

## **A PROVIDER'S GUIDE TO THE INCLUSION FUND**

*The Department for Education requires every Local Authority to have an Inclusion Fund to help children to access their early education entitlement and to make developmental progress.*

### **1. What is the Inclusion Fund? (also called SENIF - Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund)**

The Inclusion Fund is a dedicated pot of money to support young children with lower-level emerging special educational needs/disabilities (SEND) to access their entitlement of funded early years entitlement. The Inclusion Fund is to help young children with lower-level emerging SEND. In 2025/26, Gloucestershire County Council allocated £530,000 to be used as inclusion funding. Any EY provider within the county can apply for this funding to help individual or groups of children within their setting.

If you have any queries about inclusion funding, please contact our Advice Line on 01452 425959 or email [eyesadvice@goucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:eyesadvice@goucestershire.gov.uk)

### **2. Support for individual children**

#### **(a) Transition support for children with SEND**

This funding is to support children transitioning to an EY setting or to support an enhanced transition in the summer term before reception, where there are clearly identified needs but no additional financial resource in place. Up to £1000 will be allocated per child and to allow time for the child's needs to be assessed further. For those children who require ongoing support after the transition period in their EY setting, please see points (b) and (c) below. For children who require ongoing support after transition to reception class, please contact the Education Inclusion Team

#### **(b) Individual children with low level/emerging needs**

Funding of up to £500 per child or group to deliver enhanced ratios or short-term interventions for children with low level needs. This can be continued for a second cycle if necessary.

#### **(c) Individual children with high level needs**

Funding of up to £1500 per child can be requested via the EYMDT Panel and referrals are made by the EY provider. This can be continued for a second cycle if necessary. This funding can also be requested to support children on the EHCNA pathway, once the 20-week deadline has passed and there is a delay in the decision on whether to issue an EHCP.

### **2. Support for a cohort of children with low level/emerging needs**

Funding of up to £500 per group to deliver enhanced ratios or short-term interventions for children with low level needs

### **4. High Level and Long-Term Special Educational Needs**

Inclusion Funding should not be used for children with this level of need as the funding is short-term only. Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) processes are in place for children with high level and long-term needs. For more information, please follow link [Graduated Pathway](#).

## **5. Early Years Inclusion Champion Online Platform**

This is a new platform we are launching in September 2025 to encourage Early Years providers to evidence their good quality and inclusive practice and to gain an award of recognition – the Early Years Inclusion Champion Award, valid for 3 years. Additional support from the Inclusion Team is available and, again to support engagement, we are allocating between £1000 and £2000 to providers once they are accepted onto the platform. This funding will support providers to access the training expectations and levels of commitment, whilst recognising they may require less support than those on the programme to evidence the levels of good quality inclusive provision required to gain the award. Please contact the EYS Advice Line for more information ([EYSadviceline@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:EYSadviceline@gloucestershire.gov.uk))