

June 2025



Early Years Funding

Targeted and SENDIF funding 2025/2026

Guide for Early Years SENCOs

PRESENTED by:

The Early Years Operational Group

Email: earlyyearsopgroup@cognus.org.uk



Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENDIF) and Targeted Funding

This combined pot of funding will be available for settings with children who fit the eligibility criteria and can be applied for collaboratively with the EY SEND Advisor who supports the setting. The EY Advisor will be able to guide SENCOs about interventions to implement, how to group children and training needs of staff.



It is expected that this would be provided from the setting's early years entitlement funding.

UNIVERSAL

- Provision planned for all children and linked to their interests
- Visual supports
- Small group times
- Resources or equipment
- Environmental adaptations



This would be detailed in a setting wide provision map.

ENHANCED UNIVERSAL

- Increased use of visuals and communication prompts
- ABC charts for challenging behaviour
- Targeted small group interventions (using an approach which requires staff training)
- Additional resources or equipment than would usually be available
- Staff training on an approach to be used with all children
- This is likely to be grouped funding



This would be detailed in a setting wide provision map.

TARGETED

- Enhanced ratios for certain parts of a session where there is a high number of SEND children
- Regulation support and a calm down space required during each session
- Staff training in a specific approach
- Targeted interventions (delivered 1:1/in pairs or several times during a session)
- This is likely to be grouped funding

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENDIF) and Targeted Funding cont.

Target+

This would be detailed in a setting wide provision map.

HIGH LEVEL TARGETED

- Enhanced ratios for entire sessions
- Regulation support during each session on a 1:1 basis
- Targeted interventions (delivered 1:1/or with high adult ratios)
- An individualised behaviour plan or communication approach
- Implementation of support plan identified by external professionals



This would be detailed in a setting wide provision map but applied for separately via an individual provision map.

SPECIALIST

- Specialist interventions (delivered 1:1 or several times during a session)
- An individualised and specialist communication approach
- An allocated adult needed to provide supervision to keep a child safe
- Implementation of a Physiotherapy or Occupational Therapy programme



ELIGIBILITY

- Children in receipt of early years entitlement funding (up to 4 years old)
- Requests to be agreed with the Early Years SEND Advisor
- Parental consent obtained if making a request for an individual child - settings should use [this parent consent form](#).
- Enhanced Universal and Targeted levels of funding available to all children who attend Sutton settings, including those who are residents in other local authorities. For these bands funding is likely to be grouped for children attending the same sessions with similar needs.
- High Level Targeted and Specialist levels of funding are only available to children who are Sutton residents. They may attend settings in other local authorities.

Funding process

AUTUMN

- Settings identify children with SEN in their settings and complete the funding form which overviews the provision required for the setting (see example on the next page).
- Cohort provision maps to be sent to earlyyearsopgroup@cognus.org.uk
- EY SEND Advisors can, if needed, support settings in completing this form and a workshop will be held for all settings to attend should they need guidance.
- The EYOPGP will discuss the funding form and allocate funding. In instances where the funding given differs from the requested amount the EY SEND Advisor will make contact to explain the rationale for decision-making.

SPRING

- Settings will be asked to evaluate the provision in place for each tier of children on the cohort provision map at the end of the Autumn term (see example below), in advance of the Spring funding meeting, to detail if they require the same level of funding or if they are requesting changes.
- Should the level of a child's need be higher than originally thought settings should discuss with their EY SEND Advisor.

SUMMER

- Settings will be asked to provide a brief evaluation at the end of the Spring term, in advance of the Summer funding meeting, to detail if they require the same level of funding or if they are requesting changes.

AD HOC

- For children with very high levels of SEND, settings will be able to seek additional funding via an individual provision map sent to earlyyearsopgroup@cognus.org.uk alongside the completion of this form.
- These will be considered at fortnightly Op Group meetings.
- Children deemed to be eligible for specialist support would be those who have needs which pose a barrier to them accessing continuous provision without some level of adult support and who pose a risk to their own safety or the safety of others. It is likely that their development would be delayed by at least 18 months. Termly evaluation via this form will be required.

