

The Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund (EY SENIF)

An explanation of the scope, application and decision making process of the EY SENIF

Introduction

This document gives information about:

- (a) how early years settings, who are providing the free entitlement for early years provision for a child living in Barnet, can access the Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund (EY SENIF) for that child where the child has complex special educational needs; and
- (b) how each application is treated.

Background

All early years providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out in the EYFS framework.

Barnet EY SENIF helps to facilitate the above through the provision of 'top up' funding for individual children with complex special educational needs and disabilities who may need additional provision to that which is 'normally' or 'ordinarily' available in an early years setting. **Please note that only children who attend your setting on the free entitlement for 2, 3 or 4 year olds are eligible for early years SEN Inclusion Funding.**

'Normally available' provision is provision that should be available in all early years settings in Barnet for children who attend your early years settings. This provision will include resources, activities, strategies and flexibility around staffing that you routinely provide in order to meet the needs of a wide range of children. The normally available document can be found on the Early Years Section of the Barnet Local Offer website.

Who can apply?

All private, voluntary, independent early years settings (including registered child minders) and maintained school nurseries can apply for EY SENIF where they:

- (a) have a 2,3,4 year old with complex special educational needs and disabilities; and
- (b) are in receipt of their free entitlement for early years provision; and
- (c) have detailed supporting evidence as laid out in Appendices A and B.

What funding can be requested?

1. Funding is available for staff and is dependent on the extent of free entitlement the Barnet child is accessing at 2,3 or 4 years old. For example, if a Barnet 3 year old is accessing 15 hours of free entitlement provision, a request can be made for small periods of time up to a maximum of 15 hours. If a Barnet 3 year old is accessing 30 hours of free entitlement early years provision, then a request can be made for small periods of time up to 30 hours.

2. Funding is limited to under 5s in receipt of their free entitlement and who have identified complex and special educational needs as described above. In the event that a parent wishes to defer entry to reception year for their summer born child and wish to receive funding for the continuation of nursery provision during this period, an application to the SEN Inclusion Fund will not be possible. However, in such a case, the parent can make an exceptional needs application in writing for funding which will be considered by the Complex Needs Panel on the facts of each case.
3. Funding is limited to the setting in which the child is receiving their free entitlement early years provision. However, if a child accesses their free 30 hour entitlement over 2 early years settings, it is possible to apply for funding up to their maximum entitlement over the two early year settings. EY SENIF will not be given over more than two early years settings for each child.

Duration of funding

1. Funding can be given a term at a time or for two terms or may be given a year at a time.
2. No funding will be given during the Barnet stated holiday periods. Early years settings that operate during holiday periods are asked to think flexibly about how they use funding and discuss it with their Area SENCO if necessary.

The application process

1. Early years settings should discuss their applications with their Area SENCO who can support with regards to reviewing the current support in place and, if appropriate, advise the setting on how to structure their submission.
2. Each application or re-application form for funding must be supported by the information requested in Appendix A and B. This includes an SEN Support Plan or Health Care Plan and the funding request needs to be linked to individual outcomes that are evidenced in a SEN Support Plan. The outcomes should be aligned to specific strategies that help illustrate the level of resource the current setting are providing.
3. The EY SENIF must be used to free up skilled workers/early years setting staff who already have a relationship with the child to work with a child to support the SEN Support Plan outcomes i.e. funding is used to buy in other staff to help run the session so that existing early years setting staff support the child.
4. It is the early years setting's responsibility to re-apply for EY SENIF for a child whose funding may be about to 'run out'. No reminders will be sent so early years settings are advised to make a note of the dates for which funding has been given and apply in plenty of time. The weekly EY SENIF monitoring form must be included in any reapplication for EYIF. Funding cannot be backdated.
5. The SEN Team aim to be expeditious in the processing of applications

Who makes the decision?

Currently a Complex Needs Panel (Panel) meets weekly to review requests for EY SENIF. This panel is attended by professionals from health, education, social care and by educational settings represented through SENCOs, head teachers and early years practitioners.

