

# Mainstream Inclusion Partnership: Early Years

## Operational Guidance



London Borough  
of Hounslow

<b>Purpose</b>
<p>To provide a clear process for early years providers in the London Borough of Hounslow to request, use, and evidence Mainstream Inclusion Partnership Funding (SEND IF).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote early intervention.</li> <li>• To enable children identified with SEND to achieve better outcomes.</li> <li>• To support the Local Authority to work with providers to address the needs of individual children with SEND.</li> <li>• To support the Local Authority to undertake their responsibilities to strategically commission SEN services as required under the Children and Families Act 2014.</li> </ul>
<b>Eligibility Criteria</b>
<p>Before applying:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Confirm the child is 9 months to 4 years old and attending an Ofsted-registered early years provider in Hounslow receiving government funding.</li> <li>2. Ensure the child's needs meet the banding thresholds for severe to profound SEND.</li> <li>3. The child must not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have a finalised Education, Health &amp; Care Plan (EHCP).</li> <li>○ Be attending specialist provision.</li> <li>○ Be receiving support within normal EYFS practice without additional targeted needs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Discuss the funding request with parents/carers and obtain agreement to share information.</li> </ol>
<b>Funding Categories</b>
<p>Funding can only be requested under one or more of these categories:</p> <p><b>1. Building capacity</b></p> <p>Funding can be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional staffing to support specific interventions/strategies for the child (beyond required EYFS ratios).</li> <li>• Adjusting deployment of current staff to provide targeted support.</li> <li>• Interventions/provision linked to targeted plans and/or professional recommendations (e.g., support during transitions, developing self-care/independence skills).</li> <li>• Covering reduced child-to-adult ratios for childminders to enable inclusion of a child with SEND.</li> <li>• Short-term cover for absence (up to two weeks).</li> </ul> <p>Conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for one-to-one full-time support is not available; applications should not request this.</li> <li>• Decisions about staffing allocation must be made based on identified targets and agreed provision.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Training</b></p> <p>Funding can be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist or one-off training (whole team or individual) directly linked to the child's needs and/or recommended by a professional.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioning local SEND specialists or external trainers to provide training.</li> <li>• Paying staff to attend relevant training.</li> <li>• Supply cover/agency staff to release staff for relevant training.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Resources &amp; Equipment</b></p> <p>Funding can be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of resources or equipment specific to the child's needs, based on current interventions and/or advice from relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Risk assessment or moving/handling training where required for the child.</li> <li>• Insurance for specialist equipment recommended by a professional.</li> </ul> <p><b>Conditions: MIP funding will not fund:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General resources or equipment expected in any quality EYFS setting.</li> <li>• General ICT (laptops, iPads, mobile devices).</li> <li>• Assessment toolkits or developmental checklists.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prepare the Application</b></p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete the cover letter and SEN Inclusion Fund Application Form (PowerPoint document) in full. If you need support, contact your allocated cluster lead for guidance and support.</li> <li>2. Ensure information is accurate and up to date (use Birth to 5 Matters guidance for developmental levels).</li> <li>3. Submit by the published panel deadline in password-protected PDF format via email to <a href="mailto:seninclusionfunding@hounslow.gov.uk">seninclusionfunding@hounslow.gov.uk</a>.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Panel Process</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mainstream Inclusion Partnership (MIP) Panel meets twice per term (plus July for September starters).</li> <li>• Applications are reviewed by the panel against eligibility and need.</li> <li>• Outcomes letters are sent out within 7 working days.</li> <li>• If declined, reasons will be discussed at the MIP panel meetings.</li> <li>• Complete the Impact of Funding table at the end of the academic year for each funded child.</li> <li>• <b>Allocation of funding-</b> Lump sum payment calculated on the number of hours per week a child attends the setting up to a maximum of 15 hours per week/570 hours per year (in line with government funding entitlements). If accessing 30 hours, a top up amount will be provided to reflect this.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Changes &amp; Ceasing Funding</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform the SEND Cluster Lead if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The child leaves the setting.</li> <li>○ Hours of attendance change.</li> <li>○ An EHCP is finalised.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Funding is time limited to the academic year; a new application is needed each year.</li> </ul>