

Birmingham Criteria and Process for Early Years Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (EY SENIF)

Inclusion Support in Early Years (ISEY) is Birmingham's Early Years Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (EY SENIF). This fund is to support early years providers in Birmingham to meet the needs of children with SEND.

This guidance is therefore for eligible settings **receiving Early Education funding from Birmingham Local Authority**. If a child lives in Birmingham but attends a setting in another local authority Inclusion funding should be sought from that authority.

Applications can be made by:

- Birmingham Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings that:
 - Have a Setting- based SENCo who has attended the Birmingham Area SENCo team Core training.
 - Engages with twice yearly contact meetings with the Area SENCo Team as a minimum.
- Birmingham Maintained Nursery Schools that:
 - have a SENCo who meets the national requirements for school SENCos.
 - engage with the LA multi-agency planning meetings.
- Birmingham childminders registered to receive early education funding and
 - Attend a Birmingham Early Years Network session at least once a year

ISEY applications can be submitted for a child who meets **all 7 of the following eligibility criteria**:

1. There is **parent/carers consent** for the application and a signed copy of the application form is held by the setting.
2. The child **accesses their EEE funding in a Birmingham setting** as detailed above.
3. The child has either been in the setting for at **least 6 weeks** or there is evidence of a planned transition/settling period for the child prior to admission.
4. The child has **emerging or identified special educational needs/disability** and requires support that is **'additional to or different from'** that which is typically provided for children of their age in the setting.
5. Timely referrals to relevant **external agencies** have been or will be made as appropriate and the advice of any involved professionals is being followed.
6. The child has a quality, **current individual SEN Support Plan**, which includes current targets evidencing the Graduated Approach of the SEND Code of Practice 2014/5 including working in partnership with parent/carers and other professionals (Team around the child approach).
7. The child **does not** have a funded SEND Support Provision Plan or an Education, Health and Care Plan.

If a child does not meet all 7 criteria a discussion **must take place** with the relevant LA SEND support services to determine whether an **'exceptional application'** is appropriate

Throughout this document where relevant LA support services are referenced these are:

- For Private, Voluntary and Independent settings: Area SENCo Team (AST)
- For Maintained Nursery Schools: Pupil and School Support (PSS) / Communication and Autism Team (CAT) / Sensory Support and Physical Difficulties Team ((SSPD) depending on child's needs.
- For childminders: Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCC)

The ISEY Process

Applying:

Applications are screened, scored, and considered by the Moderating Group four times a year:

- End of the first half term during the Autumn term
- End of the Autumn term
- End of the Spring term
- End of the summer term

Where allocated, funding commences from the start of the following term/half term.

The current application form and closing dates are circulated throughout the academic year. These will be received by eligible providers from the following email address: areasencoteam@birmingham.gov.uk

NB A full re-application is required in the summer term for all children who will attend an eligible setting in the new academic year.

Evidence:

SEN Support plan: There must be a current, complete **Birmingham SEN Support Plan** for the child which includes a detailed **All About Me**, completed with parents/carers and reflecting their story of their child's journey.

- **ISEY Application Form:** All questions on the **current** version of the form **must be completed** as incomplete information adversely affects the scoring process.
- **For PVI's and childminders:** A separate signed **Parental Consent document**
- The completed application form and all evidence **must be emailed before 5pm on the closing date** to: areasencoteam@birmingham.gov.uk. The email should include the following separate attachments which should be sent together and must be named as detailed below:
 - The complete application form (as one document and not separately scanned sheets). The title of the application should be: 'ISEY application form_ (setting name)
 - The child's current SEN Plan titled: SEN Plan_ (child's name)
 - Signed parental consent titled: Parental consent_ (child's name)
- We encourage settings who are unfamiliar with the ISEY criteria and process to attend a 'pre-ISEY workshop' and/or an 'ISEY surgery'. Details of these sessions are sent regularly to eligible settings.

Consideration of Applications:

Screening:

All applications are screened and scored against criteria relating to the child's level of need and the required provision to meet those needs. If there are omissions on either the form or in supporting evidence the provider is contacted and given a deadline by which to provide further information. Where this is not available applications cannot proceed.

