

28 September 2017

TITLE OF REPORT: Early Years Inclusion Fund Consultation Document and Process

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Schools Forum on the progress made by officers in the development of the proposed criteria and application process for the Early Years Inclusion Fund, and to enable Schools Forum to comment and have input into the proposed early years Inclusion Fund consultation document.

Background

2. This report builds on reports to Schools Forum in December 2016 and February 2017.
3. Department for Education (DfE) Operational Guidance requires all Local Authorities (LAs) to establish an Inclusion Fund in their local funding systems for 3 and 4 year olds with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) taking the free entitlement. The purpose of the fund is to support LAs to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with low levels or emerging SEN.
4. Children with more complex needs and those in receipt of an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) continue to be eligible to receive funding from the high needs block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).
5. To ensure that the maximum amount of funding was passed to settings 95% of the Early Years Block (EYB) funding was allocated to the new funding formula. The remaining 5% is being used to fund the administration of early year's grants and to fund the inclusion fund.
6. The Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) operational guidance states that 5% top slice can only be applied to base rate funding. However, if a larger inclusion fund is to be created in future years the amount of funding allocated to settings via the EYNFF would be reduced and therefore impact negatively on the hourly rates to settings.
7. At present the amount of funding available for the Inclusion Fund is estimated at £50,933, and is based on estimated funding information from the Department of Education (DfE). The calculation is provided in appendix 1.

Inclusion Fund

8. The aim of the Gateshead Early Years Inclusion Fund is to ensure that 3 and 4 year old children accessing their funded entitlement (universal or extended) receive timely, planned and monitored early interventions to ensure they remain included in their setting and are provided with additional opportunities to access and experience the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

9. The amount available will generally be up to £200 per child, however larger amounts may be awarded, (up to £500) for example, if the proposed purpose of the funding will benefit more than 1 child. This money will be paid directly to settings. This will usually be a one-off payment although there may be occasions where repeat applications are appropriate on an annual basis.

Use of the Inclusion Fund

10. The use of the Inclusion Fund should be determined by the provider, in consultation with other professionals, such as Early Years Area SENCo or a teacher from EYAIT. Providers should state on their Inclusion Fund application form the intended purpose of the money. Examples of how providers can use the Inclusion Fund include:
- Support to produce or purchase resources for specific children where this will help to address their individual needs.
 - Specialist or one-off extra training, or to upskill a team or staff member
 - Extra staff time to support specific interventions (specific hours and not an addition to the hourly rate)
 - Support for co-ordinating key worker duties, such as team around the child
 - Helping children who are transitioning to school. This could be by spending time at the school and releasing key workers to support the process

Eligibility

- The Early Years Inclusion fund is for 3 and 4 year old children accessing either the universal or the extended funded entitlement in a Gateshead provision.
- The application may be to support an individual child, or a specific group of children (all children must be named on the application form) with lower level or emerging SEN.
- It would be expected that the application had previously been discussed with the Early Years Area SENCo prior to submission.
- The child may already receive support from the EYAIT, in which case the Inclusion Fund application should be discussed and agreed with the child's allocated worker.
- The child will not have an Education Health Care plan.
- Parents should be fully aware that an application for funding is being made.

Application for Funding

11. A short application form needs to be completed, providing details of the proposed purpose of the funding, and how this will support inclusion in the provision and reduce barriers to taking up their free entitlement and learning for the child. There also needs to be evidence of what the setting is already doing to support inclusion and meet the needs of the child.
12. The applications will be discussed fortnightly by the EHC panel.

Payment mechanism

13. Once the EHC Panel has approved an application for the Inclusion Fund, notification will be sent to Funding Officers in the Early Years and Childcare Service. They will inform providers, by email, of successful applications. Payment to PVI providers will then be made alongside the next payment opportunity, as set out in the funding schedule.

14. Payment to maintained schools will be made by journal transfer. Once Inclusion Fund funding has been exhausted for a financial year no further claims will be processed, but will be reviewed once funds become available again. Any unspent inclusion funds will be carried forward to the next financial year and added to the Inclusion Fund for that financial year.

Proposal

15. It is proposed that the Schools Forum agrees the below proposals:-

- The value of the Inclusion Fund for 2017/18 is set at the estimated amount of £50,933
- The intended use of the Inclusion Fund
- The eligibility criteria of the Inclusion Fund
- The application process of the Inclusion Fund
- The payment mechanism for the Inclusion Fund
- That the Inclusion Fund is ring fenced and finite

Consultation

16. The attached consultation documentation (appendix 2) details the proposed purpose of the Inclusion Fund, as well as other funding available to support children with SEND accessing their early years' funded entitlements.

