no guarantee that every request for funding will be met
- Retrospective funding for a prior claim period will not be considered unless there is an exceptional circumstance
- Settings must exhaust all external resource options before applying for funding
- Funding should not be used to fund resources available through the Royal Borough of Greenwich Local Offer.

The decision of panel will be one of the following outcomes –

<b>Agreed</b>	This award indicates the band of funding awarded
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<b>Incomplete application/review</b>	<p>This indicates that a decision could not be reached. Reasons may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was insufficient information to describe strategies and/or interventions used to date to support the child, but “need” is evident</li> <li>• The use of funding is not clear</li> <li>• All mandatory evidence not yet provided by the setting</li> </ul> <p><i>All applicants will be given the opportunity to re-submit their application with further information. This opportunity will be time limited to ensure a decision can be agreed as soon as possible.</i></p>
<b>Declined</b>	<p>This award indicates that funding has not been agreed. Reasons may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision for the child should be met through universal, standard inclusive practice and the Local Offer</li> <li>• There was insufficient information to describe strategies and/or interventions used to date to support the child and “need” that is “additional to and different from” is not evident.</li> <li>• The use of funding could not be determined</li> </ul>

Providers can request further advice if their application was unsuccessful.

Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) early years settings can access further support from the Early Years Inclusion Service in regard to advice on future applications, strategies to support inclusion and signposting of additional services that may support the child's and setting.

**Children who are not residents of Greenwich but access a Greenwich provision.**

All children accessing a Greenwich setting are eligible to apply for SEN Inclusion Funding regardless of where they live.

**Children who are residents of Greenwich but are accessing provision outside of Greenwich.**

A Greenwich child attending a setting outside of the borough of Greenwich is not able to access Greenwich's SEN Inclusion Funding but may access funding from the local authority in which the setting resides. To find out more about the current system in neighbouring boroughs please click on SEND Local Offer link below:

[Needs Assessment Request for an EHCP assessment in - Bexley](#)

[Needs Assessment Request for an EHCP assessment in - Bromley](#)

[Needs Assessment Request for an EHCP assessment in - Lewisham](#)

## Evaluating the impact of Inclusion Funding and planning for next steps

At the end of the period for which funding was accessed (one term) the provider will need to review the impact of the inclusion funding.

For the SEN Inclusion Fund to continue for another term, settings would be required to submit a review with further evidence of SEN support planning.

For a child to be considered as continuing to need additional funding at Intervention level (Band 2) the SENCO, in partnership with others, will have sufficient evidence over a period of time that the child continues to require targeted strategies and interventions.

For a child to be considered as continuing to need additional funding at a specialist level (Bands 3& 4) the SENCO, in partnership with other professionals, will have sufficient and mounting evidence over a period of time that the child has made very little progress and is now significantly delayed, despite very targeted strategies and interventions at an intervention level.



### Evidence to support reviews should include:

#### Band 2 - Intervention review - Mandatory evidence

	Evidence- please note SEN Inclusion Funding will not be processed without the following	Attached if not, state reason
Updated application form	<b>Confirm details on pages 2- 6 remain correct or amend as appropriate Appendix B sections 1 &amp; 2</b>	
<u>SEND Code of Practice 0- 25yrs</u>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Attached if not, state reason</b>

5.39 In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the early years practitioner, working with the setting SENCO and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need.	<b>Progress through setting data</b> (e.g., Tracking/ setting summative assessment or report)	
5.48 Where a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the child's area of need, practitioners should consider involving appropriate specialists, who may be able to identify effective strategies, equipment, programmes or other interventions to enable the child to make progress towards the desired learning and development outcomes	<b>Relevant reports</b> (from other involved service providers) informing the PLP/IEP <b>-if reports are not available, please state clearly why</b>	
5.40 Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCO should agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review.	<b>Current PLP</b>	
5.43 The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support should be evaluated by the practitioner and the SENCO working with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views.	<b>Reviewed PLP</b> Specific interventions required detailed in a PLP/IEP which has been reviewed with team /family within 3 weeks of submission	
<b>Celebrating the voice of the child</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Attached</b> if not, state reason
<b>Listening to children and recognising their voices are expressed in a range of ways, including non-verbally, is central to inclusive practice.</b>	<b>Updated one page profile</b>	

**Band 3 & 4/ hours - complex review - Mandatory evidence.**

	<b>Evidence- please note SEN Inclusion Funding will not be processed without the following</b>	<b>Attached</b> if not, state reason
Updated application form	<b>Confirm details on pages 2- 6 remain correct or amend as appropriate</b> <b>Appendix B sections 1 &amp; 2</b>	
<b><u>SEND Code of Practice 0- 25yrs</u></b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Attached</b> if not, state reason

5.39 In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the early years practitioner, working with the setting SENCO and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need.	<b>Progress through setting data</b> (e.g., Tracking/ setting summative assessment or report)	
5.48 Where a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the child's area of need, practitioners should consider involving appropriate specialists, who may be able to identify effective strategies, equipment, programmes or other interventions to enable the child to make progress towards the desired learning and development outcomes	<b>Relevant reports</b> (from other involved service providers) informing the PLP/IEP <b>-if reports are not available, please state clearly why</b>	
5.40 Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCO should agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review.	<b>Current PLP</b>	
5.43 The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support should be evaluated by the practitioner and the SENCO working with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views.	<b>Reviewed PLP</b> Specific interventions required detailed in a PLP/IEP which has been reviewed with team /family within 3 weeks of submission	
<b>Celebrating the voice of the child</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Attached if not, state reason</b>
<b>Listening to children and recognising their voices are expressed in a range of ways, including non-verbally, is central to inclusive practice.</b>	<b>Updated one page profile included within the draft profile</b>	
<b>Risk</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Attached if not, state reason</b>
When such needs have identified early years providers should conduct regular risk assessments, which identify aspects such as security of the building, child and peer safety. This involves deciding what should be done to prevent harm and ensuring that the relevant actions are taken and are updated whenever necessary.	<b>Risk Assessment</b>	
An Individual Healthcare Plan (IHP) is used in education to detail exactly what sort of care a child needs at school/ setting if they have a medical condition. Individual healthcare plans do not have to be created for every child they're only needed for children with complex medical need	<b>If required- Health Care Plan</b>	

Typically, applications will be made for children who have more complex needs and may require an Education Health and Care Plan in a timely manner ahead of accessing primary school at a point when the setting has good quality information to support an NA 1 request. We would expect the setting to be working

towards submitting an NA1 request for an EHCP assessment to the [SEN Assessment and Review Service](#) as soon as they have the required evidence of response to interventions etc (but definitely before the 3rd review). If this does not happen, it will be assumed that you do not think she/ he needs this level of support on an on-going basis, and the level of funding is likely to be reduced.

### **SEN Inclusion Fund paperwork**

Providers will only need to complete the appropriate section of the form dependant on whether it is the initial application or any subsequent reviews (ensure you have checked that the information on pages 2- 6 remain accurate; this information will need to be updated)

To be clear, the SEN Inclusion Form is intended to be 'built on' as a continuum to demonstrate the graduated approach – over a period of time with application/ termly reviews.

### **Disability Access Fund (DAF)**

From April 2017 providers will be able to access additional funding (separate to SEN Inclusion Funding) to support children with disabilities or SEN. The DAF aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting 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 as a whole attending the setting).

### **Eligibility for Disability Access Fund (DAF)**

A child will be eligible for the DAF if: the child is in receipt of [Disability Living Allowance \(DLA\)](#) **and** the child receives one of the following:

- the universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4-year-olds
  - or
  - the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2-year-olds
  - or
  - from April 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 2 years of working parents
  - or
  - from September 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 9 months to 2 years of working parents
- **Note:** Four-year olds in primary school reception classes are NOT eligible for DAF funding



## Entitlement

- The settings of three- and four-year-olds eligible for the DAF will be entitled to receive a one-off \*annual payment. The DAF is not based on an hourly rate and is an additional entitlement.
- Children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to receive the DAF. Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of free entitlement.

## Identifying eligible children

Early years providers are responsible for identifying eligible children. Providers are encouraged to speak to parents in order to find out who is eligible for the DAF.

Parents of children qualifying for Disability Living Allowance will be required to provide documented evidence of this entitlement, and providers will need to send a copy of this evidence, along with the application form to: [SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)



Evidence required with a DAF application
Application-you will only need to complete or update <b>pages 2- 6</b> of the application form
Signed Parental Declaration- <b>page 18</b>
Current DLA letter
Completed invoice <b>page 19</b> (Total see the <a href="https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-early-years-funding">https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-early-years-funding</a> for the current amount)



## How early years providers will receive DAF funding

- The local authority will fund all early years' settings providing a place for each child eligible for the DAF in their area at the fixed annual rate of £938 per eligible child.
- The DAF will not be offset against any other funding which the local authority may ordinarily be providing for children eligible for the DAF.
- The DAF is payable as a lump sum once a year per eligible child. If a child eligible for the DAF is splitting their free entitlement across two or more providers, the local authority will ask parents to nominate the main setting. This setting will be where the local authority will pay the DAF for the child.
- If a child receiving DAF moves from one setting to another within a financial year, the new setting is not eligible to receive DAF funding for this child within the same financial year. DAF funding received by the original setting will not be recouped by the local authority.
- Where a child lives in one authority area but attends a provider in a different local authority, the provider's local authority is responsible for funding the DAF for the child and eligibility checking.
- All early year's providers who are eligible to receive funding for early entitlement education are also eligible to receive the DAF.

### Disability Living Allowance- further advice and support

There are a number of different services/agencies who can support families in completing Disability Living Allowance forms should this be appropriate for the child:

- Citizens Advice
- Contact a family
- MENCAP
- Parent Voice
- National Deaf Child Society
- Greenwich Toy Library
- Cerebra
- National Autistic Society



Claim forms are also available in different formats via the [gov.uk website- How to claim](#)

### Invoices

Payments are paid in arrears and not in advance and will be paid each term with provision for settings with all-year-round placements to spread as best fits their setting.

Invoices in most cases\* **SHOULD** be submitted by the end of the term *\*Where small PVI settings request it, payments may be paid on a monthly basis.*

Spring term	Summer term	Autumn term
January- March	April- July	September- December

Click for **SENIF & DAF invoice template** - please note all sections highlighted in orange should be completed



**Invoice check points:**

Alternatively, scan the QR code using a mobile device

- ADDRESS  
Setting's detailed address should be the same as the address where the payment is made to.  
If the nursery address is different, then please list both.
- Review date coincides with dates claiming
- Fill all the required fields on the invoice template
- The bank details must be listed

**Submitting the invoices**

- Invoices should be emailed to [SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:SENIF-DAF@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)
- Invoices should be submitted on the termly basis, except Spring term when is required to submit documents by the end of February (SEN Funding coming to the end of financial year).  
Exceptions (monthly payments) can be made for PVI settings, if they request it.

**If any discrepancies:**

- You will be contacted directly with the details

**Please don't hesitate to contact the SEN Inclusion Fund email with any queries you might have.**

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

For further information on whether a child is entitled to the Free Entitlement to Early Learning (FEEL) provision click on the RBG Children Families Directory link [Early Learning and Childcare](#)

Click on the image to open the SEN Inclusion Fund Application/ Review - EXEMPLAR

Alternatively, scan the QR code using a mobile device

