



**North
Northamptonshire
Council**

North Northamptonshire Council

Early Years

SEN Inclusion Fund (SENIF) Guidance

2022-2023

This guide contains information about the SEN Inclusion Fund for Early Years Childcare providers in North Northamptonshire.

Funding is available for children in receipt of either 2-year-old funding or 3- and 4-year-old universal and 30 hours funding who have low level or emerging special educational needs.

Guidance Notes for Early Years SEN Inclusion Fund (SENIF) 2022-2023

What is SENIF?

SENIF is the inclusion fund all Local Authorities must utilise to support children in Early Years settings with low level and emerging needs. Every authority receives this fund as part of the annual allocation of funding for 3 and 4 year old funded children to support those who have needs above the universal needs but below severe and complex high needs.

In North Northamptonshire we recognise the need to support all children with low level and emerging needs at the earliest opportunity. Therefore, SENIF funding is extended to children in receipt of 2 year old funding as well as those in receipt of Universal 3 and 4 year old funding and 30 hours funding.

What is the purpose of SENIF?

This fund is available to ensure the **inclusion** of all children, taking up a funded place, either as part of a group intervention, the child has low level needs, or the child has low level **and** emerging needs in a Childcare Setting.

SENIF is for:

- 2-year-old funded children who have low level and/or emerging needs
- 3- and 4-year-olds funded children who have lower level or emerging needs

SENIF applications that are submitted with information deemed to fall under universal care such as help toileting, assistance with lunch and break sessions, learning routines etc are not eligible for SENIF and should be undertaken by the setting as part of a child's learning

Who can apply?

All OFSTED Registered, OFSTED awarded Good or Outstanding settings who are registered to offer and deliver funded places.

Please note that this funding is not available for children who attend a reception class or for children who have an EHCP.

You **must** get consent from the Parent or Carer to apply for Early Years SENIF

Funding Options

The level of funding will be based on the individual needs of the child and will be time limited. A new online application form must be submitted for every funding block the child(ren) is in attendance.

Please ensure you liaise with relevant professionals, the SEND Support Service (SSS) and the Sensory Impairment Service (SIS) for non-specialist equipment and resources before submitting

your application form. Applications with missing information will not be seen at panel possibly delaying payment to the setting.

Funding can be requested for the following:

1. Specific/Specialist Equipment

This would enable the setting to purchase specific equipment to support the child's access to play and learning opportunities. For example, wedges for children with physical needs.

Please ensure your application contains prices, quotes and/or invoices if you have already purchased the item(s). **Any requests must be recommended in writing by the appropriate health professional, usually an occupational therapist, and must include costs. Any purchased equipment must move with the child as they transition through their learning journey.**

2. Adaptations to the environment

This would enable the setting to fund small adaptations to the physical environment to enable access for the child, for example, grab rails, ramps etc. Please ensure your application contains prices, quotes and/or invoices if you have already carried out the adaptations. **Any requests must be recommended in writing by the appropriate health professional, usually an occupational therapist, and must include costs.**

3. Adult Support

- To buy in external expertise such as a trainer or consultant to support the child(ren) by upskilling the employed workforce in the setting
- Adult support is available to enable key persons to carry out targeted activities. It is important to note that the funding **is not** to provide continuous one to one support for individual children, but to enable all children to have access to an appropriate curriculum meeting individual needs and targets in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- If training cannot be accessed at an alternative time, or there is insufficient staff to cover, SENIF could be utilized to pay for bank staff to enable staff to participate in the training required to support a child/group of children's specific needs. However, this can prove expensive and should only be used when absolutely necessary and we would not expect to see a repeat application for staff to attend training of this kind as any future children who present with similar needs would have skilled staff within the setting to support them.
- **SENIF funding is for children with low level and emerging needs.** Children with low level and emerging needs would not require such a high level of support such as a one-to-one staff member and therefore it is not included in the SENIF award. We cannot award any funding to pay for staff salaries. The funding isn't to ensure there is another member of staff present if a child needs extra

support. It is more to pay for a tangible support, such as, a member of staff needs training in a certain area so they can support a child in a specific way.