17. If the above proposals are agreed, it is hoped that following the review and ratification of the Consultation document, it can be sent to all settings by the 2nd October 2017.

18. LAs are also required to consult with parents of children with SEND. The consultation document, once approved, will also be available on the Council's Local Offer website.

19. Any suggestions or questions would be welcomed prior to the Schools Forum meeting if at all possible.

Proposal

20. It is proposed that Schools Forum reviews and agrees the consultation document attached for the distribution to all early years settings by the 2nd October 2017.

Recommendations

21. That Schools Forum:-

- Reviews and agrees the proposed value, use, eligibility, application and payment processes as outlined above
- Review the attached consultation document
- Review the information contained within the document for clarity
- Depending upon the outcomes of discussions, either agree the attached consultation document or suggest changes that can be made within the very tight timescale required.

For the following reasons:-

- To consult with all settings on the proposed new Inclusion Fund
- To comply with Schools and Early Years Finance Regulations (England) 2017

- To comply with the timescales to enable early years settings to receive Inclusion Fund for eligible children in the Autumn Term 2017.

CONTACT: Carole Smith/ Jan Batchelor

Appendix 1

Estimated new funding to the LA (15 hours)			
Gateshead's Funding Rate			
Estimated Part Time Equivalents (PTE)	3,104.3	£4.02	£7,114,639.83
Estimated additional 30 hour funding			
Estimated PTE	510.5	£4.02	£1,169,987.05
Total Base Rate Funding			£8,284,626.88
5% top slice			£414,231.34
Early Years Grant Administration			£363,298.00
Funding Available for Inclusion Fund			£50,933.34

Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council

Early Years Inclusion Fund
From October 2017

CONSULTATION PAPER

INTRODUCTION

This consultation paper is for all early years' providers and for parents of children with SEND.

This consultation is set in the context of the implementation of the Local Authority Early Years National Funding Formula, which the Department for Education (DfE) introduced from April 2017.

Gateshead's new Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) for all providers of the funded entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds commenced in April 2017.

As part of the EYSFF LAs are required to introduce an Inclusion Fund.

This consultation paper sets out the LAs proposals for its Inclusion Fund, and all schools and PVI settings are requested to read this consultation paper carefully and respond to the questions on the attached consultation response form.

Context

The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice states that all providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN.

It is expected that that the following would be provided by all Gateshead early years settings as part of their standard inclusive practice:

- A broad and balanced Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum which meets all statutory requirements.
- An identified key person - to act as first point of contact, to ensure every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with parents.
- A written SEN policy.
- A graduated approach so as to be able to provide specific help to individual children through an "assess, plan, do, review" approach.
- Differentiated learning for children with a range of learning needs. This would include:
 - Practitioners meeting the individual needs of all children by delivering personalised learning, development and care.
 - Daily opportunities to work in small, structured and adult initiated, group situations where if necessary distractions can be minimised.
 - Regular monitoring and evaluation of children's progress using an early years' tracker document.
 - Inclusion in the range of learning experiences which are suitable and appropriate to an individual child's needs and compliant with the Equality Act.
 - Resources suitable for a range of children with learning needs.
- A clear policy for promoting positive behaviour that is consistently applied by all practitioners across the setting.
- Reasonable adjustments for children covered by the Equality Act (2010) such as flexible groupings, adaptations to policies and enduring disability access.
- An identified Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who ensures all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN, who advises colleagues and liaises with parents and other professionals.
- Suitable arrangements for collaborative working with parents and professionals, social care, school and health to ensure children benefit from integrated provision.

Regular developmental checks will be carried out by the key person in the nursery setting and health visitor. Where a child makes less than expected progress and where the setting identifies a child as having SEN they must work in partnership with parents to establish the support the child needs. Where it is decided to provide SEN support the practitioner and 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 and a clear date for review. The intervention will be specific to the needs of the child.

Where a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite appropriate evidence-based support and interventions, practitioners should consider involving appropriate specialists.

Current Support for children with SEND

Area SENCo - may be the first specialist to be involved to provide advice and guidance to early years providers on the development of inclusive learning environments and to provide strategies to support children within the nursery environment.

