

# The Impact of Early Years Inclusion Funding for 2, 3 & 4-year-olds



This study into the implementation of the Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) and report has been completed by:

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

The Childcare Strategy Service and the Specialist Early Years Support Team at City of York Council have worked collaboratively to carry out this small scale research report.

The aim of the research was to investigate the impact of Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) for 2, 3 and 4-year-olds. The fund was introduced in July 2011 to support preschool children with a high level of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in early years settings where they did not have a Statement of SEN.

To inform the research both quantitative and qualitative information was collected from early years/school settings receiving EYIF together with feedback comments from parents, early years Special Education Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and narratives from case studies.

### **Key Findings**

During the 18 months the Early Years Inclusion Funding has been operating, 78 children attending 43 early years settings have received additional support through the EYIF, with the majority funded over several terms. The key findings of the study are listed below under the headings of outcomes/benefits for the child, the early years setting and for the local authority.

### **Benefits to the Child**

- Earlier identification of children's SEN and referral to support services for early intervention and advice to early years settings and parents.
- Children are able to stay in their own/locality early years setting with additional adult support rather than having to travel to an enhanced resourced nursery near the centre of York.
- Evidence from review reports, evaluated Individual Education Plans (IEPs) of targets achieved, Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Baseline and Progress reports and EYFS Trackers, and reports from supporting professionals have provided information on progress made by the children.

- Parents, SENCO ratings and individual comments on the evaluation questionnaires were especially positive on the impact for children/progress made.
- Assessments of children's SEN were completed systematically and over time while they were attending preschool resulting in improvements for many of the children. It also enabled primary schools to be alerted in advance to children's SEN prior to their school entry, facilitating their planning and resource-allocation and enabling continued support for the children. It also enabled evidence for statutory assessment to be collected for 15 children to enable their assessment and Statement of SEN to be completed prior to school entry - either to a primary or special school.
- The additional adult support has meant that the programmes/interventions recommended by support service professionals have been implemented to record the child's response to programmes, their rate of learning over time and to identify the child's characteristics of learning. Recommendations can be made about what works best to maximise the child's learning.
- Several therapists and other support service professionals have commented on how the EYIF has enabled settings to implement their advice/programmes more effectively than early years practitioners in settings

### **.Benefits for the Early Years Settings**

- Enables the early years setting to focus more time on the child with SEN without taking the time away from other children in the setting.
- Enables them to work more closely with parents and support service professionals and attend multi-agency planning and review meetings.
- Increased the skills of the practitioners by working closely with support services to find techniques that improve the child's rate of progress. There has also been a reported increase in practitioners' confidence when they see how they have been able to make a difference to the child.
- Has supported settings to be fully inclusive, which may not have been possible previously where 1:1 adult support was required for the safety of the child / other children in the setting but financial implications may have prohibited this.

## **Benefits for the Local Authority**

- Children's needs can be identified earlier and so help given earlier.
- More effective use of support services time when their advice is acted upon / implemented and the child makes more progress.
- Reduces the pressure on places at York's only enhanced resourced nursery and enables children to stay at a setting in their own locality.
- More children can be supported than would be possible through a Statement of SEN and more cost-effectively.
- Identifies training and workforce development needs which can then be met primarily by support service practitioners.
- Many of the children receiving EYIF can now have a My Support Plan written collaboratively with parents, early years practitioners and support service professionals as part of the revised SEN legislation and Code of Practice. This could then be converted to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) by the Special Needs Assessment Panel (SENAP) if appropriate.

## **Conclusions**

During the period the funding has been applied 78 children have been supported in 43-different early years/school settings which is significantly more than the children supported through a Statement of SEN in mainstream early years settings during the last ten years. The EYIF has enabled all pre-school children to access additional funding for SEN support regardless of the early years setting they attended. Previously this funding had not been available to early years settings in the private and voluntary sectors.

It is clear that the funding has made a difference to 2, 3 and 4-year-olds. As children have to have high/complex SEN and/or disabilities to access the funding, its success should not be measured only in terms of the child's rate of progress or the removal of their SEN, but by whether it enables all children to attend their local early years/schools setting with their peers and be fully included safely and without detriment to other children.

A key benefit has also been to reduce the pressure on places at York's only enhanced resourced place (ERP) nursery, St Paul's Nursery, which is

only able to offer six full time equivalent ERP places at any one time. The EYIF has resulted in more children being supported in their own locality.

Although it is less clear if the EYIF has reduced or increased the number of Statutory Assessments of SEN being requested at preschool it does suggest that this has been deferred until children are nearing school entry. Certainly the 78 children supported through the EYIF during the last two years would not all have been supported through a Statement of SEN. The funding also represents clear value for money as relatively small amounts of funding have made a difference.

## **Recommendations**

- The research report clearly demonstrates the benefits and impact of the funding on these young children. There is a strong need for this funding to continue so that pre-school children (2-5 years) eligible for an early education place who have complex needs receive the same additional SEN support that children attending school receive.
- The funding formula for allocation of EYIF also needs to be integrated into York's Banding/Stages of Intervention, support and funding which presently outline the stages relating to the school age population.
- Further research should be commissioned to compare cost/benefits between this approach, where the funding is completely ring fenced to the individual child, and the existing and proposed model for schools where there is greater flexibility by the school over exact use of the funding.
- To ensure that there is increased inter-agency collaboration and support for parents of children receiving EYIF, the implementation of the SEN Pathway including the writing of a My Support Plan for each child in receipt of EYIF should help to address this to some extent. There also needs to be increased collaborative working with Children's Centres for those children who are in receipt of the EYIF but do not have regular support service intervention.

I would like to acknowledge the staff who made a significant contribution to this research and for their commitment and enthusiasm during the process.

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# **Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in the City of York**

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to firstly to describe the Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) which was introduced in the City of York in 2011 to support pre-school children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities, and secondly to outline the impact of the funding for the children supported, their early years settings and for the local authority. Quantitative and qualitative methods have been used to describe and evaluate the outcomes of the funding between September 2011 and March 2014 (eight school terms). The benefits, possible improvements and future developments are also discussed.

## **Background**

*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. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up. Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2012)*

## **York's Strategic Plan for Children, Young People and their Families 2013 – 2016**

York's strategic plan lists eight ways we will work to help all children, young people and their families in York to live their dreams:

- Striving for the highest standards.
- Upholding truly equal opportunities.
- Helping children and young people to always feel safe.
- Intervening early and effectively.
- Working together creatively.
- Working in genuine collaboration with children and families: mutual respect and collaboration.
- Connecting with communities, within which children live, and to the rich culture of our great city.

- Remembering that laughter and happiness are also important.

York's strategic plan lists five specific priorities, based on evidence about where extra help is needed:

- Helping all York children enjoy a happy family life.
- *Supporting those who need extra help at the earliest opportunity.*
- Promoting good mental health.
- Reaching further: links to a strong economy.
- Planning well in a changing world.

The Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) is a vehicle to enable many of the above to be achieved in the early years in particular by *supporting those who need extra help at the earliest opportunity*. This is achieved by providing additional support for pre-school children within their local early years/school setting through Early Years Inclusion Funding to enable them to be full participants in their local early years setting and community. It also facilitates collaborative working between the early years/school settings with children and their families and the specialist service professionals who support them.

## **Supporting pre-school Children with SEN in York**

Children with significant and/or complex special educational needs and disabilities are generally identified by health practitioners within their first two years of life. Referrals are then made to early intervention services within health e.g. physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and other medical specialists, as well as to specialist educational services such as portage home visiting, specialist early years teaching (SEN), specialist teaching (vision, hearing, autism, physical/medical support) and early years educational psychology. Many of the children attend individual therapy sessions and/or language intervention groups and many also receive home-based interventions e.g. Portage.

By the time the children are 2½ to 3-years-old the majority also attend an early years setting. A small percentage may be attending a day nursery or a childminder prior to this if their parents are both working. Although a few of the children may attend a special school setting (Hob Moor Oaks) from 2½ years of age following a statutory assessment of their special educational needs leading to a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), the majority of the preschool children with SEN attend mainstream early years settings, either within the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector or in a maintained nursery within an infant or primary school. Once attending the early years setting advice can be sought from the specialist early years support services, if they are not already working with the child.

Some children identified with significant/complex needs requiring additional adult support and daily specialist intervention within a mainstream/inclusive setting rather than within a special school may be referred for an enhanced resourced place at St Paul's Nursery School. However St Paul's Nursery only has six full-time equivalent enhanced resourced places (12 x 15 hour places).

## **Early Years Inclusion Funding for Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities**

Children identified with SEN attending maintained nurseries have traditionally been able to access additional support from their school's delegated SEN funding, but this has not been available for children attending PVI sector early years settings who do not have delegated SEN funding. Children attending PVI early years settings have either been

supported within the setting's existing resources or have undergone a statutory assessment of SEN leading to the issuing of a Statement of SEN.

In York they may have alternatively been recommended for one of the 12 part-time (15 hours) enhanced resourced places at St. Paul's Nursery School. Many local authorities in England, and some in partnerships between early years, SEN and health, have introduced Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) in order to provide additional funding to support children with SEN in their own locality PVI early years settings without needing to complete a statutory assessment of SEN to obtain this additional support. Statutory assessment may still be completed, but not until just before the child starts school.

In 2011 the City of York Council's Early Years Department set up a cross-agency steering group to discuss the introduction of Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) for the city. The first step was to research the policies and practices of EYIF in other areas of the country, as well as collecting data on the number of preschool children with SEN living in York and the numbers attending early years settings.

Based on this information and the views of the cross-agency steering group, a small amount of additional funding (£50,000 per year) became available to support preschool children with special educational needs or disabilities who did not have a Statement of SEN. This funding was initially available for 3 and 4-year-olds who were in receipt of a free early education place at a private, voluntary or independent (PVI) setting or maintained nursery in York. From September 2013 this funding was extended (by £10,000) to include 2-year-olds eligible for free early education places who also had identified SEN. The EYIF was originally drawn from the early years funding allocation; however it has been drawn from the High Needs Block through the Direct Schools Grant (DSG) since April 2013. Between July 2011 and March 2014, 78 preschool children with significant or complex needs have been supported by the EYIF, with the majority receiving funding over several terms.

### **Criteria for obtaining early year inclusion funding, application and review procedures.**

Following consideration of the literature into early intervention within inclusive settings, research into the policies and practices of implementing early years inclusion funding in other areas of the country, and the views

and experiences of the professionals on the York EYIF steering group, the following criteria for allocating inclusion funding was agreed

It was decided not to use a system of labelling children's SEN by a diagnosis of their disability or the extent of their developmental delay as measured by standardised or other measures to assess their level of delay/deficits in order to allocate funding but to consider the evidence of a child's skills, progress and special needs from existing early years records (EYFS baseline and progress and tracking records) and from additional SEN assessment, intervention and monitoring through Individual Education Plans (IEP) and other records e.g. observation and monitoring formats, in discussion with the setting's SENCo.

It was also agreed that the early years/school setting needed to have sought the advice of a specialist practitioner from health and/or education and that this advice should have been implemented and outcomes evaluated. Reports from support service practitioners were also requested. It was agreed to keep the application forms for EYIF as short and simple as possible with the attachment of EYFS and IEP records, together with reports from specialist support services, to provide evidence of a child's SEN, why additional funding was required and how it would be used. Application forms had to be discussed and counter-signed by the child's parent/carer and one of the support services practitioners involved.

A brief review report and evaluated IEP(s) are required on a termly basis to show evidence of how the funding has been used and the progress made by the child. Continuation, increase, reduction, or termination of the inclusion funding is made based on this information. Please see Appendix 1 for a copy of the referral and review forms.