Providers are advised to discuss cases which do not proceed to the moderating group with their relevant support services, and to access support before re-applying the following term.

Moderation and allocation of funding:

The Moderating Group is chaired by the Head of Early Years SEND who has overall responsibility for the ISEY budget. The group includes representatives from the following teams: Area SENCo team, Educational Psychology, Communication and Autism Team, Pupil and School Support and Early Years Childcare Service.

The Moderating Group meets following the screening process to:

- moderate a sample of applications with respect to screened scores.
- agree the 'cut-off' score for funding in line with management of the ISEY budget.
- agree the rate of funding to be allocated. The standard ISEY rate is £1,000 per term and the higher rate is £1,500 per term. Rates are decided by the score given to the application.
- consider cases which are either borderline to the cut-off score for support or the higher rate.
- confirm the outcome for each application.

The Chair of the ISEY Moderating Group is responsible for addressing any queries around allocations which are not resolved by first consulting with the LA SEND teams for the setting. The chair also has the authority to consider any special cases where an application may be addressed outside of the routine allocation periods, or where a short-term increase above the ISEY rates is required to prevent a placement breakdown.

Feedback:

Settings are informed by email of the outcome of the application. Feedback information is sent **prior** to the start of the term/half term for when funding will commence. When an application is approved for funding, there may be actions set which the provider will need to complete before funding is released.

If an application is unsuccessful, we encourage settings to discuss this with the relevant LA SEND team prior to re-applying.

Accessing allocated funding:

- When an application is approved for funding, this will be allocated to the setting as a fixed sum for the upcoming term or half term.
- Detailed invoice procedures, including deadlines, are included with the feedback for all applications approved for financial support.
- Providers should submit **one invoice** per term to cover all children within the setting who have been allocated ISEY funding. The invoice should include a brief outline of how funding will be used.
- Funding is released termly until the end of each academic year. For funding to continue term by term until the end of the academic year, the provider will be required to complete an evaluation and paperwork to confirm that the child continues to meet the ISEY criteria.
- When a child receives a funded SEND Support Provision Plan or an Education, Health and Care Plan ISEY funding will cease. Providers must promptly inform the ISEY officer.
- Where it is anticipated that an EHCP will be issued within a term, ISEY funding may only be approved to the half term.
- If a child leaves a setting during any funding period, the provider must inform the ISEY officer and provide details of the child's next placement.
- If a child starts at your setting having been in receipt of ISEY funding at a previous setting, you should contact the ISEY officer. Funding will typically transfer with the child.
- A new application is required for all children that continue to meet criteria for each new academic year.

Use of ISEY funding:

Funding is allocated towards:

- ensuring the child accesses their full entitlement to their early education funded place.
- meeting the child's needs including improving outcomes as identified in the child's individual plan through:
 - enhancing ratios: The setting is responsible for sourcing and paying appropriately qualified staff (at least NVQ level 2). It is not intended that additional team members will work exclusively with the child.

- providing bespoke resources
- staff training

If you require advice on how best to use allocated funding to meet the child's needs, you should seek advice from your relevant support services or the 'ISEY Surgery'.

Monitoring:

In addition to managing the allocation of ISEY on behalf of the Local Authority, the Area SENCo team is responsible for monitoring how funding is used to improve outcomes for children in line with the EYFS and Graduated Approach of the SEN Code of Practice 2014/5. During a monitoring visit, there will be discussion around the use of ISEY funding to meet the child's needs. Evidence of this may be requested.

Settings are routinely identified for a monitoring visit if they have an OFSTED rating of Inadequate or Requires Improvement.

In addition, a sample of settings are visited and monitored throughout the year. Where monitoring identifies areas for development, actions are set, and the Area SENCo team offer focused support to ensure funding can continue.

The team may identify settings where there is best practice and with their agreement may advise other local settings to visit these for peer support.

Transition:

All settings are encouraged to complete a *Birmingham Transition Approach* form for each child due to leave the setting to take up a Reception place in a maintained school. For children with SEND, the form provides the opportunity to share information to enhance the quality of transition practice, including informing the school that the child has been in receipt of ISEY funding.

The *Birmingham Transition Approach* form and the child's current SEN Support plan must be securely emailed to the receiving school.