



Early Years

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF)

**Guidance for Providers
September 23 to August 24**



Contents

Section title	Page
Introduction	3
What is the purpose of the Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund	5
Children's eligibility and who can claim	6
Banding	7
Submitting your application	12
Panel Decisions	15
Review paperwork	16
Notification and Payments	17
Appeals	18
Complaints	18
Key contacts	19
Key dates	20
Appendices	21

1. Introduction

1.1 Local Authorities are required to have SEN Inclusion Funds for three- and four-year-olds taking up their early year's entitlement funding. The funds are to support local authorities to work with providers to meet the needs of individual children with SEN. The fund is to support children with lower level or emerging SEN. ***DfE Early years entitlements: Local Authority funding of providers. Operational guidance 2018 DfE***

1.2 A growing body of evidence shows that high quality early years provision is the key to improving life-long outcomes for children and their families. Research shows that those children from the most deprived families who access high quality early years provision, combined with a good home learning environment, see real developmental benefits. For this reason, Wirral is committed to ensuring that all children can take up their entitlement to funded early education in a high-quality setting.

1.3 (5.2) Providers of early years education, that is all early years providers in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors that a local authority funds, are required to have regard to this Code including the principles set out in Chapter 1. ***Department for Education: SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, January 2015 Update, page 78.***

Local authorities must ensure that all providers in the maintained and private, voluntary and independent sectors that they fund to the free entitlements are aware of the requirement on them to have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25.

Department for Education: Early Education and Childcare, Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities, April 2023, page 43.

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential.

Department for Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, April 2021, page 5.

1.5 Within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, Early Years providers will expect to have some children with additional needs at some time and **must plan** for each child's care and learning requirements, with a focus on removing or helping to counter underachievement and overcoming barriers for children where these exist. The majority of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities will not require additional resources or specialist equipment to be successfully included in Early Years educational providers.

1.6 Due to the statutory adult to child ratios which must be adhered to within all Early Years providers and are regulated by Ofsted, the need for enhanced staffing is only supported through this funding for children with a range of needs which are not able to be met by any other means. Evidence demonstrates that many providers meet the additional needs of their children very well. **Inclusive Quality First Teaching** focuses on making learning purposeful and enjoyable. It is learner-centred and personalised - high achievement for all children through explicit high expectations and high aspirations. Please refer to the Early Years SEND Toolkit for guidance. For additional support and guidance please see key contacts.

1.7 There is an expectation that providers are **planning for inclusion** (e.g. through their SEND and Inclusion Policy) and are allocating staff resources e.g. **SENCO time**. There may be times when providers need some extra support. Research shows that, wherever possible, it is more beneficial for children to be supported through a whole room/setting approach rather than having 1-1 support for an individual child.

2 What is the purpose of the Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund?

2.1 The fund is available to ensure the **inclusion** of children with additional needs in early education/childcare. 'Additional needs' includes physical, sensory or learning disability, difficulties in areas such as communication and interaction, social emotional and mental health, physical and or sensory needs and cognition and learning.

2.2 The fund is intended to be added with all other funding entitlements e.g. Early Years Funding Entitlements (EYFE), and if eligible Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Fund (DAF).

2.3 The Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIFF) is intended to support providers to meet children's additional needs:

- A setting may need to attend training to enable them to support a child. Resources may need to be bought to ensure the child access early years opportunities.
- A setting may need to provide smaller groups/higher staff ratio at certain times or for certain activities, determined by the level of additional needs in the group.

2.4 The fund is NOT to provide a person to be constantly attached to one child (1:1) as this does not support inclusion nor does it allow the child to have some time on self-chosen activities which all children are able to do. **Please advise parents** that their child will **NOT** have 1:1 – their child will be in a room with enhanced staffing where **all** staff have a responsibility to meet the child's needs

3 Children's eligibility and who can claim.

3.1 Children eligible for Special Education Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF) **MUST;**

- Be attending a Wirral early years provider
- Be two, three or four years old.
- Have started the graduated approach and are working on an Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle
- Have a SEND need identified by their early year's provider and/ or brought to the attention of Health Services e.g., Health visiting, Speech and Language teams.
- Attend or about to start provision with either Childminder, Day nursery, School - Foundation 1 or Pre-school
 - **Please note children in Foundation 2, or**
 - **deferred from starting F2 or older are not eligible for the funding.**

3.2 Children in receipt of extended early years funding (*30 hours: parental eligibility applies) can apply for full 30 hours or part thereof.