Following funding meetings the setting's Early Years SEND Advisor or EYOPGRP Administrator, will confirm any decisions within two working weeks of the EYOPGRP meeting.

Cohort provision maps will need to be reviewed half-termly, and in some instances a specific intervention/piece of work or training will need to be individually reviewed but the EYOPGP will not require evidence of this to be submitted. Settings will instead be asked to provide a brief evaluation of the impact that the additional funding has had and to detail provision which is still required and areas in which they have needed to make changes.

EY SEND Advisors will seek information about the provision on offer within settings and complete informal auditing as and when they visit settings.

Additional funding for individual pupils should only be requested by settings once they have had discussions with their EY SEND Advisor and it is considered that their additional support needs cannot be provided for, or funded, through the setting wide support. This funding is intended to be for short-term (up to a term) periods of targeted intervention only and will be at a set rate of £2,300 per child per term. Funding will not be provided if adult support is not in place.

Example cohort provision map

Settings will be asked to provide these termly. This will be the only SEN register you need to submit to claim funding, but you are advised to keep your setting register which will include children who are not eligible for funding.

Level of need	Known to EY SEND Adviser Y/N	Initials of child	Under 2?	3-yr-old?	4-yr-old?	FEF hours claimed	Sutton resident Y/N	Interventions planned or resources required	Evaluation and next steps. Changes to funding? (only to be completed at reviews)	Total
Enhanced Universal	Y	HM		X		15	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small group support to follow instructions and to increase vocabulary during play (3-4 times per session) Bucket time run using three adults (15 minutes 2 times per session) One member of staff to attend Makaton training Backwards chaining support for self-care tasks (1 hour per session) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue small group language support to include more complex language Continue to implement bucket time but increase to 20 mins Continue backwards chaining for MS and JJ 	£900 (Overlap in sessions attended have reduced total funding)
	Y	JJ		X		30	N			
	Y	IB			X	30	Y			
	Y	MS	X			15	Y			
Targeted	Y	LS		X		30	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced ratios during carpet time (to offer alternative activity) Enhanced ratios during snack times Regulation support after each transition point for both children together (3 times per session) Bucket time (smaller group) (15 mins per session) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced ratios during carpet time for LS and alternative activity for RF Continue bucket time and regulation support 	£1,800 (No overlap in sessions attended)
	Y	RF			X	30	Y			
High Level Targeted	Y	FD			X	30	Y	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 support following transition in (10 minutes) Support for toileting and during snack times (1 hour per session) Social stories used to support development 1:1 play skills development for 30 mins each session Implementation of SALT care plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in transition support (ad hoc 1:1 but use visuals) Continue play skills development and SALT 	£1,650
Specialist	Y	PS		X		15	Y	Please attach an individual provision map		£2,300

Funding levels - for 2025/2026 per child funding at the enhanced universal level will be £300, at the targeted level will be £600, at the high level targeted will be £1,100 and at the specialist will be £2,300.

Example individual provision map

Settings will be asked to provide these when applying for specialist funding

Name of setting: Date:					
Name:		Date of Birth:	Year Group:		
Below indicate the main area or areas of strengths and needs					
	Communication and Interaction	Cognition and Learning	Social Emotional Mental Health	Sensory and Physical	Additional Needs
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses sounds and some single words, leads by the hand • Beginning to take turns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong interest in numbers and letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established relationship with key person • Can be comforted by key adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys outdoor play • Enjoys sensory play 	n/a
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own agenda led during play • Self-directed attention • Limited awareness of peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetitive and restricted play • No learning through shared play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to communicate his needs when upset • Needs adult support to regulate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks movement • Climbs without understanding of danger • No awareness of toileting needs 	n/a
Professionals Involved	NHS SALT	Early Years SEND Adviser	Early Years SEND Adviser	Referred to Community Paediatrics	

See [here](#) for a copy of the template provision map

Example individual provision map (cont.)

