

Disability Access Fund (DAF)



Guidance for Childcare Providers

**Additional funding for providers to
support children with Special
Educational Needs & Disabilities
aged 3- and 4- Years.**

March 2023

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1.0 Introduction

Childcare providers have a legal duty to ensure they make reasonable adjustments to ensure they support the equity of access of all children to their provision under the Equality Act 2010. Rutland County Council is committed to ensuring that all children have equal access to learning and as part of this commitment, we are implementing a government initiative called Disability Access Funding (DAF). The fund is for childcare providers/schools (providers) with three and four year olds who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and taking up a Funded Early Education place (FEEE).

The purpose of the fund is to help providers make those reasonable adjustments within their provision to support children with a disability. DAF is not based on an hourly rate and will be paid as a one-off payment of £828, from 1st April 2023 per calendar year to the provider of each eligible child.

For the purpose of this guidance, 'provider' refers to any establishment offering Early Education Funding for 3- and 4-year- olds as identified in Rutland's Funded Early Education Entitlement Provider Agreement.

2.0 Definition of 'Access' and responsibility to make 'Reasonable Adjustments'

For the purpose of DAF and early years, access refers to:

- the means or opportunity to enter the provision of space where early education is to take place. This includes either domestic or non-domestic premises¹.
- the means or opportunity to engage with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)² with reference to the seven areas of learning and development and welfare requirements.

Substantial disadvantage can be avoided by making reasonable adjustments for disabled children. This means making positive steps to ensure that disabled children can fully participate in early education and enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services offered by the provision.

The reasonable adjustment duty comprises of three requirements:

- Provision, criteria and practices
- Auxiliary aids and services
- Physical features

¹ As determined by Ofsted (p4 & 5)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/616082/EY_and_childcare_reg_handbook.pdf

²

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf

3.0 Definition of 'Disability'

A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. (Equality Act 2010).

A physical or mental impairment includes learning difficulties, mental health conditions, medical conditions, and hidden impairments such as dyslexia, autism and speech, language, and communication impairments.

It is important to note that because a child has a disability; it does not necessarily mean that he/she has special educational needs.

4.0 Eligibility

4.1 Providers in Rutland are eligible to receive DAF where a three or four year old child is taking up a place and;

- the child is in receipt of DLA³; and;
- the child is taking up Funded Early Education Entitlement, (either some or all hours of their entitlement).

4.2 Four year olds in primary school reception/foundation stage classes are not eligible for DAF funding.

4.3 Providers are encouraged to raise awareness of DAF with parents in order to identify eligible children. The parent declaration form can be used to ascertain if a child meets the relevant criteria for DAF.

4.4 If a child, eligible for DAF, is splitting their funded entitlement across two or more providers their parent(s) will need to nominate the provider to whom they wish the payment to be made. This will usually be the provider where the child is accessing the majority of their funded entitlement hours.

4.5 If a child receiving DAF moves from one provider to another, the new provider is not eligible to receive DAF for this child within the same calendar year. The new provider will need to wait until the following academic year to be able to apply for funding for the child. If an eligible child remains with the same provider for more than a year, that provider can reapply for a second grant a year after the original application.

³ Criterion as determined by the Department for Education, April 2017. More information about applying for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/eligibility>

5.0 Making an Application

5.1 Parents with an eligible child must provide a copy of their child's DLA award letter⁴ which must be seen by their provider of choice and the Local Authority.

5.2 Due to data protection, completed forms should not be emailed. The provider must forward the application form and a copy of the DLA award letter via AnyComms to EY Funding.

5.3 Rutland providers can submit DAF applications for eligible children who attend their provision but reside outside of the county boundaries.

5.4 Applications received and approved will be processed within 30 working days

6.0 Utilising DAF to support children with SEND

6.1 Providers should consider what reasonable adaptations are required to ensure the child has the same equity of access to the provision as any other child. Resources required to ensure basic entry and reasonable adjustments to the learning environment should be the priority for DAF.

6.2 Providers should involve the child's parent(s) and engage with other professionals working with the family to ensure DAF is spent appropriately. This is not limited to, but may include:

- Area SENCO, Health Visitor, Paediatrician, Local Support Team (LST) Child and Family worker, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Visual Impairment team, Hearing Impairment, Autism outreach.

6.3 Providers who have more than one child eligible for DAF at the same time may wish to 'pool' DAF⁵. This may provide an opportunity to support an adjustment or purchase of equipment that benefits more than one child.

