

# **Solihull Early Years Inclusion Fund Report for the academic year 2021/22**

## **Purpose of this report**

Every local authority must have a special educational needs (SEN) inclusion fund to support early years providers in meeting the needs of individual children with SEN. This report summarises the criteria for funding, the value and use of funding during 2021-2022.

## **Level 1 – Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF): Solihull settings 3-4 year olds only**

Solihull Local authority will target Level 1 Inclusion Funding at children with lower level or emerging SEN. These children will have identified SEND and settings will probably have made referrals on to other support such as speech and language therapy. The threshold for identification or potential funding eligibility will be assessed using the graduated approach document criteria. Applications can be made for children attending settings in Solihull, regardless of where they live.

## **Level 1 Inclusion Funding rates in Solihull**

Funding will be provided at a rate of £1.17 in Autumn 21 and Spring 22 and £1.21 per hour in Summer 2022 or a fixed sum for specialist equipment.

The number of hours will include the extended entitlement for eligible pupils, up to 30 hours.

## **EYIF Level 2 - High Needs Funding: Solihull setting 2–4 year olds**

Where settings have involved the relevant specialists and they have identified children in the early years setting as having more severe and complex needs, they can apply for Level 2 High Needs funding. This will often be for children where an Education Health Care (EHC) assessment request is being considered. Children with higher needs should be referred to other support services for advice.

## Level 2 – EYIF High Needs Funding rates in Solihull

£5.40 for 2 year olds qualifying for a funded place Autumn 2021/ Spring 2022

£5.61 for 2 year olds qualifying for a funded place Summer 2022

£4.04 for 3 – 4 year olds in Autumn 2021/ Spring 2021

£4.21 for 3 – 4 year olds per hour in Summer 2022

Children in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will receive additional high needs funding as described in each plan, currently funded from the Early Years Inclusion Fund (EYIF). This will not be through a panel application but agreed by EHCP team and the setting. The usual funding rate will continue to be equivalent to level 2.

Following consultation with providers and School Forum, the funding for SEN Inclusion and High Needs Funding was set at £340,000 for 2021/22. Forum agreed funding for inclusion Fund at £250k plus £90k from the high needs block. This included £20,000 for equipment. Six times a year the EYIF Panel meet to sample and agree requests for EYIF. The panel is made up of core members (representing the Early Years Team, Family Information Service, Solihull Inclusion Support Service, School Forum reps) and a rota of practitioners from schools and settings. Early Years and SISS Team members confirm their support of funding applications for EYIF at level 2 and for equipment as part of the application process.

### (1) Early Years Inclusion Fund and High Needs Fund expenditure for the academic year 2021/22

The spend for this academic year is as follows;

Early Years funding	Total
Inclusion Funding – Level 1	<b>£18,422.52</b>
High Needs Funding Panel – Level 2	<b>£307,759.42</b>
EHCP Under Assessment or with EHCP – Level 2	<b>£91,657.20</b>
	<b>TOTAL level 2 = £399,416.62</b>
Equipment	<b>£9,158.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£426,997.14</b>

After a drop in the percentage of children accessing funded early education in 2020 to 2021, numbers have increased again for 2022. In this academic year we also automatically funded children at EYIF level 2 who were agreed for EHCP assessment. These are agreed using information from the weekly EHCP panels and may not be included in EYIF panel numbers below.

**Number of applications for children for each Inclusion Fund panel 21/22**

<b>Panel date</b>	<b>Total number of applications submitted to panel</b>
October 2021	11 applications
December 2021	75 applications
February 2022	16 applications
April 2022	22 applications
May 2022	26 applications
July 2022	13 applications
<b>TOTAL</b>	163 applications

Applications for level 1 inclusion fund increased by 48% during this year and level 2 by 36%. 57 children with EHCP or under assessment were funded this year. Settings have found it increasingly difficult to manage increasing costs. They are committed to ensuring all children receive high quality early education and care. The impact of the demand for places for children with additional needs and the need to be financially viable has led to increased demand for this additional funding. We know that health visitors and health services have seen increased demand for support as well as young children being picked up with higher needs because contact with others has been limited.

