

## **SCHOOLS FORUM**

### **Early Years Complex Needs Inclusion Subsidy Review**

#### **Purpose of report**

- 1 Annual report on the allocation of Complex Needs Inclusion Subsidy (CNIS) to Early Years providers and to confirm proposals for continued financial support.

#### **Background**

- 2 Early Years providers can apply for Complex Needs Inclusion Subsidy (CNIS) in order to support individual children with additional needs attending their setting. The subsidy takes the form of a financial payment to the setting which can be used to provide additional support in order to ensure the child can fully access the early years curriculum and have opportunities to enjoy experiences that will enhance and promote development.
- 3 From the same budget allocation, early years providers can apply for the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) which is awarded in situations of exceptional need but not for an individual child. For example, a nursery was experiencing difficulties with several children demonstrating challenging behaviour. The EIG of £500 enabled the setting to conduct home visits to identify how parents responded to their child's behaviour in the home and put consistent boundaries in place both at home and in the nursery.
- 4 During the year the process for CNIS applications has being reviewed to be more in line with the school SEN cluster moderation process. The membership of the CNIS panel now includes representation from various early years sectors including those from maintained, private and voluntary providers and has an independent chair who is also chair of the SEN Panel. As with the cluster moderation process, the CNIS panel recognises that settings should be both challenged and supported to meet the needs of the children. The importance of demonstrating the impact of any additional support is expected by the panel and paperwork submitted with the application must reflect how this will be achieved. The SENCO representatives from PVI settings attend the cluster moderation meetings in the Summer term to support financial applications for transition

#### **Annual spending and numbers of children supported**

- 5 The CNIS process supports in the region of 35 children per term in early years providers across the borough, in private, voluntary, independent and maintained nursery settings and during the financial year 2014-15 a total of 60 children with SEND have been supported. To date we have agreed £ 81,715 to support children with complex needs in early years settings.
- 6 In most cases, the money from CNIS is used to partially fund the wages of an additional member of staff, employed to specifically support the needs of the

individual child. The subsidy however does not fully cover these costs and settings who accommodate children with complex needs often find that additional financial pressures make it increasingly difficult to remain sustainable.

**EIG-** 20 early years providers have been supported during the financial year 2014-15 with EIG payments (£10K)

## **Impact**

- 7 All applications for CNIS are for children known by the Early Years Support Services to have needs requiring the intervention of specialist services, with some children already having a diagnosis from birth. CNIS has enabled these children to access mainstream early years provision, mainly through 1:1 support, where they can be included in all the activities available and become part of the community. Without this financial support, most early years settings would not be able to meet the individual needs of children with SEND to the same extent and are not funded in the same way as schools; there is no centrally- allocated funding to support children with additional needs.
- 8 **Use and impact of EIG-** Settings have used the EIG to fund support for a wide range of interventions, such as Speech and Language support for groups of funded 2 year olds, structured conversation meetings with parents, support for groups of children with EAL who were new to the country, home visits, staff training, support for groups of children with settling- in difficulties and additional hours for staff to make resources such as visual timetables, communication books and games for parents to play with their children at home. These interventions have been mainly successful in that they have provided short- term support for groups of children and families resulting in no further intensive support being required; beneficial for both the providers and the children involved.

## **Current financial support**

- 9 CNIS is currently paid proportionately depending on the number of hours per week a child attends to a maximum rate of £825 per term for a child who attends a setting for 15 funded hours a week. This means that a maximum amount of £28,875 is paid for 35 children accessing 15 hours of provision in an early years setting every term. Not every child accesses the full 15 hours however; some children access 12hours or 9 hours of free entitlement and the payment is adjusted accordingly.

## **Proposal**

- 10 It is proposed that School's Forum continue to allocate the budget of £108K to enable early years providers appropriately meet the needs of children with SEND and that the maximum rate of CNIS allocation be increased to £1000 for a child attending 15 hours per week. The extra money would also contribute to financing the additional work involved with cluster moderation and the new expectation on early years providers to attend person-centred reviews in line with Education and

Health Care Plan requirements for children in the setting. Settings in receipt of this funding may be included as part of an annual funding audit and practice and impact will continue to be regularly monitored by the Early Years Support Services. The EIG would also continue to be allocated from this budget and settings be encouraged to share examples of success with others.

This page is intentionally left blank