

Funding for the Provision of Support for SEND and Additional Needs in the Early Years

External Guidance

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1. Introduction

The following guidance acts as supplementary guidance to the information contained in the *Top Up High Needs Funding in Mainstream Schools Handbook*: [top-up-high-needs-funding-in-mainstream-schools-handbook-2023-24 \(thegrid.org.uk\)](https://www.thegrid.org.uk/top-up-high-needs-funding-in-mainstream-schools-handbook-2023-24)

'Local authorities must ensure that all providers delivering funded early education places meet the needs of children with SEND and disabled children.' SEND Code of Practice (2015) pg. 90

Funding for SEND and additional needs in Hertfordshire supports Early Years settings to provide suitable support for children identified as needing adaptations to the curriculum to make good progress.

Early years funding can be used to pay for things such as additional equipment, resources or staff training to support the child. The funding can be used flexibly. This may look different for each provider and for each child. This funding should not be used to pay for staffing or to fund extra hours for children.

Professional support services are closely matched the needs of the child and their setting, to make the most effective and efficient use of allocated funding. More information regarding support available from the Early Years SEND Team is available on the Local Offer [Early years SEND team](#).

Resources from the Early Years Block and the High Needs Block have been utilised to ensure there is funding available to support learners with a range of needs, supporting early identification of emerging needs to specialist level intervention.

Early Years SEND Funding is available for children receiving their free early education entitlement, in a Hertfordshire Early Years setting (PVI, Maintained Nursery Schools, School Nurseries and Childminders).

2. Early Years SEND Funding Model

The funding model is structured to align with the Graduated Response to SEND, supporting Early Years providers in delivering suitable provision that caters to the unique needs of each learner.

Funding decisions are made based on the Hertfordshire Descriptors of Need and Provision ([DoN](#)) alongside contextual setting information. These decisions should reflect the child's specific needs, and the additional support and provision required, beyond what is ordinarily available, to facilitate their learning.

Funding Level	Value	Hertfordshire Descriptor of Need & Provision (based on child's main presenting need/s and provision)
Emerging Additional Needs - funding can be applied for once per term, for a maximum of 3 terms. Early Years Inclusion Funding cannot be applied for more than once per term; if a child moves setting mid-term, it cannot be paid again. Providers are required to apply each term for additional funding. This level of funding is only available to children accessing their Free Early Years Education Entitlement.		
Early Years Inclusion Funding 1 <i>Paid in 1st Term</i>	£250	Universal Plus – meets at least 20% of the descriptor criteria, provision suggested would support the implementation of an adapted curriculum for the child.
Early Years Inclusion Funding 2 <i>Paid in 2nd Term</i>	£250	Universal Plus – meets at least 20% of the descriptor criteria, impact has been shown as a result of funding, but continuation of funding is required to sustain progress.
Early Years Inclusion Funding 3 <i>Paid in 3rd Term</i>	£250	Universal Plus – meets at least 20% of the descriptor criteria, impact has been shown as a result of funding, but continuation of funding is required to sustain progress.
Funding Level	Value	Hertfordshire Descriptor of Need (based on child's main presenting need/s and provision)
Targeted Level Needs - Funding value is for three terms; Targeted funding can be allocated more than once (eg Nursery 1 and Nursery 2). A child may receive Targeted Level Funding as well as receiving DAF. This level of funding is only available to children accessing their Free Early Years Education Entitlement.		
Targeted Level 1 <i>Payment is split into 3 equal termly payments of £500</i>	£1500	Targeted – meets at least 20% of the descriptor criteria, funding facilitates the provision suggested by the professional advice giver, to support the implementation of an adapted curriculum for the child.
Targeted Level 2 <i>Payment is split into 3 equal termly payments of £833.33</i>	£2500	Targeted – meets at least 60% of the descriptor criteria and 20% of Targeted Plus, funding facilitates the provision suggested by the professional advice giver, to support the implementation of an adapted curriculum for the child.
High Needs – <i>Local High Needs Funding can be allocated for a maximum of three terms, over the course of a year. Local High Needs Funding cannot be allocated more than once per child.</i> <i>*Figures shown are based on a child attending a setting for 30 hours per week. Funding value is adjusted based on the number of hours a child attends per week. Further information can be found here Top-Up High Needs Funding Handbook.</i>		
Local High Needs Funding - Targeted Plus	£10,620*	Follow guidance for Local High Needs Funding, as detailed in the <i>Top Up High Needs Funding in Mainstream Schools Handbook</i>
Local High Needs Funding - Specialist	£13,505*	Follow guidance for Local High Needs Funding, as detailed in the <i>Top Up High Needs Funding in Mainstream Schools Handbook</i>
Local High Needs Funding - Specialist Plus	£16,390*	Follow guidance for Local High Needs Funding, as detailed in the <i>Top Up High Needs Funding in Mainstream Schools Handbook</i>

3. Accessing Funding

3.1 Early Years Inclusion Funding for low and emerging additional needs

Early Years Inclusion Funding Term 1 – Early Years providers can make an application for Early Years Inclusion Funding on the Early Years Portal; select the ‘Inclusion Funding’ option from the ‘SEN/EHC’ field on the funding return entry for the relevant child. For support with accessing and using the Early Years Portal, please refer to the [User Guides](#)

Funding is allocated automatically based on the identification of need, as assessed by the provider.

Early Years Inclusion Funding Terms 2 & 3 – an online application (link below) is made by the provider and appraised by the local area Early Years SEND Team Lead Teacher. Funding will be allocated if the impact of the previous term’s funding has been evidenced to positively support the child’s development and access to the curriculum and is required to sustain progress. It is important all parts of the application are completed to support decision making.