Priority for allocating funding to early years settings has been given to children with 'high need-low incidence' although support for children with 'high incidence-low need' has also been considered if the child is at Early Years Action Plus (EYA+) stage under the SEN Code of Practice (2001). This is presently being reviewed in light of the revised SEN Code of Practice (2014). Children who are already in receipt of additional funding, for example through a Statement of SEN (to become an Education, Health and Care Plan in 2014), are not eligible for EYIF. Neither does the fund support children who, although aged 4 years of age, are on the reception class register of a maintained school (Foundation Stage 2) as they are then able to access support through the school's delegated SEN Funding.

Applications have increased substantially during the last 8 terms with five applications in July 2011 and 39 applications (22 reviews and 17 new) in December 2013. Initially each individual application was read by the EYIF Panel during the termly meeting. The panel is made up of representatives from the council's early years and childcare strategy service, preschools (maintained and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sectors and advisory services and specialist early years support services). However, as the number of reviews and applications has increased, the Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist for Early Years and the Early Learning Leader with a SEN specialism, now read through, and summarise the applications in advance of the meeting (taking a full working day) for the EYIF panel to consider in the two and a half to three hour termly meeting. Please see data tables for a summary of applications and funding agreed/declined.

### **The Inclusion of 2-year-olds in the SEN Early Years Inclusion Funding**

In September 2013 a new statutory duty came into force for Local Authorities (LA) in England to fund the delivery of a targeted offer of free early education to their most disadvantaged 20 per cent of 2-year-olds. This duty is extending to around 40 per cent, in two phases. The first phase, from September 2013, applies to around 20 per cent of two-year-olds whose families meet the criteria for free school meals, or are looked after by the LA (306 in York).

The second phase, from September 2014, will increase the number of free places to around 40 per cent of 2-year-olds (613 in York). Currently, this second poorest quintile of 2-year-olds is the least likely to access early education (37% of the group, compared to 72% of the most advantaged quintile and 43% of the poorest).

As the children accessing free early education had been increased to include vulnerable 2-year-olds as described above, it was agreed to increase the EYIF to include the 2-year-olds attending free early education who also met the criteria of high or complex SEN or disabilities. A further £10,000 funding was made available to fund this additional group of children from September 2013.

From 1 September 2014, the second phase will extend the free early education entitlement to 2-year-olds who have a current statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care plan (to

replace Statements of SEN from 2014) or who attract Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

Nationally around 8,000 two year-olds attract DLA, and around 250 have Statements of SEN (figures supplied by the Department for Education (DfE)). The High Needs Funding Block, which came in to effect in April 2013, funds all provision for pupils in specialist settings, and the additional costs of education for children with high needs in mainstream settings. However, the fund has not been increased by the DfE to cater for the wider age range of 0-25-year-olds.

This funding is already under pressure with existing priorities. In York it's estimated that there are fifteen 2-year-olds with special educational needs or disabilities who currently attract DLA. This figure could increase as children are identified as having a special educational need or disability through the single assessment process/plan or through earlier referrals to Early Support and/or Specialist Early Years Support Services.

## **Review of Literature and Research into Early Intervention and Inclusion**

The benefits of early education are accepted at every level including government:

The government is responsible for helping each and every child achieve their full potential, whatever their background or circumstances. We believe in trusting professionals to do their job free from the central targets and bureaucracy of recent years. Most fundamentally, we believe that the government should take action to support the disadvantaged and that this support, whether through free early education, the network of Sure Start children's centres or intervening early with other services that make a difference is crucial in helping children fulfil their potential.

DfE 26.4.12 Importance of Early Education

The view of the present (and previous) government is based on evidenced-based-practice and research in England as well as research and practice during the last 50 years in America.

The Head Start programme was introduced as part of the 'war on poverty' in the USA in the 1960s. The most notable and frequently cited longitudinal research studies based on centre-based programmes with additional support for their parents, were the Abecedarian Project and the High Scope Perry Preschool Program, both starting in the 1970s. Outcomes of the preschool interventions have been evaluated over a 30 to 40 year follow-up period (Ramey and Ramey, 1998; and Schweinhart et. al., 1997, 2004).

One of the components of the High Scope project was the quality early education experiences following a Piagetian-based curriculum where children were encouraged to be active learners in largely self-initiated activities within a plan-do-review learning cycle. The other component was intensive parent involvement through workshops, weekly visits to the preschool by parents and regular home visits by pre-school practitioners to set up home-based educational activities. Evaluations of the effectiveness of High Scope preschool programmes through follow-ups at age 15, 19, 23 and 27 and 40 by Schweinhart et al. (2004) and Belfield (2006) found that although the initial IQ advantages disappeared by secondary school, other general academic, social and behavioural advantages were found.

Smaller scale experiments such as Early Headstart (Love et al, 2001) and a larger cohort study by Brooks-Gunn (2003) have continued to report positive effects for disadvantaged youngsters of early childhood centre-based programmes, which include parental involvement and support. Brooks-Gunn showed that poverty, low education and low socio-economic status work together to create a home environment of low hope, low expectations and few of the kind of parenting interactions that stimulate young minds. This adds emphasis for the need for a two-pronged approach to supporting parents as well as vulnerable children to maximise the benefits of early intervention programmes.

Melhuish (2004a) completed a literature review of the impact of early years provision, with an emphasis on children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and located a huge body of literature which points to the many positive effects of centre-based childcare and education.

In England the most rigorous longitudinal large-scale study into the effects of early education has been conducted by a research team led by Professor Kathy Sylva from London University Institute Education, which was commissioned and funded by the DfES. The Effectiveness Provision of Preschool Education (EPPE) was a 5 year study (1999-2004) that traced the development of over 3,000 children between the ages of 3 to 7 years in a variety of preschool settings across England. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods, including multi-level models, to measure the effects of early education. Based on a review of earlier studies the EPPE study took into account aspects of the child's home environment as well as different aspects of the preschools they attended. Sylva et al (2004) and Sammons et al (2007) reported the long-term benefits if the children were attending good quality education in terms of enhancing children's all-round cognition, language and social development, especially for disadvantaged and vulnerable children.

The EPPSE study, followed on from the EPPE study, and continued to follow the development of the 3,000 children in the study through to age 11 years. The findings of both studies have identified that although there is no single factor that determines attainment, the importance of good quality pre-school provision, well trained and qualified practitioners, a balanced curriculum, an equal focus on social as well as cognitive development, combined with a good early years home learning environment are all key factors.

The EPPE study also found that disadvantaged children who attended childcare centres with children from mixed social backgrounds made more progress than in settings serving mainly socially disadvantaged children. In terms of home environments the findings of the study identified that for all children, the quality of the home learning environment is more important for intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income and concluded that what parents do is more important than who parents are.

Leon Feinstein's research on the correlation between socio-economic status and attainment of children also provides a clear basis for intervening early to tackle disadvantage through good early years support (Feinstein, et al. 1998).

Dr Ann Hoskins, Director Children, Young People and Families, Public Health England, in her key note presentation, *Prevention – better than the cure : Better outcomes for children and young people*, at the 2013 No Wrong Door Conference in York, listed key health and educational factors linked to risks for vulnerable children and their parents. She advocated the importance of early intervention for pre-school children and their families and cited the evidence base, which shows we can make a difference through early intervention and public health approaches (<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/early-intervention-next-steps.pdf> and [www.earlyinterventionfoundation.org.uk](http://www.earlyinterventionfoundation.org.uk)).

Dr Hoskins cited evidence that effective preventive interventions in early life can produce significant cost savings and benefits in health, social care, educational achievement, economic productivity and responsible citizenship e.g. Action for children and New Economics Foundation (2009) *Backing the future: why investing in children is good for all of us*, London, New Economics Foundation. She also cited the scientific base for early intervention in terms of neurological/brain research studies, stating that a child's early experience has a long lasting impact on the neurological architecture of their brain and their emotional and cognitive development e.g. Balbernie 2001, *Circuits and circumstances; the neurobiological consequences of early relationships and how they shape later behaviour*.

Other neurological studies e.g. Gopnick, et al. (1999) and Smith (2005), have also demonstrated the importance of early stimulation, including positive adult-child social interactions, in developing the neural pathways in the brain during the pre-school years and especially in the first three years

of life. Our brains at birth are undeveloped and although we are born with all the neurons that we need, it is our experiences which influence the way in which our brains grow and develop. Studies in the early and mid 1990s of children reared without love, early stimulation and with minimal human contact such as the children reared in orphanages containing hundreds of children in Romania before the fall of communism, and more recently in mass orphanages in China, have provided alarming information on the lack of brain development through severe neglect.

Finally, Hoskins cited research by Professors Kathleen Kiernan and John Hobcraft at the department of social work and social policy, University of York of evidence from 'the Millennium Cohort Study' identifying the predictive factors for children at age 9 months and 3 years for attainments at age 5+. These risk factors included maternal depression, poor general health, living in poverty and workless households. This would suggest that in addition to quality early learning experiences at preschool it is also important that children's centres, children's social care, health and education work in close collaboration with parents to provide early intervention and support for the family and not just for the preschool child.

The studies by Frank Field in 2010 in his Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances, and the Allen report in 2011 into early intervention, and the Munro report, 2011 reviewing child protection procedures, all identified the importance of prevention, early intervention and close inter-agency collaboration when working with, and improving the life chances of vulnerable children and families. Again identifying that although quality preschool provision is essential it is also important to support the children's parents and families at the same time.

Finally, turning to the group of children who are vulnerable because of their special educational needs and disabilities, much of the research evidence from studies into social vulnerability and disadvantage also included children with special educational needs (Schweinhart et al, 2004; Sylva et al, 2004; Field 2010, and Allen 2011). A publication by the DfES in 2007, *A better start: Children and families with special needs and disabilities in sure start local programmes* also advocated the benefits of quality early education, early support and intervention for children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) and their families. Pillai et al (2007) noted that parents with children with SEND often face higher costs for early education and childcare and so the inclusion in September 2014 of free early education places for children with SEND from the age of 2 will ease some of the

financial burdens that working parents of this group of children presently face.

When considering factors related to the effective inclusion for children with SEN and Disabilities, Cook, Tessier and Klein (2000) and Bricker (1995), state that children with SEN require individualised educational experiences to promote the attainment of their unique potential. This involves preschools making sensitive adaptations of curriculum, materials space, instruction and adult expectations to stimulate a nurturing environment. Although the complexity and high level of some children's SEN and disabilities may require attendance at a more specialist school setting the needs of the majority of children with SEN can be met within mainstream settings, especially at preschool.

Although as Sylva and others have advocated, good quality preschools should be able to meet the needs of all children regardless of their social or special educational needs and/or disabilities when supported by good home learning environments; the more recent focus on the characteristics of learning in the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS, 2012) has highlighted the individual differences in the way that children learn and not just in what they have learnt. Early years practitioners need to be sensitive to how children learn and be aware that children with SEN and/or disabilities may need different techniques as well as differentiated materials and resources, additional time and additional opportunities to practice new skills. It is generally recognised that a child with SEN and/or disabilities will need additional adult support to be able to fully access all aspects of the EYFS and the preschool environment safely. However, as noted by Stewart (2011) into how children learn - the characteristics of effective learning:

There is a finely balanced relationship between adult involvement which supports a child to explore, and which becomes intrusive and discourages the child's own explorations. This is the key dilemma facing early years practitioners when they consider their role in supporting children to learn through play. Stewart, N. (2011) p27.

This 2011 publication, and her book written with Helen Moylett (2012) on understanding the revised EYFS, are key publications relating not only to the revised EYFS but also to how children learn and the sensitivity, flexibility and creativity and good observation skills required by early years practitioners in meeting the needs of all young children, including those with SEN and disabilities.

The revised SEN legislation: The Children and Families Bill, 2013, which will become law in 2014, following the consultation outcomes from the Green Paper, *Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability* (2011). This included an emphasis on the importance of effective early identification of SEN and disabilities if children are to thrive, be ready for school, make good progress in their education and, as adults, live independently and make as positive contribution to society as is possible. It advocates integrated working across education, health and social care with parents and voluntary organisations as well as the keyworking functions developed by the Early Support programme, previously for 0-5-year-olds and now being extended to 0-25 year olds, plus the positive impact of coordinated early intervention for children and families with a disabled child.

