

TITLE OF REPORT: Early Years Inclusion Fund

Purpose of the Report

1. To bring to Schools Forum proposals on the allocation of the Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) to settings and for Schools Forum to review and approved the attached proposed Early Years Inclusion Fund consultation document for all settings in Gateshead.

Background

2. The EYIF was introduced from April 2017 by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF). The changes required each local authority to have an inclusion fund for children with low and emerging special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). There has to be an EYIF for 3 and 4 year olds, but Gateshead also includes 2 year olds in the funding arrangements.
3. In Gateshead, after consultation with providers, it was agreed that Gateshead's inclusion fund would be the balance for the 5% permitted top slice after the deduction of the Early Years Team. The fund was initially just over £50k. The EYIF has grown in recent years as the amount of early years funding received from the DfE has grown. For 2021/22 the amount of the EYIF is £128k.
4. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, not all the EYIF for 2020/21 was fully allocated to settings. Therefore, it is proposed that £50k of the underspend be added to the 2021/22 allocation as a one off, and therefore settings should not anticipate this level of funding every year.
5. Currently providers have to make an application to the EYIF for specific items or training. As this funding is allocated throughout the year, settings are not certain of how much, if any funding they will receive. This does not allow settings to plan how they will use their EYIF to support children with low or emerging SEND.
6. Research on the allocation processes of other local authorities has been reviewed and work has been undertaken to amend Gateshead's current funding allocation methodology and a number of models have been produced.
7. The first model allocated all but a small centrally held amount (£8.5k) on providers' spring term actual hours, weighted by the providers' ACORN score. The ACORN score is a measure of deprivation where 1 is very affluent and 100 is extremely deprived.
8. This methodology worked well for larger providers, but small settings with few funded hours received little funding. Providers with no funded children received no EYIF.

9. The second model allocated a minimum amount of £100 to all open funded providers (including childminders) irrespective of them having any children in the spring term, the amount held centrally was the same as model 1 and the remainder of the funding allocated to settings on ACORN weighted hours.
10. This methodology could allocate funding to a provider that does not have any funded children for the whole funding period, when this funding could have been used to support children with low and emerging SEND in provision with funded children.
11. The third model allocated half the funding on weighted ACORN hours and retained the remainder centrally.
12. At an officer meeting the outcomes of the models were discussed, and as the basis for changing the Inclusion Fund allocation methodology was to give providers certainty of their funding allocation at the beginning of the financial year, so that they could plan how to support their children with low and emerging SEND, the first model is the preferred option.

Proposal

13. It is proposed that the funding methodology in model one is used to allocate funding to providers.
14. The proposed process will be to use the post codes of the children at providers on the January census to generate the ACORN score. The ACORN score will be multiplied by the spring term actual hours to generate the ACORN weighted hours to allocate funding.
15. £8,500 will be retained centrally to allocate to providers that identify needs throughout the year, assessed by Area SENCo.
16. The examples of different outcomes depending on the number of hours and the value of the ACORN score as per model 1 is in appendix 1 and appendix 2 is the proposed consultation.

Recommendation

17. It is recommended that Schools Forum approves: -

The proposed model with the outcomes shown in appendix 1, and reviews and approves the consultation document for all settings in appendix 2

For the following reason(s):

- To enable consultation with all funded providers on the proposed changes to the EYIF
- To provide EYIF to all providers in a timely basis to enable them to plan for the effective use of EYIF for their children

CONTACT: Carole Smith ext. 2747

Appendix 1

Table to show the difference in funding depending on the number of hours

| Funding per weighted hour £0.0053 | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Provider | Hours | ACORN Score | Weighted Hours | Funding |
| Provider A | 900 | 39.26 | 35334 | £187.27 |
| Provider B | 5000 | 39.26 | 196300 | £1,040.39 |
| Provider C | 10000 | 39.26 | 392600 | £2,080.78 |
| Provider D | 20000 | 39.26 | 785200 | £4,161.56 |

Table to show the difference in funding depending on the ACORN score

| Funding per weighted hour £0.0053 | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Provider | Hours | ACORN Score | Weighted Hours | Funding |
| Provider A | 5000 | 5 | 25000 | £132.50 |
| Provider B | 5000 | 20 | 100000 | £530.00 |
| Provider C | 5000 | 40 | 200000 | £1,060.00 |
| Provider D | 5000 | 60 | 300000 | £1,590.00 |

Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council

**Early Years Inclusion Fund
From September 2021**

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 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 have an Inclusion Fund. In Gateshead the inclusion fund includes 2 year olds.