The panel members read and consider all the evidence and information provided as part of the request prior to the weekly panel. During the Panel the evidence is discussed and a decision is made on whether the Local Authority agrees to provide EY SENIF and, if yes, the extent of the funding provided. The decision record is communicated to the relevant people by the SEN Team in writing following panel.

What guidelines do the Panel have regard to when considering: (a) to provide EY SENIF; and (b) the extent of EY SENIF.

The guidelines are based on the SEND Code of Practice 2015. These guidelines help the Panel to decide whether to approve each application as well as what EY SENIF to give.

Guideline 1: Does the nature, extent and context of the child's SEN evidence that the child is experiencing extensive barriers to learning, participation and achievement.

Under this guideline, the Panel is looking for the following evidence:

- The agreement/views of the parents or carers (e.g. discussed at an SEN support plan meeting)
- Views from relevant professionals
- Information provided by the setting that clearly highlights the child's individual needs in the following areas:
 - Communication and language
 - Personal, social and emotional development
 - Physical development

Guideline 2: Does the child's rate of progress evidence that the child is experiencing a delay in their developmental milestones and that the child has not made expected progress

Under this guideline, the Panel is looking for the following evidence:

- Evidence of the child's developmental milestones and rate and style of progress over time.
- Whether the child has made expected progress.
- Evidence that where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support detailed in a SEN Support Plan / Individual Learning Plan

Guideline 3: Do the interventions and strategies already in place evidence that the child is experiencing extensive barriers to learning, participation and progress for which normally available resources may not be sufficient

Under this guideline, the Panel is looking for the following evidence:

- Interventions have already been implemented by the early years provider to meet the child's special educational needs
- The parents / carers have been involved in reviewing the child's progress with the setting and developing appropriate outcomes.
- Where professionals have provided support, there is clear action as a result of their input (e.g. strategies / recommendations are embedded in the child's SEN Support Plan)
- Evidence that where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support detailed in a SEN Support Plan / Individual Learning Plan

Guideline 4: Does the child-centred Assess-Plan-Do-Review (A-P-D-R) documentation evidence that the child's individual needs have been addressed with appropriate strategies and that there has been a review process focusing on targeted outcomes that have informed future SEN Support Plans.

Under this guideline the panel is looking for the following evidence:

- Interventions have been implemented and reviewed with reference to the impact on progress towards specified outcomes.
- The parents / carers have been involved in reviewing the child's progress with the setting and developing appropriate outcomes.
- The review process has impacted the approach taken (e.g. strategies) and resulting outcomes developed.
- There is evidence of assess-plan-do review evidenced through SEN Support Plans / Individual Learning Plans

Levels of funding

The Panel uses the guidelines above to determine not only whether to give funding but also the level of funding. For a child with particularly complex needs requiring considerable provision, the hours of additional funding awarded under the EY SENIF can match exactly the child's free entitlement. Where the needs are less complex but clearly above what is normally available the hours of additional funding awarded from the EY SENIF can be less. Each case is looked at on its merits in the light of the evidence submitted by the early years setting for a particular child.

Exceptional Circumstances

No guidelines can ever cover all the individual circumstances faced by children, early years settings, schools and families. The Panel will always consider individual circumstances and whether criteria and thresholds should be waived on the grounds of exceptionality. Similarly a local set of thresholds cannot override the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

How is the EY SENIF monitored?

Each early years setting's Area SENCO in the private, independent and voluntary sector will monitor how the early years setting is using the EY SENIF. In maintained settings the head teacher and SENCO are responsible for monitoring this. Following receipt of a positive decision, early years settings are expected to do the following:

- Ensure that they have allocated a member of staff for the agreed allocated number of hours.

