



One minute guide

Early Years Funding for Inclusion

No. 127, June 2022

What is Early Years Funding for Inclusion?

Funding for Inclusion (FFI) is the system for sharing out the special educational needs (SEN) High Needs Top Up budget to education settings. This guide is about Early Years Funding for Inclusion (EYFFI).

A child's needs can be categorised in one (or more) of the following bands:

- A band – cognition and learning needs;
- B band – vision needs;
- C band – hearing needs;
- D band – physical needs;
- E band – communication and interaction needs;
- F band – social, emotional and mental health needs; and
- G band – health care needs

How is EYFFI decided and distributed?

EYFFI is provided to children who receive educational provision in school nurseries, children's centres, private, voluntary or independent (PVI) nurseries and child minders. It is available for Leeds residents or children who are looked after (in care) in Leeds.

The criteria for allocation of the funding for two, three and four year olds is determined by Children's Services and is available in [Section 3 of the Funding for Inclusion Handbook](#).

EYFFI is applied for by settings, education and health practitioners who know the child best and the process for applications is evidence based in order to match needs according to criteria. The forms and guidance to apply for E Band are available in Section 3 of the FFI Handbook. Applications are considered and decisions made about approvals by a termly EYFFI Moderation Panel.

Funding is allocated from the beginning of the term following approval of the application and either the child's second or third birthday, or the term following the application if the child is over three years of age.

Settings (where the child already attends), education, health practitioners and parents are notified of funding allocations that have been agreed. If the child does not attend a setting at the time of application, parents will receive a placement confirmation form to pass onto the education setting for completion. This needs to be returned to the Funding for Inclusion Team for payments to commence.

Once placement is confirmed, the setting receives monthly notifications of funding allocations. Payments are initially based on maximum of 15 hours per week, however they can be increased where a child is eligible for 30 hours Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE). Adjustments are made if the child leaves the setting, has an extended period of absence where the setting can no longer claim FEEE, or subsequently if they receive their educational provision from another setting.

Who can access EYFFI?

The funding is available for children aged two, three and four years old until they transfer to Reception.

EYFFI is linked to two-year-olds' [Free Early Education Entitlement](#) and eligibility for a three or four year old's free nursery place.

For funding to continue, the education setting must arrange termly reviews to discuss the child's progress and outcomes and review targets.

What happens next?

EYFFI does not automatically continue for all funding levels and bands for children moving into Reception, as schools must provide support for children out of their Notional Inclusion Budget up to the value of £6,000 before FFI High Needs Top-up is allocated.

For children with more complex needs, funding does continue in order to support their transition to the primary phase. Whether funding continues or not, it is important that discussions take place between the early years setting, parents, outside practitioners and staff from the receiving primary school in order to prepare for a smooth transition to the primary phase. This should be done during the summer term prior to entry to Reception.

Any parent who would like their child to be taught out of their chronological year group must speak to the SEN Coordinator (SENCO) at their child's setting to arrange a review, which should include the child's parents, SENCO and any outside practitioners involved to discuss and agree a recommendation. An application should also be made to the Admissions Team. EYFFI will only continue if the request is approved. Further guidance is available on the [Primary Admissions](#) process.

Key contacts and for more information

If you require any further information please contact: Emma Charlton (FFI Coordinator), tel: 0113 3785449 and email: emma.charlton@leeds.gov.uk

For more information you can read the online [Funding for Inclusion Handbook documents](#) (Refer to Sections 1, 2 and 3)