Figures below for **2020-2021**:

<b>TERM</b>	<b>TOTAL L1</b>	<b>TOTAL L2</b>	<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>TOTAL BY TERM</b>
Autumn 2020	£3,597.20	£74,312.95	£1,391.47	£79,301.62
Spring 2021	£4,295.25	£94,914.44	£9,993.00	£109,202.69
Summer 2021	£4,155.84	£121,573.41	£9,365.98	£135,095.23
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>£12,048.29</b>	<b>£290,800.81</b>	<b>£20,750.45</b>	<b>£323,599.55</b>

- 25 children funded at L1
- 150 children funded at L2
- 4 children moved from L1 to L2 so appear on both sheets and counted twice
- 171 individual children receiving some inclusion funding 2020-2021

#### Figs for 2021-2022:

TERM	TOTAL L1	TOTAL L2	EHCP AUTO FUND L2	EQUIPMENT	TOTAL BY TERM
Autumn 2021	£3,257.28	£78,245.09	£28,792.20	£2,912.00	£113,206.57
Spring 2022	£6,184.62	£101,884.69	£28,092.60	£6,246.00	£142,407.91
Summer 2022	£8,980.62	£127,629.64	£34,772.40	£0.00	£171,382.66
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>£18,422.52</b>	<b>£307,759.42</b>	<b>£91,657.20</b>	<b>£9,158.00</b>	<b>£426,997.14</b>

- 37 children funded at L1
- 136 children funded at L2 (4 children did not receive funding as they didn't take up a place)
- 56 children funded at L2 due to EHC assessment or plan (13 children did not receive funding as they didn't take up a place)
- 6 moved from L1 to L2
- 243 individual children receiving some Inclusion Funding 2021-2022

#### Other changes for 2021-22

There were three amendments to the EYIF application form this year, which we hope has resulted in a simplified application process. Feedback has been positive, and the new form has supported panel to accept/ reject applications more easily. We believe the relevant information is now requested in the application with less repetition. We now need to ensure all settings use the most up-to-date version of the EYIF application. We have promoted EYIF availability and the application process through training and visits to settings.

The application process was further simplified to remove the need for the Area SENCo to physically sign an application form to show support of the needs of the child.

Panel meetings have continued successfully on Microsoft Teams. We appreciate the reading that panel members do ahead of the panel to aid allocation of funds.

Thresholds have not been relaxed and the same criteria continues for this year as last year.

We removed the need to apply for EYIF for children accepted for EHCP assessment where a level 2 application had not been submitted previously.

A frequently asked questions document was added to the EYIF webpage to build consistency and clarity.

The monitoring form was developed in Microsoft Teams with the expectation that every setting completes a form for their EYIF cohort. The results of this are included within this report as a summary to support Solihull settings to use EYIF appropriately to contribute to the provision for children. Settings who did not complete the monitoring form by the deadline were contacted three times in total, requesting the information.

## **(2) Early education settings requesting funding and number of children allocated EYIF1 and EYIF level 2**

79 settings have received Early Years Funding IF 1 and/ or 2 in 2021/22 with 217 children benefitting from enhanced funding. See **Appendix 1**.

### **(1) How funding has been used**

All settings were asked to complete a monitoring form to evaluate how they had spent the EYIF money and the impact of this funding. This year an online form was used to collect this information. Settings where multiple children received funding were asked to complete this as a summary of the total funding received rather than for each child. The EYIF panel chair contacted settings who had not submitted the monitoring form.

We had 63 forms returned which gives us a good picture of how the funding has been supported children.

Settings who did not complete forms will be considered for monitoring visits throughout the 2022-2023 academic year.

Three settings were visited for a more in-depth discussion about their use of EYIF. These settings were targeted because they received higher levels of EYIF monies.

#### **Castle Bromwich Infants and Nursery- All Stars**

The funding received by All Stars was mainly used to provide additional adult support to ensure the targets on My Support Plans were addressed. They also applied for funding for a specialist chair for one nursery child. Funding allowed the school to purchase additional resources to support a child's interests such as to be able throw objects (safely) and support their trajectory schema, or to support a fascination with rotational schema with spinning toys. Staff accessed language training. They make sure the appropriate strategies are used across the setting.

The team worked hard to 'read' and provide for the children's needs and interests. This aided attendance and additional support was given to aid transition between rooms as main school is in a different building. The All Stars lead commented on the difference that attending the school from 2-years-old has made to one child. Another, where it was expected that an Education Health and Care Plan would be necessary, but they have developed so well that this is no longer being considered. Additional funding has helped both of these children, but so has the 'can do' attitude of staff in school.