6.4 Providers are encouraged to forward plan in utilising DAF to ensure a child's needs are met for the duration of time that the child will be attending their provision before they start school. However, providers are advised to spend DAF within the term it is awarded.

6.5 Any resources purchased as part of DAF remain the property of that particular provider. However, if a child is moving onto another provider, they may wish to make arrangements for the transfer of any resources.⁶

⁴ Applications without this supporting evidence will not be considered.

⁵ If providers choose to 'pool' funds with other providers, they may choose to enter into an agreement regarding ownership, use and maintenance of resources.

⁶ This may only be possible for non-static items and is at the discretion of the provider who purchased the resource.

6.6 Providers may wish to allow parents to take resources home for weekends and holiday periods if they feel they would benefit the child.

6.7 Providers are encouraged to spend the entire £828 on the eligible child and meet the shortfall for any items over this amount. Rutland County Council will not meet any additional requests for funding above the standard DAF grant.

6.8 DAF should not be used to fund trips, assessments, 1:1 support or additional staffing, staff training or any other activity outside the definition of 'access' as outlined in section 2 and clause 6.1.

7.0 Purchasing equipment and undertaking adaptations

7.1 A list of potential resources which could be purchased with DAF are included in Appendix 1. This section should not be treated as an 'exhaustive' list but should provide some ideas and suggestions on how funding can be used to support eligible children.

7.2 Providers must ensure that any equipment purchased meet the relevant (safety requirements). Electrical items must be PAT tested yearly.

7.3 Providers must ensure any building adaptations meet the appropriate regulations and standards.

8.0 Keeping evidence/proof of spend

Providers must keep receipts and proof of spend for audit purposes by Rutland County Council.

9.0 Further documents and publications/links that providers may wish to refer to

SEND Code of Practice 0-25 – January 2015

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Early Education and Childcare (statutory guidance for local authorities) – June 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718179/Early_education_and_childcare-statutory_guidance.pdf

Statutory Framework for EYFS – 1ST September 2021

[Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance)

Equalities Act 2010 – <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

SEND Family Partnership (for parents and carers of children and young people aged 0 to 25, with special educational needs and disabilities) (SEND)

<https://sendiassrutland.org.uk/>

Contributors

The Learning & Skills Service at Rutland County Council would like to thank Staffordshire County Council for their advice and specialist expertise in developing this guidance.

Appendix 1 – Resource list

Physical access	Communication needs/ASD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gates/child gates • Tarmac area for smooth access • Ramp • Handrails • Steps • Box for feet • Chairs/seating • Walker/rollator • Outside equipment – different swing seat, adapted trikes, trikes with waist straps, resources to support to access the outdoor area • soft play equipment • sitting wedges • corner seats • visual support for sitting e.g. carpet spot • Equipment for marking steps etc. • Different chairs • Big physio balls • OT equipment e.g., spinning mat, 'bilabos' • Different types of scissors (e.g. table top scissors) • Gross motor skills equipment • Hoists • Recording switches • Bibs/dribble bibs • Complete waterproof suits etc • Toughspots etc – allowing physical/sensory play • Chunky crayons/finger crayons • Rulers with handles • Rompa helmets • Early Pencil grips • Suction grab rails • High visibility jackets/bibs • Shazbah trollies [John Care catalogue] • Push chair for trips • Happy pee bottle • Resource booklet for PD (see local offer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings faces • Visual support • Sensory tent • Sensory toys • Portable dividers – create different spaces • Autism friendly materials – social stories book, weighted lap blankets • Board maker/Communicate in Print CD or I-pad app. • Sound area – head phones and DVD player etc. – calming or S+L • Communication support – Makaton symbols, choice boards, • DVDs for songs, simple, picture books • big books and little books • story sacks • chunky books • PECS books, • storage for symbols (boxes or shelves) • Chewigems etc • Mirrors for SLT • Mini trampolines • Persona dolls • Enclosed chairs • Key fobs – play doctor website • Feely bags • Early language objects (doll, brush, cup etc.)