- For example, during small group times you may want to allocate one person to lead the group and a second person to support the children in accessing the group, the funding may support you in having enough staff to do this.
- Specialist or one-off training e.g., Signing training course, understanding Autism or Down Syndrome.

4. Group Funding

This type of funding will be available for small groups* of children with low level and/or low-level emerging needs. Childcare Providers will be able to apply for this type of funding to support children through small intervention groups and to access Training courses to upskill Early Years Practitioners.

**a group is deemed 3 or more children attending at the same time for the same session/intervention*

Early Years SEND Thresholds of Needs Framework

This is the key document you need to use before deciding which type of funding and level of support you will be applying for. The document can be found at the end of this guidance and on our website.

What is the SENIF process?

SENIF funding is set out into 3 bands of support:

Band A-SENIF Group Funding	Band B – SENIF Individual Application	Band C- SENIF Individual Application
<u>Up to</u> £500 per child per Funding Block	<u>Up to</u> £1000 per child per Funding Block	Lower level – <u>Up to</u> £1500 Higher Level – <u>Up to</u> £3,300 per child’s year*
Maximum number of applications – 3 per child in their funding year**		

**A child’s year is the year in which they become eligible to start a funded place. For example, a child who turns 3 years old in March would be eligible to begin their funding from 1st April. The child’s year starts 1st April*

A child who attends two settings will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Two settings could claim SENIF funding to support the child, however the settings must work together to best support the needs of the child. Any application that appears to be duplicate will be declined

The funding amounts provided are the maximum amount that a child could be eligible for. If the application/evidence/quotes/costs etc total less than the maximum amount of funding for that Band, the funding will be for the amount requested and not the full amount.

Band A – SENIF Group Funding

Band A funding is for 3 or more children attending the same group or session where the children require the same level of support and intervention. This could be a speech and language session or a specific learning session etc.

The application will require information regarding each individual child needs and abilities clearly listed on the form. Any application with child information missing will be declined.

Band B – SENIF Individual Application

Band B funding is for individual children with low level special educational needs who require a short-term intervention to support their progress along the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The application requires the following information to be included:

- Name of setting and person applying and job role
- Name and details of child
- Needs and concerns of each individual child
- What 'plan of action' have you put in place to assist the child to progress
- What are you intending to spend the funding on and how this will link in with the 'plan of action'?
- Provide evidence of the training, the resources, the purchase, including full costs, any invoices/quotes etc to support your application including links to websites for specific items

Band C – SENIF Individual Application

Band C funding is for individual children with low level and emerging special educational needs who require an intervention to support their special educational needs to progress along the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The application requires the following information to be included:

- Name of setting and person applying and job role
- Name and details of child
- Needs and concerns of each individual child
- What 'plan of action' have you put in place to assist the child to progress
- What are you intending to spend the funding on and how this will link in with the 'plan of action'?
- Provide evidence of the training, the resources, the purchase, including full costs, any invoices/quotes etc to support your application including links to websites for specific items

How do I apply?

Applications form can be found on our website under Information for Providers – Childcare Funding Guide for Providers.

There will be an online form specifically for Band A and one specifically for Bands B and C

You must include an accurate fully completed Early Years Portage Developmental (no older than 3 months) Profile and any further evidence of other assessments you may

have carried out (e.g., **Observation Checkpoints from the EYFS, Speech and Language Monitoring Tool, Early Years Social Communication Difficulties/ASD Checklist** etc.)

You must ensure that all requested information and evidence is included with the application form. Applications that do not have the relevant information/evidence will be returned to sender and not heard at panel.

If information/details/evidence is missed, a new application will need to be completed along with the missing information. Applications with missing details will be deleted.

What happens once I have submitted my application?

Each application will be logged, and accuracy checked before panel meets. If the application misses the deadline for submissions, this will be carried over to the following month.

Any applications missing information will immediately be declined and will not be presented to panel.