### **In the Woods Nursery**

Applications were received to support children at both level 1 and level 2 EYIF. Applications explained the need for equipment including a touch table, sensory paths and additional adult support to aid the particular skills being developed. Transition reports have been completed to aid continuity and a local school has visited In the Woods to see how they have adapted to aid children's development. They know their children well and are keen to ensure support continues successfully for the child and family.

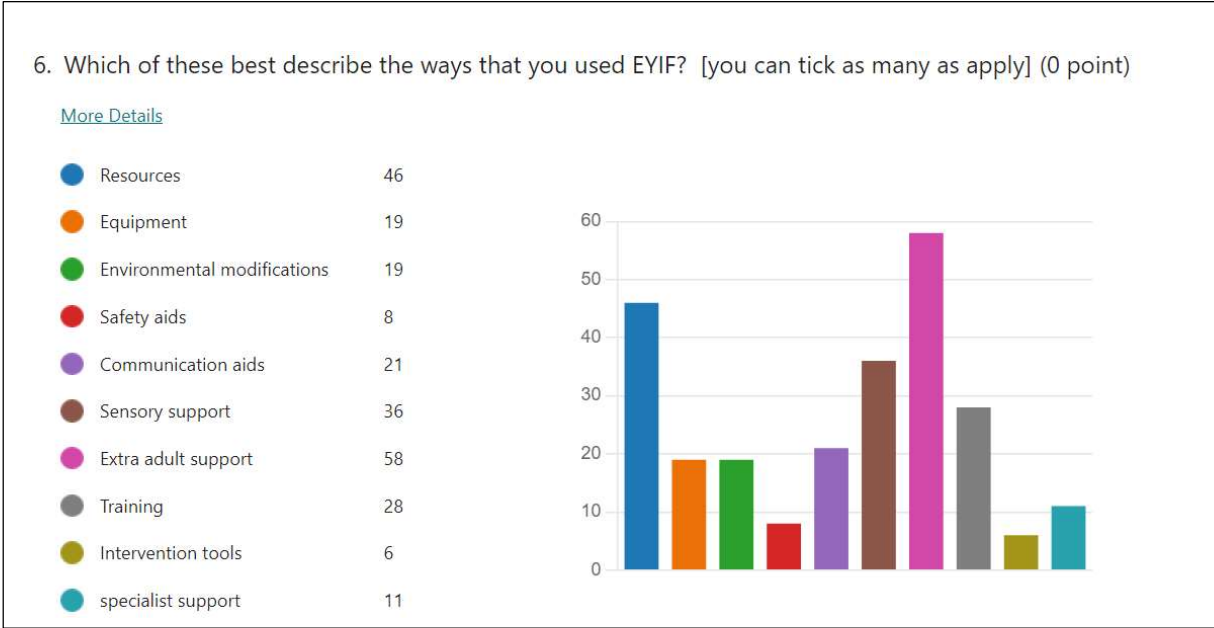
The SENCo is considerate of the small steps to success that they need to support to ensure progress. The setting works closely with parents and share resources to aid consistency and home-routines. The nursery approaches the needs of the child, family and setting by carefully considering how they can aid meal times or routines by helping each small step along the way to the desired outcome. They appreciate that it takes time but believe through working together to 'listen' to the child and family they can support for a positive outcome. Nursery have worked hard to help children to communicate and take turns and develop physically. A trampoline and yoga cards have helped balance and physical development and keep children active. The golden thread is staff knowledge and their attitude to ensure they include every child.

### **The Mulberry Bush Nursery**

The two leads shared the story of children who were supported with additional funding in their nursery. To remove barriers to access for their early education entitlement they worked closely with parents to adjust attendance to suit one child. They now attend 5 days for a shorter amount of time each day rather than the previous 3 long days. Additional staffing has supported children's ability to join in and communicate.

Advice from SISS: Sensory and physical Impairment team and the Early Years Team has been implemented to removing barriers to learning. Choice boards used in the home were adopted successfully in nursery. Staff are trained in Makaton and recent Intensive Interaction training is being implemented. The nursery staff adapt with schemes and routines in mind. The setting leads evaluate provision and ensure there are consistent approaches and strategies embedded into routines. Funding has supported them to purchase specific resources for each child's sensory/ calm box. Resources used as objects of reference are temporarily transitioning with the child to aid visual communication in their new setting.

**Funding for the 2020/2021 academic year has been used for:**



Further information about the ways that EYIF was used can be found in **Appendix 2**.