[Early Years inclusion funding application | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

Early Years Inclusion Funding should be discussed with your link Inclusion Development Officer (PVI, Maintained Nursery School, Childminder) or link Specialist Advisory Teacher/Early Years Inclusion Advisor (School Nursery). The Early Years Professional may decide the need or provision for the child meets the criteria for a higher level of funding and/or more intensive support from the Early Years SEND Team. In this case, the Early Years Professional will support the provider to initiate SEND Support (ADPR) for the child, if this has not already been implemented.

3.2 Targeted Funding for emerging additional needs

Targeted Level 1 & 2 – Targeted Level Funding can be awarded by an Early Years professional Inclusion Development Officer (IDO), Specialist Advisory Teacher (SAT), Early Years Inclusion Advisor (EYIA), Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour Specialist (EWB), Lead Teacher. The decision to award Targeted Level Funding can be made during or following a consultation or observation visit with the provider. Decisions will be made based on the information provided by the setting and the Early Years Professionals knowledge, understanding and assessment of the needs of the child.

As per the usual process, to access individualised support from the EYS SEND Team, for a consultation or visit to take place providers are required to send in a [Single Service Referral \(SSR\)](#) including parental consent. The Early Years Action Group review all SSR’s and allocate the appropriate level of support based on the information provided in the SSR. A virtual or in person consultation will be offered as a first step. Early Years professionals will discuss the needs of the child and the provision currently in place. It is expected that the ADPR cycle will have been initiated or is put in place as part of the consultation, this should be recorded on the [Early Years Portal](#) (as a child receiving SEND Support). When available, either at point of initial consultation or funding review, a copy of the APDR paperwork should be shared with the Early Years Professional, this will be documented as evidence of the professional’s decision making. It is important to note that requests should not be made solely for funding purposes and that Targeted Funding is designed to supplement support and provision for low and emerging needs.

The level and duration of funding awarded will be determined by the professional based on the evidence provided, needs of the child and the provision currently in place or planned for. The level and duration of funding will be confirmed via HERTSFX email following the consultation. Targeted Funding will run on the financial year (Summer Term to Spring Term). Therefore, the duration of

funding will reflect this e.g funding allocated in Autumn Term can only be awarded for maximum of two terms ahead of review.

If a child is already in receipt of Inclusion Funding when Targeted Funding is agreed, the Early Years Team will recall the Inclusion Funding Payment and replace this with the agreed Targeted Funding.

3.3 Review of Targeted Funding

In order to access further Targeted Funding, it is the responsibility of the provider to request a review consultation with the link Early Years professional. This review may be held virtually, via telephone or in person. The impact of Targeted Funding should be reviewed and monitored by providers as part of their ongoing ADPR cycle. Impact and future planning will be reviewed by the Early Years professional. The reviewed ADPR documents should be shared with Early Years professional, this will be documented as evidence of the decision to award further Targeted funding. Reviews with the Early Years Professional should be planned in respect of key transition points (eg transition to a new setting or end of agreed funding period).

During or following a review, should the Early Years Professional determine that the level of need or provision in place has changed, the level of funding awarded could be increased, decreased or ceased. The Early Years Professional may also signpost/recommend more intensive support from the Early Years Send Team. Any changes to funding levels will be confirmed with the provider via email.

3.4 Higher Needs Funding

If a setting feels a child's needs and provision in place meets the criteria for Local Higher Needs Funding, they can make an application for this through the DSPL in their area. For more information on the criteria and how to apply please refer to the [Top-Up High Needs Funding Handbook](#). The setting can discuss this application with the Early Years Professional supporting the child/setting where necessary.

4. Allocation of Funding

4.1 Inclusion Funding

Inclusion funding is paid via the Early Years Portal. The first term can be claimed directly by Early Years settings by selecting the 'Inclusion Funding' option from the 'SEN/EHC' field on the funding return entry for the relevant child.

Any subsequent terms need to be applied for separately and as per the process detailed in 3.1.

Payments are made upon submission of the funding term and if the Early Years Inclusion Funding option has been chosen. Any subsequent terms funding which are approved will depend on whether this was agreed prior to the initial funding submission, or as part of adjustment submission at the end of each term.

4.2 Targeted Level Funding

The Early Years Service will record the approved Targeted Level Funding. This will generate a payment, and it will be shown in the Finance Section of the Early Years Portal. Should the provider have any queries regarding the receipt of Targeted Funding they can contact the Early Years Team earlyyears@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

The Early Years SEND Team will send a notification via HERTSFX email to settings, confirming the level and duration of funding they will receive. The letter will clearly state that the provider should share this information with the parents. Any decisions made around ongoing professional support will follow usual processes and procedures.

4.3 Higher Needs Funding

As per the Local High Needs Funding processes, the DSPL Managers will share funding decisions with providers following the Local High Needs Funding Panel. This will include the professional support offered to the child and their setting.

5. Monitoring and Measuring Impact

To monitor the impact of funding on children's outcomes, the County Lead for Early Years SEND, and area Lead Teachers will conduct termly moderation panels. Cases will be chosen at random and reviewed. The awarding professional will have the opportunity to share information in relation to use of funding and how this has positively impacted learners' outcomes.

Funding allocation data will be analysed alongside Early Years progress data, Valuing SEND information and Early Years SEND Team service level data, to target individual settings for focussed support and inform provision and support at a county wide level.

The use of Early Years Inclusion Funding (Emerging Additional Needs) and Targeted Level Funding is monitored by the Early Years Funding Subgroup, which includes members from across the Early Years sector.