York, although not one of the government's SEN pathfinder councils, is in the process of trialling and implementing the revisions to SEN procedures and practices. In line with the new legislation and the indicative draft SEN Code of Practice 2013, York has already produced information booklets on its Local Offer of SEN provision and services for children, young people (CYP) and their families.

York has developed revised SEN Pathways linked to SEN funding bandings and is discussing collaborative commissioning of services and coordinated assessment procedures between education, health and social care with the CYP and their parents, leading to a single plan for a CYP with SEN and/or disabilities outlining how their needs are/will be met. In York the single plan will be in the form of a My Support Plan, which may lead to an Education Health and Care Plan for children with high or complex needs, replacing the present Statement of SEN.

These new SEN developments are key to the Early Years Inclusion F(EYIF) and the present evaluation and proposed continuation of the funding as all SEN funding is now drawn from the High Needs Block and will be linked to the proposed SEN Banding funding formula.

At present the proposed SEN Banding stage document in York relates to the school age population. Focus groups are now meeting to address the preschool and post-school age groups. At present, without the EYIF, early years settings have no additional funding to support children with SEN and/or disabilities unless the child has a Statement of SEN, however schools have been able to draw on SEN delegated funding, while St Paul's

Nursery School receives additional funding for its enhanced resourced places.

To date the Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) in York has focussed on supporting the needs of individual children with SEN and/or disabilities in early years settings. Although collaboration with parents and support service practitioners by early years settings is advocated, the research into effective early intervention for vulnerable groups suggests that this collaborative working and support for parents is essential if children are to fully benefit and achieve maximum benefit in the long term. The implementation of a My Support Plan for each child receiving EYIF could go some way in addressing this.

## Methodology

In order to evaluate the impact of the Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) in York after it had been implemented for a two year period, it was decided to collect both quantitative and qualitative information to evaluate the number of children and early years settings receiving EYIF and the impact of the additional funding for the children, the early years settings and practitioners and for City of York Council.

*Quantitative information* was collected from data on the number of applications and reviews received from different early years/school settings, the number of children supported, the types of special educational needs and/or disabilities the children had, the length of time additional support was given and what happened to the children following the conclusion of the additional funding.

*Qualitative information (objective)* was collected from the information submitted for each child as part of the initial applications and reviews, including application/review forms, supporting evidence from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Baseline and Reviews, monitoring and tracking, examples of children's Learning Journeys/Journals, evaluated Individual Education Plans (IEPS) and other observation and monitoring records, as well as from reports from support service professionals involved with the children.

This documentation not only provided information about the children's progress and response to the additional interventions/programmes but also about the quality of data submitted by the early years settings and improvements in the quality of this information over time following advice and training provided by support professionals.

Evidence of any collaborative working with parents and support services was also collected from the review reports submitted.

*Qualitative information (subjective)* was collected from feedback comments from parents and early years setting SENCOs by questionnaires and also from case studies, some of which were collected through face-to-face interviews.

## FINDINGS

### Section one: Quantitative data

Quantitative information was collected from data on the number of applications and reviews received from different early years settings, the number of children supported, the types of special educational needs and/or disabilities the children had, the length of time additional support was given and what happened to the children following the conclusion of the additional funding.

The information is presented in the following tables with a brief discussion following each table. Tables 1, 2 and 3 summarise the applications by year, while table 4 presents the data for the 3 years. Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8 present information related to the actual number of individual children supported during the time period September 2011 to March 2014.

**Table 1. Data related to applications for funding in financial year 2011/12**

Date of Panel meeting	Number of applications				Type of EY Setting	
	New	Reviews	Total	No. declined	PVI	School nursery
14/7/11	5	0	5	1 <sup>1</sup>	3	2
18/10/11	11	0	11	3 <sup>2</sup>	5	6
5/12/11	6	11 <sup>3</sup>	17	0	8	9
Totals	22	11	33	4	16 *	17 *

<sup>1</sup> application declined because insufficient evidence of the child's level of need was provided

<sup>2</sup> two applications declined because two children were in the school's reception class and not in nursery, and one child was already being funded by a Statement of SEN

<sup>3</sup> although review reports were completed, applications for continued funding were not made for 4 children who were starting school (1-mainstream school, 2-special school and 1-enhanced resourced place nursery)

\* does not reflect the actual number of schools and settings applying as some of the same settings applied for funding for children at different times/ panel meetings

The inclusion funding was not available until the autumn term 2011. The applications discussed at the December panel meeting were for funding in the spring term 2012. However some funding was awarded retrospectively where the setting provided evidence that they had already provided additional resources/adult support for the child.

**Table 2. Data related to applications for funding in financial year 2012/13**

Date of Panel meeting	Number of applications				Type of EY Setting	
	New	Reviews	Total	No. declined	PVI	School nursery
12/03/12	5	12	17	0	8	9
03/07/12	10	15	25	2 <sup>1</sup>	13	12
26/11/12	8	10	18	0	10	8
Totals	23	37 <sup>2</sup>	60	2	31*	29*

<sup>1</sup> applications declined because one child was under 3, the other was starting school in September

<sup>2</sup> although review reports were completed, applications for continued funding were not made for children who were starting school (4 to special school with Statement of SEN and 13 to mainstream school (including 1 with a Statement of SEN)

\* does not reflect the actual number of schools and settings applying as some of the same settings applied for funding for children in different meetings

Although the number of applications is higher in 2012/13 than in 2011 this is because it covers 3 terms where table 1 (2011/12) only covered 2 terms of funding.

**Table 3. Data related to applications for funding in financial year 2013/14**

Date of Panel meeting	Number of applications			Type of EY Setting		
	New	Reviews	Total	Number declined	PVI	School nursery
11/03/13	12	19	31	1	19	12
04/07/13	17	23	40	0	26	14
21/11/13	17	22	39	3	25	14
Totals	46	64 <sup>2</sup>	110	4 <sup>1</sup>	70*	40*

<sup>1</sup> application was declined in 3 cases because of insufficient evidence of high level of SEN and no external SEN support services were involved, and for one 2-year-old child because the child was not eligible for a 2 Year Funded Place (the SEN category is not included in government criteria until Sept. 2014).

<sup>2</sup> although review reports were completed, applications for continued funding were not made for children who were starting school (17-mainstream, including 2 with Statement of SEN, 1-special school, 1-enhanced resourced place nursery and 1 child progressed so well EYIF no longer required).

\* does not reflect the actual number of schools and settings applying/receiving funding as some of the same settings applied at different times for funding for different children or for continued funding.

As the EYIF has become more established and settings have shared the success of the programme at various meetings including the Early Years SENCO Networks, the number of new applications has increased. The number of children receiving the funding for more than one term has also increased leading to 64 children having continued funding, although as noted above, 22 of these children did not require funding for the following term as they were starting mainstream school, an enhanced resource nursery or a special school, or they had made sufficient progress to no longer require the additional support.

**Table 4. Number of children receiving EYIF between September 2011 and April 2014**

	Number of applications				Type of EY Setting	
	New	Reviews	Total	No. declined	PVI	School nursery
2011/12 (2 terms)	22	11	33	4	16	17
2012/13 (3 terms)	23	37	60	2	31	29
2013/14 (3 terms)	46	64	110	4	70	40
Totals	91	112	203	10	117	86

Although the figures above provide the actual numbers of EYIF applications made, including new applications, reviews, the number of applications declined, the number of applications from maintained early years settings (school nurseries) and from private, voluntary or independent, pre-schools (day nurseries and pre-school playgroups), further clarification of the data is required and is included in the next section.

The four tables above provide information on the number of applications for EYIF during the last 2½ years, although the present funding allocated will support children with special needs until Easter 2014 (making a total of 8 terms).

As the majority of the children receiving EYIF have high or complex special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities they have required continued funding over several terms, and 14 of the children have gone on to have a Statement of SEN (to become an Education, Health and Care Plan by September 2014) when the EYIF concluded. It is important that no child should receive dual funding and so EYIF concludes as soon as funding for their Statement of SEN is in place. Funding also concludes as soon as a child enters school as they can then access the school's delegated SEN funding if it is required.

The data in the tables above shows that 203 children have received EYIF between September 2011 and April 2014 (91 of which were new

applications and 112 were reviews). Further analysis of the individual child data identifies that 78 individual children received additional funding from the EYIF and the majority of these children received funding for 2 or more terms.

Although funding applications were received from 86 school nurseries and 117 PVI settings, this is not the actual number of individual settings receiving the funding, as the majority of settings received continued funding for 2-4 terms for each child, but had to submit a review report on a termly basis, and several settings submitted new applications for more than one child over the 2½ years.

As indicated in the data above, only 10 of the applications failed to meet the criteria by age of the child (attending pre-school setting and not a school reception's class) who had high or complex needs. A few applications were refused because they provided insufficient evidence of the additional interventions they had implemented and evaluated outcomes for the child prior to their funding applications and/or had not sought the advice of a support service professional for SEN. Although some children became eligible for 2-year-old funding following their second birthday in September 2013, applications had to be declined if the child had special needs but did not have a free funded pre-school place. However these children will become eligible for funding in September 2014.

A few of the successful applications were submitted by a specialist support service professional who was working with the child prior to attending an early years/school setting. They were able to provide evidence of the child's SEN through their assessment of need and evaluation of intervention programmes implemented prior to attending the pre-school for example, from weekly or fortnightly visits from the Portage Home Visiting Service, or from a Specialist Early Years Teacher (SEN) and Speech and Language Therapist by attending a weekly specialist language group at the Child Development Centre (CDC). The child may also have been receiving advice and support from a Specialist Teacher of the Deaf, or Visual Impairment, Physical/Medical needs or Autism. Once the child was attending the early years setting with EYIF, the support services were able to reduce the frequency of their visits to the child and family at their homes and would then provide advice to the child's early years setting for future interventions/IEP targets, as well as having a reduced intervention with the family or may even be able to conclude their home-based interventions and then meet with the parents at the pre-school.

In some cases application for EYIF was made by a PVI nursery on behalf of the school nursery the child was transferring to as the child : adult ratio in the school nursery was higher than in the PVI setting. The PVI setting had felt able to meet the child's SEN in their setting but applied for extra funding from the EYIF to support the child in the school nursery where the adult : child ratio was lower than in the PVI nursery and it was felt that the demands on the child may be higher in the school nursery.

The following tables provide information about the 78 individual children who received EYIF during the last 8 terms (September 2011 to April 2014).

**Table 5. Data related to actual number of children receiving EYIF during 2011-2014**

Year of funding	No. children receiving funding	Male	Female	Type of EY Setting			Total number of pre-schools
				School nursery	PVI Nursery	PVI Playgroup	
2011	18	12	6	10 <sup>1</sup>	6 <sup>1</sup>	3	19
2012	20	11	9	9 <sup>2</sup>	7 <sup>2</sup>	5	21
2013	40	31	9	14	13 <sup>2</sup>	14 <sup>2</sup>	41
Totals	78	54	24	33 *	26 *	22 *	81 *

<sup>1</sup> child attending a PVI nursery for one term and a school nursery for the second term

<sup>2</sup> two children were attending more than one pre-school setting.

\* this number reflects the number of settings where EYIF was allocated, however as some settings applied for funding for more than one child during the 2 year period these figures are not a representation of the actual number of pre-schools receiving funding.

The actual/true figures of early years settings receiving funding are as follows:

15 - maintained/school nurseries, 14 – PVI day nurseries, 14 – pre-school playgroups (see Appendix 4 for the actual list). This shows that funding has been allocated almost equally across the three types of settings. When the number of PVI settings is combined (28) this is almost double the number of maintained/school nurseries receiving funding (15). When considering

the number of applications declined (10), 4 were from school nurseries, 4 from PVI day nurseries and 2 from pre-school playgroups, this again is very similar across the different types of settings.