- Fill in a EY SENIF monitoring record on at least a weekly basis in order to outline the work that has been done with the child
- Demonstrate on how the additional resource is being utilised with regards to specific strategies / interventions (i.e. It is not enough to state 1:1 support, it needs to be clearly illustrated what the 1:1 support is focusing upon, skills being developed and outcomes that they are working towards).
- Monitor the progress of the child and ensure that outcomes are reviewed at least termly through the SEN Support Plan Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle.
- Inform the SEN Team if there are any changes in the circumstances of the child (e.g. if the child changes the number of hours that s/he attends the early years setting)

Area SENCOs may discuss how early years settings are using EY SENIF with Pre-school teachers.

APPENDIX A

In order to make an appropriate application for Early Years SEN Inclusion Funding (EY SENIF) please read the following very carefully as applications MUST include:

1. an application or re-application form filled in fully with details of when the child started at your early years setting, what sessions the child attends and whether the child is on FEE2 or FEE3/4.
2. a short report (see Appendix B 'What to include in your short report to support your application (or reapplication) for early years high needs funding') . Please ensure that in your report you demonstrate:
 - a) how flexible you have been able to be in terms of the size of your setting and the staff available
 - b) evidence of what intervention you have put in place in order meet the needs of the child
 - c) the impact of the interventions that you have put in place and how you have used suggestions from your area SENCO or other outside professional known to the child
 - d) how EY SENIF would enhance the resources available to you and the provision that you can put in place in order to promote the outcomes for the child
 - e) for children who have not yet started at your setting – what support for transition are you planning? In these cases, transition EY SENIF may be given that will be reviewed at the beginning of the subsequent term for an enduring allocation (the setting would be responsible for making any further applications)
3. an SEN support plan outlining how you are implementing the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle. This must include expected long term outcomes as well as targets for the coming term. It must also give evidence of discussions with parents/carers and their view of the child's needs.
4. Any available reports from outside professionals giving evidence of any strategies or activities that they have recommended.
5. for reapplications only, settings are required to fill in the weekly monitoring sheet and send this in with the reapplication information.

APPENDIX B

What to include in your short report to support your application (or reapplication) for early years SEN inclusion funding

Background Information

- A brief outline of the child's needs stating any diagnosis, disability, medical condition or areas of need that have been identified by outside professionals.
- Briefly summarise your main concerns about the child.
- Start date and any special settling in/transition arrangements

Assessed Attainment

- Give the child's chronological age in months.
- The child's age and stage within the 3 prime areas of the EYFS indicating whether they are emerging, developing or secure in each area.
- Indicate the areas of need/s from the four categories of the SEND Code of Practice (2015) (Communication and interaction, Cognition and learning, Social, emotional and mental health or Sensory and/or physical.)
- Give information from any other milestones, assessments or significant observation information e.g. 2 year progress check, information from outside professionals etc.

What You Do

Give evidence of the interventions and strategies you have put in place which are over and above what would normally be available in your nursery setting (See Barnet's Normally Available Early Years Setting document which is available online in the Early Years Section of the Barnet's Local Offer)

- Do you need to adapt, differentiate or use special resources or activities in order to enable the child to develop and learn?
- Include strategies given to you for the child by outside professionals
- Are there any specific situations or times of the day during which the child requires assistance?
- Give adaptations you have made to the nursery and environment and 'reasonable adjustments' that you have made for the child.
- Have you been able to be flexible in terms of your staffing levels in order to meet the child's needs? Please state what you have put in place.

Review of Progress

State the impact of the interventions (see above) that you have put in place and the rate of the child's progress

- Please refer to suggestions you have used from your Area SENCO or other outside professional known to the child
- Refer to the child's SEN Support Plan and summarise the child's progress towards the outcomes (if relevant). Outcomes for this child may be in very small steps.

State how Early Years SEN Inclusion Funding would enhance the resources available to you and the provision that you can put in place in order to promote the outcomes for the child.

Re-applications

In addition to the above information, please give details of how the additional person/support has had an impact on the progress of the child. Make sure you include updated SEN support plans.

You must show evidence of how you have used the funding by including your monitoring sheet.

For children new to your setting - What support for transition are you planning? Give a clear outline of the transition plan and who is involved.