

Early Years SEND Team

Guidance for Early Years Settings

Working together to support early identification, strengthen inclusive practice and ensure every child gets the right support at the right time.



Early
Identification



Inclusive
Practice



Targeted
Support



Stronger
Together



EARLY YEARS SEND TEAM

GUIDANCE FOR
EARLY YEARS SETTINGS



Contents

How to use this guide

1	Welcome	03
2	The Role of the Early Years SEND Team	04
3	Provider Responsibilities	05
4	Overview of the Early Years SEND Support Model	06
5	The Early Years Targeted Support Plan (EY-TSP)	07
6	Visit 1 – Understanding the Child in Context	08
7	Visit 2 – Strengthening Practice	09
8	Visit 3 – Reviewing Impact and Next Steps	10
9	Outcomes and Reviewing the EY-TSP	11
10	The EY-TSP Journey: From Referral to Outcomes	12
11	Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	13



USING THIS GUIDE

This guide explains the role of the Early Years SEND Team and how settings can access and make the most of the support available.

It outlines the EY Targeted Support Plan (EY-TSP), the three-visit support model and the collaborative approach taken to strengthen inclusive practice.



KEY MESSAGES

- ✓ The service complements the Graduated Response.
- ✓ Support is time-limited and outcome-focused.
- ✓ Settings remain responsible for implementing agreed actions.
- ✓ Decisions are informed by evidence of need and impact.



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02

EARLY YEARS SEND TEAM

GUIDANCE FOR EARLY YEARS SETTINGS

Welcome

Welcome to the Early Years SEND Team Guide.

This guide explains how the Early Years SEND Team supports settings to deliver effective SEN Support through the Graduated Approach.

It introduces the Early Years Targeted Support Plan (EY-TSP), our three-visit support model and the collaborative approach we take to strengthen inclusive practice.

Our aim is to strengthen inclusive practice, build confidence and support settings to deliver effective SEN Support so that every child receives the right support at the right time.



The Early Years SEND Team works alongside settings to strengthen inclusive practice and support the delivery of effective SEN Support through the Graduated Approach.



Every child belongs.
Every voice is heard.
Every step forward matters.



OUR APPROACH

We work in partnership with settings, families and other professionals to understand each child's needs and identify practical strategies that make a real difference.

Our support is:



Collaborative

We work alongside you as equal partners.



Practical

We provide evidence-informed advice and strategies that can be used straight away.



Targeted

Support is focused on the child's individual needs and what will have the greatest impact.



Outcome-focused

We evaluate impact together and celebrate progress.



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Early Identification.
Targeted Support.
Better Outcomes.

The Role of the Early Years SEND Team

We provide specialist advice, guidance and targeted support to help settings meet the needs of children with SEND as early as possible.

We work alongside you, building knowledge and confidence, and supporting sustainable inclusive practice.

HOW WE SUPPORT SETTINGS



WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

- ✓ Advice and guidance tailored to your setting and the children you support.
- ✓ A collaborative approach working alongside you and your team.
- ✓ Practical strategies that are evidence-informed and easy to embed.
- ✓ Clear, agreed next steps so you know what to do and what support is available.
- ✓ A focus on building confidence and sustainable inclusive practice.



WHAT IS THE EY SEND TEAM?

A team of experienced Early Years SEND specialists who:

- ✓ Work across the borough to support all early years settings.
- ✓ Provide advice, guidance and targeted support.
- ✓ Help build inclusive, high-quality practice.
- ✓ Collaborate with health and other professionals.
- ✓ Champion inclusion for every child, every setting.



OUR SUPPORT



Practical and evidence-informed.



Collaborative and respectful partnerships.



Neuro-affirming and strength-based.



Early support, better outcomes.



Reflective, responsive and focused on impact.



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 Early Identification.

 Targeted Support.

 Better Outcomes.

Provider Responsibilities

Working together to strengthen inclusive practice

The Early Years SEND Team works alongside settings to strengthen inclusive practice and improve outcomes for children with SEND. We provide advice, guidance, coaching and targeted support.

Responsibility for identifying, planning, implementing and reviewing SEN Support with the early years provider in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

THE PROVIDER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:



1. Observe and identify

Observe children's development, monitor progress, gather evidence and raise concerns promptly.



2. Use the Graduated Approach

Assess, Plan, Do, Review to meet individual needs through SEN Support.



