

# Launch of Early Years Inclusion Advice and Funding Panel

# Why do we need a panel?

Local Authorities are statutorily required to establish funding arrangements for early education reflective of the need to provide suitable support for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

The [Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2024 to 2025](#) for Local Authority to have special educational needs inclusion funds (SENIFs) known in Shropshire as Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) for all children with special educational needs (SEN) eligible for or taking up the new and existing entitlements.

# What we did to improve our existing EIG Panel

- Evaluation of current processes and procedures with EY team, budget holder and EQA.
- Inform settings of plans to relaunch from April 2025

- Test and Learn panels with selected number of settings using new paperwork and attending panel meetings, providing feedback

- Early Years Inclusion Advice and Funding Panel launched

September/  
October  
2024

December  
2024

January/  
February  
2025

March  
2025

April  
2025

- EIG request paperwork refreshed in line with GSP paperwork, to include supporting documents that show clear A-P-D-R response and graduated response
- Invite professionals to panel ensure is able to provide good advice to settings

- Review paperwork, procedures and processes reflecting on feedback
- Finalised processes, procedures and paperwork share in EY Network and SENCo meetings

# The Early Years Inclusion Advice and Funding (EYIA&F) Panel

- Aims to **support the development of inclusive early years provision across Shropshire.**
- It will provide **support, advice and funding** for private, voluntary and maintained early years settings including childminders **regarding the provision and practice** for children with SEND.
- Ensure that children with SEND, some of which may have increasingly complex needs, are able to fully access early years education in order that they can be **healthy, happy and safe, and able to achieve their potential to lead a fulfilling life.** We want them to have, and to expect the same opportunities in life as other children and young people. **We want them to thrive and live their best life.**
- Support settings in **identifying needs at the earliest opportunity** and subsequently **responding with well match support and intervention** through the implement a graduated response, delivered through assess, plan, do, review cycles.

# Our collective aims

- Staff in Early Years settings will be more able to meet the needs of children with SEND.
- Staff in Early Years setting will be able to effectively identify and deploy early intervention and support so that children, where able to, can close the gap between themselves and their peers.
- Early Years settings will be supported to increase their confidence so that children with SEND are included and can achieve to their highest potential.
- There will be increased participation and achievement for children with SEND.
- Early Years settings will build their own expertise through wider workforce development leading to better outcomes for all.
- There will be less escalation into more specialist pathways, resource and provision

# What will the panel do?

## **Advice and Guidance**

Support and challenge

Signposting to services

## **Access to Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF)**

Criteria determined by quality of graduated approach

And in the future...

Access to outreach support and advice

# Who are the panel members?

- Andy Nicholls (Education and Childcare Sufficiency Manager)
- Dan Steel (Senior Development Officer, Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency)
- Alison Rae (Education Improvement Adviser (Early Years))
- Beverly Jones (Early Years Consultant)
- Heidi White (Education Quality Adviser (SEND & AP))
- Professionals representing agencies of support and advice.

# When and where will the panel meet?

- New request meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of every month unless this falls in school holidays, then it will be on the first Wednesday after the holidays. Settings will be asked to attend these meetings.
- Review meetings will take place two weeks after the new requests panel – settings will not need to attend these meetings.
- The panel will meet online via Microsoft Teams



## Making a request to present a child to the Early Years Inclusive Advice and Funding panel

- Complete a new request form
  - For advice and support
  - For advice, support and funding

**This must contain parent carer input and signed consent.**

**Ensure you evidence how you have used your settings inclusive practice to support the child's needs.**

**Ensure you evidence use of a graduated response** – include PCP cycles with a clear proposal of what you will use any funding received for if you are asking for funding through completion of a new PCP (assess, plan, do sections)

**Include any reports from external agencies.**

- Send your paperwork to [NEF@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:NEF@shropshire.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1

# Early Years Inclusion Advice and Funding panel Application Form

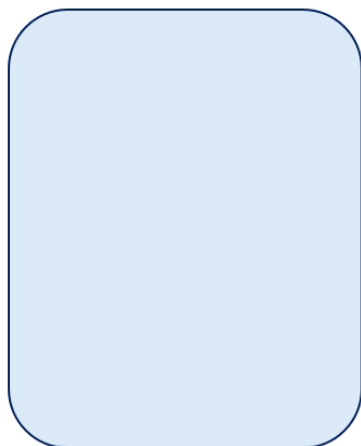
**Please note:** this is now the only EYIA&F application form and is for requesting Funding and Advice/Guidance.