**Table 6. Primary area of SEN or disability listed for the children receiving EYIF**

Primary are of SEND	Number of children			Total number
	2011/12	2012/13	2113/14	
	2			
Significant Speech & Language Delay	3	5	12	20
Global Developmental Delay	5	5	9	19
ASC	7	4	1	12
Physical Disabilities	0	1	6	7
BSED	1	1	3	5
Down Syndrome	0	3	2	5
Deaf / Hearing Impaired	2	0	3	5
Blind / Visually Impaired	0	0	2	2
Health/Tubular Sclerosis with epilepsy	0	0	2	2
Elective/Selective Mutism	0	1	0	1

Although table 6 provides information on the child's primary area of SEN or disability, in reality the majority of applications listed two or even three areas of need (The criteria for funding says that children should have delay/difficulty in at least two areas/aspects of their development). The most common jointly listed area of need was global developmental delay (GDD) either with a linked syndrome such as Down syndrome or linked to a more significant delay in speech and language skills (20 children had GDD listed as their secondary area of need). Of particular note is that although 12 children who received EYIF had been diagnosed with autism, a further 15 children were queried as possibly having autism, but had not yet been given a diagnosis. For these children the referrals listed a speech and language difficulty, a learning difficulty or behaviour, social and emotional difficulty, as their primary area of need.

It is important to stress that the additional funding from the EYIF was awarded on the basis of the information/evidence provided about their special educational needs through the EYFS records, evaluated IEPs, and other information/reports, not the diagnosis of their needs, although it was taken into account when considering whether the child had high or low incidence, as well as high or low level of need.

**Table 7. Number of terms of EY Inclusion Funding provided for the 78 children**

<b>1 term</b>	<b>2 terms</b>	<b>3 terms</b>	<b>4 terms</b>	<b>5 terms</b>
<b>30*</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>

\* most of these were applications received in the first or last terms of applications, so they did not have time to apply for an extension to the funding.

**Table 8. Placements the 78 children moved onto following conclusion of funding**

	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total</b>
Attending a primary school /nursery	9	10	5	24
Attending primary school with a Statement	5	2	1	9
Attending an Enhanced resourced Nursery	1	1	1	3
Attending a special school with Statement	3	3	0	6

## **SECTION TWO - Qualitative information (objective)**

Objective qualitative information was collected from the information submitted for each child as part of the initial applications and reviews, including application/review forms, and supporting evidence from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Baseline and Reviews, monitoring and tracking, examples of children's Learning Journeys/Journals, evaluated Individual Education Plans (IEPS) and other observations and monitoring records, as well as from reports from support service professionals involved in supporting the children.

### ***Examples of the applications and reviews for two children have been attached***

This documentation not only provided information about the children's progress and response to the additional interventions/programmes, but also about the quality of data submitted by the early years/school settings and improvements in the quality of this information over time in response to the advice and training provided by support professionals. Evidence of any collaborative working between the early years settings with parents and support services was also collected from the review reports submitted.

### **Analysis of the individual child and setting application and review forms for EYIF**

Analysis of completed individual child application and review forms (Appendix 1) and supporting evidence (EYFS records, progress and monitoring and evaluated IEPs and observation records) enabled the Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist (Early Years) and the Early Learning Leader (SEN specialism), while reading and summarising the information for the EYIF Panel meetings, enabled them to identify possible un-met needs of the child, family or the early years setting by:

- identifying children with SEN who had not been referred to specialist support services and to recommend to settings to make these referrals (education and/or health, and/or children's social care, and/or to a Children's Centre);
- identifying where the early years setting (SENCo and early year practitioners) needed more help/advice on how to assess the children's special needs, how to write, implement and record outcomes of IEP targets and other interventions, where to seek further specialist/professional advice and how to work more collaboratively with the child's parents if evidence of this was not provided. The advice to

the settings could be given by an advisory or support service practitioner visiting the setting to meet with the SENCO and/or manager and/or the child's key person or by the SENCO attending a consultation session e.g. offered by the Specialist Early Years Teachers one day per month.

- identifying training needs of the setting's SENCO in particular, and to check they had attended a recent SENCO basic training five day course as well as the termly SENCO Network sessions, or one of the courses/training sessions offered by Early Learning Leaders, other early years specialist or by the Specialist Teaching Teams, as applicable to the needs of the child they had identified, and to recommend the appropriate training needed.

Analysis of the EYIF application and review documents over time (July 2011 to November 2013) has identified improvements in the applications and review forms and supporting information submitted. It has also provided feedback on the effectiveness of the advice, support and training which had been given to the staff. The difference in the quality of the applications between those early years settings with a SENCO who had recently attended the EY SENCO training course as well as attending the termly EY SENCO Networks sessions has been increasingly apparent.

At present the EY practitioners from school nurseries have not been able to attend this training (as it is only available to the PVI sector) or an equivalent, and their applications and IEPs have generally not been of the same standard of many of the PVI setting applications. Specialist Staff from the Specialist Early Year Support Team and the Early Learning Leaders have consequently been visiting the school nurseries to provide some individualised training and advice. Evidence of this has been seen in their improved EYIF applications during the last year.

**Paper copies of children outcome data are available upon request.**

### **SECTION THREE - Qualitative information (subjective)**

- (i) Questionnaires to parents and pre-school settings in receipt of EYIF
- (ii) Case studies – One preschool practitioner (SENCo) and three parents

#### **(i) Questionnaires to parents and pre-school settings in receipt of EYIF**

Questionnaires were designed based on evaluation questionnaires found to be quick and effective in collecting feedback in particular from parents, such as the exit-questionnaires sent during the last ten years to all parents whose children have received Portage home visiting in the city of York after Portage interventions/visits conclude.

A copy of the *Practitioner's Questionnaire* was sent to the SENCo in each early years setting in receipt of EYIF as they are instrumental in coordinating the support for children with SEN and disabilities. A copy of *the Parent's Questionnaire* was sent to the parents of each child in receipt of EYIF via the early years setting. All questionnaires were completed anonymously so not to restrict the honesty of the responses made by the respondents, i.e. so not to restrict any negative responses they might want to make because they may feel it could affect any future funding applied for.

Questionnaires were only sent to recipients in 2012 and 2013 as the length of time since the funding had concluded was considered to be too long for the 2011 cohort. Neither were questionnaires sent to the new applicants discussed at the November 2013 EYIF panel meeting as their funding would not be in place until January 2014. Consequently only 35 questionnaires were sent to early years settings and 27 questionnaires were sent to parents of the 78 children and 43 early years settings in receipt of EYIF between July 2011 and January 2014.

## **Findings from completed questionnaires**

In total 62 questionnaires were sent out, 35 to pre-school settings and 27 to parents. Completed questionnaires were received from 71% of pre-school settings (n = 25) and 59% of parents (n =16). Only one setting confirmed that they did not feel able to complete the questionnaire. Analysis was completed by compiling a list of categories and then collapsed to prevent overlap. The responses from the parents' questionnaires are summarised first, followed by the responses from the practitioners. A summary of the main findings of each questionnaire follows each questionnaire.

The overall findings were very positive from both the parents and the practitioners. Any negative comments have been followed up and settings have received a visit from Early Years Support Advisers (EYSAs), Early Learning Leaders (ELL) and/or the Specialist Early Years Support Team. Discussions and training have taken place with settings' staff to ensure they are clear around information sharing with parents, aspects of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Equality Act (2010). Follow up monitoring visits have also taken place to ensure that funding is being used appropriately.

The responses from a few parents and practitioners indicated that there could be closer collaborative working between some of the pre-school settings with the children's parents. This will now also be addressed through advisory visits and training from the support services.

## Questionnaire for Parents

The following show a summary of the responses from parent questionnaires.

### 1. How old was your child when the Early Years Inclusion Funding started?

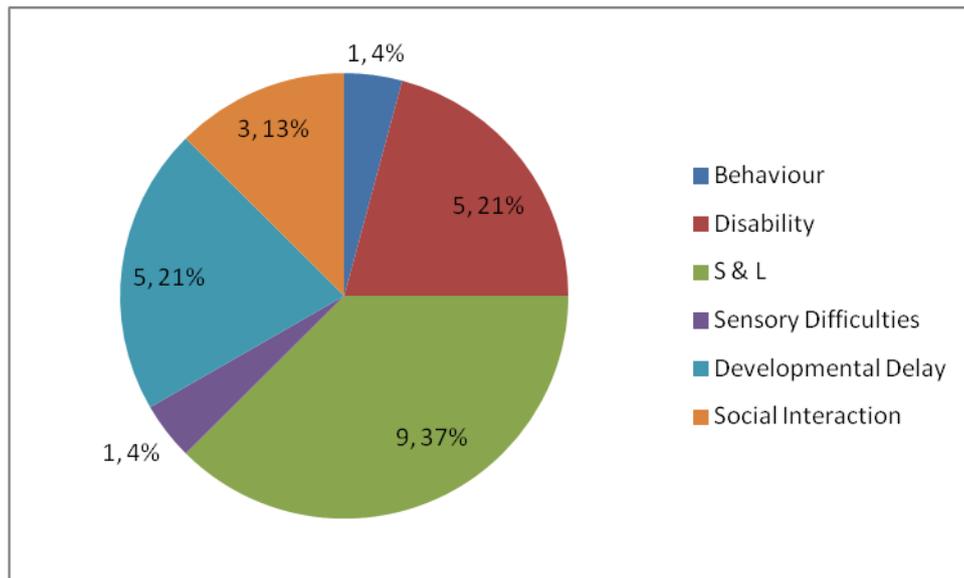
Age of Children when Funding Commenced		
Years	Months	Number of Children
4	0	1
4	6	1
3	0	1
3	1	1
3	2	1
3	3	4
3	4	4
3	5	1
2	7	1
2	9	1
2	11	1
Total		16

### 2. Please tell us how you found out about the Early Years Inclusion Fund.

Support Service	Number of children
Portage Service	3
Setting SENCO	6
Pre-School Team	3
Early Support Coordinator	1
Sibling Received Funding	1
Teacher of the Deaf	1
Health Visitor	1
Total	17

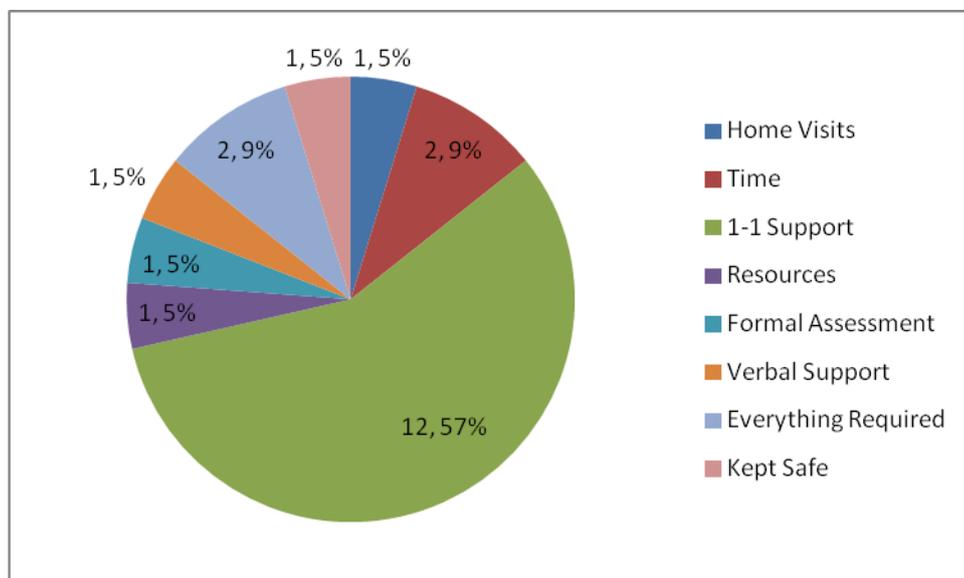
This indicates that different outside agencies/support services are aware of the EYIF and have been able to explain it to the parents. However, it is surprising that more parents said they had heard about the EYIF from a support service professional than from the SENCo at the early years setting, as the SENCo had completed the EYIF forms which were then counter-signed by the parents (except for four cases where the Specialist Early Years Support Team had made the referral prior to the child's starting preschool). This could also be indicative of good collaborative working between support services and parents and early years/school settings.