3. Deliver inclusive practice

Provide high-quality Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP), make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers to learning.



4. Coordinate SEN Support

Coordinate SEN Support, liaise with professionals and share information where appropriate.



5. Work in partnership with families

Listen to families, co-produce support and share progress regularly.



6. Implement and review

Implement agreed strategies, monitor impact and review outcomes.



INCLUSIVE PRACTICE IN ACTION

Examples of adaptations that support children's learning and development



Communication

- Visual timetables
- Symbols
- Simplified language
- Processing time



Fine motor

- Adapted resources
- Chunky pencils
- Scissor skills support



Sensory

- Quiet spaces
- Movement breaks
- Sensory resources



Social interaction

- Small group work
- Turn-taking games
- Modelling and social stories



Physical

- Accessible layout
- Adapted equipment
- Seating options



Learning

- Visual supports
- Breaking tasks down
- Repetition and routines



Building on Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) strengthens inclusive practice and supports positive outcomes for every child.



KEY MESSAGE

The setting remains responsible for identifying, planning, implementing and reviewing SEN Support.

The Early Years SEND Team works alongside providers to strengthen practice, build confidence and improve outcomes for children with SEND.



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Overview of the Early Years SEND Support Model

The Early Years SEND Team provides graduated, targeted and time-limited support to early years settings. Working alongside practitioners, we support settings to understand children's needs, strengthen inclusive practice and deliver effective SEN Support through the Graduated Approach.



Support is collaborative, targeted and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains focused on improving outcomes for the child.



SUPPORT INCLUDES



Advice and guidance to support settings to understand and meet identified needs.



Observation to understand strengths and areas for development.



Collaborative planning using the EY Targeted Support Plan (EY-TSP).



Modelling and support to strengthen inclusive practice.



Review and next steps agreed together.



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The Early Years Targeted Support Plan (EY-TSP)

The EY Targeted Support Plan (EY-TSP) is a collaborative planning tool that supports the setting's SEN Support arrangements. It does not replace the setting's existing planning, assessment and review processes.

The EY-TSP identifies priorities, agrees actions and practical strategies to strengthen inclusive practice and improve outcomes for the child.



KEY FEATURES



Collaborative

Developed together with the setting.



Outcome-focused

Focused on improving outcomes for the child.



Time-limited

Usually runs for up to 12 weeks.



Reviewed and updated as needed.

Reviewed regularly to ensure it remains effective.



THE EY-TSP HELPS TO:

- ✓ Identify priorities for the child and the setting.
- ✓ Agree practical strategies and actions.
- ✓ Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- ✓ Record progress and impact.
- ✓ Support review discussions and next steps.



WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE EY-TSP?



- **Needs and Strengths**
A summary of the child's needs and existing strengths.
- **Agreed Outcomes**
The outcomes we want to achieve together.
- **Strategies and Actions**
The practical strategies, support and actions we will implement.
- **Review and Next Steps**
How we will review progress and what happens next.
- **Parent Carer Views**
Parent carer views are considered when agreeing outcomes, strategies and next steps.



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Visit 1 – Understanding the Child in Context

Visit 1 is the first step in our support together. It helps us build a clear understanding of the child's strengths, needs and the context of their learning and development.

This visit enables us to work collaboratively with you to identify priorities and agree outcomes for the EY-TSP.

PURPOSE OF VISIT 1



Build a shared understanding of the child's strengths, needs and interests.



Explore how the child learns and participates in the setting.



Listen to your experiences, observations and professional insights.



Identify priority outcomes for the EY-TSP together, informed by practitioner observations, existing evidence and parent/carer views.



Agree initial strategies and next steps.



WHAT THE EY SEND LOCALITY LEAD WILL DO

- ✓ Meet with key staff involved with the child.
- ✓ Observe the child in their natural environment.
- ✓ Discuss the child's strengths, needs and interests.
- ✓ Review current support and strategies.
- ✓ Work with you to identify priority outcomes.
- ✓ Agree next steps and plan for Visit 2.



OUTCOMES FROM VISIT 1

- ✓ A clear, shared understanding of the child.
- ✓ Priority outcomes agreed for the EY-TSP.
- ✓ Initial strategies identified or refined.
- ✓ A plan for support and next steps.



WHAT YOU CAN PREPARE

- ✓ A brief summary of the child's strengths and needs.
- ✓ Examples of current strategies and support in place.
- ✓ Observations of what works well and any ongoing challenges.
- ✓ Relevant assessments or reports (where available).
- ✓ Any questions or areas where you would like advice.
- ✓ Parent/carer views and information shared by the family.



