

SEND early years inclusion fund FAQs

Early years inclusion fund

Do I have to stick to panel dates? Can I submit inclusion fund applications outside these deadlines?

You can send your applications and supporting evidence of need/graduated approach to the early years SEND funding applications inbox at any time. Applications will only be looked at after the closing date for each panel so that decisions on funding can be made at the panel meeting.

eysendfundingapp@solihull.gov.uk

A list of panel dates are here <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Children-and-family-support/localoffer/inclusion-fund>

My application has not been accepted. Can I re-submit outside panel date?

Except for exceptional cases, where this is agreed in the post-panel letter, all inclusion fund submissions are viewed after the closing date for each panel and agreed at the panel meeting.

A child has been accepted for a EHC assessment; can they have inclusion fund?

Children in a Solihull setting will be funded at level 2 if they have been agreed for EHCP/EHC assessment. This will be agreed after EHCP panel for children who are not already receiving high-needs funding and funding provided to the setting following the usual payment timescales. EHC assessments agreed over the summer break will be included as agreed in the Autumn term.

A child has joined my setting from another local authority. They are very high needs with significant agencies involved. Do I have to wait for two reviewed plans?

The panel will look at each exceptional case. If the needs are significant, and you have evidence of agencies involved, then the panel can review the application, plan, and evidence for funding.

Can I submit an application without supporting evidence?

The panel cannot agree an application without supporting evidence of need and the graduated approach.

The Area SENCo agreed my application but panel did not agree to funding?

Applications that are not agreed by panel are often because supporting evidence of need, a graduated approach or parental signature was not included in the application. We would appreciate a zipped (compressed) file of all evidence required along with the application to enable us to have a full picture of the child's needs to make a decision on funding at panel.

Do I have to use the most up-to-date application form for EYIF or can I use an old one?

Applications will only be accepted using a recent application form. The Parent approval that is sent to accompany the application needs to be on the latest form version to match the consent in the current application form. The most up to date application form can be accessed on the Inclusion Fund webpage

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Children-and-family-support/localoffer/inclusion-fund>

Does a child need to be EEF funded to receive EYIF?

If the child is at least 2 years' old, they can be considered as an exceptional case if the application is supported by a LA SEND practitioner. Please state this clearly in the application.

If a child has 15hrs EEF but parents pay for additional hours (e.g. 15hrs EEF and 10hrs parent pay) can EYIF cover the cost of the extra 10 hours?

No, EYIF is for the EEF hours only unless there is an exceptional case where a 2 year old is not funded any hours through EEF. EYIF panel can agree EYIF funding for a maximum of 15 hours if SEND needs are evidenced.

If I want to purchase a piece of specialist equipment do I complete an Inclusion Fund application?

For equipment, which is recommended by a specialist, please complete the 'specialist equipment application form'. This should be signed, agreed and submitted along with quotes. Equipment funding is usually agreed outside panel. You can access the equipment application form on the webpage

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Children-and-family-support/localoffer/inclusion-fund>

Is there a cut-off point for applying for specialist equipment?

If you wish to apply for specialist equipment for a child who is attending your setting during the summer term but will be moving to reception in the Autumn term, you will need to apply for the equipment by the end of the first half term e.g. the Friday before the May half term break. This is because equipment often takes up to 6 weeks to arrive and then if ordered later in the term, the child would no longer be in nursery where they can use it. The Inclusion Funding for Specialist Equipment is only to fund equipment for children who are attending an early education place and are not yet in reception.

Does a member of SISS or an Area SENCo need to sign a level 1 application?

You only need agreement from a LA SEND practitioner for a level 2 inclusion fund application or an equipment application unless it is an exceptional case

Can funding be given to a 1-year-old with possible SEND, who is not receiving EEF?

We can fund hours that are paid for by parents, but the inclusion fund can only start for children from the term after their 2nd birthday until they start in Reception.

Can I apply for a reception age child?

You can only apply for a reception age child if the child is attending a nursery setting or has been officially kept back a year in a school nursery and is not yet 5 years old. Once a child is 5 they are statutory school age and therefore cannot access Inclusion Funding.

What evidence should I submit?

- Application for Early Years Inclusion Funding/specialist equipment
- Signature of parent and SEND practitioner support for the application if it is for level 2
- Reviewed plan(s)

If you wish to demonstrate evidence of significant involvement, then the most recent reports from those specialists involved.

Do I have to re-submit each term/ year or if a child moves to me who has had inclusion fund previously?

No, the funding will roll over into the new year or new setting if the child is still eligible.

If we have children who were 15 hours, and are now 30 hours, do we have to re-apply?

Funded hours will be adjusted automatically as FIS look at children's funded hours ahead of payment. Settings/ schools don't have to do anything – you can check payment through provider portal.

When will I be paid Early Years Inclusion Fund?

Payments are made after the termly 'head-count' payment and they are then back-dated to the start of the half-term. For example the February panel agreements are paid from the start of Spring term and the March panel agreements, starting from after February half-term.

Your Inclusion Funding will be paid as an adjustment payment. You can view details of adjustments by logging into your provider portal account. You choose the year and term and then when the summary page appears you can click on the adjustments tab to see any payments made. You will need to look on each year group to see adjustments for all children.

We are supporting a child who we feel needs 1-1 and is not yet attending for their full entitlement. Can we claim the full hours and additional inclusion fund?

No, settings should only claim for the hours that children are attending the nursery. Children are entitled to their full early education entitlement and settings should have plans to review and build-up attendance. Parents must be involved in the decision to implement reduced hours/timetables and to build up to full attendance. They should also be involved in discussing the Early Years Inclusion Funding and its use.

How do I decide if a child is eligible to apply for funding?

Level 1: Emerging special needs

The child will have identified SEND and need support which is "additional to" or "different from" the differentiated universal educational provision made generally for children of their age – the entitlement available to all children, as set out in the EYFS.

Level 2: High needs

Where settings have involved the relevant specialists and identify children in the early years setting as having more severe and complex needs, they can apply for level 2 funding. This will often be for children where an EHC assessment request may be considered or has been accepted.

<https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-01/Early-Years-Inclusion-Flowchart.pdf> -Use the flowchart to check your application includes all required information.

How should I use the Early Years Inclusion Fund money?

Every year the chair of the panel writes a report based on the monitoring feedback from settings. This outlines how Solihull settings have spent the inclusion fund to support children. This might help you to consider how best to support children in your setting. Children who have EYIF will have been referred to other professionals such as the early years team or SISS teams or health professionals who will have advised on strategies to help. Consider how additional funding could support the child to develop these skills both when under the direction of an adult and independently.