**(2) Impact of funding**

The lists below are a summary of the many ways that early years settings and the inclusion fund have supported children and their families.

**Feedback from parents**

*Child attending the setting more as happy to attend, parents feel more confident that needs are met – happy and calmer*

*Parents are delighted with the progress and notice they [child] are able to use shared strategies at home to benefit their child*

*All of the resources bought have helped towards their great progress*

*Parents are particularly pleased with how the nursery involves them [parents] in decision making and seeking information on needs and interests from them.*

*1 parent posted on social media how amazed she was that her child has been included for 2 /3 hour sessions per week when previous he only attended another nursery for 30 minutes twice a week. The high staff ratio and determination to include her child by providing equipment and adapting the environment played a large part in that success.*

*The child is remaining in the setting for an extra year as parents were impressed with their development and support.*

*Parents fed back that consistency has supported with them signing at home*

*'Not available' sign supports safety at home and nursery*

*Progress checks, parents' evenings and end of year reports -the feedback is positive.*

*'Every day this little boy has the time of his life, I could never thank you enough'*

### **Impact on the child**

*Child is walking which is great. Another child is starting to give eye contact.*

*Communication has improved*

*We have limited the sensory aversions so they will now engage with water and get into a bath to wash*

*His speech and physical skills have improved massively*

*The chair has enabled her to join in more*

*Improvements in levels of development and achieving targets as well as other skills*

*Child's behaviour -support when they become anxious or overwhelmed*

*Always has a smile on his face, looks in his element in setting.*

*Now sits with peers, takes turns, follows simple instructions, speaks in one and two-word phrases....*

*At first the child would only play with set toys or equipment and now happy to explore all areas of the environment and new equipment.*

*Improved physical play with greater confidence*

*Lots of positive feedback from physio, occupational health, and speech therapists.*

### **Comments from settings**

*'We try to share as much advice and how we support the children in setting to parents so that there can be consistency in approach. Parents notice the progression and development for their child'*

*The purchase of specific equipment has helped in meeting their sensory needs but also in integrating them into some routines and to involve them in some activities.*

*The funding use has had a big impact on their wellbeing and progress*

*'It has been SO handy having a contact in the LA to talk to and have the support from them if we have any concerns and queries, and this is valuable and very much appreciated.*



## **How might we develop the application and monitoring process?**

*Honestly, I don't think there needs to be any changes, we have always felt supported and trusted.*

*The form is fairly easy to use and self-explanatory to complete making application process smooth. Monitoring is a good process and again easy to complete within a good timeframe.*

*This is a better way than over the last few years the way this form is presented.*

*We have been happy with the support we have received in terms of inclusion funding this year and it has had a big impact on our ability to meet the needs of the children. Sharing of panel dates has ensured that we did not miss any application deadlines. Sometimes children attend the setting without being known previously to agencies and it would be helpful to get additional funding quickly as significant adult support is needed.*

*Application form is too repetitive and there are many barriers involved to accessing the funding, which can lead to delay in necessary support for the child.*

*Application form is fine to complete and asking for feedback/monitoring once a year is also better than termly due to workload*

### **(3) Recommendations for EYIF for 2021/22**

We will promote the new simplified application form and consider the development of an on-line application form.

The Early Years Team will be working with others to update the Graduated Approach 'banding' document to support what a setting should do as part of their universal offer and how to enhance provision to support where children have SEND. We hope that this will aid our recognition of quality first teaching and adjustments for enhanced provision.

We will consider the monitoring of EYIF through the reflective conversations with the Early Years Team and SISS. Potential targeting of settings for monitoring who have less input from the early years SEND teams or who have not submitted monitoring forms.

We should increase the monitoring of attendance levels for children receiving enhanced funding for 15 or 30 hours but who we are aware are on a reduced timetable without plans to increase this.

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 we will consider piloting further opportunities for automatic funding. The children who are identified for referral to the Early Years Team Around The Child panel (EYTAC) who then go on to receive early years practitioner / SISS support in the home have their potential SEN needs identified early. Where these children continue to need a higher level of support as they transition into a nursery

(as identified by SISS/ EYP), we would like to consider automatic funding for the term. This is to support staff release and resources to work with early years inclusion support practitioners who will model skills and coach key persons to best support the child. The amount funded will be equivalent to level 1 EYIF and will be for 2, 3 and 4 year-olds. During the term the setting can consider completing an application for EYIF at level 2. This EYIF T-level (TAC- Transition) is not funding to encourage settings to take a child with high needs as this inclusive practice should already be part of the settings ethos and practice. It is in recognition of the expectation for enhanced communication during and after transition and the opportunity for training.