Education, Health and Care Panel - if a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence based support and interventions, then a referral to the Education, Health and Care Panel (EHC) may be appropriate. The panel will be able to:

- provide additional educational assessment, intervention or support for a child via the Early Years (0-4) Assessment and Intervention Team (EYAIT);
- refer a child for assessment to the Child Development Team;
- identify other agencies that should be involved;
- recommend a child for further assessment for an EHC plan (if appropriate).

In order to refer to the EHC panel a referral form must be completed, along with a signed parental consent form, and there must be an accompanying Common Assessment Framework (CAF). The referral form must give evidence of differentiated learning opportunities provided for the child and of specific interventions undertaken.

Disability Access Funding (DAF) – aids access to early years places by, for example, supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their provision and/or helping with building capacity. 3 and 4 year olds will be eligible for the DAF if they are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). The providers of three and four year olds eligible for the DAF will be entitled to receive a one-off payment of £615 per financial year. Further details are available from Funding Officers in the Early Years and Childcare Service

Inclusion Fund Proposal

The aim of the Gateshead Early Years Inclusion Fund is to ensure that 3 and 4 year old children accessing their funded entitlement (universal or extended) receive timely, planned and monitored early interventions to ensure they remain included in their setting and are provided with additional opportunities to access and experience the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

The estimated total available for 2017/18 is approximately £50,933. Based on current information any increase in the amount of Inclusion Fund available would result in a reduction of base rates paid to all providers.

Q1 Do you accept the total level of Inclusion Fund for 2017/18 Financial Year?

The amount available to settings will generally be up to £200 per child, however larger amounts may be awarded, (up to £500) for example, if the proposed purpose of the funding will benefit more than 1 child.

Q2 Do you accept the Inclusion Fund application limit of £200 or in exceptional circumstances £500?

This money will be paid directly to settings. This will usually be a one-off payment although there may be occasions where repeat applications are appropriate on an annual basis.

Use of the Inclusion Fund

The use of the Inclusion Fund should be determined by the provider, in consultation with other professionals, as appropriate. Providers should state on their Inclusion Fund application form the intended purpose of the money. Examples of how providers can use the Inclusion Fund include:

- Support to produce or purchase resources for specific children where this will help to address their individual needs.
- Specialist or one-off extra training, or to upskill a team or staff member
- Extra staff time to support specific interventions (specific hours and not an addition to the hourly rate)
- Support for co-ordinating key worker duties, such as team around the child
- Helping children who are transitioning to school. This could be by spending time at the school and releasing key workers to support the process

Q3 Do you accept the proposed uses of the Inclusion Fund?

Eligibility

- The Early Years Inclusion fund is for 3 and 4 year old children accessing either the universal or the extended funded entitlement in a Gateshead provision.
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- The child may already receive support from the EYAIT, in which case the Inclusion Fund application should be discussed with the child's allocated worker.
- The child will not have an Education Health Care plan.
- Parents should be fully aware that an application for funding is being made.

Q4 Do you accept the eligibility criteria for the Inclusion Fund?

Application for Funding

A short application form needs to be completed, providing details of the proposed purpose of the funding, and how this will support inclusion in the provision and reduce barriers to taking up their free entitlement and learning for the child. There also needs to be evidence of what the setting is already doing to support inclusion and meet the needs of the child.

The applications will be discussed fortnightly by the EHC panel.

Payment mechanism

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Q5 Do you accept the payment mechanism?

Consultation

Please complete the attached consultation form and return by noon on Wednesday 11 October 2017 and send to Jan Batchelor (janbatchelor@gateshead.gov.uk)

Consultation Response Form

Inclusion Fund Consultation for All 3 and 4 Year Old Settings

The name organisation and role sections must be completed, and only one consultation response will be accepted from each setting.

Return deadline 11 October 2017

Name	
Organisation	
Role	

INCLUSION FUND	
Q1 Do you accept the total level of Inclusion Fund for 2017/18 Financial Year?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	

INCLUSION FUND	
Q2 Do you accept the Inclusion Fund application limit of £200 or in exceptional circumstances £500?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	

INCLUSION FUND	
Q3 Do you accept the proposed uses of the Inclusion Fund?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	

INCLUSION FUND	
Q4 Do you accept the eligibility criteria for the Inclusion Fund?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	

INCLUSION FUND	
Q5 Do you accept the payment mechanism?	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	

INCLUSION FUND	
Any other comments	

Please return to
 Jan Batchelor
 Childcare Support Lead Officer
 janbatchelor@gateshead.gov.uk

By Wednesday 11 October 2017