

**TITLE OF REPORT: Early Years Inclusion Fund Consultation Outcome**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To bring to Schools Forum the outcome of the Early Years Inclusion Fund consultation.

**Background**

2. This report builds on the report brought to Schools Forum July 2021. 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. The proposed changes to the process was to allocate funding at a single point of time in the year that would not vary with hours to enable settings to be better plan for their use of this funding for children with low and emerging SEND. The proposal was 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 the majority of the Inclusion Fund with £8,500 to be retained centrally to allocate to providers that identify needs throughout the year, assessed by Area SENCo.
4. Following the 2-week consultation period 11 responses were received, 3 from schools and 8 from the private voluntary and independent sector (PVI).
5. The vast majority of responses were in favour of the consultation proposals with only 2 negative and 1 don't know response. Out of the 11 responses only 2 contained comments.
6. A summary of the responses and the comments are in appendix 1 for information.

**Proposal**

7. It is proposed that, in light of the lack of response to, and the actual consultation responses received that Schools Forum approves the proposed changes to the inclusion fund calculation and administration. It is proposed that the changes are implemented for the financial year 2021/22 and that payments for 2021/22 be paid to PVI's in the autumn term and maintained schools will be notified of their allocation. For financial years 2022/23 inclusion fund payments will be paid in the summer term.

## **Recommendation**

8. It is recommended that Schools Forum approves the change in the Inclusion Fund calculation method and that payments for 2021/22 will be in the autumn term and from 2022/23 onwards will be in the summer term.

### **For the following reasons:**

- To update the calculation method for the Early Years Inclusion Fund and to facilitate payments in financial year 2021/22 and future years.

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## Appendix 1

### Inclusion Fund Consultation Responses and Comments

INCLUSION FUND	Totals
<b>Q1 Do you accept the total level of Inclusion Fund for 2021/22 Financial Year?</b>	
Yes	11
Don't Know	0
No	0

<b>Q2 Do you accept the top slice of £8,500?</b>	
Yes	11
Don't Know	0
No	0

<b>Q3 Do you accept using the average ACORN score of each individual setting to calculate funding?</b>	
Yes	10
Don't Know	0
No	1

<b>Q4 Do you accept to the total spring term hours being used to calculate EYIF?</b>	
Yes	10
Don't Know	0
No	1

<b>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?</b>	
Yes	10
Don't Know	0
No	1

<b>Q6 Do you accept that for 2021/22 EYIF payment will be made in the autumn term?</b>	
Yes	10
Don't Know	1
No	0

<b>Q7 Do you accept the proposed uses of the Inclusion Fund?</b>	
Yes	11
Don't Know	0
No	0

## **Comments**

### **Question 1**

No choice!

### **Question 2**

Any setting with a child with identified needs should get help

### **Question 3**

SEN does not discriminate between postcodes. Autism etc can happen anywhere and to any family no matter what their income. All children with SEN should receive equal support no matter where they live.

### **Question 4**

EYIF should follow the child and be available when they need it . What about settings who accept an SEN child in summer term? This is likely to make settings reluctant to accept these children.

### **Question 5**

This seems to suggest that children identified in the autumn as SEN would not receive any help until possibly the summer term? How is this supposed to work for settings who are supporting these children without funding until then? Also runs the risk of leaving settings with a very short time to use the funding before child leaves for school ( as happens with EYPP)

### **Question 6**

Why can't there be an allocation each term so that all children can benefit regardless of when their birthday falls?

### **Question 7**

## **Other Comments**

Yet again things are seemingly being arranged for the convenience of the LA who work in financial years, ignoring the fact that settings have to work in academic years. This issue needs to be sorted out so that settings do not lose out.

We currently have a child at our setting who has additional needs and needs further support due to some behaviours have become difficult to manage. The child will often bite other children and staff. The send team are involved, occupational Therapy and the portage team. This child will be moving to the next room at the end of the year where the ratios increase to 1:8 so further support will be needed as the child may struggle on a higher ratio when the transition time comes especially considering there is around 30 children in the next room each day.