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|  | **TERMS OF REFERENCE**  **Activity Led Funding for Inclusion (ALFI) Board January 2024** |  |

# Introduction

This Guidance clarifies the role of the Activity Led Funding for Inclusion (ALFI) Board.

# Background

SEND Code of Practice - Jan 2015

Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for children with SEN

(Ref. 5.1)

All children are entitled to an education that enables them to:

* achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and
* become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education

Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children.

Funding for SEN support in the early years

(Ref. 5.59)

Local authorities must ensure that all providers delivering funded early education places meet the needs of children with SEN and disabled children. In order to do this, Local Authorities should make sure funding arrangements for early education reflect the need to provide suitable support for these children.

(Ref. 5.60)

Early years providers should consider how best to use their resources to support the progress of children with SEN.

**Board**

The ALFI Board has been set up primarily as a consultative moderation group to respond to requests for activity led funding from Early Years’ settings to support individual children with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) within a setting.

**Group Membership**

The Board will consist of a minimum of 3 of the following members:

* Advisory Teacher for Early Years
* HLE & EY Lead
* EHCP Monitoring Officer
* Business Support Officer
* Early Years Practitioner x 2

**Expectation of Board members**

Board members will:

* The early years practitioners will be expected to attend in person alongside the Torbay Council employees.
* Apply the Activity Led Funding for Inclusion criteria to each request; (Appendix 1)
* Read the Activity Led Funding applications: Part 1 & 2 & the required ILDPs and ILDP reviews.
* Input at the meeting which will inform the discussion and outcome
* Agree to sign off or decline funding requests following the individual child Board meetings
* Treat all information presented at the ALFI Board as confidential.

**Delivery and management of the Board**

* There are six Boards a year, one each half term.
* All submission dates, Board dates and approximate payment dates will be shown on the SEND Early Years Inclusion webpage [SEND Inclusion in Early Years - Torbay Council](https://www.torbay.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/send/send-services/send-inclusion-in-early-years/#:~:text=We%20support%20all%20practitioners%20and%20Special%20Educational%20Needs,guidance%20around%20individual%20children%E2%80%99s%20needs%20and%20inclusive%20practices.).
* The Board is chaired by individual Local Authority employee members of the Board, in turn.
* The Board meetings are organised and supported by the Business Support Officer. The Business Support Officer will also communicate the times of individual application presentations, to each applicant via email.
* Local Authority employee Board members will be given the ALFI applications to be considered for each Board, 10 working days in advance of each Board.
* Preferably, two Early Years practitioner Board members will attend each Board
* All meetings will take place in Local Authority meeting rooms or virtually
* The agenda and minutes of the last meeting are shared at each Board meeting
* There will be annual training events, held in the Autumn term, to ensure that Setting SENCOS, including childminders, are fully aware of how to apply for ALFI

**Making an Application**

* The applications MUST be submitted by Early Years managers/SENDCOs by email to [earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk)
* Setting managers/SENDCOs MUST submit an application by the closing date, which is 10 working days before the Board date. All submission/closing dates and Board dates are shown on the SEND Inclusion in Early Years webpage [SEND Inclusion in Early Years - Torbay Council](https://www.torbay.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/send/send-services/send-inclusion-in-early-years/#:~:text=We%20support%20all%20practitioners%20and%20Special%20Educational%20Needs,guidance%20around%20individual%20children%E2%80%99s%20needs%20and%20inclusive%20practices.).Applications received **after** the submission date deadline will then be considered at the following Board.
* All applications will be presented complete on the PART 1 and 2 ALFI request forms available on the Torbay SEND Inclusion in Early Years website [SEND Inclusion in Early Years - Torbay Council](https://www.torbay.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/send/send-services/send-inclusion-in-early-years/#:~:text=We%20support%20all%20practitioners%20and%20Special%20Educational%20Needs,guidance%20around%20individual%20children%E2%80%99s%20needs%20and%20inclusive%20practices.).. **Any handwritten applications will not be accepted and returned to the Early Years setting.**
* Child minders will complete the PART 2 for CHILD MINDERS and submit this with an ILDP and ILDP review using the [earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk) email address
* Application must be written on the January 2024 documents**.**
* All applications MUST include Individual Learning and Development Plans and Review meetings with parents/carers and/or transition meeting minutes for new children with SEND entering the setting. Without this evidence of the Graduated Approach, the application will not be accepted. A checklist to support applications can be found in Appendix 2.
* A TEAMS appointment, to present the case for ALFI for each child will be sent to the relevant Manager/Setting SENCO ahead of the ALFI Board by the Early Years Business Support Administrator
* Applicants attending a Board will come prepared to talk to each child’s application using the criteria document to help frame each presentation (Appendix 1).
* Each Early Years Setting SENCO or Manager will have up to 10 minutes to present their individual child’s needs. There will be time after each Early years Setting’s presentation for the Board members to make a clear decision of the level of funding for each child presented.
* It is important that Managers/Setting SENCOS state a preferred time of day, am or pm, for their online appointment at the ALFI Board in their Part 2. ALFI Board members will try and accommodate this preference where possible.
* If on the day of the ALFI Board, Managers/Setting SENCOS cannot suddenly attend their online appointment, practitioners should in the first instance make every effort to provide an alternative colleague to attend the ALFI Board. Failing this the setting will be able to complete a written application retrospectively and submit to the [earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk) email address. **If funding is agreed, it will be linked to the date of the meeting when the ALFI Board is able to reconvene**.

