



# Early Years Guidance for Inclusive Practice and Reasonable Adjustments

*What to do when I am worried about not being able to meet a child's needs?*

***“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances.”***

Taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2023):

## Rationale

---

Along with providers of Early Years Education and Childcare, the Early Years Quality and Inclusion (EYQI) Team is committed to ensuring all children are able to access their entitlement to high quality Early Years Education and Care.

When children are not able to access their entitlement, they are at risk of not fulfilling their full potential and any developmental gaps between children and their peers are likely to widen. In addition to this when vulnerable children are not able to regularly access their educational entitlement, providers are not able to carry out their safeguarding duties effectively.

***“Leaders act with integrity to ensure that all children, particularly those with SEND, have full access to their entitlement to early education.”***

OFSTED Early Years Inspection Handbook (Updated July 2023), Leadership and Management Grade Descriptor for Good.

***“We need to become neurodiversity-informed, so we can begin to disrupt ableist practices and transform early childhood experiences for neurodivergent and disabled children. They are not problems to be fixed but individuals to be understood.”*** Taken from “A guide to neurodiversity in the Early Years”, published by the Anna Freud Centre for children and families: <https://d1uw1dikibnh8j.cloudfront.net/media/18298/anna-freud-neurodiversity-booklet-early-years-110423.pdf>

Early Years Providers have responsibilities under the **Equality Act 2010** to ensure that protected groups are not discriminated against, this includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A useful guide for Early Years providers to the responsibilities outlined in the Equality Act can be found here:

[https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/files/equality-act-early-years\\_online.pdf](https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/files/equality-act-early-years_online.pdf)

### Concerns over a new child starting at your setting

---

If you are worried about being able to meet a child's needs **prior** to them starting in your setting, contact the Early Years Quality and Inclusion team to discuss the child's needs and to find out what support is available to ensure the child can access their entitlement in an appropriate setting.

### Points to consider if you are worried about meeting the needs of a child already attending your setting

---

When you are worried about continuing to meet the needs of a child who is already in your setting. Before you consider withdrawing the child's place, you must follow a robust graduated response including taking the actions outlined below. Please note that we recognise that all children and families are unique and the considerations below will not all apply to all children. This should not be seen as a list of actions to work through, rather as a reminder of considerations which should be made if a child's place is at risk. Those highlighted in bold are suggested priority actions that must be given serious consideration.

- **Ensure there is quality first teaching in place, including reasonable adjustments e.g. adapted curriculum (Individual Play Plan) or environment. Implement an ongoing plan, do, review cycle.**
- **Open and honest discussions are taking place with parents/carers and practitioners to develop a consistent plan that is relevant for the child.**
- Discussions with other team members about the child are taking place to enable a 'joint problem solving' approach.
- Ensure staff are confident in their knowledge of child development and inclusive practice and have access to appropriate training (e.g. Dingley's Promise, EYPDP, DFE child development training, SBC child development training, SBC SENCO training).
- Ensure an Early Help Assessment (EHA) is in place and reviewed regularly.
- Where appropriate, implement a STAR/ABC chart to identify possible triggers to behaviours that challenge and plans are in place to reduce these.
- Seek support from professionals at Early Years virtual consultations, including consultation with an Educational Psychologist.

## Early Years Guidance for Inclusive Practice and Reasonable Adjustments

*What to do when I am worried about not being able to meet a child's needs?*

- If additional resources are needed, make an application for Early Years SEND Inclusion Funding (SENIF) which will allow appropriate strategies to be implemented. Strategies will need to be given time to have an impact.
- Consider referrals to other agencies (Speech and Language Therapy, Health Visiting) .
- Consider signposting parents to Swindon Early Years Centre (SEYC) or All Aboard if appropriate.
- Consider support for parents (e.g. the relevant sections of the Local Offer website, through Contact Swindon, Swindon SEND Families Voice, Anna Freud, Swindon SEND Information Advice and Support Service, the Early Bird Course for parents of children with Autism).
- Consider shorter sessions, with a plan to increase hours at the earliest possible opportunity, so that the child is able to access their full entitlement.
- Where there is a risk to the child, other children, or staff, develop and implement a shared risk assessment involving all stakeholders including parents.
- **Contact the EYQI team for a discussion (this could be a phone call/teams call) alerting the team to current concerns.**  
[eyqiteam@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:eyqiteam@swindon.gov.uk)
- Contact the EYQI team to request a visit.
- Consider an application for an Education Health Care Needs Assessment.
- **Contact Swindon SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SIAS) to discuss provision for the child and your legal responsibilities as a provider.**

The EYQI team are here to support and we recognise the huge challenges currently faced by providers of high quality and inclusive Early Years Education and childcare. We would encourage providers to contact us at the earliest opportunity if they are concerned that a child's place may be at risk, or if they are aware of a child whose family may not be able to find a place. Our aim is to work with providers in the sector to ensure that all children are able to access their educational entitlement in a suitable setting.