

Disability Access Fund and Disability Living Allowance guidance

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Disability Access Fund

A SEN/D funding stream is available for early years settings to apply for. It totals £800 and will be a one-off payment for 3- & 4-year olds accessing NEF who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

The Disability Access Fund (DAF) supports the full inclusion of children with SEN/D within early years provision and is a contribution towards the reasonable adjustments settings must make to include children with SEN/D. The fund can also be used to help with building capacity within your settings; for example, training, specific inclusion resources etc.

Eligibility criteria for DAF

3 & 4-year-old will be eligible for DAF if they meet the following criteria:

- the child is in receipt of child disability living allowance (DLA) and;
- the child receives free early education

Note: Children attending primary school reception classes are NOT eligible for DAF funding.

Entitlement

- The settings of three- and four-year olds eligible for DAF will be entitled to receive a one-off payment of £800 per year.
- Children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to receive the DAF. Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of free entitlement.

Identifying eligible children

Early years providers are responsible for identifying eligible children. Providers are encouraged to speak to parents in order to find out who is eligible for the DAF.

If a child is splitting their free entitlement across two or more providers, the payment is made to the setting of the parents' choice. The advice of the Local Authority is that the parent should nominate the main setting. This setting will be where the Local Authority will pay the DAF for the child.

Applying for the DAF

Providers will be able to use the parent declaration form template from September 2017. The template will include a box for parents to tick if their child is in receipt of DLA and an indication of where they want the funding to be paid. The parents will need to provide you with a copy of the DLA form to send in alongside the parent declaration form. The DLA form and parent declaration form needs to be sent through to early years funding via the Childrens Services Portal.

The DAF will be received alongside the actual payment in the term in which it was applied for.

There will also be a question on the provider portal when you enter the child's actuals. It will ask whether you are claiming DAF for the child – please tick yes.

Disability Living Allowance

Supporting Parents with Understanding the Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

In April the government introduced the Disability Access Fund - an annual payment of £800 to settings who care for children accessing 3&4-year-old NEF, and who are in receipt of DLA. The fund is designed to support early years providers in putting in place the adaptations, training and resources that are required to support the full inclusion of children with complex needs.

It is now necessary for practitioners to ask parents whether their child is in receipt of DLA in order to encourage parents to allow settings to apply for the Disability Access Fund (DAF).

The question will be added to the parent declaration form from September; however, it may be advisable to settings to raise awareness of the DLA and the DAF with parents.

You may want to:

- Add a question to your settings registration form to ask whether the child is in receipt of DLA
- Put up notices and poster on your parent information boards to raise awareness of DLA

What is Disability Living Allowance?

It is the main benefit paid to a parent or carer for children with a specific condition (including an illness) or registered disability. It helps families meet the increased costs associated with child's additional needs or disability and it comes in two parts.

A care component

Many children with additional needs can have increased care and supervision needs at home, similar to the extra level of supervision you put in place within your settings to ensure the child's needs are met and their safety is not compromised. It is paid on a 3-tier rate – with the children requiring the highest level of supervision and care receiving the top tier. Children must be over 3 months old to apply, unless the child has a terminal illness (where they can apply from birth.)

A mobility component

A child may require support with their mobility due to their disability and this component is paid on a 2-tier rate. The highest rate is for children with significant walking difficulties, visual impairments or behavioural issues. Children are eligible for this from the age of 3.

The lowest rate is for children who need additional supervision when they are outside of the home and children are eligible for this from the age of 5.

Do the children need a diagnosis?

Children will not always receive a diagnosis of their special need or disability prior to entering school, and therefore a diagnosis is not required to access DLA. Parents (and associated professionals) will need to provide evidence of the child's needs.

How will we know if a child is eligible for DLA?

We would advise parents to seek advice from a health professional who is supporting their child. Parents are able to apply independently if they feel their child's needs are significant and that they meet the criteria.

[Further information regarding the Disability Living Allowance \(opens in new window\)](#)