

FAQ's re SENDIF

1) Do we have to submit a completely new application for children returning to the setting who received funding last year?

Answer – No you do not need to do a completely new application. Use your original form and update it in another colour, include reviews of how SENDIF has been used for the period you had it (i.e. planning and provision towards specific outcomes) any new specialist advice and how that is used. Please include current age and stage of development judgements (and a couple of observation records that support this assessment) as well as progress and tracking data. It may be that the funding goes down or up depending on progress and the child's match to criteria.

2) Can a setting still receive SENDIF if a child is due to start reception but is not going?

- a) is a summer born and the parents are requesting deferred entry
- b) new arrival and no school place found yet

Answer – yes but only if either or the two situations above apply

3) Can SENDIF funding be continued for a child moving to reception when the EHCP is not due to be completed until later in the Autumn term?

Answer - No SENDIF would cease at the end of the summer term. The school would be expected to make provision using its notional SEN funding.

4) Parents do not always apply for DLA for their 2 year olds even though they may meet the criteria. How can settings get support for these children?

Answer – settings should work with parents to support them to consider or apply for [DLA](#) if it is appropriate. Currently the LA cannot offer SENDIF funding for 2 year olds children not in receipt of DLA. Settings should contact SEN for advice.

5) A child has just started at our setting, and they had SENDIF funding awarded by the previous LA. Do we have to apply again?

Answer - Once you have had a chance to see how the child manages in your setting you should have a clearer idea if the funding is required. You can submit the original application and its evidence if you have it to apply to Southwark and add any baseline or initial assessments and your review of response to interventions in place alongside any other information you can gather e.g. reports, action plans, TACs etc to support the application. If you do not have the previous application you will need to follow the normal Southwark process as we cannot agree SENDIF funding based on a different LA's decision

6) Can we apply for SENDIF before the child starts with us?

Answer – The LA recognises that some children present with very high needs and that to prepare for their arrival it would be helpful to have funding ensured so that appropriate support can be in place. If you have sufficient evidence of the level of need e.g. professionals' reports and involvement and the information you gather as part of your usual transition arrangements such as home visit reports, stay and play observations then yes you can apply beforehand. However funding will only apply from the actual date the child starts attending.

7) We successfully applied for SENDIF but the child moved to another setting what happens?

Answer – Please notify SEN immediately to ensure records are kept up to date. If they move out of borough/ attend a provision in a different borough then the new setting would need to apply to their local scheme. If they move to another Southwark setting please pass all the records you have including your application to the new setting if you know which setting they have gone to. They can then notify us of the child's start date with them and the funding would follow the child.

Should you get a child that you think already has Southwark SENDIF agreed come to you please let us know their start date and we can check our records.

8) Should we say what level of SENDIF funding we want?

Answer – The LA will decide on the level of funding based on the evidence in your application. Your application should clearly explain the areas of SEND the child experiences and how these are impacting on learning and other development, including tracking data for all areas. You need to show what interventions you are doing and those you want to put in place including when/ how much/ intensity (group/1-1) and why – what outcomes are you wanting to achieve, include things you are being advised to do or how you think you may use professional advice if they are only just getting involved. You may wish to indicate the funding level you consider may be needed but this is not required.

9) We have a child with medical needs where a medical practitioner (HCA/ nurse) is attending with them. Should I apply for an EHC needs assessment or SENDIF?

Answer – It will depend on whether the child has additional SEN and if so what level. Where children are supported by a HCA they usually will not need a second adult with them at all times. However, there maybe some times when some more specialist educational input is needed that a medical professional may not be able to do e.g. a speech and language programme that requires a trained person to deliver it. In these cases some SENDIF funding may be needed. Some children may have very complex SEN and an EHC needs assessment may be required to identify the type of provision needed to meet their needs in the long term. The professionals involved are likely to be able to advise if this is necessary.

10) Can we apply for SENDIF funding and an EHC needs assessment at the same time? *

Answer – Yes you can although you must make this clear on the request. This is likely to be appropriate for **relatively few** children at this point as in most cases gaining SENDIF support allows for interventions to be put in place that may either reduce the need for an assessment, or that would contribute to the evidence you gather later as to the need for assessment. The LA recognises that a small number of children may have very high level needs and that delaying assessment is not in their best interest. The LA can also decide to move to assessment for children where settings have applied for SENDIF if they feel it is required. Settings can apply using either the SENDIF form or the EHCP1 form; there is no need to duplicate your work by completing both however you must ensure that you have sufficient evidence to support the request. The LA would need more detail and evidence to determine if an EHC needs assessment is required than is necessary to offer SENDIF.

