

Inclusion Grant Funding Guidance



**September 2025
Version 1**

Inclusion Grant Funding Guidance

Context

Gov Guidance [Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

Local authorities are required to have a Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) for all children aged 9 months with special educational needs (SEN) so that they can take up their funded-entitlement to early years provision which includes entitlements for working parents. These funds are intended to support local authorities to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEN. This fund will also support local authorities to undertake their responsibilities to strategically commission SEN services as required under the Children and Families Act 2014.

In Milton Keynes, we refer to the SENIF as Inclusion Grant Funding (IGF).

Who can apply for IGF?

- Settings who have children with SEND requiring targeted/personalised levels of support. [Parent and carers guide to the Graduated Approach March 2023 updates \(mkSENDlocaloffer.co.uk\)](#)
- Settings located within Milton Keynes receiving Early Education Funding (EEF), can apply for Inclusion Grant Funding for children with SEND for children who live outside of Milton Keynes.
- Children who live in Milton Keynes but attend a setting in a neighbouring LA will be funded in line with the neighbouring LA's SENIF funding policy: [Early years entitlements: local authority funding operational guide 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

Applying for Inclusion Grant Funding

Settings complete a **Request for Inclusion Grant Inclusion Funding application form** *and* provide the following:

- Updated SEND Support Plan (signed by parent/carer)
- Timetable of support that details what any additional adult(s) will be doing to meet the needs in the Support Plan- we will use this to check the funding requested matches the support being detailed in this timetable
- Copies of professional reports

What happens next?

- Applications will be initially reviewed at SEND Support Line level- if information is missing your request cannot be considered, and you will be invited to resubmit once the issues are resolved
- Requests are considered weekly- please note that you should allow up to four weeks depending on the volume of requests
- You will be informed via email if the request is successful- with details of the amount and time frame for funding
- If the request is not successful, you will be informed by email as to why, and any next steps
- It takes around six weeks for funding to be processed

Group funding:

- For settings who have more than one child with SEND.
- Separate applications are required for each child along with details of the sessions they attend throughout the week.
- If adult support is to be shared/grouped then a timetable that summarises this should be provided

Please note that:

- It is the provider's responsibility to ensure that any subsequent applications are made in a timely manner, taking into account expiration dates.
- IGF is provided in line with the EEF and the academic year calendar.
- Following a successful application for IGF, funds will be awarded with effect from the date the full application is received by MKCC. It cannot be back dated.
- IGF is a contribution towards cost only.
- IGF may be part of a package of support provided to settings by the Specialist Teaching Team which may include: training, modelling support/ strategies, meeting with parents and staff. Sometimes funding will be provided that is less than has been requested- if this is the case we will ensure the provider understands the rationale for this.
- When considering an application for IGF, providers should ensure that they are accessing other forms of financial support as appropriate (eg: DAF) and that they can evidence what they have used this for. Providers should also ensure that they are claiming for EEF in accordance with the criteria/hours child attends.

- For children with high/complex SEND and who are in receipt of a 30 hour code- IGF can be considered above the EEF 15 hours in exceptional circumstances on a case by case basis. The code must be shared within the application.

What might IGF be typically used for?

- Adult support for children with enduring mobility challenges- who may use equipment such as wheelchairs or walking frames to move around the environment
- Adult support for children who have significant visual impairment- and require support to move around the environment safely
- Adult support for children who have significant hearing impairment and require close support from a BSL signing adult
- Support for those children whose medical needs impact on their ability to access the environment (eg: nasal gastric tube/PEG feeding; tracheostomy etc) and for whom any medical procedures are above and beyond what we might typically expect staff to undertake
- Support for children where their global developmental delay result in a significant level of vulnerability within the chronological group (eg: children aged 2-3 yrs who are not yet able to stand unaided)
- Support at key times for children who have highly limited attention skills (eg: when the group are coming together for snack, or story/input-and the child may need a different offer at this time)
- Support during continuous provision for children who are presenting with significantly delayed development (eg: mouthing to explore resources and/or to regulate) for whom close adult attention is needed to ensure safety (eg: mouthing loose/small parts)
- Support at key times for children who have significant social communication needs- and require a degree of adult support to make sense of the learning offer (eg: during free flow play an additional adult may be on hand to provide increased structure as needed; ability to move in and out of learning areas flexibly beyond the staff ratio)

What does IGF not typically fund?

- Training for staff- providers are encouraged to make use of the free centralised training offer
- Time for key staff to complete paperwork relating to SEND
- Time for key staff to attend meetings relating to SEND

- Changes or adaptations that are classed as ‘reasonable adjustments’ and form part of a quality first teaching approach eg: purchase of textured books; use of group visual timetable
- Support required to support self help skills (eg: toileting, dressing/undressing) as in most cases these can be seen as typical tasks undertaken in an early years environment by all staff
- Support for meal times, unless the child has a specific feeding difficulty that calls for increased supervision/a feeding regime as identified by a relevant professional
- Support for children who are demonstrating behaviours of concern, unless a close level of support has been recommended by a professional following observation and it is felt necessary to maintain safety
- Support for children whose parents wish to extend their session time up to 15 hours a week- each child is entitled to 15 hours of early years education and providers are obliged to provide this, regardless of need
- Support during the school holidays
- Long term support beyond three terms- if the provider feels that support is needed over a longer time frame then the guidelines for EHC assessment should be consulted

Appealing IGF decisions made

Decisions made at IGF Forum are final. However, consideration to appeal the decision will be given where you feel that the following circumstances apply:

- Additional supporting information which could not be submitted at the time of the application should be considered
- Significant change in circumstances or the CYP presentation since the information first submitted
- Exceptional circumstances apply Where the above applies, appeals can be made by emailing SENDsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk
- You will be requested to state the reasons for the appeal and to share any additional information.

What other forms of funding are available to support children in the early years with SEND?

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) [Disability Living Allowance \(DLA\) for children: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-for-children)

This is funding that may help families with the living costs of children under 16 who have difficulties walking or need much more care than a child of the same age who does not have a disability.

Disability Access Fund (DAF) [Early years funding | Milton Keynes City Council \(mksendlocaloffer.co.uk\)](https://mksendlocaloffer.co.uk/early-years-funding/)

DAF is for early years providers to support children with disabilities or SEND between 3 and 4 years old (who are receiving DLA). It is a one off payment to the setting, and is designed to support the inclusion of that child in their setting. It can be used for resources, pieces of equipment, training. It cannot be used to pay for additional support.

DAF can be claimed by group-based and childminder settings for children from 9mths old. It cannot be claimed for 4 year olds in EYFS/Reception classes. In order to claim for DAF, the child must be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

More information about DAF can be found here: [Support for providers in the early years | Milton Keynes City Council](#)