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Visit 2 – Strengthening Practice

Visit 2 builds on the understanding from Visit 1. We focus on strengthening strategies and provision so they better meet the child's needs and move us towards our outcomes.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING VISIT 2



WHAT YOU CAN PREPARE

- ✓ Have your current EY-TSP available.
- ✓ Be ready to discuss what's working well.
- ✓ Share any new observations.
- ✓ Identify any questions you'd like to explore.



OUTCOMES FROM VISIT 2

- ✓ Strategies refined where needed.
- ✓ Increased confidence in practice.
- ✓ The EY-TSP reflects current needs.
- ✓ Clear priorities agreed for Visit 3.



WHAT THE EY SEND LOCALITY LEAD WILL DO



Observe practice and routines.



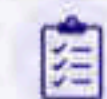
Model approaches alongside practitioners.



Problem-solve challenges together.



Share practical ideas and resources.



Refine strategies within the EY-TSP.



Support staff to embed strategies within everyday practice and sustainable provision.



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Visit 3 – Reviewing Impact and Next Steps

Visit 3 is about reviewing the impact of the support provided, evaluating progress and agreeing sustainable next steps so the child continues to thrive.

REVIEWING IMPACT



WHAT YOU CAN PREPARE

- ✔ Bring your updated EY-TSP.
- ✔ Gather recent observations and examples of progress.
- ✔ Share parent/carer feedback (where available).
- ✔ Note any remaining questions or concerns to discuss.

AFTER VISIT 3

- ✔ The EY-TSP is concluded or updated.
- ✔ The setting has agreed next steps.
- ✔ Staff have clear recommendations to continue supporting the child.
- ✔ Any additional support pathways are identified if required.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Following conclusion of the EY-TSP, the setting continues to monitor progress through its SEN Support arrangements. If needs change, further discussion or referral can be considered.

WHAT THE EY SEND LOCALITY LEAD WILL DO

 Review evidence of progress against the EY-TSP outcomes.

 Discuss outcomes with practitioners and listen to their reflections.

 Evaluate the impact of strategies and interventions.

 Update recommendations to support continued progress.

 Agree next steps with the setting and signpost additional support if required.



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Outcomes and Reviewing the EY-TSP

We review the EY-TSP regularly to reflect on progress, impact and next steps. Review and reflection help us make sure that support continues to meet the child's needs and strengthens inclusive practice.

HOW WE REVIEW AND REFLECT



DURING THE REVIEW

During each review we consider:

- ✓ Progress towards agreed outcomes.
- ✓ The impact of agreed strategies.
- ✓ Any changes to the child's strengths and needs.
- ✓ Whether further support or different approaches are required.



AFTER THE REVIEW

Following the review, the EY SEND Locality Lead and setting will agree whether to:

- ✓ Continue the current plan.
- ✓ Update outcomes or strategies.
- ✓ Conclude the EY-TSP where outcomes have been achieved.
- ✓ Consider whether any further support is required.



OUTCOMES WE AIM FOR

- ✓ Children make progress and achieve their individual outcomes.
- ✓ Early needs are identified and supported.
- ✓ Inclusive practice is strengthened within the setting.
- ✓ Confidence and capacity of staff increase.
- ✓ Children, parents and carers are actively involved in decisions about support and next steps.
- ✓ Sustainable impact for the child and the setting.



PREPARING FOR THE REVIEW

Before the review meeting, settings should:

-  Gather observations and examples of progress.
-  Review the agreed actions within the EY-TSP.
-  Consider any changes to the child's strengths or needs.
-  Identify any questions or areas where further advice may be helpful.
-  Consider parent/carer views and any changes identified within the home environment.