This consultation paper sets out the LAs proposals for its Inclusion Fund, and all schools and PVI providers 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 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 early years provision and health visitor. Where a child makes less than expected progress and where the provider 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 3 and 4 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 (EYIF) 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 total available for 2021/22 is £128,615 plus £50,000 unallocated funding from 2020/21 giving a total of £178,615.

The below tables provide some worked examples of different outcomes depending on the number of hours and the value of the ACORN score.

Table to show the difference in funding depending on the number of hours

| Funding per weighted hour £0.0053 | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
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| Provider C | 5000 | 40 | 200000 | £1,060.00 |
| Provider D | 5000 | 60 | 300000 | £1,590.00 |

Q1 Do you accept the total level of Inclusion Fund for 2021/22 Financial Year?

The proposal is for a small top slice of the EYIF of £8,500 to be held centrally for providers that received little or no funding but have an identified need (assessed by Area SENCo?).

Q2 Do you accept the top slice of £8,500?

The third proposal is that funding will be calculated by using the average ACORN score of all funded 2,3 and 4 year olds on the January census. This will be based on the individual children's postcodes at the provider.

Q3 Do you accept using the average ACORN score of each individual setting to calculate funding?

The fourth proposal is that in order to calculate funding the total hours in the spring term will be used and funding will be no adjustment to funding after this date.

Q4 Do you accept to the total spring term hours being used to calculate EYIF?

Funding will be calculated and paid to providers either late in the spring term or early in the summer term as a one-off payment in future years so that settings have certainty over this funding and can plan how to best use the EYIF in their provision. Funding for 2021/22 will be paid in autumn term after the outcome of the consultation is known, and the change has been approved by Schools Forum.

Q5 Do you accept that the EYIF will be paid as a one-off amount either late in the spring term or early in the summer term as a one-off payment?

Q6 Do you accept that for 2021/22 EYIF payment will be made in the autumn term?

Use of the Inclusion Fund

In order to support additional needs of a child, a provider must use the Graduated Approach to identify, offer support, and plan interventions. In order to provide the right support or intervention you may need to buy resources or provide staff training. The Inclusion Fund is allocated to each setting to promote the inclusion of children who may display these low and emerging needs.

It would not be appropriate to use Inclusion Fund to employ extra hours to support a child on a one to one basis. This would not be a low and/or emerging need.

Q7 Do you accept the proposed uses of the Inclusion Fund?

Consultation

Please complete the attached consultation form and return by noon on Wednesday 23 July 2021 and send to Carole Smith carolesmith@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 23 July 2021

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Name | |
| Organisation | |
| Role | |

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q1 Do you accept the total level of Inclusion Fund for 2021/22 Financial Year? | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't Know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments | |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q2 Do you accept the top slice of £8,500? | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't Know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments | |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q3 Do you accept using the average ACORN score of each individual setting to calculate funding? | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't Know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments | |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q4 Do you accept to the total spring term hours being used to calculate EYIF? | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't Know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments | |

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q5 Do you accept that the EYIF will be paid as a one-off amount either late in the spring term or early in the summer term as a one off payment? | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't Know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments | |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q6 Do you accept that for 2021/22 EYIF payment will be made in the autumn term? | |
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Don't Know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comments | |

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| INCLUSION FUND | |
| Q7 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 | |
| Any other comments | |
| Comments | |

Please return to
Carole Smith
Finance Business Partner Schools
By Friday 23 July 2021