3.3 For children aged 2 and privately funded and not in receipt of any early years funding entitlements the maximum number of hours they can apply for is 15. It is expected that providers will check eligibility for all funding entitlements before applying for SENIF.

4 Funding Bands

4.1 Special Education Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF) is split into 2 bands both bands are to enhance the existing Early Years Funding Entitlements (EYFE) children are eligible for. All EYFE types are detailed below for your information.

4.2 Providers are requested to consider the needs of the child and what additional support is required when deciding which band to apply for. If the panel, feel the band requested is not appropriate other bands will be considered.

4.3 There is no right to appeal the band granted.

Type of funding	Title	Eligibility criteria	Funding covers	Rate
Universal place funding	Early years funding entitlement	This is the money that is provided to an early year's provider and school according to how many children there are and what ages they are (headcount funding). Applicable to 2-yr 3-, 4-yr olds	This pays for a curriculum which meets the needs of all children in the setting and a proportion of this should be spent on support for those with special educational needs (SEN). Quality first teaching should be applied as a matter of good practice.	2-year-olds £5.55 per hour 3- and 4-year-olds Base rate £4.22 Deprivation supplements 19p, 12p, 4p, Quality supplements 13p, 9p Flexibility supplements 15p, 15p Range £4.26 to £5.74
Qualifying place funding	EYPP / DAF	EYPP: Applicable to 3-and-4-yr-olds Low-income households - https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-early-years-funding	EYPP: To support child's education	EYPP 62p per / hour £342.00 per year

		<p>DAF: 3-and-4-yr-olds Child in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)</p>	<p>DAF: It aids access to early year's places by supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings.</p>	<p>DAF £800.00 per year</p>
<p>Universal: Eligible</p>	<p>One off payment</p>	<p>Inclusion settling payment. Significant complex SEND needs identified during settling in period likely to require Education Health Care (EHC) needs Assessment and new to setting, not had a previously private paid place.</p> <p>Setting can identify where child is on graduated approach as other professionals involved.</p> <p>Applicable to 2-and-3- year-olds only in Early Years provision F1 and below.</p> <p>Follow on from accessing portage.</p>	<p>Identify need during settling process. Start the graduated approach Liaise with SEND officer. Application must be received within 4 weeks Payment will be paid from receipt of application</p> <p>Training:</p>	<p>Inclusion Setting Payment £348.60</p>

		<p>Training / resources Applicable to: 2,3-and-4-yr-olds in Early years provision F1 and below.</p> <p>Follow on from accessing portage.</p>	<p>To cover cost of training or support releasing staff to attend training. Time sensitive training to be completed.</p> <p>Resources: Specific requirement Home learning resources</p>	
Targeted	Band 3 A	<p>SENIF A Social, emotional and mental health differences Cognition and learning differences Physical / sensory needs Communication and interaction differences</p> <p>Child should be on step 1 of the graduated approach Applicable to 2,3-and-4-yr-olds in Early years provision F1 and below.</p> <p>Delivery of 'additional and different' provision for a CYP with SEN linking interventions to teaching.</p> <p>Evidence of the graduated approach, provision map, one page profile and Early</p>	<p>Enhance ratio for specific interventions: e.g. small group work</p>	<p>Enhance 2-year-old rate: £1.66 per hour for 2 terms</p> <p>Enhance 3-year-and-4-year-old rate: £2.64 per hour for 2 terms</p>

		Years Support Plan (EYSP) in place.		
Targeted	Band 3B	<p>SENIF B Social, emotional and mental health differences Cognition and learning differences. Physical / sensory needs. Communication and interaction differences.</p> <p>Evidence of the graduated approach, provision map, 1 page profile and Early Years Support Plan (EYSP) in place.</p> <p>Children on EHCN Assessment pathway and moving onto an EHCP pathway</p> <p>Delivery of 'additional and different' provision for a CYP with SEN linking interventions to teaching.</p> <p>The asses, plan, do, review cycle has evidenced high level of</p>	Enhance ratio for specific interventions and consistent enhanced ratio for supervision Support gathering evidence	£5.28 per hour for 2 terms

		support is required to promote progress. Applicable to 2,3-and-4-yr-olds in Early years provision F1 and below		
--	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--

4.4 There may be exceptional circumstances after two terms of SENIF funding where a child requires a continuation of SENIF funding. This must be applied for before the end of the second term for panel to consider. Please email the SENIF administrator to request this form at eysend@wirral.gov.uk.