### 3. Why was extra help requested for your child?



Parents shared their thoughts around why their children were allocated the funding. Of the 16 responses 37% (n=9) of parents reported speech and language as the main area where they felt their children needed support, 21% (n=5) responded that funding was allocated to their child because they had a disability which included both physical and specific conditions.

### 4. What support was provided?



Parents responded to this question in two ways. Some parents indicated that they felt they had received support through the funding in the way of home visits and verbal support; however 57% (n=12) responded that 1-1 support was provided through the funding for their children.

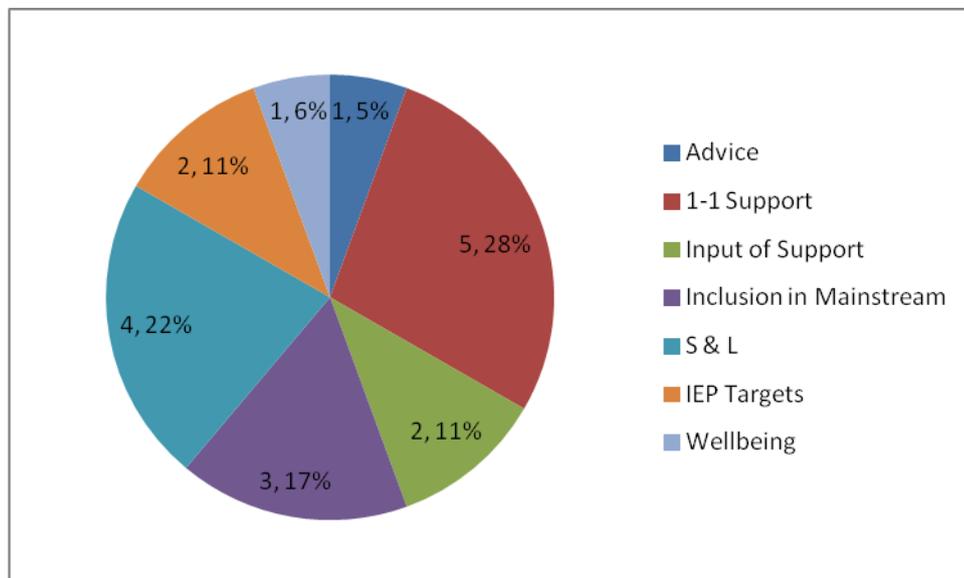
## 5. Do you feel this was enough support?

### Level of Support Provided Through SEN Inclusion Funding

About Right	Not Enough	Not Sure
14	1	1

From the 16 responses received from parents only one indicated that the support offered through the funding was not enough. This parent responded that they felt there was “not enough 1-1 time and too much time spent on group work”.

## 6. What do you feel were the benefits of the funding for you and your child?



Findings from the parents’ responses showed that 28% (n=5) felt their children had benefitted the most from 1-1 support which in turn supported the children’s inclusion in the mainstream settings 17% (n=3) and in achieving their Individual Education Plan (IEP) targets 11% (n=2).

## 7. Please rate your satisfaction with the benefits of the Early Years Inclusion Funding.

### Satisfaction of the Benefits of SEN Inclusion Funding

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
10	5	1	0	0

Findings show that all but one of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were very satisfied with the benefits of the Early Years Inclusion Funding.

One parent responded: *“The funding was fundamental in my son’s early education. He could not have gone easily without it. Thank you, life was made so much more straightforward. Please don’t stop, children and families benefit immensely.”*

Another responded: *“Very pleased at how quick the funding was provided. It has made a real difference to him and we are very pleased with his development and support. The setting has been very professional and supportive.”*

**Parents were invited to add any other comments they had to the questionnaire. The following are actual comments from individual parents:**

- Thank you for the availability of this funding, it has already made a huge difference to us all. We feel immensely grateful he is well supported in our absence.
- Keep up the good work and thank you for all your help and support so far.
- If the 1-1 (individual support person) is off sick, the nursery tell us not to send him that day which we think isn’t right. \*
- You are asking questions I don’t know much about, York Council needs to give more advice and help to parents who need help; this is all new to me!! Everyone just thinks you know what we are doing and do not.

- There has been a massive improvement in my son's development. I think this funding is absolutely essential to him, there's so much more still he could achieve with this help.
- I have been extremely pleased with the progress my son has made since September thanks to my son's key person giving this additional help.
- The funding has made a big difference to his learning and development. It has meant he has had more opportunities to learn and play.
- Jane and Laura at playgroup have been fantastic.
- It's great and helping my daughter to catch up with everyone else.
- The children needed more 1-1 time rather than group work. Also help from SALT (speech and language therapist) going into the nursery to advise them would help.
- The SENCO left and the new manager disagreed with the care plan.

*\* As the parent had notified one of the support services professionals about this concern it was followed up directly with the school nursery and has not happened since.*

### **Summary of the above findings from the parent questionnaires**

To summarise, in general all of the parents who responded to the questionnaire were aware of the Early Years Inclusion Funding, knew why their child was receiving the extra help and how it was being used and were happy with the support being given. They were positive about the benefits and impact of the funding. Parents confirmed that they could see the impact the 1-1 funded support had on their child's development and they were very supportive and complimentary about the support from settings and support services.

Any negative comments have been followed up and settings have received a visit from Early Years Support Advisers (EYSAs) and the Specialist Early Years Support Team. Discussions and training have taken place with setting staff to ensure they are clear around information sharing with parents, aspects of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and the Equality

Act (2010). Follow up monitoring visits have also taken place to ensure that funding is being used appropriately.

The responses from a few parents in these questionnaires indicate that there could be closer collaborative working between some of the early years/school settings with the children's parents.

## Questionnaire for Practitioners

The following show a summary of the responses of the practitioner's questionnaire.

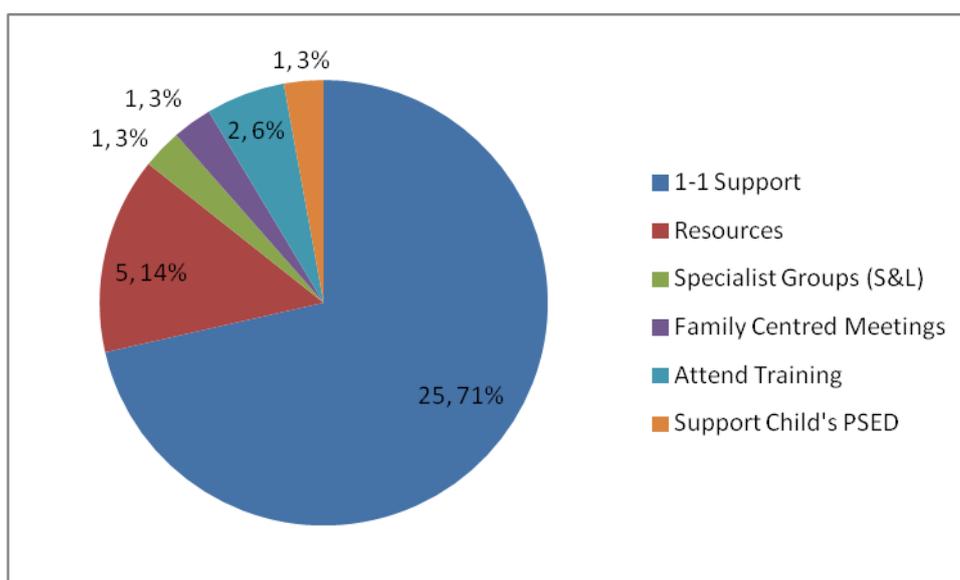
**Please rate the following:**

### SEN Inclusion Fund application and review process

	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
Application Process	8	12	5	1	0
Review Process	8	13	4	1	0

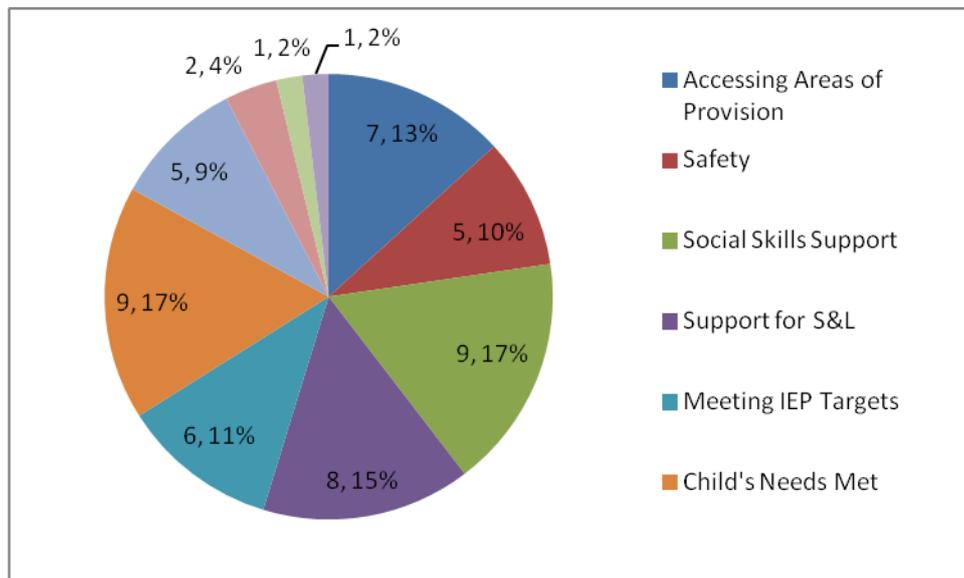
One practitioner recorded that the application and review process were time consuming whereas another reported the excellent support they received from support services which was key to completing the application and review forms accurately. One practitioner recorded that the application process was satisfactory and the review process good. Only one practitioner recorded that both the application and review process were unsatisfactory. There was one nil response from a setting; they felt unable to contribute to the questionnaire.

### 1. How was the Early Years Inclusion Funding used in your setting?



Of the 27 responses 71% (n=25) of settings said they had used the SEN Inclusion Funding to fund 1-1 support for the preschool children with special educational needs and disabilities. 14% (n=5) of respondents also said they had used the funding to purchase specific resources related to the needs of the children.

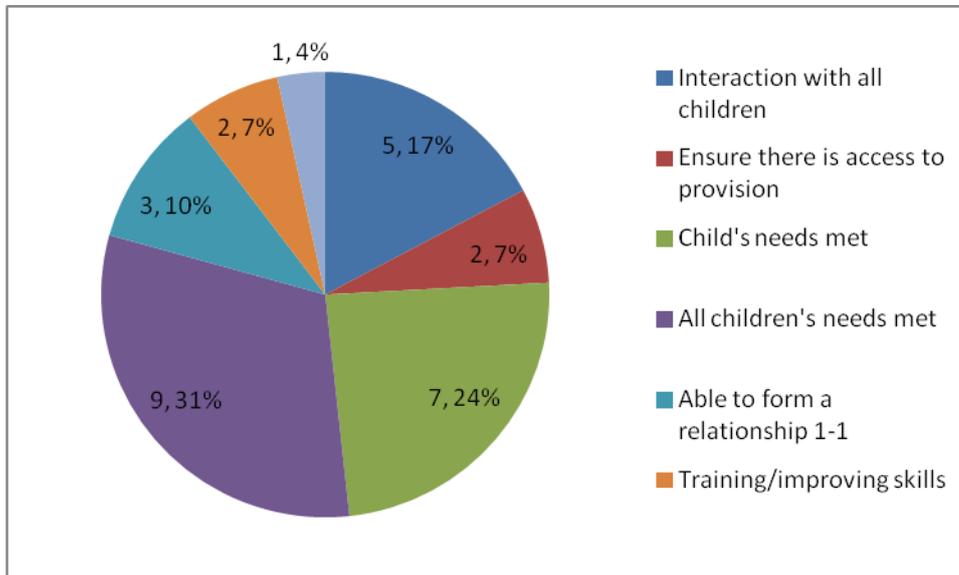
## 2. What benefits did the funding provide for the child?



