

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Revised July 2025

Activity Led Funding for Inclusion (ALFI) Board

Introduction

This Guidance clarifies the role of the Activity Led Funding for Inclusion (ALFI) Board.

Background

SEND Code of Practice - Jan 2015

Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for children with SEN

(Ref. 5.1)

All children are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and
- become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education

Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children.

Funding for SEN support in the Early Years

(Ref. 5.59)

Local authorities must ensure that all providers delivering funded early education places meet the needs of children with SEN and disabled children. To do this, Local Authorities should make sure funding arrangements for Early education reflect the need to provide suitable support for these children.

(Ref. 5.60)

Early Years providers should consider how best to use their resources to support the progress of children with SEN.

The Board

The ALFI Board has been set up primarily as a consultative moderation group to respond to requests for activity led funding from Early Years' settings to support individual children with special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) within a setting.

Group Membership

The Board will consist of a minimum of 3 of the following members:

- Home Learning Environment and Early Years team members
- Business Support Officer
- Early Years practitioners

Expectation of Board members

- The Early Years practitioners will be expected to attend in person alongside the Torbay Council employees
- All Board members will apply the Activity Led Funding for Inclusion criteria to each request; (Appendix 1)
- Together, all Board members will read the Activity Led Funding applications: Part 1 & 2 & the required ILDPs and ILDP reviews
- All Board members will input at the meeting which will inform the discussion and outcome
- All Board members will agree to sign off or decline funding requests following the individual child Board meetings
- All Board members will treat all information presented at the ALFI Board as confidential

Delivery and management of the Board

- Generally, there are twelve Boards a year, two each half term
- All submission dates, Board dates and approximate payment dates will be shown on the Torbay Family Hub website <https://torbayfamilyhub.org.uk/topic/activity-led-funding-for-inclusion-alfi/>
- The Board is chaired by individual Local Authority employee members of the Board
- The Board meetings are organised and supported by the Business Support Officer. The Business Support Officer will also communicate the times of individual application presentations to each applicant via email
- Local Authority employee Board members will check all applications to ensure they are complete, for each Board, between the submission date and the Board itself
- Incomplete applications made by Early Years settings, will receive an email from Early Years informing them of this and what action to take
- All meetings will take place in Local Authority meeting rooms or virtually
- The agenda is shared at each Board meeting

- There will be annual training events, held in the Autumn term, to ensure that setting SENCOS, including childminders, are fully aware of how to apply for ALFI

Making an Application

- The applications **MUST** be submitted by Early Years managers/SEND COs by email to earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk. Applications should be sent as single applications, in a single email for each child. **All files/documents should be named and with the child's name.**
- Setting managers/SEND COs **MUST** submit an application by midday on the published submission date. All submission/closing dates and Board dates are shown on the Torbay Family Hub. Applications received **after** the submission time and date deadline will then be considered at the following Board.
- All applications will be presented complete on the PART 1 and 2 ALFI request forms available on the Torbay Family Hub [PVI setting ALFI paperwork - Family Hub](#). **Any handwritten applications will not be accepted and returned to the Early Years setting.**
- All applications **MUST** include:
 - ✓ An individual learning and development plan (ILDP) / Individual support plan
 - ✓ An ILDP review meeting minutes dated no more than 3 months leading up to the Board of the application
 - ✓ If appropriate, an induction/transition meeting minutes in place of the ILDP review.

Without this evidence of the Graduated Approach, the application will not be accepted. A checklist to support applications can be found in Appendix 2.

- Childminders will complete the PART 2 for CHILDMINDERS [Childminders' ALFI paperwork - Family Hub](#) and submit this with an ILDP and ILDP review using the earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk email address
- A TEAMS appointment, to present the case for ALFI for each child, will be sent to the relevant Manager/Setting SENCO ahead of the ALFI Board by the Business support officer

Medical needs

- If a child has solely medical needs, Early Years settings will need to submit the following documents
 1. Evidence of the child's medical needs such as; a paediatrician's report, a specialist nurse report or guidance
 2. A risk assessment
 3. Evidence of the training you have undertaken to support the health need, as relevant
 4. A health care plan created in collaboration with the family and a health professional
- Medical intervention needed to be administered by the Early Years setting staff, should be clearly set out in the child's medical health plan and jointly drawn up by the parent/carer, medical professional and EY practitioner. Relevant training from a medical practitioner to administer the intervention must be sought by the EY staff members.