5 Submitting Your Application

5.1 Prior to the application

The provider must demonstrate how the **Graduated Approach** to meeting children's needs has been implemented and monitored during their time at the setting prior to making an application for the Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF). There is an expectation that Early Years providers will demonstrate the ways in which they have endeavoured to meet a child's additional needs within the resources routinely available and this information **must** be provided when applying.

5.2 Whilst undertaking a plan do review cycle during induction if there are specific causes for concern speak to your SEND officer.

5.3 If applying for SENIF band 3B Day Nurseries, Childminders and Pre-schools must ensure the child is known to the SEND officers. Schools must discuss child at Educational Psychologist drop in or ASC team drop in. It is expected that after the 1st application a commitment to attend appropriate training such as Autism Education Trust (AET) Training would be made.

5.4 Making an initial application

Please ensure the application is completed on the correct paperwork. All current paperwork can be found on the Local Offer website at <https://localofferwirral.org/information-for-providers/information-for-providers-useful-documents> For support in locating the paperwork, please contact the administrator on eysend@wirral.gov.uk . Applications completed on incorrect paperwork **will not** be accepted.

5.5 Applications **MUST** include attendance of funded hours and be inclusive of how additional hours of SENIF fund (above universal 15 hours) will meet the child's identified need.

5.6 It is important that you allow sufficient time and complete your application fully. Please note: applications received after the 15th will fall into the next month's panel if this is the last month in the term they will be considered in the following term. For example received 16th December will be in January's panel and funding won't commence until Summer Term.

5.7 Incomplete or illegible applications will not be considered. If you have not answered all the questions or been unable to confirm you have submitted all the information listed on the checklist by marking with a tick in the relevant box, your application will be delayed.

5.8 Panel will meet on a monthly basis and applications must be received by the 15th of the month to be considered for that month's panel. Any applications received after this date will be considered in the next months panel.

Term	Submission Date	Payment commences
Autumn Term	15 th September	Spring Term
Autumn Term	15 th October	Spring Term
Autumn Term	15 th November	Spring Term
Autumn Term	15 th December	Spring Term
Spring Term	15 th January	Summer Term
Spring Term	15 th February	Summer Term
Spring Term	15 th March	Summer Term
Summer Term	15 th April	Autumn Term
Summer Term	15 th May	Autumn Term
Summer Term	15 th June	Autumn Term
Summer Term	15 th July	Autumn Term
NO AUGUST SUBMISSION		

5.9 Please note the signatures must be penned by the parent. A signed copy can be kept on file and noted on the application. Applications can be scanned in and emailed, or a hard copy collected by Early Years Team. A copy **must** be retained by the setting. To comply with data protection please use additional security measures to any sensitive information you are sending by encrypting the email message, or password protection. Applications can be collected, please contact the administrator on eysend@wirral.gov.uk or 666 3980 to arrange a collection.

5.10 Original paperwork must be retained by the provider.

5.11 Applications sent by email will receive a confirmation of receipt email within 48 hours.

5.12 Upon receipt of the application, the application form and supporting evidence will be checked by the Administrator. The SENIF Panel will then meet to decide if the funding is granted. Panel decisions are based on the information received in the application form and supporting evidence; funding will be awarded in line with the SENIF criteria. Providers can suggest the band they feel is appropriate the panel will ultimately decide which band is granted.

5.13 Please see Appendix B for diagram of full application process.

5.14 Children will receive SENIF for two terms. Settings and schools should hold a multiagency meeting with parents at the start of the second term where the continuation of funding is to be considered or to move forward with an Education Health Care Needs Assessment or note the child is making expected progress and no longer needs funding additional support.