All practitioners who completed the questionnaire responded positively to the benefits of the funding for the child. The most perceived benefits cited were in meeting the child's needs and supporting social skills both 17% (n=9) followed by 15% (n=8) expressing that the child's speech and language development benefitted from funding 1-1 support.

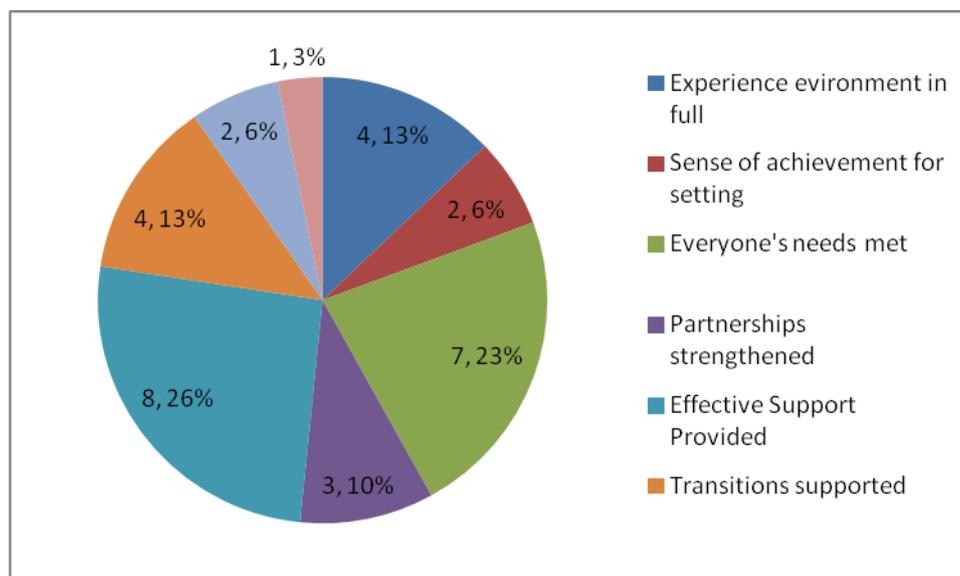
### 3. What were benefits of the funding to (a) staff and (b) the benefits overall at your setting?

#### (a) Benefits of the funding to staff



Two options were given to practitioners about the benefits of the funding. The first (a) benefits for staff, 31% (n=9) of practitioners felt that all the children attending the setting had their needs met as a result of the 1-1 support available to the child with special educational needs or disabilities. One practitioner responded that: “we would have really struggled without support from pre-school SEN team. It would have been very stressful if some of our children did not have the funding for support as their needs were of a high level.” Another recorded: “Thank you for giving this child a better chance with support of this funding.”

#### (b) Benefits of the funding overall for the setting



The second option, (b) re overall benefits of the funding for the setting, all practitioners who completed the questionnaire responded positively to the overall benefits of the funding.

26% (n=8) of practitioners felt that meeting the child’s needs with effective support was the most beneficial aspect of the funding, however 23% (n=7) felt that meeting everyone’s needs was the most beneficial aspect of receiving the funding, while 13% (n=4) of practitioners felt that accessing the setting’s environment fully and supporting transitions were of great benefit through the funding. One practitioner recorded: “Funding has helped children have a positive start to their school life.” Another added: “I hope the inclusion fund will continue.”

**(c) Please rate your satisfaction with the benefits of Early Years Inclusion Funding**

Level of satisfaction with the benefits of Early Years Inclusion Funding				
Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
16	10	0	0	0

Responses show all practitioners were very satisfied with the benefits of the Early Years Inclusion Funding. One practitioner recorded: “Without funding it would not be possible to admit this child into pre-school and support him effectively, catering for his needs.” *(this is not in fact be the case under disability discrimination legislation as no child should be refused entry based on their SEND)*

**Practitioners were invited to add any other comments they had to the questionnaire.**

The following comments were made:

- Even when progress was small, any little bit of progress was of benefit in the eyes of the child and their family.
- I think there should be more support for settings in how to engage with parents and involve them in the funding process.
- The paperwork needed and the nursery staff’s time to attend meetings at various places has been a challenge and a considerable cost to the setting in extra hours paid to the staff.

- All is very time consuming but valuable and a challenge.
- School tops up EYIF 12.5 hours to 15 hours to allow full access to nursery provision.
- Early Years Specialist Support was superb during the whole process.
- It would be helpful to know the deadlines for submission (for application for funding) in advance – preferably on an academic yearly basis.

### **Summary of the above findings from the parent questionnaires**

To summarise, all practitioners who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the impact and benefits of EYIF. All practitioners acknowledge the positive impact the EYFI has had on supporting the children with their needs within the setting. There was also a significant number of practitioners who acknowledged the impact of the funding in helping them meet all the needs of every child in their care.

Any negative comments have been followed up by the early years advisory team and the specialist early years support team. The amount of paper work to be completed by the setting SENCO has been kept to a minimal amount (Appendix 1). The requirement for additional evidence/information to support applications is around those documents that should be kept by all pre-schools on all pre-school children e.g. EYFS records, and for all children with special educational needs or disabilities as require under the SEN Code of Practice (2001) such as IEPs, and reports from specialist support service professionals to advise on interventions to meet the children's special needs.

## **Qualitative information (subjective) - (ii) Case studies.**

Following the unsolicited email received from the parents of one child who had received funding (case study 2) it was decided to collect more in-depth feedback from several parents and practitioners. Two of the parents requested that this be completed in the form of a face-to-face interview (case studies 3 and 4). This was completed by the specialist senior educational psychologist for early years who had known both parents for several years as their children had been identified with SEN whilst babies/toddlers.

### **Case Study 1**

#### **Early Years Inclusion Fund Setting Perspective: Haxby Playgroup at Headlands, views of the SENCo who has received EYIF for three children during 2012 and 2013**

We received Early Years Inclusion Funding for three children during the last two years:

- one child had global developmental delay with particular difficulties in physical and speech and language skills,
- the second child had a diagnosis of Autism and had considerable challenging behaviours,
- the third child has significant visual difficulties and is registered blind.

The following more detailed information relates to the first child, who we initially received funding for equipment for (January 2012) and later for additional adult support (from the summer term 2012 to summer term 2013).

**The advantages for the setting:** Haxby Playgroups is a charity based group who have to fundraise to buy large equipment; the Inclusion Fund enabled us to buy a trampoline which was recommended by the child's physiotherapist to strengthen her core-stability and the muscles in her legs. It also helped the Playgroup to provide staff to support her during lunch times when she had problems with reflux and choking while eating. We were also able to support her in establishing a toileting routine in an environment where she could be guided by her peers and always have the time and resources needed to achieve a positive outcome. We also provided focussed individual speech and language activities to follow the targets recommended by her speech and language therapist and her Portage home visitor.

**The advantages for the child:** She was able to fully integrate into the group even with her complex needs including speech and language delay and physical problems including low muscle tone and reflux. The trampoline allowed the child to start building her muscle tone which improved her everyday activities such as walking, but also during her two years at Playgroup, strengthened her legs enough that she was able to ride a push along scooter independently. The addition of support staff helped the child greatly with her speech and language programme, meaning that by the time the child left Playgroup she was talking in sentences and was able to communicate her wants and needs.

**The advantages for the parents:** Her parents were initially concerned that Playgroup would not be able to meet all of their daughter's needs when she first started, but we were able to support both her physical and educational needs due to the equipment and the staff support that the inclusion funding provided. When they wanted to start toilet training with their daughter they were able to ask us for support with the knowledge that the funding would cover the additional hours needed to establish this routine. We were also able to provide additional support during her transition into school, including extra visits to the reception classroom helping to greatly reduce her parents' concerns about her moving to a new setting she started primary school on a full-time basis with a Statement of SEN in September 2013).

I feel that the Early Years Inclusion Fund has been of great benefit to this child's journey through Haxby playgroups.

**Helen Marquis, Setting SENCO Haxby Playgroup at Headlands, November 2013**

## **Case Study 2**

### **Early Years Inclusion Fund - Parents comments on the benefits for their child**

There is a simple purpose in my wanting to contact you and that is to simply say 'thank you'.

Our daughter has attended the school nursery since September last year. She has some developmental delays which have caused problems for her in terms of her general mobility, but in other ways too – her speech, language development and hearing in particular. Without wanting to get into her case history these have in turn meant that she struggled more than she might otherwise have done with certain aspects of her general development – in particular things such as sharing, turn taking and group work.

All the professionals at school involved in her care have been extremely supportive of her, and met regularly with others from external agencies to discuss how to best manage her development and I believe it was the TA who applied for specific Early Years funding on my daughter's behalf, so that some additional classroom support could be provided and it was.

It feels only right that you should be aware of the good that has come from the funding that has been provided. It has been transformational in terms of my daughter's development and while she will continue to face some challenges as she moves up into Reception, she does so with the best preparation we could have asked for. We owe a great deal to the school in general.

As well as expressing our grateful appreciation, I would like to think that should the school make an application for similar funding in the future, it would be given consideration in light of the knowledge that they most certainly can put it to good use."

**Parents of a child at a mainstream primary school nursery.  
October 2013**

### **Case Study 3**

#### **Early Years Inclusion Fund - parent comments on the benefits for their child**

Our daughter has attended Haxby Preschool Playgroup (at Headlands) since she was 2½ year old. She had global developmental delay, low muscle tone and speech and language difficulties. Before starting at pre-school she received Portage Home teaching, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and attended a weekly group at the Child Development Centre at York hospital.

We were anxious about how she would cope at pre-school because of her special needs but we found the staff, and particularly the SENCO, to be very sensitive to her special needs and to make sure that she got the extra help she needed and be included in all the pre-school activities.

The playgroup applied for the Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF) as soon as she was three years old. At first they got funding for a mini-trampoline with handles to work on her core stability, muscle tone and to strengthen her legs as recommended by her physiotherapist. This really helped our daughter but also other children in the playgroup were also able to benefit from using it too.

A term later when our daughter had increased her sessions at preschool, she was have more behaviour problems, which we felt was because of her frustration in having difficulty in talking and difficulty in moving about like other children could. Safety was also an issue as she was falling over a lot and she was having difficulty eating, she had reflux and a tendency to choke and was very fussy about what she would eat and has started to throw food. The nursery then applied for extra funding from the EYIF to provide extra adult help to keep her safe at playgroup and also to follow special programmes of work with her like we were doing with Portage and at therapy sessions.

We feel that the SENCO was excellent and always 'went the extra mile' for our daughter, even if she hadn't got the extra funding, but through the extra funding the SENCO was able to give our daughter the extra help she needed without it affecting the education and support for the other children at the playgroup. I always felt that the SENCO knew my daughter as well as I did as her mother and always felt confident that she was safe with her and doing as well as she was able to do.

Although we don't know how well our daughter would have done if she hadn't got the extra help through the EYIF we do believe that she wouldn't

have got as far as she has today without it. She is now more stable on her feet and falls over less often. Her speech in particular is much improved and her talking has really come on a lot. Our daughter was able to make extra transition visits to primary school with the SENCO during the summer term which increased her confidence about starting school as well as helping to reduce my anxieties as her mother. She also attended a meeting at school with us to plan for her starting school. Our daughter is now attending Headlands primary school and has a Statement of special needs and is doing much better than we expected.