**Eligibility**

* ALFI is aimed at supporting all funded pre-school aged children (2-5 years) with an identified SEND need, which meets the criteria for ALFI. Children under 2 years requiring supervised medical intervention are eligible for ALFI.

Medical intervention needed to be administered by the early years setting staff, should be clearly set out in the child’s medical health plan and jointly drawn up by the parent/carer, medical professional and EY practitioner. Relevant training from a medical practitioner to administer the intervention must be sought by the EY staff members.

**NB From April 2024 in line with the free childcare offers being rolled out by Government, the following children will be eligible for 15 hours of ALFI:**

* **All 2 year olds with working parents/carers**
* **All 3 -4 year olds**

**From September 2024:**

* **All children aged from 9 months**

**From September 2025:**

* **All children from 9 months will be eligible for up to 30 hours of ALFI**

**Decisions made about ALFI applications**

* After hearing each presentation, Board members will ask the Setting SENCO or Manager how funding will help enhance the targeted support already being delivered in the setting for individual children.
* Decisions about funding applications will be made at the Board meeting. Applications will be judged against a set of criteria (see Appendix 1) and the response from the applicant regarding the impact of the funding if successful. Together, this will enable Board members to award funding correlating to the stated criteria levels 1-3 in appendix A.

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| **Level** | **Percentage of an hourly rate** |
| 1 | 40% |
| 2 | 70% |
| 3 | 100% |

* Funding will commence from the beginning of the next half term after the Board has met.
* In some cases, the funding allocation may come with a *stated suggestion* (e.g. SEND support needed including referrals onto other services, access to training events; specialist support; equipment).
* Board members from Early Years settings will not contribute to the decision for ALFI for children that attend their setting.
* Applications for a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will automatically be awarded a Level 3 funding rate.
* Discussions and decisions made will be recorded by the SEN Business Support Officer.
* Settings will be notified of the allocated funding by email from the SEN Business Support Officer

**Monitoring**

* A cease date will be given, this will be usually one calendar year from the initial application unless stated otherwise.
* If the ALFI is due to be ceased the half term before the child leaves the setting i.e. In the May, the ALFI be extended to cover the June and July of that academic year depending on the individual circumstance discussed and agreed at the ALFI Board.
* Each term the early years business support officer will contact the setting manager, confirming the children in their setting, who are receiving ALFI funding
* Where a child who is already receiving ALFI, transitions into a new setting, the Managers/ SENCOS of the new setting, need to submit their transition meeting minutes with the parents/carers and the ILDP and ILDP review from the previous setting, to continue the ALFI payments from the date of joining the new setting, until the next scheduled ALFI Board. The transition meeting must be held by the end of the first week of the child attending the setting. The Manger/Setting SENCO of the new setting must then reapply for ALFI at the next possible ALFI Board.
* Applications will need to be renewed each year from the date of the initial allocation or beforehand if you know of significant changes.
* If funding needs to continue after the cease date, a new application to the Board will need to be submitted prior to the cease date.
* If the child increases or decreases their hours at the setting but there is **no change to their level of ALFI support,** the setting manager will complete the ‘Changes of Hours’ form found on the Early Years Inclusion website and submit it to the SEN Business Support Officer. The number of hours claimed for must match the Head Count hours. A full ALFI application (Part 1 & 2) will not be necessary in this circumstance.
* All Change of Hours applications will be heard at the ALFI Board and recorded in the minutes
* Early Years setting managers must report IMMEDIATELY to the Early Years Business Support Officer if a child receiving ALFI moves from the setting.

**Confidentiality**

All members of Board will respect the need for confidentiality. Any cases discussed at the Board are not to be discussed outside the Board. Feedback regarding decisions will be the responsibility of the Early Years Business Support Office.

The following procedures will be followed by all Board members:

* On receipt of the ALFI applications, all data will be kept securely.
* ALFI applications will not be emailed from one hard drive to another, once received by the Board members.
* All paper copies of the decision-making process and the applications themselves will be shredded after the Board has met.
* All Board members will sign this confidentiality agreement below.

Board member:

Signed Date: