 

**Wirral**

**Inclusive**

**Practice**

**Fund**

**Guidance**

**2017-2018**



**Section 1 - INTRODUCTION**

A growing body of evidence shows that high quality early years provision is the key to improving life-long outcomes for children and their families. Research shows that those children from the most deprived families who access high quality early years provision, combined with a good home learning environment, see real developmental benefits. For this reason, Wirral is committed to ensuring that all children are able to take up their entitlement to funded early education in a high quality setting. The statutory guidance from the Department for Education states “All children who meet the prescribed criteria are able to take up high quality early education, regardless of their parents’ ability to pay – benefiting their social, physical and mental development and helping to prepare them for school. Evidence shows that regular, high quality early education has lasting benefits for all children”.

Local authorities and providers must have regard to the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and the Equalities Act 2010 and be able to demonstrate how they are implementing a graduated approach to support all children with special needs or a disability to fulfil their potential.

*5.4 Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEND or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND (SEND Code of Practice, January 2015 update)*

*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)*

Within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, Early Years providers will expect to have some children with additional needs at some time and must plan for each child’s care and learning requirements, with a focus on removing or helping to counter underachievement and overcoming barriers for children where these exist. The majority of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities will not require additional resources or specialist equipment to be successfully included in Early Years educational settings. Due to the statutory adult to child ratios which must be adhered to within all Early Years settings and are regulated by Ofsted, the need for enhanced staffing is only supported through this funding for children with a range of needs which are not able to be met by any other means. Evidence demonstrates that many settings meet the additional needs of their children very well. Inclusive Quality First Teaching focuses on making learning purposeful and enjoyable. Inclusive Quality First Teaching is learner-centred and personalised - high achievement for all children through explicit high expectations and high aspirations. Practitioners can ask for support and advice from Early Years SEND Team.

There is an expectation that settings are planning for inclusion (e.g. through their SEND and Inclusion Policy) and are allocating staff resources e.g. SENCO time. There may be times when providers need some extra support. Research shows that, wherever possible, it is more beneficial for children to be supported through a whole room/setting approach rather than having 1-1 support for an individual child. We do recognise that for some children in certain situations 1-1 support may be needed.

The provider must demonstrate how the graduated response to meeting children’s needs has been implemented and monitored during their time at the setting prior to making an application. There is an expectation that Early Years providers will demonstrate the ways in which they have endeavoured to meet a child’s additional needs within the resources routinely available and this information must be provided when submitting an Early Years Inclusive Practice Funding application.

**Section 2 - What is the purpose of the Inclusive Practice Fund?**

The fund is available to ensure the **inclusion** of children with additional needs in early education /childcare.

“Additional needs” includes a physical, sensory or learning disability, difficulties in areas such as communication, attention, or behaviour and problems, which may be related to children from socially excluded families.

The Inclusive Practice Fund (IPF) is intended to support settings with additional staff time, for example:

 A setting may need to provide smaller groups/higher staff ratio at certain times or for certain activities, determined by the level of additional needs in the group

 The setting Key Person may have to attend meetings, liaise with outside professionals and write additional reports which take them away from his/her normal duties

 There may be more than the usual number of children with additional needs in the setting

 For children looked after with additional needs.

The fund will support a maximum of 15 hours or 570 hours over a stretched period.

The funding is allocated to the end of the school year (or end of August if stretched) unless it is only approved for a shorter period of time. It will be paid termly and will follow the child if they move settings.

Should a child move their universal 15 hours funding from 1 setting to another the Local Authority will broker the Inclusive Practice Funding reviews to the new setting.

**Section 3 - Who can apply?**

The children need to be in receipt of 3 or 4 year old funding.

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| --- |
| The funding is available for the following group settings:  Day Nursery |
| Pre-School |
| Nursery Unit of an Independent School  Maintained Schools with F1 classes  Childminders  **There may be some discretionary funding for funded 2 year olds.** |

The Inclusive Practice Fund application form only needs to be completed **once** **a year** but there is follow up paperwork for you to complete on a termly basis.

Please fully complete the Early Years Inclusive Practice Fund Application.

You must have discussed your application with your **Early Years SEND Officers and they must have signed the form before the setting** submit it to **Early Years SEND Team Leader.**

As the fund is looking at enhancing the staff ratio when inclusion support is considered, children are grouped together, rather than supported individually in a room.

**Section 4 - Factors that can cause a request for funding to fail:**

Each individual application will be considered on merit. It is very important that the application is completed fully and accurately, indicating exactly how much is being applied for. All applications are presented to a panel for a decision on their suitability. To help you in planning your request, listed below are some factors which could result in a request failing or being deferred. Funding will **not** be awarded:

 To subsidise places.