**Completed in a face-to face discussion/interview - November 2013.**

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## **Case Study 4**

### **The Benefits of the Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) for our daughter at Little Badgers Pre-School**

Our daughter has Down Syndrome and has received support at home through Portage home visiting (weekly visits) and through medical specialists at the hospital including speech and language therapy and physiotherapy since she was a baby.

In addition to these services, we decided to also enrol her on some sessions at Little Badgers Pre-School Playgroup at the age of 2 ½ years as we wanted her to have the opportunity to play with other children within an inclusive setting as she is our only child.

The Setting have been great in meeting her needs, however, when we heard about the Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) in 2012, we decided to apply for funding in order to purchase specialist equipment/resources which included 'See and Learn' reading and language programme (Downs ed publication) as well as specialist speech and language DVDs as recommended by the speech and language therapists and Numicon (early maths programme). This enabled the pre-school to implement the specialist programmes we were also using at home with our Portage Home Visitor and with the Speech and Language Therapist. Having these materials (we didn't request additional adult support at that time) not only benefitted our daughter but was also used by other children at the pre-school and especially those with English as an additional language, and so has been helpful in developing early communication skills for lots of children besides our daughter. The Numicon, although an early mathematics programme has proved to be versatile and has been used for arts and crafts activities too. Having the Numicon also led the pre-school

to develop a 'maths corner' and to purchase other materials themselves to add to this corner.

A year later when we held our review meeting at nursery it was agreed that our daughter would now benefit from having additional adult support (purchased through the EYIF) to enable the pre-school to work on focused individual and small group activities with her as she needs smaller-step teaching and more repetition and practice than many other children do. It has also enabled them to provide additional support during outdoor play as she can still be unsteady and needs extra support to ensure her safety during outdoor play. Similarly during the 'starting school session' that she attends at pre-school on Monday afternoons each week (including when they visit the school hall for PE sessions in preparation for starting school) she has really needed this extra adult support to keep her safe. She will also need this extra help at transition times and to assist her when eating (she easily becomes distracted) and when learning to carry hot food.

We have continued to have Portage visits at home (reduced from weekly to fortnightly and now to monthly) and the EYIF has ensured that the pre-school are able to provide the same focussed activities during our daughter's sessions with them.

We would also like to add that our daughter can become overwhelmed when in crowds and the extra adult help she has had through the EYIF has given her the opportunity to be in busy areas during outside play as well as during the 'starting school sessions' and has given her the assurance and the extra practice she has needed while also keeping her physically safe. With the additional support she has had (through specialist resources and extra adult help) we feel she has not been able to get the full benefit of attending an inclusive pre-school setting.

Our daughter will be starting primary school in September 2014 and we now have the evidence of what additional support she will need at school in order to request a Statutory Assessment of her special needs thanks to the additional resources and support she has received through the Early Years Inclusion Funding at Little Badgers Pre-School Playgroup.

**Completed in a face-to face discussion/interview - November 2013.**

## **Discussion of Results**

### **Section one (quantitative information)**

Quantitative data was compiled on the number of EYIF applications and reviews received from different early years settings, the number of children supported, the types of primary special educational needs and/or disabilities listed for the children, the length of time additional support was given and what happened to the children following the conclusion of the additional funding.

There have been three panel meetings in each of the years the EYIF has been available (2011, 2012 and 2013) to discuss the applications. A total of 203 children discussed were discussed, 91 as new referrals and 112 as reviews. Applications were received from 86 school/maintained nurseries and 117 private and voluntary or independent (PVI) settings. Of the new applications received only ten were refused because they did not meet the criteria, either based on age (were above or below the age group included for funding) or had provided insufficient evidence of the child having a high or complex level of need and had not involved the SEN support services. The number of applications has increased each year (33 in 2011/12, 60 in 2012/13 and 110 in 2013/14) but the number of applications declined has not increased as the pre-schools gained a better understanding of the criteria.

Although the above data is an actual recording of EYIF applications further analysis of the data identified that many of the early years/school settings applied on more than one occasion for funding for a child i.e. the majority of children received funding for more than one term due to the complexity or high level of the child's SEN or disability, and several of the settings applied for funding for more than one child during the last eight terms. Settings were required to submit termly review reports on each child to show how the funding had been spent and the progress the child had made. Analysis of this information is discussed in section two of the findings.

The analysis of the data related to each individual child, regardless of the number of terms funding was received, identified that 78 individual children were supported through the EYIF. Of these 54 were boys and 24 were girls. This is in line with national statistics and research studies into SEN where boys consistently outnumber girls. Although more than one area of SEN was listed for each child, their primary area of need was listed in table 6 and this identified that significant speech and language delay or difficulty

(n=20), global developmental delay (n=19) and autism (n=12) were the most frequently listed. Of the combined areas listed the most common was global developmental delay (GDD) which was either linked to a syndrome such as Down syndrome or it was linked to a more significant delay in speech and language skills (20 children had GDD listed as their secondary area of need). Of particular note is that although 12 children who received EYIF had been diagnosed with autism, a further 15 children possibly had autism, but had not yet been given a diagnosis. This is again in line with local and national statistics in terms of the significant increase in the number of children identified with autism (ASC).

Of the 78 children receiving funding, 48 received funding from between two and five terms indicating the high level of their SEN, while 30 received the funding for only one term. Many of these were referred in the first and last term of the funding applications so they did not have time to apply for an extension to the funding.

The number of preschool children funded through the EYIF during the last eight terms is significantly higher than those who have been supported in mainstream preschool settings through a Statement of SEN during the last ten years. Analysis of the children's placements following the conclusion of EYIF identified that 33 children transferred to primary school, nine of whom had a Statement of SEN, three transferred to an enhanced resourced place at St Paul's Nursery School and six transferred to Hob Moor Oaks special school with a Statement of SEN; each of these children had a diagnosis of severe autism.

The number of preschools which have received EYIF between September 2011 and March 2014 is 43 (15 school nurseries, 14 -PVI day nurseries, 14 - PVI pre-school playgroups). There are a total of 103 early years/school settings within York.

Without a matched control group it is not possible to say conclusively how well the children's SEN would have been met or if they would have made the same level of progress without the additional support; it was not however considered ethical to identify children's SEN and then not provide the additional support through EYIF for some of them.

## **Section two - Qualitative information (objective)**

This information was collected from the documentation submitted for each child as part of the initial applications and reviews, including application/review forms, and supporting evidence from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) baseline and reviews, monitoring and tracking, examples of children's Learning Journeys/Journals, evaluated Individual Education Plans (IEPS) and other observation and monitoring records, as well as from reports from support service professionals involved in supporting the children.

Analysis of this documentation provided measurable information about each child's progress and response to the additional interventions/programmes, but also provided an insight into the quality of information submitted by the early years/school settings and improvements in its quality in response to the advice and training provided by support professionals. It also provided evidence of any collaborative working with parents and support services from the review reports submitted.

It enabled the early years educational psychologist and early learning leader, who read through each EYIF application and review submitted to identify possible unmet needs of the child, family or the early years/school setting and to recommend to settings to make these referrals to education support services and/or health practitioners, to a Children's Centre or children's social care.

It also identified where the early years/school setting (SENCO and early year practitioners) needed more help/advice in how to assess the children's special needs, how to write, implement and record outcomes of IEP targets and other interventions, where to seek further specialist/professional advice and how to work more collaboratively with the child's parents if evidence of this was not provided. The advice to the settings could be given by an advisory or support service practitioner visiting the setting to meet with the SENCO and/or manager and/or the child's key person or by the SENCO attending a consultation session e.g. as offered by the Specialist Early Years Teachers one day per month.

The information submitted also helped to identify training needs of the setting's SENCO in particular and to check they had attended a recent SENCO basic training five day course and the termly SENCO Network sessions, or one of the courses / training sessions offered by Early Learning Leaders, other early years specialist or by the Specialist Teaching

Teams, as applicable to the needs of the child they had identified, and to recommend the appropriate training needed.

Analysis of the EYIF application and review documents over time has identified improvements in the applications and review forms and supporting information submitted. It has also provided feedback on the effectiveness of the advice, support and training which had been given to the staff. The difference in the quality of the applications between those settings with a SENCO who had recently attended the EY SENCO training course, as well as attending the termly EY SENCO Networks , has been increasingly apparent. At present the EY practitioners from school nurseries have not been able to attend this training (as it is only available to the PVI sector) or an equivalent and their applications and IEPs have generally not been of the same standard of many of the PVI setting applications. Specialist Staff from the Specialist Early Year Support Team and the Early Learning Leaders have consequently been visiting the schools to provide some individualised training and advice. Evidence of this has been seen in their improved EYIF applications during the last year.

### **Section three - Qualitative information (subjective)**

This information was collected from feedback comments from parents and early years /school setting SENCOs by questionnaires and also from narratives from case studies, some of which were collected through face-to-face interviews at parent's requests.

All the parents and practitioners (early years SENCo) who completed the evaluation questionnaires and the narrative case studies were very positive about the benefits of the EYIF for the children's progress and inclusion in the mainstream pre-schools. A few of the practitioners said that they had found the paperwork and meetings to be time consuming, although beneficial for the child. Some of the parents and practitioner questionnaires indicated a need for closer collaborative working between some of the settings with parents. All of the questionnaire returns that mentioned support service professionals, especially the specialist early years support team, were very positive about the support and advice they had received, not only for the children and their parents but also in providing advice to the SENCo and setting in completing information and records required for the EYIF.

### **Summary of the outcomes and benefits of the EYIF**

## **Benefits to the Child**

- Earlier identification of children's SEN and referral to support services for early intervention and advice to EY Settings and parents.
- Children are able to stay in their own/locality EY Setting with additional adult support rather than having to travel to an enhanced resourced nursery near the centre of York.
- Evidence from review reports, evaluated IEPs (targets achieved) EYFS Baseline and progress reports and EYFS Trackers, reports from supporting professionals of progress made by the child.
- Parents and SENCO ratings and individual comments on the evaluation questionnaires were especially positive on the impact for children/progress made.
- Assessments of children's SEN were completed systematically and over time while they were attending preschool resulting in improvements for many of the children. It enabled primary schools to be alerted in advance to children's SEN prior to their school entry to facilitate their planning and resource-allocation to enable continued support for the children. It also enabled evidence for statutory assessment to be collected for 15 children to enable their assessment and subsequent Statement of SEN to be completed prior to school entry - either to a primary school or to a special school.
- The additional adult support has meant that the programmes/interventions recommended by support service professionals have been implemented to record the child's response to programmes and rate of learning over time and to identify the child's characteristics of learning. Recommendations can then be made about what works best to maximise the child's learning.
- Several therapists and other support service professionals have commented on how the EYIF has enabled settings to implement their advice/programmes more, when the EY practitioners in the settings previously struggled to find the time to do this.

## **Benefits for the EY Settings**

Information has been obtained from the review reports, verbal discussions with specialist support service professionals, with practitioners at SENCo Network meetings and from the questionnaires (SENCOs and parents' questionnaires).

- Enables the early years setting to focus more time on the child with SEN without taking the time away from other children in the setting.
- Enables them to work more closely with parents and support service professionals and attend multi-agency planning and review meetings.
- Increased the skills of the practitioners by working closely with support services to work with the child and to find techniques that work to improve the child's rate of progress. There has also been a reported increase in practitioners' confidence when they see how they have been able to make a difference to the child.

### **Benefits for the Local Authority**

- Children's needs can be identified earlier, so help given earlier.
- More effective use of support services time when their advice is acted upon/implemented and the child makes more progress.
- Reduces the pressure on places at York's only enhanced resourced nursery and enabled some of the children to stay in their own locality/neighbourhood nursery.
- More children can be supported than would be possible through a Statement of SEN and more cost-effectively.
- Identifies training and workforce development needs which can then be met primarily by support service practitioners.
- Many of the children receiving EYIF will now have a My Support Plan written collaboratively with parents, early years practitioners and support service professionals as part of the revised SEN legislation and Code of Practice.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This report has described the implementation of the Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) in York which was introduced in July 2011 to date (spring term 2014) to support preschool children with SEN and/or disabilities in mainstream preschool settings where they did not have a Statement of SEN.