The budget was over spent this year due to the high numbers of applications. This year is the first year that the Early Years Inclusion Fund budget has been spent. We have not restricted the funding but responded to the change in need by applying usual criteria and continuing to fund where this criteria has been met. We hope to increase the amount requested for 2022-2023 year with EHCP funding. The EHCP funding, where children have a plan, will be funded through EHCP level 2N funding which will be equivalent to level 2 and will be a separate fund outside EYIF. The removal of this proportion of funding for next year will increase the EYIF budget to accommodate the need for emerging SEN. The EYIF chairs will meet more regularly to monitor the budget spend and consider what evidence we have for the increase in applications. This may lead to a change in policy if the overspend continues in the future.

Levels 1 and 2 funding will remain equivalent to core funding base rate for next year. This should enable the fund to be able to support more children and more settings.

**Lisa Morris**

Early Years Team Manager

**Rosie Ratcliffe**

Family Information Service Manager

Chairs of Early Years Inclusion Fund Panel

## Appendix 1.

Early Education Setting	Inclusion Fund 1	Inclusion Fund 2	Equipment funding	Monitoring form received End September 2022
Abigail Godfree		1		Y
Active Angels		2		Y
Balsall Common Academy		3		Y
Beatle Woods		2		Y
Beechwood Haslucks Green		2	Yes	Y
Beechwood Windy Arbor		3		Y
Bentley Manor Nursery		2		
Billy Bears		1		
Bishop Wilson Primary		2		Y

Blossoms Pre-School	1	1		Y
Brambles Nursery		2		Y
Burman Infant School		3		Y
Busy Little Bees		2		Y
Castle Bromwich Infant and Nursery School (including All Stars)	1	17	Yes	Y
Cheswick Green Primary and Cheswick Chimps	1	1		Y
Child First Day Nursery		2		Y
Coleshill Heath School & Chuckles	1	4		Y
Claire Miller		1		
Cranmore Infant School	2			Y
Damson Wood Infants (including Woodies)	2	4		Y
Eversfield School	1			Y
Faye Morris		1		Y
First Steps	2	6		Y
First Choice Langley		1		
Fordbridge Primary including Childcare Plus	2	4		
Greswold Primary including Greswold Greyhounds	3	1		Y
Holly Lane Pathways		1		
Honey Pot House (Shirley)		3		
In the Woods	1	4		Y
Kids Planet Nursery		2		
Kineton Green Primary School		2		Y
Kirsty Synnott		1		Y
Lady Katherine Leveson including Care and Play		1		Y
Lawnswood Shirley Heath		5		Y
Lawnswood Streetsbrook		2		Y
Little Angels Pre-school		2		Y
Little Learners Montessori School		1		Y
Little Scallywags Day Nursery		3		Y
Mad Hatters		2		Y
Marston Green Infant Academy		4		Y
Marston Green Leap Frogs		2		
Meriden Primary School		2	Yes	
Merstone (Pebbles)		13		Y

Mill Lodge Primary	1	1		Y
Monkspath Primary and Monkeys		3		Y
Mucky Pups Nursery		1		
Nurture Nest Nursery		1		Y
Oak Cottage Primary		1		Y
Our Lady of the wayside Primary	1	1		Y
Pauline Brayson		1	Yes	Y
Peterbrook Primary		1		
Playpals Nursery		1		Y
Reynalds Cross		10		
Smiths Wood Primary		1		Y
Solihull Stratford Court		1		
St Alphege Infant and Nursery		2		Y
St Alphege Pre-school	1			Y
St Andrews Primary	1			Y
St George and St Teresa Primary Academy		1		Y
St Margaret's Pre-school		2		
St Margaret's Primary School	3			Y
St Patrick's C of E Primary Academy		1		Y
Streetsbrook Infant Academy		2		Y
Streetsbrook Childcare	1	4		Y
Tender Years Nursery	4	4		Y
Tudor Grange Academy St James		2		Y
Tudor Grange Academy Yew Tree and childcare		4		Y
The Base	1			Y
The Mulberry Bush		6		Y
The Natural Childcare Company		1		Y
The Organic Nursery	2	1		Y
Tidbury Green Private Nursery		1		Y
Ulverley Primary (including Rising Stars)		1		Y
Whitesmore NN		1		Y
Wiggles and Giggles Nursery		1		Y
Windy Arbor Primary School		1		
Wise Owls Day Nursery		4		Y
Woodlands Trails		2		
Yorkswood Primary		1		

If a child attends 2 settings they have been counted at each setting.

