

Early Years 'Child Alert' Terms of Reference



Early Years Child Alert

Terms of Reference

June 2025

1. Aim

The 'Early Years Child Alert' is designed to raise awareness of children aged between 0–5 years (preschool) who may require additional resources or support at home or in preschool settings. The mechanism aims to connect these children with the most appropriate offer that can best support their individual needs. Support, advice, guidance or training will be offered as to which offer can best support the child and family's needs. The 'Early Years Child Alert' aims to ensure early intervention and appropriate signposting to either a Universal, Targeted or Statutory support offer.

5.36 'It is particularly important in the early years that there is no delay in making any necessary special educational provision. Delay at this stage can give rise to learning difficulty and subsequently to loss of self-esteem, frustration in learning and to behaviour difficulties. Early action to address identified needs is critical to the future progress and improved outcomes that are essential in helping the child to prepare for adult life'

The 0–25 SEND Code of Practice (2015)

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Early Years Child Alert aim to:

- **Support** parents / carers to fully understand and meet the needs of their child
- **Ensure** every child will have his/her needs met with the right support in an educational setting.
- **Promote** high expectations that will contribute to individual progress and outcomes for every child who has or may have Special Educational Needs Disabilities (SEND).
- **Ensure** every child is accepted and included into the early years setting.
- **Increase** professional knowledge of early identification strategies and timely intervention so that every child makes the best possible progress with the support of appropriate services.
- **Support** early years practitioners to implement the Graduated Approach to support every child with emerging needs.
- **Focus** on improved outcomes: provide advice and guidance to help practitioners develop their confidence and expertise in matters relating to SEND and inclusion.
- **Provide** support and guidance for early years practitioners to ensure reports and applications for additional support and funding are completed robustly and submitted in a timely manner.

- **Ensure** the assessment process proceeds at an appropriate pace and every child receives the help s/he needs at the earliest opportunity.
- **Develop** practitioners' knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities to Code of Practice (2014) and other legislation relating to SEND and inclusion.
- **Support** settings and schools to ensure that high expectations and a secure understanding in order to facilitate effective transitions for every child in his/her setting.
- **Improve** professional awareness, to ensure every child will be well prepared for the next phase in his/her educational journey.

3. Overview of the Early Years Child Alert

- The 'Early Years Child Alert' is a single point of referral route used to bring a child from birth until they begin their reception age to the attention of Early Years specialist teams. It is a mechanism that parents, Early Years providers and professionals must use if they feel their child needs provision different from or additional to that normally is available to children of the same age.
- A request for support must be made through the 'Early Years Child Alert' single point of entry. This will be triaged by a panel of early years professionals. The recommended outcomes will be a Universal, Targeted or Statutory offer.
- A discussion will take place with an identified key worker from the Early Years Partnership and with the child's parent/carer, prior to start of the intervention.
- The EY specialist worker will work alongside an identified teacher, practitioner or parent to plan, implement and evaluate the impact of the intervention.
- A request for Early Years Inclusion Funding (for transition/access support) can be made via this route.
- A request for Early Years Inclusion Funding recommended by the key worker from the Early Years Partnership can be made via the Child Alert process.

4. Conditions of the Early Years Child Alert

Prior to the 'Early Years Child Alert' being made, the EY's providers and professionals must discuss how the information will be collected and used, with the child's parent or carers. Before submitting Early Years Child Alert, you will be required to confirm that permission has been given by the parent/ carer.

5. Reporting and Accountability

The Early Years Targeted Support Services need to:

- Know about the child in order to signpost them to the most appropriate support or service.
- Understand who is making the request for support. This will help to provide the correct targeted guidance and assistance for the child, family, or early years provider/professional.
- Identify the child's area of need. This will signpost the right training and support for the EY practitioners/professionals.
- Understand which other professionals are involved to guide the assessment process for allocating appropriate support services.

5. Membership & Lead Roles

Manager of Early Years Inclusion Service
Manager of Portage and Early Years Inclusion Funding
Manager of Language and Communication Team
Manager of Sensory Service
Lead of Primary Outreach Team
Manager of Ready for School Team / Early Help
Specialist Public Health Nurse for Children and Young People with SEND, Children's Public Health Service (CPHS)

6. Frequency and Duration of Support

To be assessed and will be dependent on the individual needs of the child.

7. Confidentiality Agreement for Observers and Additional Contributors to the Early Years Triage Panel

From time to time, the LA receives requests for colleagues to join the Panel in an observatory capacity. The LA agrees to this in the spirit of promoting joint working, joint understanding, professional development and workforce development. In order to manage this effectively, observers must book in advance to attend by contacting a EYP

Service Manager. Observers should note that they must not take part in any elements of the Panel's case discussions and be made aware of these terms of reference.

8. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Panel representatives must uphold confidentiality in all cases considered at the Child Alert Triage Panel and act in accordance with the Data Protection duties of the LA and work together to safeguard children.

9. Confidentiality and Data Protection

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually unless the need arises for an earlier review.

Date: June 2026