

Early Years SEND Inclusion Fund Guidance

The EY Inclusion Fund thresholds are set out on the pages that follow. They should be seen as providing guidance to all parties. Each request for inclusion support funding is considered individually at the Early Years Panel to enable panel members to come to a decision based on the threshold information and the evidence provided. This ensures consistency and transparency of decision-making across Telford and Wrekin.

The decision to allocate inclusion support funding is informed by three principle considerations:

- 1) The severity, complexity and long-term nature of the special educational need.
- 2) Despite relevant, purposeful, evidence based support and making reasonable adjustments, it is not possible to meet the special educational needs within existing resources. This should include advice from external agencies (may include EYAT, Portage, Educational Psychologist)
- 3) Progress over time.

In most cases, the panel will expect the above principles and the descriptors to apply to the child in question, evidenced in the request, before agreeing a band specific to any one area of need. Where a child has needs across several areas, an overall funding band will be agreed based on the evidence provided. The quality of the evidence is crucial in enabling the panel to make comprehensive decisions.

Some children will have needs that span across two or more areas of SEN. It may be possible for a number of less severe special educational needs to have a significant cumulative effect on a child's progress and inclusion support funding may be appropriate. In such cases, a judgement will be made by panel and the reaching of a consensus view.

As mentioned above, the provider must demonstrate how the graduated approach (cycles of assess-plan- do and review) has been implemented and monitored during their time at the setting prior to making an application (minimum of two cycles over a 3 month period). 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 evidenced when submitting an application. This can be evidenced using reviewed Target Plans at SEN Support, inclusion plans and risk assessments over a minimum of three months to evidence the need for inclusion funding.

The panel is happy to receive reports and information emailed from therapists in a secure manner if the appropriate permissions have been obtained. This is to help relieve capacity issues on specialist support services where a report may not yet be available.

Please seek advice from an Early Years Advisory Teacher if unsure what evidence to submit.

Band A	Band B	Band C
£1000 SEND Inclusion Funding per year	£2000 SEND Inclusion Funding per year	£3000 SEND Inclusion Funding per year

Guidance notes on using the thresholds to make a request

1. Children with wide-ranging learning needs

Some children may have 'global delay' or are working across most of the EYFS at age-bands well below their chronological age, suggesting that they have wide ranging learning difficulties and needs. It is essential the evidence submitted as part of the funding request triangulates with specialist reports. For some children with active or recent Health Visitor involvement, a completed and plotted Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) may be available. This gives standardised information based on parental views and can be useful in helping to profile a child's development and needs across many areas.

2. Children with specific needs in particular areas

Some children clearly have more specific needs rather than wide-ranging ones, and in such cases the area of greatest need should normally be evidenced first. Completing or reviewing the child's progress record should enable early years settings to build an EYFS profile as a starting point for considering areas of greatest (and least) need.

Communication & Interaction

There are two sets of Inclusion Fund descriptors in this section. The **communication descriptors** link closely with the EYFS prime area Communication and Language and the development of Listening & Attention, Understanding and Speaking. The **Interaction descriptors** are closely linked to those within the EYFS Personal, Social and Emotional Development prime area and are most

appropriate for those children experiencing significant **social communication difficulties** and who may have, or be on the path towards a diagnosis of, an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or now known as Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Many young children experience delays in the development of communication and language skills, and those with mild delays should normally have their needs met within the setting using the target setting at SEN Support, but without requiring additional funding. The panel will consider requests for those with moderate to significant or severe communication delays or language disorder, but in all cases evidence is required of assessment and intervention from a Speech & Language Therapist in addition to a Target Plan at SEN Support. There should normally be evidence of input from the Speech & Language Therapist.

Cognition & Learning

As the EYFS does not have a specific section related to 'cognition', Early Years Settings should be able to gather evidence from a range of learning experiences in which the child has had to solve problems of one kind or another, or use basic concepts to sort, match and classify. The child's play skills, mathematical knowledge and skills, how they explore the environment and their understanding of the world are all relevant. Many cognitive skills develop as language skills develop and are facilitated by them, others – such as completing inset jig-saw puzzles, do not depend so much on language.

Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)

This area of need corresponds closely with the EYFS Personal, Social & Emotional Development prime area, but with an added 'mental health' dimension which is perhaps more familiar as a concept to practitioners and agencies working with older children and parents/carers. Early years practitioners may be more comfortable with the term 'emotional wellbeing'.

We know that some babies and young children do experience severe emotional trauma which in turn can lead to difficulties forming positive attachments with significant adults and a wide range of social and emotional needs, together with challenging behaviour. Some of these children may be subject to a Child in Need, Child Protection Plan, in care or adopted at the time a SENDIF request is being considered, and have (or be about to have) a Personal Education Plan (PEP) drawn up. The descriptors listed under SEMH will be considered against:

- The level of behaviours displayed particularly in relation to age and context
- Frequency (at least daily incidents)
- Severity/intensity.

- Its persistence over time.
- Impact on learning and progress and on others
- Progress over time (this should include information about progress against appropriately focused and relevant targets)

Evidence submitted as part of the inclusion request could include:

- EYFS information relating to the child's progress in Making Relationships, Self Confidence and Self Awareness, and Managing Feelings and Behaviour.
- Information about any structured observations of behaviour carried out in the setting, either by setting staff or outside agencies, and any targeted outcomes agreed. E.g. behaviour logs, frequency charts.
- A completed risk assessment where safety of the child, or others, is a concern
- If the child is part of a CIN / CP then information from Social Care (with consent).
- A completed and up-to-date Common Assessment (CAF) with multi-agency input highlighting the child's needs.

Physical Skills and Sensory Needs

There are separate sets of Inclusion Fund descriptors for each of these SEND areas. The physical descriptors relate closely to the EYFS prime area but with the emphasis on mobility and, to a lesser extent, personal care needs. In most cases requests to SENDIF will require evidence of involvement from a specialist agency, usually a Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist.

Children with significant physical needs may also have communication and complex medical needs, and these are recognised in the Inclusion Fund threshold bands. Separate requests can be made to the panel for specialist equipment through the appropriate specialist agency.

Children with severe sensory loss may have significant access and/or educational/learning needs as well as having complex medical or access needs requiring very high levels of intervention and support. The panel would normally expect the involvement of the Sensory Inclusion Service (SIS) to inform practice and to advise the panel on the child's needs.

3. Children with Medical Needs

Settings are normally expected to make reasonable adjustments for children experiencing health and medical needs which do not impact in a significant way on learning and development. Advice should be sought from the Health Visitor or other relevant specialist agency if there are concerns about how to meet such needs. A health care plan may be necessary or already in place. Children with medical/health needs that impact on their learning and development must have a Target Plan at SEN Support that appropriately reflects these needs.

4. Children not in an early years setting

Some children with highly complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (e.g. physical/medical needs) will require support as soon as they start at an early years setting. The child's needs are so significant that they are likely to require immediate support, aid or adaptations over and above that normally available through the graduated approach at SEN Support. We would expect the above information to apply with evidence coming from the one page profile, specialist reports, health care plan (if applicable) and relevant assessments. Requests for these children will normally come from a Health Visitor, Portage Home Visitor, Nursery Practitioner or another relevant professional involved with the child/family.

4. Exceptional Circumstances Requests

It is expected that the vast majority of requests for inclusion support funding will follow the above procedures, and will be examined in relation to the evidence received. However, in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to request inclusion support funding without the evidence of actions taken by the early years setting. These circumstances include:

- The child (and family) has recently moved into Telford and Wrekin with a documented history of significant or highly complex learning needs.
- An unexpected/sudden and significant special educational need which occurred as a result of a medical condition, an accident, emotional abuse or trauma.

If you are planning to make an exceptional circumstances request please discuss with your Early Years Advisory Teacher in the first instance.

5. Contact information

If you have any queries about making a request to panel and are unsure about using the threshold descriptors, please contact SEND Team for further information.

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