

# Early Years 'Child Alert' Terms of Reference



# Early Years Child Alert

## Terms of Reference

### September 2024

#### 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:

- **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 between the age of 0-5 (preschool) 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 early years practitioner or SENDCo 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 EY specialist worker can be made via this route.

### 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.

## **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 provide 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**

Parents, Headteachers, Early Years teachers, SENDCos, nursery managers and Early Years practitioners and other professionals in the local authority can make an 'Early Years Child Alert'

Health professionals would only use the health notification pathway.

## **6. Early Years Outreach Worker Frequency**

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

## **7. Review of Terms of Reference**

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

Date: September 2025