5.15 SENIF Impact Reports including the outcomes of the multi-agency meeting must be submitted during the second term to determine if needs are met or higher needs identified resulting in moving forward with an EHC needs assessment.

5.16 When a child is at two providers, both providers should liaise to complete the application form.

6 Panel Decisions

6.1 Decisions regarding applications will be made at the multiagency panel meetings, made up of early years operations manager, SEND team manager, Health visiting lead for SEND, Speech and Language therapist, Educational Psychologist, and a Children's centre manager.

6.2 The panel will decide on Special Education Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF) and may also suggest other services that the child and family may find beneficial.

6.3 All applications are presented to a panel for a decision on their suitability. To help you in planning your request, listed below are some factors which could result in a request failing or being deferred. Funding will not be awarded:

- To subsidise places.
- If there is an insufficient explanation as to how the funding would be used e.g., request for funding for a small group but with no explanation as to what this would achieve.
- If inclusion is not the primary purpose of the application.
- If the request is for activities that should form part of your normal provision.
- If the child has an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP).
- For late applications please refer to section 5.6.

7 SENIF impact review

7.1 Providers **must** complete part three Impact Report of the SENIF application at the end of each term. This will identify the impact of the funding and progress for those children who have accessed SENIF. Failure to complete and submit the Impact Review **will** result in a pause or termination of payments.

7.2 The administrator will only contact providers if there is an issue impacting upon continuation of payments. If you have a query about continuation of payments, please contact the administrator on 0151 666 3980 or eysend@wirral.gov.uk .

7.3 Dates for submission

Impact Report submission date	School Term
15th July	Summer
15 th December	Autumn
15 th March	Spring

7.4 The impact review is an update of the child's wellcomm score, their strengths and their action plan. This should be completed towards the end of term following a review meeting with the parents.

7.5 Consent from parents should be gained to share updated information and a record kept of this consent.

7.6 The Early Years SEND Team will use the report information for monitoring and quality assurance purposes to ensure that appropriate provision is being made for children. This produces valuable information which allows us to appropriately support providers.

7.5 Failure to submit termly Impact Reports as part of the funding agreement, **will** lead to the cessation of payments and/or future applications from the provider not being considered.

7.6 Ensure on the transition spreadsheet in summer term includes details that the child has additional needs. After transition spreadsheet submission share details of the child's strengths, the child's needs and what support has worked well and that consideration may need to given as to how this can continue in school.

8 Notification and payments

8.1 Notification of outcome of applications will be emailed within 10 working days after panel meeting. Notification will be sent to the email address supplied on the application form.

8.2 To ensure information governance policies are adhered to outcomes of the panel decision are not able to be provided verbally. For a professional discussion regarding the decision, please email eysend@wirral.gov.uk.

8.3 If funding is granted, the funding will commence the term after the panel meeting, e.g. Panel meeting in November funding will commence in January see 5.8. Inclusive settling payments will aim to be paid within two weeks of the application.

8.4 Where a provider has been awarded the Special Education Needs Funding (SENIF) for a named child and the child reduces the number of hours attended. The provider **must** complete part two change in circumstances of the SENIF application form and email to eysend@wirral.gov.uk. A decision will be made based on the situation if funds need to be recouped. When this occurs failure to notify the administrator will result in a recoup of all SENIF payments for the child that term.

8.6 If the child increases their hour's, then SENIF may not automatically increase. Completed the part two Change in circumstances on their original SENIF application and send to eysend@wirral.gov.uk.

8.7 The provider **must** inform the administrator by email eysend@wirral.gov.uk or telephone 0151 666 3980, if...

- a child ceases to attend during the period for which funding has been awarded and return any remaining balance of the funding.
- If an Inclusion settling payment has been and the child reduces hours, changes providers or stops attending. A decision will be made based on the situation if funds need to be recouped.
- if a child begins to receive any alternate SEND funding from the Local Authority such as EHCP.

8.8 If the child is transferring to an alternative provider please complete part two changes in circumstances of the SENIF application form and send to the SENIF administrator at eysend@wirral.gov.uk. The SENIF administrator will send on to the new provider.

