

What is the Disability Access Fund (DAF)

- From April 2017 the Disability Access Fund (DAF) is new funding for early years providers to support children with disabilities or special educational needs. It aids access to early years places by supporting providers in making reasonable adjustments to their settings.

Eligibility

- 3 and 4 year olds will be eligible for the DAF if they meet the following criteria:
- the child is in receipt of child disability living allowance (DLA) and;
- the child accesses the funded entitlement at the early years provider

Note: 4 year olds in primary and infant school reception classes are NOT eligible for DAF funding.

Entitlement

- Providers taking three- and four-year-olds that are eligible for the DAF will be entitled to receive a one-off payment of £615 per year. The DAF is not based on an hourly rate and is an additional entitlement.
- Children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to receive the DAF. Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of free entitlement.

Identifying Children

- Early years providers are responsible for identifying eligible children. Providers are encouraged to speak to parents in order to find out who is eligible for the DAF. Parents of children qualifying for Disability Living Allowance are required to provide documented evidence of this entitlement. Providers need to take a copy of this evidence and email it to talkingchildcare@telford.gov.uk

Responsibilities

- The local authority will fund all early years providers providing a place for each child eligible for the DAF in their area at the fixed annual rate of £615 per eligible child.
- The DAF will not be offset against any other funding which the local authority may ordinarily be providing for children eligible for the DAF.
- The DAF is payable as a lump sum once a year per eligible child. If a child eligible for the DAF is splitting their funded entitlement across two or more providers, the local authority will ask parents to nominate the main provider. The Local Authority will then pay this provider the DAF for the child.

- If a child receiving the DAF moves from one provider to another within a financial year, the new provider is not eligible to receive the DAF funding for this child within the same financial year. DAF funding received by the original setting will not be recouped by the local authority.
- Where a child lives in one authority area but attends a provider in a different local authority, the provider's local authority is responsible for funding the DAF for the child and eligibility checking.
- All early years providers who are eligible to receive funding for the 3 and 4 year old early years entitlement are also eligible to receive the DAF.