 Where insufficient explanation has been given as to how the funding would be used e.g. request for funding for a small group but with no explanation as to what this would achieve.

 Where Inclusion is not the primary purpose of the application.

 Where funding is requested retrospectively outside the term

 For activities that should form part of your normal provision

 It is important that you allow sufficient time and complete your application fully. Please note: **Late applications will not be considered** until the following Panel meeting

 If the child has an EHCP [Education, Health and Care Plan]

**Incomplete or difficult to read applications will not be considered.** If you have not answered all of the questions or been unable to confirm you have submitted all the information listed on the checklist by marking with a cross the relevant box, your application will be delayed.

**Section 5 - Submitting your application**

The Panel’s decisions are based on the information received in the application form and supporting evidence; funding will be awarded in line with the Inclusive Practice Funding criteria. Following each panel meeting, the Early Years provider will be informed of the panel’s decision in writing electronically. Providers are asked to inform parents/carers of the panel’s decision. Outcomes of the panel decision are not able to be provided verbally to ensure information governance policies are adhered to.

The funding will commence from the time that the graduated response (see Appendix 1) has been completed. The funding will run from when the setting put in additional staffing levels – evidence to be shown on application form. Only in exceptional circumstances will the funding be back dated.

**Section 6 - What happens once I have submitted my application?**

When we have received your completed application we will email you to say that we have it. Should you not have heard from us in 10 days please contact us. We are aiming to set up a robust system to collect all the requests but the Early Years SEND Team is on the move and we just want to make sure all requests are logged.

Each of the requests needs to be individually assessed at panel to take into account the particular circumstances associated with the request. The panel generally meets twice a term as laid out below. You will be informed of the outcome of your request within 2-3 weeks of the panel date.

You will be notified of the outcome of your application by email/post.

**Deadlines for submission of applications 2017-2018**

The panel will meet approximately 6 times per year to decide on applications.

\* Please note – applications received after the submission dates below will be held until the following panel to allow time for pre-panel checks to be made.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Applications to be submitted by** | **Panel meeting** |
| 10th October 2017 | 17th October 2017 |
| 4th December 2017 | 11th December 2017 |
| 5th February 2018  19th March 2018  15th May 2018  9th July 2018 | 12th February 2018  26th March 2018  22nd May 2018  16th July 2018 |

**Section 7 - How does IPF get reviewed and what are the monitoring arrangements?**

It is good practice for settings to arrange termly meetings to review the child’s progress towards the outcomes. In addition settings must complete a termly report (see Termly Review document) describing the impact of provision and progress for those children who have accessed IPF at any point during the term. Failure to submit the Review form may affect future applications for support. Review documentation **must** be submitted by the second week of January, May and August.

When a child is in 2 settings the parents can express a preference as to which setting should be responsible for the meetings and reports. The settings need to work jointly to enable the best possible support and outcomes for the child.

We have asked for the attendance of the child as a safeguarding measure and also to determine the amount of impact expected.

Where a provider has been awarded Early Years Inclusive Practice Funding for a named child and the child reduces/increases the number of hours attended to maximum of 15, the provider will be expected to notify Principal Officer, Budget Support by email and adjustments will be made accordingly. The provider will also be expected to inform Principal Officer, Budget Support via email if a child ceases to attend during the period for which funding has been awarded and return any remaining balance of the funding.

Failure to spend the money in accordance with your application will result in funding having to be re-paid to Wirral Council.

The Early Years SEND Team will use the report information for monitoring and quality assurance purposes to ensure that appropriate provision is being made for children. This produces valuable information in providing appropriate support and challenge to settings.

APPENDIX

A

Graduated Response to SEND

**No additional support**

Applicable to ALL children

A

**Exceptional Support**

Applicable to FEW children

**Lots of additional support /**

**Some additional support**

Applicable to SOME children

APPENDIX

B

Pathway to requesting

Inclusive Practice Funding

Settings/F1 follow the Graduated Response (Assess, Plan, Do Review) to meet a child’s needs in the first instance and referrals are made to outside agency professionals as required

Setting to discuss with EY SEND Officer and parents about applying for IPF and then send the complete form and documentation to Early Years SEND Team Leader by the due date

Setting notified

Not approved

Paperwork incomplete Resubmit complete form

Annual report sent to EY SEND Team

Termly reviews held with parents and outside professionals to discuss progress towards outcomes and future plans. Reports sent to EY SEND Team

Settings will be informed of funding being agreed - paid termly.

Approved

Panel meets to make decisions

Requests are acknowledged via email