8.9 SENIF payments will be made within 10 working days of notification to provider by Journal or BACS payment into the account for which we hold details. Please advise **Corporate Payments: cpt@wirral.gov.uk** if your bank details have changed recently.

8.10 Funding MUST be spent in accordance with the application. Failure to do so will result in a funding reclaim by Wirral Council.

8.11 Funding will automatically cease when a child starts Foundation 2. Children who defer entry to school for Foundation 2, for either part or the whole year **will not receive SENIF**.

9 Appeals

9.1 A provider may be denied approval to offer the Special Education Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF) or have their funding withdrawn, in line with the early years funding agreement. The provider can appeal against that decision.

9.2 Where a provider receives confirmation that Wirral Council will not be granting the funding or intends to withdraw the funding, they will have the right to appeal. This appeal should be made within one month of receiving the letter.

9.3 Appeals should be sent to:

Sarah Harper – Interim Operations manager
Wirral Borough Council
PO Box 290
Brighton Street, Wallasey
CH27 9FQ

Appeals must be in the form of a written report, outlining the reason(s) for appeal.

9.4 The appeals panel has the responsibility to decide on the petition based on the written evidence presented; in addition, it may request personal representation by the provider.

9.5 A decision to the appeal will be made and the provider notified in writing of the decision within 14 days of the meeting. There is no further appeal against such a decision.

10 Complaints

10.1 Where a provider has a complaint or concern that Wirral Council has not acted properly in discharging its duties in relation to improving outcomes for children through its' Special Education Needs Fund (SENIF) provision, the Wirral Council's Complaints Procedure can be used to make such a complaint. For more information on making a complaint please go to:

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/about-council/complaints/how-complain-wirral-council>

or email: cypdcomplaints@wirral.gov.uk

11 Key contacts

Email: eysend@wirral.gov.uk

Telephone: 0151 666 3980

Early Years SEND Team Administrator

Kelly Sleight 0151 666 3561 eysend@wirral.gov.uk

Early Years SEND Officers

Joanne France: joannefrance@wirral.gov.uk
















Sarah Saxton: sarahsaxton@wirral.gov.uk

Lizi Williams: elizabethwilliams@wirral.gov.uk

Karen Burke: karenburke@wirral.gov.uk

Early Years SEND Manager

Penny Bishop: pennybishop@wirral.gov.uk

<u>Who can I contact?</u>	Early Years Day Nurseries, PVI's, Childminders maintained nurseries,	Schools - 2-year-old provision	Schools Foundation 1 and above
Early Years SEND Officer Support			
Educational Psychologist via: epresponse@wirral.gov.uk			
ASC Team via: autismsoccomm@wirral.gov.uk			
Inclusion Support Team via: inclusionteamreferrals@wirral.gov.uk			
cwp.wirralcamhsreferrals@nhs.net			