The new panel currently meet monthly however from April 2023 the new panel will meet weekly with payments being made along side the monthly Headcount payments.

Settings will be informed of the outcome of applications within 5 working days of the decision being made.

Panel Meeting Date	Deadline for Applications
4 th October	30 th September
2 nd November	27 th October
1 st December	28 th November
9 th January	4 th January
2 nd February	27 th January
7 th March	2 nd March

Declined applications

It is very important that the application is completed fully and accurately, indicating the following:

- Name of setting and person applying and job role
- Name and details of child
- Needs and concerns of each individual child
- What 'plan of action' have you put in place to assist the child to progress
- What are you intending to spend the funding on and how this will link in with the 'plan of action'?

- Provide evidence of the training, the resources, the purchase, including full costs, any invoices/quotes etc to support your application including links to websites for specific items

Incomplete or inaccurate applications will be returned to the sender without being presented at panel.

To help you in planning your application, listed below are some points that will not be accepted at panel. Funding will **not** be awarded:

- for 1 to 1 staffing cost/staff salaries for individual children
- to subsidise funded places or to offset an existing deficit
- where insufficient explanation has been given 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/progress outcomes
- where inclusion is not the primary purpose of the application
- where funding is requested retrospectively
- where the child is not in attendance at your setting or on your Headcount Return
- for non-specialised resources that should be part of your general provision
- for activities that should form part of your universal provision

Will SENIF be monitored?

The monitoring of the use of the SENIF funding will take place each Funding Block and will consist of an advisory visit (virtual or face to face) from an Early Years Advisor or SEND Support Service Advisor (SSS Advisor) where the child's progress and continuation of funding will be discussed.

SENIF will also be included in the Funding Audit currently undertaken.

What if I am unhappy with the decision made?

If you have any queries regarding the outcome of your application or the process, please contact the service directly at inclusionfund@northnorthants.gov.uk

Where can I get further information?

There is an FAQ document that has been created to answer some of the frequently asked questions we have received over the last couple of weeks. This is a live document with new questions being added as often as we receive them. If you have a question or a comment, please email us at inclusionfund@northnorthants.gov.uk

Appendix 1

If resources are being requested for the first time, please ensure that you have had a discussion with a professional (with agreement from other professionals – e.g. Early Years Advisors, SEND Support Service (SSS), OTs, EPs, Physiotherapists etc.)

Resources that you can purchase	Area of need
<p>Sensory Toy Warehouse</p> <p>Sensory toy warehouse provides a range of different sensory toys and ideas (e.g., ear defenders, chew toys, fidget toys, wobble cushions)</p> <p>https://www.sensorytoywarehouse.com/</p>	<p>Autism</p> <p>Sensory processing</p> <p>Behaviour</p> <p>Attention</p> <p>Developmental delay</p> <p>Physical needs</p> <p>Hearing impaired</p> <p>Visually impaired</p>
<p>Sensory Direct</p> <p>Sensory direct provide a selection of different sensory toys</p> <p>https://www.sensorydirect.com/sense.html?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI5ZSOrabo4QIV75PtCh1R_gTrEAAYAAAEgL34_D_BwE</p>	<p>Autism</p> <p>Sensory processing</p> <p>Behaviour</p> <p>Attention</p> <p>Developmental delay</p> <p>Physical needs</p> <p>Hearing impaired</p> <p>Visually impaired</p>
<p>Sense Toys</p> <p>Sense toys provide a selection of different resources and sensory toys</p> <p>https://www.sensetoys.com/</p>	<p>Autism</p> <p>Sensory processing</p> <p>Behaviour</p> <p>Attention</p> <p>Developmental delay</p> <p>Physical needs</p> <p>Hearing impaired</p> <p>Visually impaired</p>
<p>Amazon</p> <p>Amazon have a range of different toys and resources (e.g., key ring with signs, timers)</p> <p>https://www.amazon.co.uk</p>	<p>Autism</p> <p>Sensory processing</p> <p>Behaviour</p> <p>Attention</p> <p>Developmental delay</p> <p>Physical needs</p> <p>Hearing impaired</p> <p>Visually impaired</p>
<p>Sensory Education</p> <p>Sensory education have a variety of different resources and toys.</p> <p>https://www.cheapdisabilityaids.co.uk</p>	<p>Autism</p> <p>Sensory processing</p> <p>Behaviour</p> <p>Attention</p> <p>Developmental delay</p> <p>Physical needs</p> <p>Hearing impaired</p> <p>Visually impaired</p>