**Appendix 2:**

How funding was used? What areas did the funding support?

<p><b>Adult support</b></p>	<p>To implement suggested strategies- such as physio.          To observe and get to know children better          One-to-one at mealtimes to support safety and involvement          Movement breaks          Adult to collect equipment that was available to a child [so zones were not all collected preventing other children from playing with the resources] This has reduced in volume over time          Transition resources          Now and next          Self-care          Play partner and supporting children’s play          Release time for paperwork and contacts such as EHCP          There were incidents where a setting applied for EY funding to support the next setting as a child was leaving them – thankyou.</p>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>Sensory toys- balls, dough, water play          Schema related toys including soft objects for throwing- woollen pompoms, soft bean bags          Consistent resources for home and setting          Themed toys for child’s special interest- princess, Peppa Pig.          Physical development aids- strength for arms/ legs and co-ordination (BEAM)          Climbing equipment          Fine motor bags and fidget toys          Books (such as for social stories) and Toniebox stories          Role play themed resources</p>
<p><b>Equipment/ Sensory support</b></p>	<p>Foil and fleece blankets to envelope or bean bag          Weighted objects          Ear defenders          Wig-wam and black out tent          Sensory/ calming boxes/ basket          Massage and firm cuddle time when child is anxious/ overwhelmed          Pod swings, trampette, gym balls, sit and spin          Cuddle ball, mood lights, emotion bean bags          Sensory room- bubble tube, light buttons, sensory floor mats, peanut ball, light up water, mirrors          Fidget toys          Braille equipment, books, labelling sheets</p>

<b>Communication aids</b>	<p>Makaton signs and symbols  Voice machine, voice box  Role play toys/ imaginative play  Books, i-pad  Communication cards, Communication in Print purchased  Objects of reference such as astro turf  'Communication Fix'  Transition books  Communication boards  Mirroring</p>
<b>Sensory support/ equipment</b>	<p>Toys- cause and effect  Flashing toys -balls, torch, star  Remote control toys  Texture board and tactile equipment  Water beads, Gelli bath, Bubbles  Sensory mat  Auditory sound equipment  Use of a sail to reduce acoustic/ surround sound  Red tape to map the room</p>
<b>Consumables</b>	<p>Printing  Laminating to help resources last and to be wiped  Signs such as -not available</p>
<b>Training</b>	<p>Dingley's Promise- Inclusion and Transition  Makaton  Intensive Interaction  Manual handling  ILP training  Medical  PECS  Autism Awareness/ AET- good autism practice.  Cost of training and/ or release for staff.</p>
<b>Parents meetings</b>	<p>To share strategies and complete referrals  Themed Personalised Intervention Bags such as to develop hand arch, to use at home.  Support for parent – sleep, behaviour, school preparation.</p>
<b>Environmental modifications</b>	<p>Mud kitchen  Sensory area  Den / dark tent with sensory lights  Small climbing steps, outside mats, quiet space away from the hustle and bustle  Ensure space for wheelchair accessibility  Workstation  Outdoor canopy/ fence and gate for free flow. Outdoor rug.  Small lunch area</p>
<b>Safety aids</b>	<p>Tools to support eating  Chew toys [and foods]  Crash mat</p>

	<p>Head guard</p> <p>Distraction resources – hats for others and alternative ‘hair’ for a child</p> <p>Replace less stable furniture</p> <p>Pushchair and reins</p> <p>Adapted safety gate</p> <p>Training and support from Area SENCo/ SENCo to help keep child safe</p> <p>Replaced some equipment with softer versions</p>
<b>Specialist equipment recommended by specialist</b>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Seating system</p> <p>Toilet seat</p> <p>Footrest</p> <p>Pushchair</p> <p>Adjustable table -wheelchair height</p> <p>Floor chair</p> <p>Walker</p>
<b>Specialist support bought in</b>	<p>Guide dog support team</p> <p>Independent Speech and Language Therapist</p> <p>Educational Psychologist.</p>