

Disability Access Funding (DAF)

What is DAF?

DAF stands for Disability Access Funding. This is additional funding for early years providers to make reasonable adjustments to their service, to enable a child to access early education.

It is important that settings adhere to the Equality Act 2010 – you have a responsibility as a provider to ensure all children can access your setting. For some children with disabilities, this might mean the provider needs to make reasonable adjustments to allow the child to access the setting. DAF can help support settings to make reasonable adjustments.

What can it be spent on?

DAF should be spent on making early education accessible for the child. This will be individual to the child's needs. DAF should not be used for general costs – adaptations must specifically facilitate access to education for the child. Some ideas of what might be appropriate can include:

- Physical adaptations to settings (eg. hand rails)
- Books or resources to support staff with the child's needs
- Communication aids
- Sensory toys or areas
- Specialist books and toys for the child
- Tactile books and resources
- Sensory tents
- Self-care aids – for example specialist equipment such as non-slip mats for meal times.
- Making existing areas more accessible – for example, purchasing a different chair or table to enable a child to sit with peers during activities and mealtimes.

DAF should not be spent on:

- Childcare fees
- Additional costs that are usual costs for parents, and not directly related to the child's access to education (such as lunch, French lessons)

- General resources, or setting improvements that are not specific to the child's needs
 - Staffing costs.

Who is eligible?

Any child in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is eligible for DAF funding – however it can only be used in one setting per child (you cannot have DAF funding in multiple providers).

Eligible children should be aged 3 or 4 years and should be claiming funded hours.

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 are not eligible to claim DAF if they are in a reception class.

What does the provider receive?

Early Years Providers will receive £815 per calendar year for each eligible child.

DAF is not based on an hourly rate and is an additional entitlement.

You can claim each calendar year for DAF. For example, in West Berkshire, if you receive DAF funding in June 2022, you can apply again in June 2023 (providing the child still meets the eligibility criteria).

How should we apply?

You should apply for DAF through the early years portal. You will need to supply a copy of the DLA award letter and the parent declaration form giving you permission to claim DAF.

When you log in to the Early Years Provider Portal, you should see a tile labelled 'Disability Access Funding'. Click on this tile and select 'create new Disability Access Funding Application'. You should then select the child from the list for whom the application relates to and follow the instructions to upload your documents and enter the child's details.

Inclusion funding

Providers who have a child who might need 1-to-1 support might be able to apply for inclusion funding. Inclusion funding is intended as a contribution towards providing

additional support and resources for children with complex and severe special educational needs and disabilities – this funding is limited, but a panel will consider your application. This funding has a separate eligibility criteria and application process to DAF. For more information, contact earlyyears-service@westberks.gov.uk.