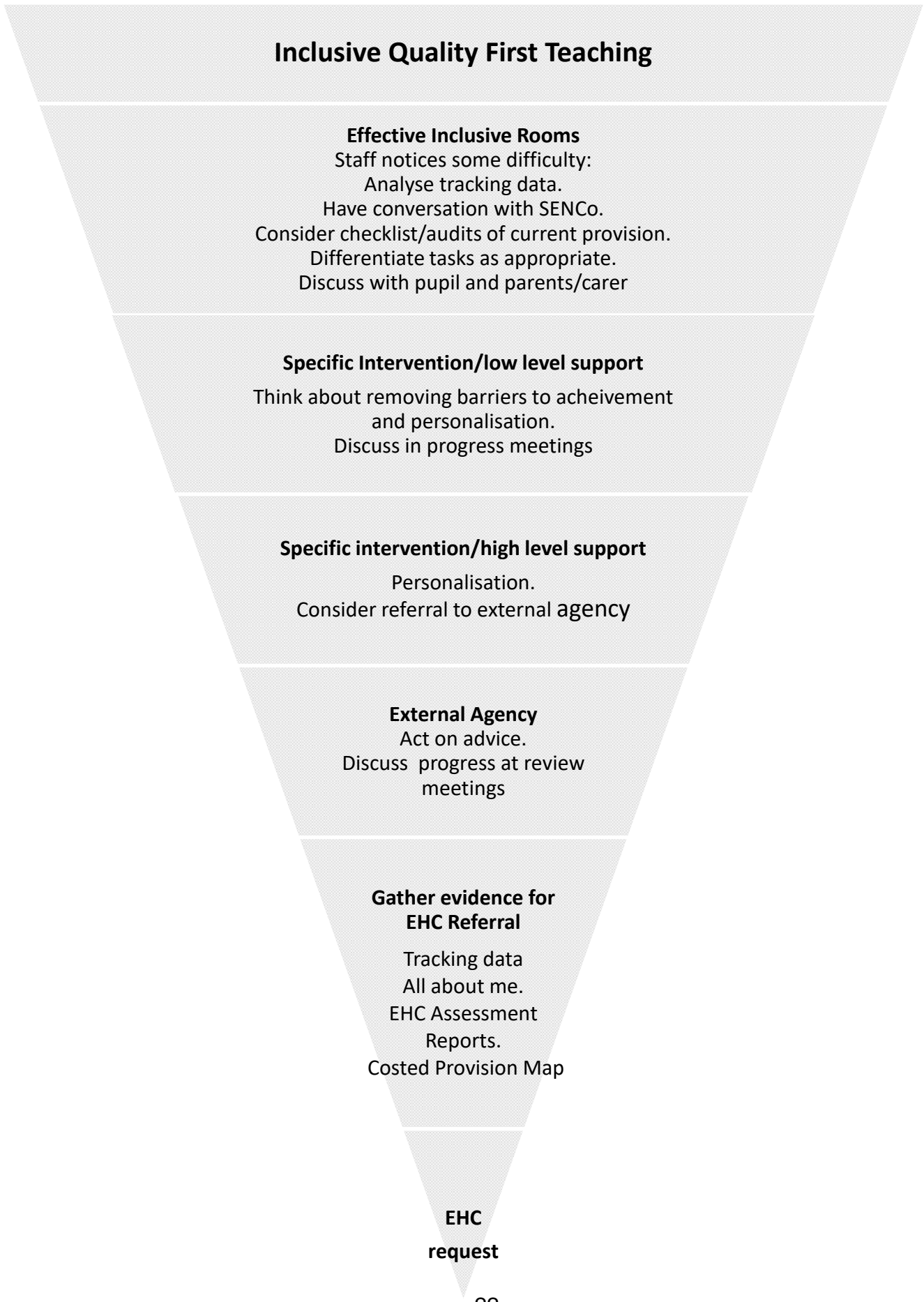
11 Key dates

Term	Submission date	Payment
Autumn term	15 th September	Spring term
Autumn term	15 th October	Spring term
Autumn term	15 th November	Spring term
Autumn term	15 th December	Spring term
Spring term	15 th January	Summer term
Spring term	15 th February	Summer term
Spring term	15 th March	Summer term
Summer term	15 th April	Autumn term
Summer term	15 th May	Autumn term
Summer term	15 th June	Autumn term
Summer term	15 th July	Autumn term

12 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Graduated Response to SEND