During this time 78 children have been supported in 43 different early years/school settings, which is significantly more than those supported through a Statement of SEN in mainstream early years settings during the last ten years. Previously children with SEN attending maintained/school nurseries were able to access additional support through the schools

delegated SEN funding, but this funding had not been available to early years settings in the private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector. The Early Years Inclusion Funding has enabled all preschool children to access additional funding for SEN support equally, regardless of the early years setting they attend.

The present study used quantitative and qualitative methods to evaluate the impact of EYIF in terms of benefits for the children, the early years/school settings and local authority (LA). The results have been outlined in the previous sections and have been extremely positive in terms of identifying children's SEN earlier, enabling a fuller assessment of their needs to be completed over time and to implement early interventions to increase their progress and enable them to fully access all aspects of the EYFS and all areas of the early years setting safely.

The aim of the EYIF is, as the name suggests, to facilitate children's inclusion in mainstream settings as well as implementing specific and focussed individual interventions. As the criteria for accessing EYIF has been that children have high/complex SEN and/or disabilities, the success of funding should not be measured only in terms of the child's rate of progress or the eradication of their SEN, but in its facilitation in enabling all children to attend their local early years/school setting with their peers and to be fully included safely, and without detriment to other children.

An additional benefit for the local authority has been the reduction in the pressure on places at York's only enhanced resourced place (ERP) nursery, St Paul's Nursery, which is only able to offer 12 ERPs (six fulltime equivalent (FTE) at any one time). The EYIF has resulted in more children being supported in their own locality/neighbourhood nursery and only children with more complex needs being referred for an ERP at St Paul's Nursery or a place at special school.

Although it is not clear if the EYIF has reduced or increased the number of Statutory Assessments being requested at preschool, it does suggest that these have been deferred until children are nearing school entry. Certainly there is no way that the 78 children supported through the EYIF during the last two years would have been supported through a Statement of SEN.

As noted earlier in this report, 2014 brings new challenges within a climate of reducing budgets, with the implementation of the Children and Families Bill, the revised SEN Code of Practice and changes to formula funding for SEN and for Early Years. However it also brings a time of positive developments with increased interagency commissioning, assessments and interventions with the child/young person and their parents to complete the child's single plan, initially through a My Support Plan. This may then lead onto an Education, Health and Care Plan for those CYP with the highest levels of need.

The funding for early years/school settings (from the EYIF) and for SEN support for all mainstream, enhanced and specialist resourced schools is also being drawn from the same High Needs Funding Block through the Direct Schools Grant. The present study and report into the implementation and impact of the EYIF has demonstrated the benefits of the funding and the need for this funding to continue to enable preschool children in receipt of free childcare place entitlement from two to five years receive the same additional SEN support that children attending schools receive. The funding formula for allocation of EYIF also needs to be integrated into York's Banding /stages of intervention, support and funding, which presently outlines the stages relating to the school-age population.

The final area which needs to be addressed based on the research literature into the benefits of early intervention for vulnerable preschool children, is ensuring that there is increased inter-agency collaboration and support for parents of children receiving EYIF. The implementation of the SEN Pathway, including the writing of a My Support Plan for each child in receipt of EYIF, should help to address this to some extent.

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## **Appendices**

**Appendix 1** - Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) Application and Review Forms

**Appendix 2** - Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) Questionnaire for Parents

**Appendix 3** - Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF) Questionnaire for Practitioners

**Appendix 4** - List of Early Years Settings who have received the EYIF.

**Appendix 5** – Detailed child outcome information on one case example over 5 terms – available upon request

## Appendix 1

### City of York Early Years Inclusion Fund

#### Targeted Support:

A small amount of additional funding is available to support\* pre-school children with disabilities or additional needs who do not have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

*\* Support through additional staffing, equipment or resources.*

Priority will be given to children with 'high need, low incidence' although support for children with 'high incidence, low need' will also be considered if the child is at Early Years Action Plus (SEN Code of Practice 2001).

#### Eligibility Criteria:

The fund can support Preschool children from two to five years old, in receipt of the Free Early Years Entitlement at a Private, Voluntary or Independent setting, maintained nursery or accredited childminder in York. **This fund cannot support Children who are on the reception class register of a maintained school.**

#### Procedure:

Evidence of need and the level of additional support required must be provided with each request for funding, including:

i) Evidence of need in **at least two categories as follows:**

- cognitive and learning
- sensory, physical and medical
- communication and language (including ASC)
- behaviour, emotional and social difficulties

Assessment of children's development as recorded on the EYFS areas of learning and development and/or on an Early Support Developmental Journal (ESDJ) and any developmental measures or assessment tools recorded by specialists or support services. Evidence of tracking the child's development on the EYFS or ESDJ over time should be included.

ii) Evidence of actions by the Early Years Practitioners to meet the child's needs to date, including completed IEPs that have been evaluated and arrangements made during group and individual activities to facilitate the child's learning and inclusion.

iii) Reports from professional/support services involved e.g. Portage, Specialist Early Years Teacher (SEN), Specialist Teacher, Speech & Language Therapist (SALT), Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Educational Psychologist, etc.

All requests must be discussed with parents/carers and at least one of the support services, who should countersign the Request for Additional Support form. The Early Learning Leaders/Early Years Advisors may counter-sign the form if the support service professional is unavailable.

A panel of representatives from Early Years and Specialist Services will convene to consider the requests on a termly basis.

All settings in receipt of Inclusion Funding will be required to submit a termly review report.

***Funding is awarded on a termly basis but may be continued based on the termly review report submitted. The panel will use the completed report to assess whether funding should be allocated for the following term. A new application form does not need to be completed.***

## Request for Additional Support

### Cover Sheet of information submitted

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting Attended: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of hours child attends each week \_\_\_\_\_

Number of hours of Free Early Years Funding claimed by setting each week  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of hours support requested; *the full amount may not be awarded*  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date IEP set: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Evaluated: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of SENCO:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Report by SENCO: \_\_\_\_\_

Attachments included:

Evaluated IEP(s)  Reports from Professionals:

Professional's Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Job title (s) \_\_\_\_\_

EYFS/ESDJ\* tracking of development

Others (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

***All the above must be included with reports attached or the application will be returned.***

**Report from Early Years Setting for Child with Additional Needs requiring  
Additional Adult Support**

Name of Child:		Date of Birth:	
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Primary Area of Need:

Other Area(s) of Need:

Name of Early Years Setting:

Number of days/hours attending:

Name of SENCO:

Background Information on the Child:

Chronology of Action (*e.g. plans for child's entry to nursery, special arrangement made, advice sought and actions taken to assess and meet the child's needs*)

\*Level of support currently being provided:

*\* Attach copies of IEP(s) set and evaluated*

*\* Attach copies of EYFS/ESDJ Tracking of Development*

Why additional support/help is being requested and how it will be used:

List of Reports from Support Services attached:

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Form Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Countersigned by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\* All requests must be discussed with parents/carers and at least one of the support services, who should countersign the request for additional support form. One of the Early Learning Leaders or Early Years Advisors may counter-sign the form if the support service professional is unavailable.*

**Return completed forms to: Christine Clarke /Ruth Sharp, Specialist Early Years Support Team, Hob Moor Children's Centre, Green Lane, Acomb, York, YO24 4PS. DEADLINE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_**

## Termly Review Report of Inclusion Funding Provided

Name of Child:		Date of Birth:	
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Primary Area of Need:
Other Area(s) of Need:

Name of Early Years Setting:
Number of days/hours attending:
Name of SENCO:

Date additional support agreed to:	
Date additional support started:	
Number of hours agreed to/provided:	
Equipment/resources approved:	

Description of how additional help is being used, please provide specific details of additional 1-1 support etc.
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Summary of the child's progress and impact of the additional support: <i>* (include completed &amp; evaluated IEPs and tracking on EYFS/ESDJ)*</i>
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What if any additional support or resources do you require next term? (Funding cannot be allocated to children on the reception class register of a maintained school).

*\*Attach a copy of (recent evaluated IEP) (Current and Previous)  
Attach a copy of EYFS/ESDJ Tracking of Development (baseline and termly reviews)*

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ (SENCO)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Carer)

**PLEASE NOTE: THE PANEL WILL USE THIS REPORT TO DETERMINE WHETHER FUNDING WILL BE ALLOCATED FOR THE FOLLOWING TERM. YOU DO NOT NEED TO COMPLETE A NEW APPLICATION.**

*Return completed form to: **Christine Clarke/Ruth Sharp, Specialist Early Years Support Team, Hob Moor Children's Centre, Green Lane, Acomb, York, YO24 4PS.***

### Early Years Inclusion Funding

#### Questionnaire for parents

As your child was in receipt of Early Years Inclusion Funding at pre-school we would be grateful if you could complete this questionnaire to assist in the evaluation of the Early Years Inclusion Fund. Evidence from questionnaires will be used to develop and further improve the funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities attending early years settings across the city. **Please return by 5 November 2013.**

1. How old was your child when Early Years Inclusion Funding started?

Years

Months

2. Please tell us how you found out about the Early Years Inclusion Fund.

3. Why was extra help requested for your child?

4. What support was provided?

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5. Do you feel this was enough support?

About Right	Not Enough	Not Sure

6. What do you feel were the benefits of the funding for you and your child?

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7. Please rate your satisfaction with the benefits of the Early Years Inclusion Funding

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory

Any Other Comments
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Are there any additional comments you would like to add?
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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

**Please return to Debbie Adair Access & Inclusion Support Adviser,  
Childcare Strategy Service, West Offices, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA**

## Appendix 3

### Early Years Inclusion Funding

#### Questionnaire for Practitioners



Please complete this questionnaire to assist in the evaluation of the Early Years Inclusion Fund. Evidence from questionnaires will be used to support the development and further improve the funding for children with special educational needs and disabilities attending early years settings across the city. **Please return by 5 November 2013.**

Name of Setting:

Name of SENCO:

Please rate the following:

	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
The Application Process					
The Review Process					

1. How was the Early Years Inclusion Funding used in your setting?

2. What benefits did the funding provide for the child?

3. What were the benefits of the funding to staff and the benefits over all at your setting?

(a) Benefits to staff

(b) Benefits over all

4. Please rate your satisfaction with the benefits of the Early Years Inclusion Funding.

Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
Any Other Comments				

Are there any additional comments you would like to add?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

**Please return by email to [debbie.adair@york.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.adair@york.gov.uk) or post to Debbie Adair, Access & Inclusion Support Adviser, Childcare Strategy Service, West Offices, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA**

## Appendix 4

### Early Years Settings who have received the Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF).

<b>School Nursery</b>	<b>Day Nursery</b>	<b>Play-Group</b>
Westfield	Adventurers	Clifton
Carr Infants	Happy Jays	Beehive
New Earswick	Wendy House	Haxby playgroups@headlands
Clifton Green	Polly Anna's	Strensall
Poppleton Ousebank	Josephs Nursery	Stepping Stones
St Lawrences	Kaleidoscope Acomb	Leeman Rd
Yearsley Grove	Heworth House	Badgerhill
Hobmoor	Heworth Green	Dunnington Children
Tang Hall	Little Stars	Bishopthorpe
Haxby Road	Tiddlywinks	The Wonder Years
Woodthorpe	Lilliput	Funfishers
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs	York Uni Campus Nursery	Rainbow
Burton Green	Scarcroft Green	Skelton squirrels
Knavesmire	York Montessori (Strensall)	Osbalwick
St Aelred's	Little Acorns (New Earswick)	

## **Appendix 5**

### **Detailed child outcome information on one case example over 5 terms**

Provided upon request

