

Improving Intervention Strategy for Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Early Years Funding

Introduction

Funding to all schools has changed since April 2006 as a result of the Improving Intervention strategy for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). This paper summarises the position regarding funding streams for children with SEN in early years settings. It outlines changes which are consistent with the overarching aims of the Improving Intervention project: to encourage greater early identification, assessment and intervention by reducing reliance on statutory assessment and bringing funding to providers at an earlier stage.

Pre April 2006 Early Years provision for children with SEN

Identification of special educational needs in children is a gradual process, which builds upon systematic observation of children from birth onwards. While Health Services have a crucial role from birth onwards for many children, it is not until they are in an early years setting that their educational needs can be clarified. The first stage of meeting these needs are at Early Years Action (EYA) as laid out in the SEN Code of Practice. This is resourced through core funding arrangements. Funding streams to support intervention at Early Years Action Plus (EYA+) are various but come from two sources: the Local Authority (LA) and the Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCS) through their central government inclusion grant. The latter is child led but applied to the setting as a whole and not earmarked for individual children. Statemented children are funded entirely by the LA.

Children with SEN will be in all varieties of settings in Surrey and support was funded as indicated below:

Early Years Action Plus (pre April 2006)	
Setting	Funding mechanism
Non maintained nursery	Early Years Inclusion Grant to the nursery setting (approx £100k for 330 children) Discretionary funding from LA if child meets criteria for statutory assessment.
Maintained nursery school	LA block funding based upon number of places

Nursery class in maintained school	No funding mechanism
Units (stand alone or attached to schools) which do not require statutory assessment	LA block funding for defined number of places in each unit
Statemented Children	
Non maintained nursery } Maintained nursery } Nursery class } Unit not requiring a statement }	Earmarked resources from the LA based upon the provisions of the statement
Units requiring a statement } Nursery provision in special schools }	Block funding from LA

Resources for EYA+ varied significantly across the various settings. The value of resource varied from zero (maintained) nursery classes, to £300 (approx) for non-maintained nurseries to very significantly higher levels of funding for block funded “special” but non-statemented places (see paper on Nursery School funding)

Resources for statements were and will continue to be more accurately calibrated for level of need and are consistent across the maintained and non-maintained sector through ISPSB funding.

Post April 2006

NOTE: Block funding for children in maintained nursery schools, specialist units or nursery classes in special schools is not affected by changes in funding following implementation of IISEN.

The aim of the Improving Intervention project is to resource early intervention and to reduce the number of children funded through statements. It has been agreed that this is achieved as follows:

1. Remove the requirement for a statement for access to specialist provision attached to mainstream schools; retain specialist Panels but base decisions on learning and development profiles. Block funding will continue to resource this provision. This includes Key Stage 1 unit provisions.
2. Increase the range of EYA+ children by adjusting criteria to match those for statutory age children, thereby raising the threshold for the initiation of statutory assessment and maintenance of a statement.
3. Funding arrangements for independent non-maintained providers essentially to remain the same as pre-April 2006 – this is effective and quick. **Note** however that EYA+ will include children with a greater range of need than was the case pre April 2006 as the statement criteria changes. There will be a number of children that would have met previous statement criteria who are now at EYA+. There is no additional funding through the EYCS grant after April 2006 and therefore any additional funding for these children will still

need to come from discretionary funding from the LA. The Foundation Stage criteria (non-maintained) identify two levels of EYA+. The lower level is to be funded by the EYCS grant and the higher level (i.e. above old statement criteria) that will need to be resourced by discretionary funding from the LA.

4. Children in maintained nurseries classes funded for EYA+ through the same funding route as all SA+ children. It was decided that as from April 2006 the school would receive funding based on the percentage of SA+ children they have in years 1 and 2. As the thrust of this initiative is to provide early intervention, nursery classes would receive a minimum level of EYA+ funding equivalent to 2 full time pupils.
5. Continue to statement young children who are **very clearly** in the future going to fall within criteria for a statement after they are 5+ years, whether in the context of a mainstream or special school placement. As in the past statutory assessment could be delayed until after a period of time for further assessment within an early years setting.
6. Delay statutory assessment of pupils who meet new criteria for statutory assessment as they enter early years provisions but with appropriate interventions could make progress such that they may not meet the criteria by the time they enter school.
 - Maintain such children at EYA+ until 6 months prior to admission to a reception class in a mainstream Surrey school.
 - A decision on whether a statutory assessment is necessary will then be made following a review of their needs held at that time.
 - As these children do meet new statement criteria they may need a higher level of funding than that provided through EYA+ arrangements.
 - These children should be funded through discretionary funding in both non-maintained and maintained nursery classes.

Table below gives an overview of the funding streams for children in mainstream early years settings.

Please Note

Not all funding requests will come from early years settings. Following a Pre-school notification (PSN) for a child not currently in an early years setting recommendations may be made by the relevant professionals as to whether in their view the child meets the criteria for additional support/funding in order to access the chosen early years setting. In order to ensure smooth transition into the early years setting this should be considered by the decision making panel and, if appropriate, agreed and made available to the setting before the child starts.

Summary Table of funding arrangements for non-maintained settings and maintained nursery classes

Setting	Stage of Code of Practice	Funding available setting	Statement decision	Additional funding from LA	Who makes decision?
Non maintained setting	EYA+ (lower band FS Criteria)	EYCS grant	No	None	EYCS
	EYA+ (higher band of FS criteria)	Setting requests additional funding from LA	No	Discretionary	Area panel
	Meets criteria for Statement	Setting requests additional funding from LA	Possible impact of intervention on future need not clear. Delay decision and monitor progress *	Discretionary	Area panel
			Very clear future need – Yes (Could delay for further period of assessment)	Discretionary until statement written	Area panel
Nursery Class	EYA+ (all)	Funding through SA+ mechanism	No	None	School
	Meets criteria for statement	Setting requests additional funding from LA	Impact of intervention on future need not clear. Delay decision and monitor progress *	Discretionary	Area panel
			Very clear future need –Yes (Could delay for further period of assessment)	Discretionary until statement written	Area panel

* Note statements will no longer be necessary to access specialist units in mainstream schools so decision may be deferred until year 1 for children attending these units. Those entering mainstream reception class will need statement if they meet criteria.

Decisions regarding additional funding will be based on information provided by the setting and other professionals involved. Documentation for early years settings is available on the IISEN website.