Use the Early Years Graduated Response document as a reference ([EY Graduated Response](#))

Provision/ Resource Indicate if Universal -Blue , Targeted - Green or Specialist - Red by colour coding	Staff/pupil ratio	Length of session	How often?	Name of staff involved	Costs (year = 39 weeks)	Desired impact (Evaluation in the form of RAG rating when provision has been delivered)
Adults using reduced and visually supported language, allowing extra time to process instructions, individual prompt for child when giving group instructions	1:8	3 hours	All session	All staff	n/a	To increase understanding of routines
Provision of additional toys following interests and introduced to an activity child usually enjoys as their attention begins to wane.	1:8	3 hours	3 to 4 times per session minimum	All staff	n/a	To develop focus and attention
Working in free play to encourage interactions with peers - adult modelling social play, demonstrating simple role play games, turn taking of roles, sharing resources.	1:1	3 hours	6 x 10 minutes per session = 60 minutes	Key person	Hourly rate £15.56	To engage in and maintain play with peers
Adult to provide opportunities for small group work to develop emotional vocabulary	1:3	3 hours	1 x 5 minutes per session = 5 minutes	Key person	43p	To support emotional literacy
Provide individual prompt for child during group transitions and instructions	1:1	3 hours	Adult available during session	Key person	£46.68	Child will look at the visual object to support understanding of transitions
Adult to use Core board	1:1	3 hours	Throughout the session	Key person	£46.68	Child will begin to initiate communication
Adult support to attend bucket time (small focus group of 2-3 to develop focus and attention)	1:1	3 hours	1 x 5 minutes per session = 5 minutes	Key person	£1.30	To increase focus and attention
Total yearly cost (3 hours x 5 days x 14 weeks)						

Please note that this is not a complete example of a provision map. It is anticipated that more provision than listed about would be required for a child in receipt of specialist funding.

Evaluation will be required using the [specialist funding evaluation form](#).

Levels of SEN

Banding	Description	Support available (based on 15 hours, for 30 hour children an additional 50% will be granted)
Enhanced Universal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more areas of developmental difference around 12 months behind age expectations • An additional need/s that require support and monitoring • Developmental difference that may be linked to limited experiences in infancy/early childhood 	Up to £300 per child, per term, requested through cohort provision map (funded likely to be grouped)
Targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complex needs in one or more areas of learning • Needs which are impacting on overall development, access to learning and inclusion • Developmental differences that are 12 months below age related expectations 	Up to £600 per child, per term, requested through cohort provision map (funded likely to be grouped)
High Level Targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high level of supervision is needed to support access and inclusion • Support may be needed some group activities, snack and meal times; free play, to extend interests or to support in outdoor play • Staff are needed to meet the child's welfare and personal needs • The child's needs are significant and may require regular support and a higher level of personal/intimate care 	£1,100 per child, per term, requested through cohort provision map
Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare and personal care needs are significant • Children who cannot access continuous provision without regular supervision and adult support. • Children whose behaviour poses a risk to their safety and the safety of other children • Children with developmental delays of at least 18 months across prime areas 	Short-term funding (usually up to a term) at a set rate of £2,300 per child per term applied through via an individual provision map (this amount will be given for 15 and 30 hour funded children)

Funding will be provided at the same amount per term and will be backdated from the start of the term if the request is received within timescales.

A lower amount of funding may be granted if a child has not yet been seen by an Advisor, with scope to increase funding following a visit.

Meeting dates



Funding for Autumn term

18th August 2025

Deadline for submission 1st August

When settings know children who will be attending from Autumn term we ask that the request support in the Summer term



Funding for Autumn term

20th October 2025

Deadline for submission 10th October

Funding for Autumn term which will be backdated to start of term



Funding for Spring term

12th January 2026

Deadline for submission 7th January

Cohort provision maps including evaluation summary to be returned. Funding for Spring term which will be backdated to start of term



Funding for Summer term

21st April 2026

Deadline for submission 15th April

Cohort provision maps including evaluation summary to be returned. Funding for Summer term which will be backdated to start of term

Cohort provision maps to be sent to: earlyyearsopgroup@cognus.org.uk
Requests for specialist funding to be made via [this form](#) and a provision map sent to earlyyearsopgroup@cognus.org.uk

Specialist funding requests will be reviewed at the Early Years Operational Group meetings, held on alternate Tuesdays during term time.