This application is for:	Please select	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advice and guidance <u>is</u> available for all applications.</li> <li>All settings are required to show how they have made reasonable adjustments and deployed their universal SEND offer effectively.</li> </ul>
Advice and Guidance only	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Additional EYI Funding	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Section 1: Pupil and Settings details		
Setting: Name and Address:		
Email: Telephone:		
Setting admission date:	Sessions attended and timings:	
	Monday	
	Tuesday	
	Wednesday	
	Thursday	

## Appendix 2

### My Early Years Person Centred Plan (PCP)



<b>Name</b>	<b>Date of birth</b>	<b>Home language</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>
<b>Setting (s)</b>	<b>Days/ hours attending</b>	<b>Early Help Involvement</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Funding (15/30 hours)</b>	<b>Early Years pupil premium</b> Yes/No	<b>Name of Family Support Worker:</b>	
<b>Level of support</b> <i>(please circle)</i> SEN Support    EHCP	<b>Additional funding?</b>	<b>Social Care Involvement</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Date plan started:</b>	<b>Review date:</b>	<b>Child Looked After</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
		<b>Name of Social Worker:</b>	

### Assess

#### Child views and comments

*Remember all this comes from child's point of view*

**Things I enjoy and can do at home and in the setting**

**My identified needs at home and in the setting**

You will then be invited to come to panel

At panel you will...

- Have a 15-minute slot
  - Introductions
  - 5 minutes to provide evidence of need, what you have tried and what you are asking for
  - 5 minutes to discuss and answer and questions
  - Be provided with advice and support

You will then leave, and panel will make a decision on funding if this is part of your request. This will be communicated to you in your outcome email.

There is presentation guide available to support you.

*We are friendly  
and here to help  
and support!*

# Panel

- We have a clear agreed Term of Reference for panel.
- All who attend panel understand that what is discussed is confidential.
- With your outcome email, you will receive a link for a satisfaction survey – this is important to help us quality assure our panel.

# Funding

- Any funding will generally be awarded for a full academic year, unless the child is due to start school. It will then cease once they leave the setting.
- Funding will be sent termly.
- If the child moves, the funding will cease, and the child's new setting will need to re-apply.
- If you require funding to continue after the first year, you need to send a review into the LA. It is recommended this is done the half term before the funding is due to stop.

## Review of funding

- Complete and send in a review form.
- Send your three reviewed PCPs in with your review form.
- Send in the new PCP with the assess, plan and do sections complete to show what you intend to use the funding for.
- Send in any new external agency reports.

Send your paperwork to [NEF@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:NEF@shropshire.gov.uk)

You do not need to come to panel for a review but may be contacted if we have any queries or questions.

## Review of Early Years Inclusion Funding Form

- In the Notification of Decision letter you will be informed of the start and end dates of funding (usually a calendar year) if this has been allocated. This will include the child's next EYIF review date and the date for the review form to be returned.
- Settings are also able to ask for an early review of an allocation of Early Years Inclusion Funding if there has been a significant change to a child's level of need. Robust evidence of why an early review is needed must be provided through the Assess-Plan-Do-Review process evidenced in the child's Person-Centred-Plan. On most occasions, it would be expected that outside agency involvement has also been utilised. If funding is already in place, this must be a review and not a new request.
- When the child's inclusion funding review is due, you may be contacted to arrange a date to discuss the child's progress.
- For a review, it is not usually necessary to attend panel. However, an Early Years Inclusion Funding review form must be submitted. Please ensure that you submit enough evidence to support your application for continued funding, including an up-to-date Early Year Person Centred Plan and any new reports from outside agencies. These documents must be returned **at least 5 working days** prior to the EYIA&F panel meeting. **Failure to submit the review form will result in the child not being discussed at the panel and a loss of funding or support.**
- If there has been a change in the level and/or type need and you feel that you need significantly more funding, please contact the EYIA&F panel via the NEF inbox for advice prior to submission as you may be asked to present the review in person.
- The information on the form will contribute to the panel's decision as to whether funding will continue or cease. Panel may also recommend advice and/or outreach support.



- Funding can be reviewed and awarded for a second academic year.
- If you are coming back a third time, we may ask you to consider if the need could be concerned long-term and enduring, if so, would an ECHNA request be appropriate.
- If the child is due to start school, we recommend you consider if their needs can be supported by schools' notional budget, if not and you consider upon entry to school, they will need provision that would be considered additional to and different from you consider an ECHNA request. This would be the second summer term or first autumn term in the academic year they apply for school.

## Supporting guidance

- Information for Parent Carers
- Checklist and presentation guide

## Where can I find the guides, forms and PCPs?

- On the Learning Gateway <https://www.shropshirelg.net/early-years-information-including-cpd-booking-details/early-years-inclusion-advice-and-funding/>
- On Shropshire's SEND Local Offer
- Links to both will be added to the EY teams group and go out in the EY newsletter

**We will officially go live  
from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.**

Old paperwork will not be excepted from this point.



**Any questions?**