Hearing needs

- Sign language books, cards and games
- Light and sound toys
- interactive whiteboards,
- Soundfield system,
- Talking tins
- Acoustic modification:
- fabric for tables
- curtains
- hanging mobiles
- acoustic clouds
- carpet for a setting/rugs
- felt pads for bottom of toy boxes to reduce sounds
- audio equipment – listening checkers, listening leads, stettoclip, splitter cables,
- sign and write – part of communicate in print software
- Velcro
- story sacks
- Listening games
- iPad – communication/pictures
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Visual needs

- VI list – advice from VI team to settings
- Books with sound buttons, tactile patches
- Touch Braille letters
- Coloured glue sticks
- Giggly Wiggly balls/sensory balls
- Tactile books
- Story sacks
- Musical instruments
- Light and sound buzzers
- Scented playdough
- Scented pens and pencils
- Vibrating cushions
- Plate guard/plate surround
- Scooping bowl
- High contrast tape
- Dark tent/cosy cave
- Dark room kit
- Be Active box
- WOWee
- Tactile Vibrations Sensory Starter Tub
- Simple Switches
- UV Dark Den Multi Sensory Glow Kit
- Fibre Optics
- Lightbox
- iPad
- Tactile letters with braille
- Torches
- Subscription for 3-d books
- Survival blanket/space blanket
- Talking Tins
- Wikki Sticks
- Braille Maths Blocks
- Braille ABC blocks
- Numicom
- Desk slopes
- iPad stands
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<p>Self-care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilet access, changing table etc., changing mats, kneeling pads for staff, storage, toilet frames, toilet steps, toilet inserts, potties with arms/back [Smirthwaite] • Feeding materials: non-slip mats, angled plates, cutlery, appropriate height tables. chairs, specialist cutlery, grasp bar, cups, mini food processor 	<p>General developmental needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensory toys • Cause and effect toys • Stage-not-age toys e.g. cause and effect, inset puzzles, shape sorters. • Large handled brushes • Musical instruments/hand bells • Light weight rattles • Peg men/spring pegs • Stacking toys with magnets • Bubbles • Switches and cause and effect toys • Sensory materials • Construction toys • Treasure baskets – exploration toys • Playdough • Tactile materials/water beads/slime/semolina • Posting boxes
<p>Medical support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure box for medication, plus mobile box for trips etc 	<p>General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printer, Laminator, Velcro! • Environmental changes e.g. safe space, child gates, security doors, handrails, high vis tape for steps, non-slip paint for steps • Digital camera • Parachute • Cookery equipment
<p>Behaviour Sand timers Reward systems/charts/stickers</p>	

Further ideas:

RNIB can provide talking books

Disability Access Funding (DAF) – Application Form 2023-2025

This form is to be completed by the provider and returned via AnyComms (Early Years Funding) or email – Earlyeducationsupportteam@rutland.gov.uk

Three- and four-year old children who are in receipt of child Disability Living Allowance and are receiving the funded entitlement are eligible for the Disability Access Fund (DAF). DAF is paid to the child's early years provider as a fixed annual rate of £828 per eligible child.

Name of Provider	
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Once a parent has declared that their child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and you have seen written evidence of this awarded benefit, please complete the information below and return it, together with a scanned copy of the DLA letter, as directed above.

Child's Legal Family Name:	Child's Legal Forename(s):	
Date of Birth:		Male / Female:
Address including postcode		

Please indicate how the DAF funding will be spent.
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Parent/ Carer/ Guardian with legal responsibility	Childcare Provider
Signed	Signed
Date	Date

Date received

Date approved

Data privacy

Please note that information about whether a child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance is sensitive personal data and will be handled appropriately.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which comes into effect in May 2018, we have to provide you with information about the personal data you give to us. This information is set out below:

Rutland County Council is the data controller for the personal information you may provide. You can contact us by phone on 01572 722577, via email to dataprotection@rutland.gov.uk or by writing to us at Data Protection, Catmose House, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP.

Your information will be used to enable us to perform the necessary checks to ensure correct allocation of the Disability Allowance Fund on behalf of the Government.

Your personal data may be shared with other teams within the council in order to provide a service to you, to ensure our records are kept up to date or otherwise where we are required to do so under other legislation. We may share the data with third parties if we are required by law to do so, this may include the Police or Government Agencies, such as the Department for Education (DfE) and local NHS agencies. We will not sell your data or use it for marketing purposes without your consent.

We will keep your data for four years. This is in accordance with current legislation.

You have the following rights under the GDPR. Please note not all of these rights apply to all processing. Further details on each right can be found on our website (<https://www.rutland.gov.uk>)

- *The right to be informed.*
- *The right of access.*
- *The right to rectification*
- *The right to erasure*
- *The right to restrict processing*
- *The right to data portability*
- *The right to object*
- *Rights related to automated decision making, including profiling'*

☐

Rutland County Council would like to contact you to provide you with information on other Council Services. If you consent to us contacting you for this purpose please tick here.

If you are not happy with the way the council is handling your personal information you have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office.

Department for Education

If you need to know more about how the DfE collects and uses your information please see their website: <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection-how-we-collect-and-share-research-data>