Settings must ensure they refer to the Assessment Criteria (this and the EHCP1 form can be found on the Local Offer <http://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/education--health-and-care-plan/>) and that if they are using the SENDIF form that it has all the information we need (i.e. all the areas covered by the EHCP1 form) and sufficient supporting evidence to show that the SEN the child experiences is of a significant level that would require provision long term beyond expectations of what could be put in place using SENDIF/SEN Support. To request an EHC needs assessment it is likely that the professionals involved with the child have indicated that assessment is needed and you should include any meeting notes/ written records to this effect.

Settings may be asked to send in additional information to support the consideration of whether to assess if needed.

*Cases submitted through this route using the SENDIF form are considered at the EY SEND panel first and then will be sent to the next available SEND panel unless further information is required.

11) What should I do if I think the child needs to be considered for an EHC needs assessment immediately?

If you have sufficient evidence to support a request for assessment, for example professional advice or reports indicate the child has a high level of need especially where they indicate the child is likely to require an EHC needs assessment then **use the EHCP1 form**. (See answer to q 10) Assessment requests are considered every week whereas SENDIF applications (even if you are also asking for an EHC needs assessment) are considered half termly. This is especially important for children due to transfer to primary school the following year, as if an EHCNA is required it is best to begin the process as early as possible in their final nursery year.

12) If I use the EHCP1 form will I still be able to get SENDIF?

Answer – yes but again it is helpful to make it clear you want the LA to decide on both aspects. Please see answers above re evidence required to apply for an EHC needs assessment. You may find that the LA offers SENDIF but does not agree the EHC needs assessment at this point, or that it asks for additional information to be sent in immediately or that it suggests some actions to be taken before you reapply in the future.

13) We successfully applied for SENDIF for a pupil previously and we now think an EHC needs assessment is the right next step. Do we need to complete the EHCP1 form?

Answer – We do need to know rather more detail to determine if an EHC needs assessment is required than is necessary to offer SENDIF. However we do not want to make colleagues have to do unnecessary work. There are different ways to give the LA the information we need to consider an EHC needs assessment request but your SENDIF application should help whichever approach you take.

- a) Use your original application and add to it in another colour to make clear that this is new and updated information. The LA will need to see clearly your use of the funding and review of impact as well as how you are using specialist advice – as by now you should have had time to seek and use professional input. You need to look at the EHCP1 request form and make sure that you cover all the required aspects in your SENDIF form – add information where you feel most appropriate making clear what it is intended to demonstrate. You may prefer to copy and attach specific pages from the EHCP1 form to your pack e.g. the resource strand.
- b) Alternatively you may find it easier to use the EHCP1 form and attach your original SENDIF form as part of the evidence. Then you can refer back to your SENDIF application e.g. rather than completing every section of the EHCP1 you could refer to the relevant part of the SENDIF form that has the required information rather than writing it again e.g. 'see SENDIF application q 3'. Then complete the EHCP1 sections that are not addressed. Remember though you will need to show how things have progressed since the original application as discussed above.
- c) Alternatively you could copy and paste from your SENDIF application onto the EHC1 form and add to it and update.

Regardless of which approach you choose please include all the supporting evidence e.g. tracking data, TAC or meeting minutes, observation notes, delivery plans, provision maps, planning records and reviews and amendments as well as any formal reports that may have been done.

14) We were awarded L2 funding for a pupil previously can we request an EHC needs assessment?

Answer – yes if your monitoring and review of the child's progress based on the use of SENDIF indicates that their difficulties and the provision required to address them matches the EHC assessment criteria. It would be likely that there would be additional information

also such as updated or new professional involvement. If you are not sure that this is the case you may prefer to apply for the higher level funding first.

15) We applied for SENDIF and an EHC needs assessment, we got funding but the assessment wasn't agreed. Can we apply again now we have new information?

Answer – Yes if the new information is significant and demonstrates that the child's difficulties and provision to meet them matches the assessment criteria. See answer 12 for more advice.

16) Are there any examples of completed forms we could use to help us?

Answer – as the scheme has not been going long settings are still working out how best to do them and the number of applications is not yet high enough to ensure anonymity. We will be developing support materials. Settings are welcome to contact SEN to seek advice on their application before submitting it.