Useful website and downloadable tools	Area of need
<p>Widgit</p> <p>Supporting communication and reading for young learners. Downloadable software that supports symbol labelling, visual timetables, and educational materials.</p> <p>https://www.widgit.com/sectors/education/early-years.htm</p>	<p>Autism Sensory processing Behaviour Attention Developmental delay Physical needs Hearing impaired Visually impaired</p>
<p>Do2learn</p> <p>Variety of different free downloadable visuals</p> <p>http://do2learn.com/picturecards/VisualSchedules/index.htm</p>	<p>Autism Sensory processing Behaviour Attention Developmental delay Physical needs Hearing impaired Visually impaired</p>
<p>National Autistic Society (NAS)</p> <p>The NAS offer a range of support and advice for professionals supporting children with Autism (e.g., in- house training, virtual training etc.)</p> <p>https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/visual-supports.aspx</p>	<p>Autism Sensory processing Attention Behaviour</p>
<p>Autism Education Trust</p> <p>Downloadable tool that enables you to rate your practice and setting in how you support children with autism. The toolbox is also full of additional resources. These are free to download. (e.g., in-house training, virtual training etc.)</p> <p>https://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/resources/early-years-resources/</p>	<p>Autism Behaviour Sensory processing Attention</p>
<p>Downs Syndrome Association</p> <p>The downs syndrome association offers advice and support for professionals supporting children with Downs Syndrome.</p> <p>https://www.downs-syndrome.org.uk/for-professionals</p>	<p>Downs Syndrome Developmental delay</p>
<p>Twinkl</p> <p>Twinkl offers a range of different resources for supporting children with SEN.</p>	<p>Autism Sensory processing Behaviour Attention Developmental delay Physical needs</p>

<p>https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/specialeducationalneeds-sen/specialeducationalneeds-sen-social-emotional-and-mental-health-difficulties/specialeducationalneeds-sen-social-emotional-and-mental-health-difficulties-visual-timetables-and-routine/3</p>	<p>Hearing impaired Visually impaired</p>
<p>Signalong</p> <p>Access to training and resources to support staff in meeting children’s individual needs</p> <p>https://signalong.org.uk/</p>	<p>Autism Sensory processing Speech delay Behaviour Attention Developmental delay Hearing impaired</p>

Appendix 2

Stages of Accessing the Enhanced SEN Inclusion Fund

1. Concerns raised about a child within the setting
2. Contact the SEND Support Service (SSS) to discuss the child's needs and strategies
3. Introduce and IEP/SEN support plan and review at least once (assess, plan, do review cycle for at least 6 weeks)
4. If the child is not making sufficient progress, complete the online application form for Early Years SENIF with support from your Early Years Advisory or SSS Advisor
5. Submit the online form for Early Years SENIF ensuring you include any supporting documentation
6. If the application is successful, funding will be released. Please note that you will have to reapply the following Funding Block should you wish for the funding to be continue
7. If application is unsuccessful, continue to support child (assess, plan, do, review cycle) with support from your Early Years Advisor and/or SSS Advisor (if required) and re-apply the following Funding Block, if the child is still not making sufficient progress

Appendix 3

Stages of Accessing the Group SEN Inclusion Fund

1. Concerns raised about a child within the setting
2. The child is not making significant progress in some of the prime areas
3. The child's needs are lower level or emerging and you have decided to include them in an intervention group
4. The online Early Years SENIF - Group Funding application form is submitted
5. Child accesses the planned intervention group for the funding block
6. The setting reviews the progress the child has made with their Early Years Advisor and/or SSS Advisor completing the online monitoring form together
7. The funding continues for an additional funding block if the child has not made sufficient progress or stops if the child no longer needs the additional support