At the ALFI Board

- Applicants attending a Board will come prepared to talk about each child's application **using the criteria document** to help frame each presentation, focussing on their graduated response (Appendix 1).
- There are some set questions asked by Board members, to help participants anticipate what will be asked, so supporting their preparation. The set questions are:
 - ✓ What does a typical session look like for the child in terms of routines, transitions and engagement?
 - ✓ How is the child interacting with their peers and the adults in the setting?
 - ✓ Can you describe what you have put in place in your setting to support the child?
 - ✓ What impact will ALFI have on what you have told us?
- Each Early Years setting SENCO or manager will have up to 10 minutes to present their individual child's needs. There will be time after each Early Years setting's presentation for the Board members to make a clear decision of the level of funding for each child presented.
- Early Years setting SENCOS and managers will be able to choose whether they see the whole Board or one member of the Board, on their screen while presenting. Applicants will be introduced to each member of the board at the beginning of their virtual meeting. The preference can be made on the ALFI Part 2 form as part of the application.
- It is important that Managers/Setting SENCOS state a preferred time of day, am or pm, for their online appointment at the ALFI Board in their Part 2. ALFI Board members will try and accommodate this preference where possible.
- If on the day of the ALFI Board, Managers/Setting SENCOS cannot attend their online appointment, practitioners should in the first instance make every effort to provide an alternative colleague to attend the ALFI Board. If there is scope to be flexible on the day of the ALFI Board, the Board will try to re-convene the appointment
- If there are a high number of applications for any one Board, then there will be a parallel ALFI Board held either in the morning or afternoon, ensuring that there are at least 3 members for each ALFI Board, to hear all the applications for that day.

Decisions made about ALFI applications

- Decisions about funding applications will be made at the Board meeting. Applications will be judged against a set of criteria (see Appendix 1) and the response from the applicant regarding the impact of the funding if successful. Together, this will enable Board members to award funding correlating to the stated criteria levels 1-3 in appendix A.

Level	SEND Need	Percentage of an hourly rate
1	A moderate level of SEND at SEN Support	40%
2	A high level of SEND at SEN Support	70%
3	An EHCP has been finalised	100%

- Funding will commence from the beginning of the next half term after the Board has met.

- ALFI awarded will be for up to a maximum of 1 year, with a cease date given. Reapplying for ALFI can happen at any point should the needs of the child change. It is the responsibility of the Early Years setting to note each child's cease date and reapply as appropriate to maintain the support needed
- If the child changes their hours, following being awarded ALFI, please complete the 'Change of Hours' form and submit it to the earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk inbox. All Change of Hours applications will be heard at the next ALFI Board and recorded in the minutes. Funding will reflect the week of the child's change of hours. The number of hours claimed for must match the Head Count funded hours. A full ALFI application (Part 1 & 2) will not be necessary in this circumstance
- In the circumstance of a child who is already receiving ALFI and who is transitioning into a new setting, that new setting will receive ALFI from the date of joining until the next scheduled ALFI Board. The new setting must then reapply for ALFI at the next possible ALFI Board. For this to happen please submit your transition meeting minutes to the earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk inbox within one week of the child starting at the new setting
- Where a child who is already receiving ALFI, and starts attending an additional setting, the new setting will need to make an individual application for ALFI at the next possible Board
- The board may offer recommendations to further develop practice whether ALFI is awarded or not e.g. SEND support needed including referrals onto other services, further actions of support, access to training events; specialist support; equipment
- Board members from Early Years settings will not contribute to the decision for ALFI for children that attend **their** setting
- Applications for a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan will automatically be awarded a Level 3 funding rate
- Discussions and decisions made will be recorded by the Business support officer
- Settings will be notified of the allocated funding by email from the Business support officer
- Should Early Years setting staff have any queries or concerns following the Board, please correspond using the earlyyearssend@torbay.gov.uk address only

Monitoring

- A cease date will be given; this will be usually one calendar year from the initial application unless stated otherwise. The Board will offer a short cease date when it is considered a more detailed application is required
- If the ALFI is due to be ceased the half term before the child leaves the setting for a school start i.e. In the May, the ALFI be extended to cover the June and July of that academic year and agreed at the ALFI Board
- If funding needs to continue after the cease date, a new application to the Board will need to be submitted prior to the cease date

- Each term the Business support officer will contact the setting manager, confirming the children in their setting, who are receiving ALFI funding
- Early Years setting managers must report IMMEDIATELY to the Early Years Business support officer if a child receiving ALFI moves from the setting

Eligibility

- ALFI is aimed at supporting all funded pre-school aged children in the following categories with an identified SEND need and/or medical need and who meet the criteria for ALFI.

Age of child	Eligibility	Number of funded hours
All children from 9 months to 4 years	With working parents/carers From September 2025	30 hours
2 year olds	Targeted children	15 hours
All 3 & 4 year olds		15 hours

Confidentiality

- All members of Board will respect the need for confidentiality. Any cases discussed at the Board are not to be discussed outside the Board. Feedback regarding decisions will be the responsibility of the Business support officer

The following procedures will be followed by all Board members:

- ALFI applications will not be emailed from one hard drive to another, once received by the Board members
- All paper copies of the decision-making process and the applications themselves will be shredded after the Board has met
- All Board members working outside Torbay Council, new to the Board, will be sent this Terms of Reference and the ALFI Criteria document to read prior to attending the Board
- All new Board members will confirm, by email, they have read the Terms of Reference and in doing so are confirming that they are bound to the confidentiality statements

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