

## Email from Carolyn Terry to Essex early years and childcare and childcare providers

**From:** Free Entitlement Funding Queries <[FEEDQueries@essex.gov.uk](mailto:FEEDQueries@essex.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 13 May 2021 12:26

**Cc:** Free Entitlement Funding Queries <[FEEDQueries@essex.gov.uk](mailto:FEEDQueries@essex.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Urgent - Please Read - Covid-19 Update 13 May 2021

Dear All

Please see updates on the following points in this email

- Proposed Temporary Changes to the Early Years Inclusion Funding Application Process
- DocuSign - changes to signing Early Years Inclusion and Capital funding agreement forms
- Updates from the DfE

**Proposed Temporary Changes to the Early Years Inclusion Funding Application Process** - we have received a lot of feedback around: -

- the difficulties early years settings and childminders are still having with obtaining a supporting statement to enable them to submit an Early Years Inclusion Funding application.
- confusion on which Inclusion Funding form should be used

In response to this feedback, we are intending to trial a new system for Early Years Inclusion Funding applications that will remove the requirement for a supporting statement and have just one application form to be completed.

We are proposing this trial period will run for the June 2021, July 2021 and August 2021 Early Years Funding panels

To summarise the changes for the trial period: -

- Both the Temporary Covid and Interim Early Years Inclusion Funding Application forms will be discontinued and removed from the Provider pages
- The current full application form will be adjusted and will cover up to the end of each financial year as relevant (ie this won't apply where children start in a Reception class in September)
- The new application form will have 3 sections that must be completed, covering: -
  1. What the child's identified needs are
  2. What interventions are already in place or will be implemented
  3. Why additional staffing is needed for this over and above the provision's usual practice
- Alongside the application, a copy of a SEND support plan, One Plan or Health Care Plan must be submitted at the same time

- A condition of funding may be that the early years setting or childminder may be required to attend a cluster meeting and / or training to provide additional support. Where this is the case, evidence of attending this support prior to additional termly payments are made, as appropriate
- If an application does not include enough information, the Early Years Funding panel will refer the setting or childminder on for further support from internal ECC education teams as appropriate. In these instances, inclusion funding will be agreed for an interim period of 12 weeks to allow for further support to be accessed.
- Details on who has applied for Inclusion Funding will be shared with internal ECC teams to enable support to be offered where required

Please note, if you have **already submitted** an Inclusion Funding application form for the **June 2021 panel** this will be processed as usual and you will not need to submit a new form. Any new applications from this point on should be made via the new form for the June 2021, July 2021 and August 2021 panels.

*The new application form can be found [here](#)*

Feedback will be sought from settings and childminders that have submitted early years inclusion funding applications during this period to support the decision on whether this should become a permanent change. The decision on whether this will become a permanent change will be made by the 31 July 2021.

If you have any queries about this change, please email the Early Years Inclusion Funding mailbox ([inclusion.funding@essex.gov.uk](mailto:inclusion.funding@essex.gov.uk))

**DocuSign - changes to signing Early Years Inclusion and Capital funding agreement forms** - as part of our review in how we can make the processes of applying for funding easier for childcare providers, we have identified an easier solution to signing and returning funding agreement forms for both early years Inclusion and Capital funding.

A number of teams across ECC are already using digital signatures for customers to accept terms and conditions of funding or contracts. We have reviewed this option and feel it will be a simpler solution for childcare providers to use too. Therefore, the Early Years Funding panel will be adopting this later this month.

You will be able to accept the terms and conditions of an Inclusion Funding Agreement immediately rather than having to print, sign and scan a document. This means that payments will be made quicker and more funding will reach the children the panel have agreed to support.

The process is set out below: -

- Once an application for early years inclusion or capital funding is agreed, you will be sent an email with the documents attached and a link to the DocuSign website.
- When you click on the link you will be taken to the document to apply your signature. *Please note you **do not need a DocuSign account in order to sign.***
- This can be completed on a mobile phone as well as tablets, laptops and computers.

- You will only need your email address (username) password and a code that will be sent when you sign into the DocuSign website.

This is a secure system with a two-factor authentication process, which is compliant with ECC Technical Services requirements.

This 1 minute video shows the process

<https://support.docusign.com/en/videos/New-Signing-Experience>

If you have any queries about this change, please email the Early Years Inclusion Funding mailbox ([inclusion.funding@essex.gov.uk](mailto:inclusion.funding@essex.gov.uk))

## Updated DfE Guidance

### Coronavirus (COVID-19) Roadmap – guidance for education settings

This week, the [Prime Minister announced](#) that the country will move to Step 3 of the roadmap on Monday 17 May. As a result, the following documents have been updated: -

- [early years and childcare providers](#)
- [schools guidance](#)
- [special schools and other specialist settings](#)
- [further education colleges and providers](#)
- [higher education providers](#)
- [protective measures for holiday or after-school clubs and other out-of-school settings](#)

Please see the [guidance on the COVID-19 response – Spring 2021 \(Roadmap\)](#) for additional information.

## DfE Updated Guidance 10<sup>th</sup> May

[Guidance for parents and carers of children attending out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#) Updated to provide additional guidance on residential visits, which can commence from Step 3. Updated the guidance on use of face coverings, indoor group sizes and parental attendance at out-of-school settings.

[What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges during COVID-19](#) Updated guidance for parents in line with Step 3 of the roadmap, including information on face coverings, testing, travel abroad and educational visits.

Best wishes.

Carolyn

### Carolyn Terry

EYCC Sufficiency and Sustainability Manager

Strategy, Planning and Performance

Education Directorate

Essex County Council

<https://eycp.essex.gov.uk/>

Please note my normal working days are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday

T: 033 3013 6481

Mob: 078 2586 0004

E: [carolyn.terry@essex.gov.uk](mailto:carolyn.terry@essex.gov.uk)