Appendix 4

Examples of Needs and Supporting Criteria

Personal, Social and Emotional Development Criteria	Examples of types of evidence
<p>The persistence and intensity of a child’s difficulties has a significant impact on the child, peers, and practitioners within setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • these difficulties could be demonstrated either as withdrawn, anxious or challenging behaviours which would indicate underlying emotional/social concerns or communication difficulties • child requires daily targeted and planned intervention to develop aspects of their personal, social, and emotional development, such as making relationships, behaviour, self-control and self-care, communication for language and communication for thinking • safety of the child who is unaware of danger or self-harms, or who is a danger to other children • child may have a vision/hearing impairment or a diagnosed developmental condition which impacts on the development of social relationships, self- confidence, and awareness 	<p>Evidence from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents on entry to setting • previous setting • current observations • individual planning • planning review • risk assessment <p>Reports from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paediatrician • Speech and Language Therapist • SEND Support Service Advisor • Health Visitor • Social Care Services • Sensory Impairment Service
<p>Review request Ensure there is a clear cycle of review involving child, parents, staff, and other professionals as appropriate.</p>	<p>Evidence of planning, monitoring, assessment, and evaluation cycles to support and extend personal, social, and emotional aspects of development and learning</p>

Language and Communication Criteria	Examples of types of evidence
<p>The child may have a vision/hearing impairment which impacts on the development of communication and language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of language – child does not understand or has a very limited understanding of spoken words in their home language • child may be reliant on other non-verbal cues to interpret messages, or struggle to understand these cues • child has significant difficulties in listening and attending, and/or not recognise the social overtures of others • expressive language - child cannot verbalise to make his/hers needs known. A close relationship with an adult need to be formed to anticipate needs, to pick up on non-verbal communication and to facilitate understanding, friendships, and access to the curriculum • child needs to be explicitly taught specific communication strategies, for example, PECS, Makaton Colourful Semantics • child may display highly distressed behaviour arising from a significant lack of comprehension 	<p>Evidence from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents on entry to setting • previous setting • current observations • individual planning • planning review • risk assessment <p>Reports from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paediatrician • Speech and Language Therapist • Send Support Service Advisor • Health Visitor • Social Care Services • Sensory Impairment Service
<p>Review request Ensure there is a clear cycle of review involving child, parents, staff, and other professionals as appropriate.</p>	<p>Evidence of planning, monitoring, assessment, and evaluation cycles to support and extend language and communication aspects of development and learning</p>

Physical Development Criteria	Examples of types of evidence
<p>The child may have physical disabilities affecting some or all limbs which have been diagnosed by a paediatrician or physiotherapist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child has a physical need which necessitates the use of additional equipment and adult intervention to support their positioning, transfers, and mobility • daily intervention programmes prescribed by a professional, e.g., physiotherapy or occupational therapy, speech therapy to maintain and extend health, wellbeing, and physical skills • Interventions required to support a child’s medical needs • Intervention necessary for child’s self-care needs, e.g., eating, drinking, dressing, toileting, and positioning • Intervention required to support the child’s access to the curriculum, develop independence and to facilitate relationships with peers • additional resources/equipment required to support child’s basic needs or access, for example, specialist seating, ramps 	<p>Evidence from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents on entry to setting • previous setting • current observations • individual planning • planning reviews • risk assessment • health care plan <p>Reports from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paediatrician • Physiotherapist • Occupational Therapist • Dietician • Speech and Language Therapist • Community nurse • Send Support Service Advisor • Health Visitor • Social Care Services • Sensory Impairment Service
<p>Review request Ensure there is a clear cycle of review involving child, parents/carers, staff, and other professionals as appropriate.</p>	<p>Evidence of planning, monitoring, assessment, and evaluation cycles to support and extend physical aspects of development and learning</p>