No additional support
 Applicable to ALL children

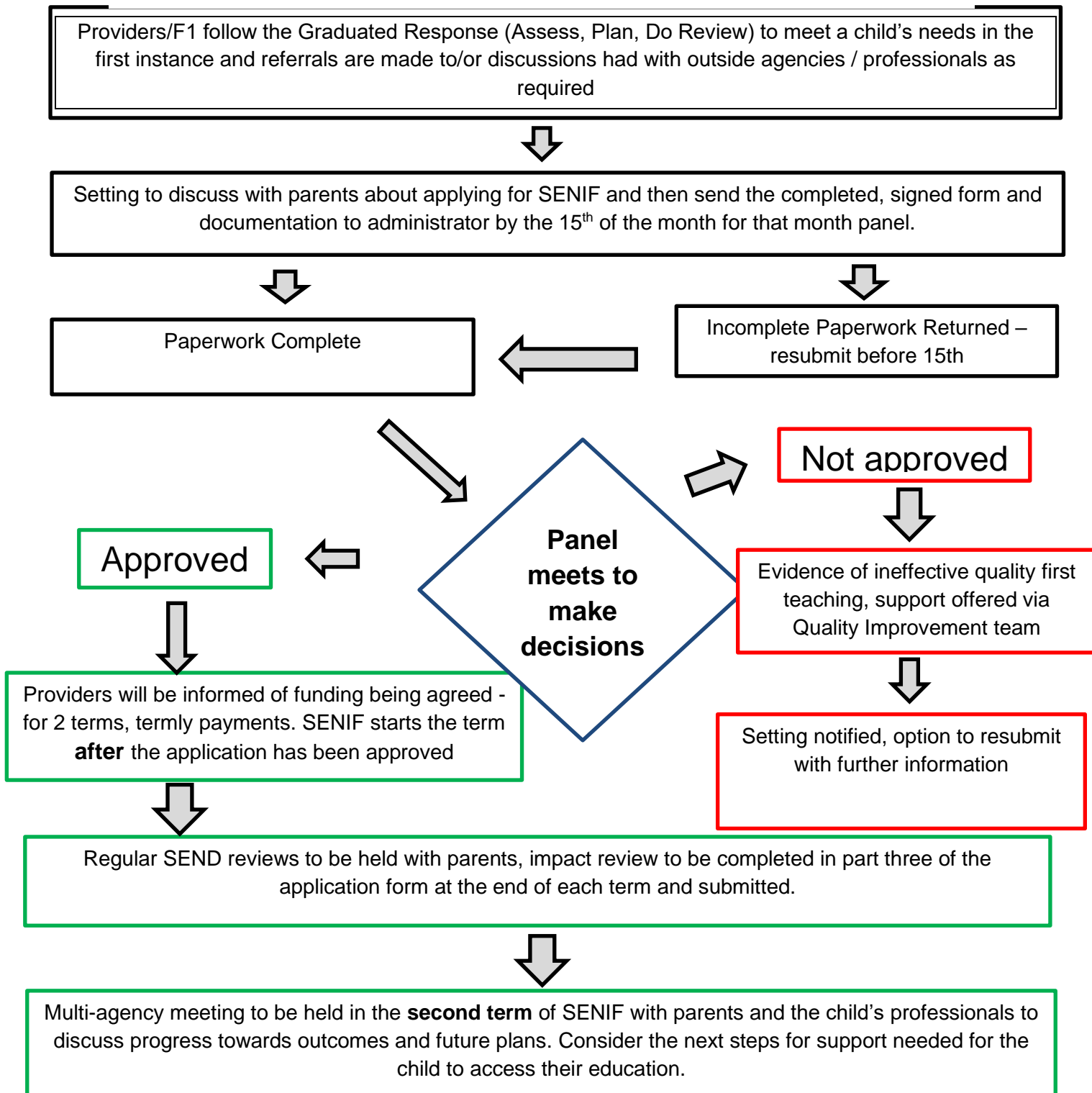
Lots of additional support /some additional support
 Applicable to SOME children

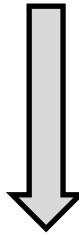
Exceptional Support
 Applicable to FEW children

APPENDIX B

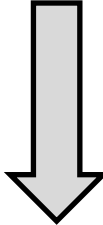
Pathway to requesting Special Education Needs Inclusion Funding

Pathway to requesting Special Education Need Inclusion Funding (SENIF)

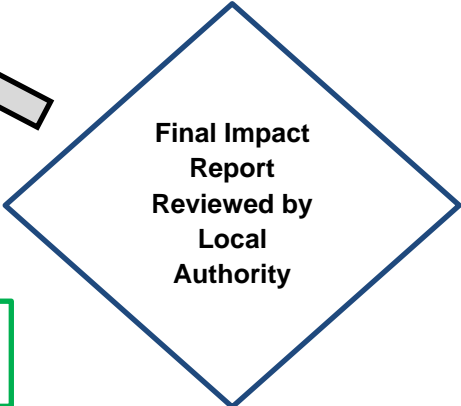




Complete and submit part three impact review following second term

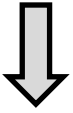


Appropriate progress



Continuation of need

Objectives of funding met no further funding required



Speak to your SEND Officer about other next steps



Has an EHCP been applied for and been accepted for Assessment? Funding to continue until plan is finalised.

