

Inclusion Funding Application and Review Process

Inclusion Funding (IF) is available for children accessing their Free Entitlement (FE) with an early years setting – this can be for the universal 15 hours or the extended 30 hours entitlement and includes the 2, 3 and 4 year old entitlement.

The early years setting discusses the needs of children as part of the termly conversation and EYCA suggests application for IF where appropriate.

The early years setting, or other professional, identifies a need for a child to have IF outside of the termly conversation and contacts their EYCA to discuss.

A health professional or family identifies the need for preentry support and, potentially, funding for a child.







The setting speaks to the EYCA to discuss the child's needs. The EYCA will recommend either:

- IF is not needed, the child's needs can be met with the setting's universal inclusive practice or use of existing inclusion funding. The EYCA suggests strategies for the setting to implement.
- IF is probably appropriate, the EYCA recommends that the setting apply for IF and arranges a visit to the setting.



The early years setting completes the application for IF, with the involvement of the child's parents/carers.

The EYCA visits the setting to observe the child, reviews copies of all relevant paperwork and uses this information to complete their professional comments and submits this for the consideration of the Funding Panel.



The Funding Panel will meet termly in the first half of term – dates are published on the website. The Panel will review any complete applications submitted by the deadline and decide on the level of funding, recommended actions for the setting and the duration of the funding.

The Panel will not consider late or incomplete applications. Applications received after the deadline will wait until the next Panel meeting. If there is an exceptional circumstance, the reasons and appropriateness of considering the application out of the usual Panel meeting will be considered by the Free Entitlement Strategy Group.



Appeals

Any appeals must be submitted within two months of the funding decision being made. Appeals will be considered based on the original application and any additional information presented by the setting. Appeals will be considered at the monthly FE Strategy Meeting.



Equipment Funding Requests

If specialist equipment is recommended by a Physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist to support a child to access the environment, the setting should complete an IF application form and include the information provided by the health professional and submit the application to inclusionteam@westsussex.gov.uk. Applications for funding for specialist equipment will be considered at the time they are received and will not have to wait until the next Funding Panel meeting.

Inclusion Funding Reviews

The use of, and ongoing need for funding will be reviewed by EYCAs as part of the termly conversations in settings.

In addition, for short-term funding, the setting will complete a self-review form to show how the funding has been used and the impact for the child at the end of the agreed funding period.

For ongoing funding, the setting will complete a self-review form each year to show how the funding has been used, the impact for the child, the child's ongoing needs and next steps. They will also complete a self-review form at the end of the funded period.

Changes to Funding Awarded

If, as a result of the conversation with the setting or another professional supporting the child, a need for a change to funding is identified, then the EYCA will need to collect evidence of the ongoing needs of the child and complete a new professional comment form.

The funding level might change as a result of the changing needs of the child or the setting's use of funding.

Inclusion Bursaries

These will no longer be awarded as accessing training to meet the needs of a child should be part of universal inclusive practice.

If a child in receipt of Inclusion Funding moves to a new setting

The funding will transfer with the child in the same way that FE payments are transferred. Once a child is accessing a new setting, this will trigger a funding review by the EYCA but the new setting will not need to apply for IF for the child.

Inclusion funding for children who do not live in West Sussex

Following changes made to the statutory guidance, IF should be applied for to the Local Authority in which the setting that the child attends is located. Therefore, all IF applications from West Sussex early years settings should be made to West Sussex.