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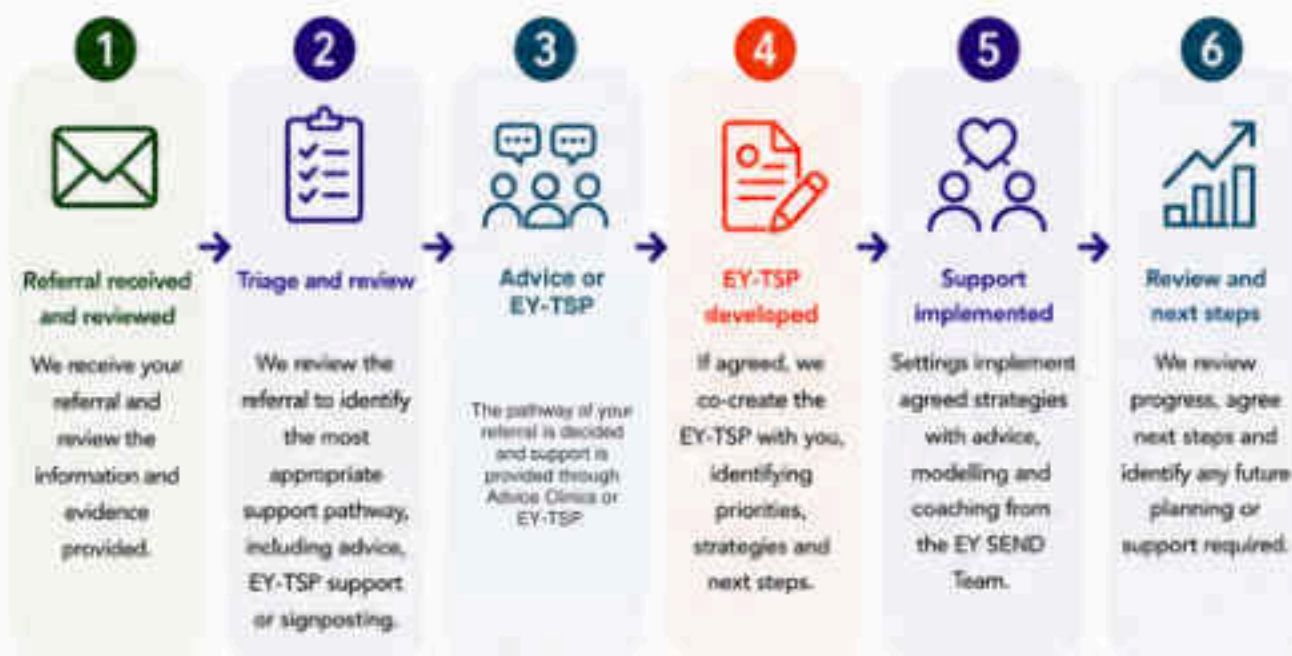
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The EY-TSP Journey: From Referral to Outcomes

Once a referral is received and agreed for the EY-TSP, we follow a clear, collaborative process to provide the right support at the right time.

The journey below shows what happens from start to finish.



KEY INFORMATION

-  The EY-TSP is time-limited (up to 12 weeks).
-  Support is tailored to the child and setting's needs.
-  We focus on building sustainable, inclusive practice.
-  Parents and carers are involved throughout.
-  Outcomes are reviewed and next steps are agreed together.

THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY

The EY-TSP remains a working document.



Strategies are reviewed and refined during each visit.



Settings continue implementing agreed actions between visits.



Families remain involved where appropriate.



Next steps are agreed collaboratively at each stage.



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FAQs

Below are answers to some of the questions settings most commonly ask about the Early Years SEND Team, visits and the EY-TSP.



Who is the EY SEND Team for?

The Early Years SEND Team supports childminders and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) early years settings in Croydon working with children from birth to five years who have emerging or additional SEND needs and would benefit from targeted support to strengthen inclusive practice.



Is there a cost for this support?

No. Support from the Early Years SEND Team is provided as part of Croydon Council's Early Years SEND offer.



Who should be involved in the visits?

We encourage the setting's **SENCO**, manager, key person and other relevant practitioners to take part. The setting **SENCO** coordinates SEN Support within the setting and works alongside the EY SEND Locality Lead to ensure strategies are embedded consistently across practice.



What should we prepare before a visit?

Each visit includes guidance on what to prepare. This may include observations, examples of current practice, the EY-TSP and any questions you would like to discuss.



What happens if more support is needed?

If, following completion of the EY-TSP, a child continues to require additional support or their needs change, we will discuss the most appropriate next steps. This may include further advice, signposting or consideration of other services where appropriate.



Is this the same as the Portage Service?

No. The Portage Service is a separate part of the Early Years SEND Team and provides specialist home-based support for children with more complex developmental needs **who are not attending** an early years setting in Croydon. If Portage support may be appropriate, this will be discussed with you. Separate guidance is available for the Portage Service.



THINGS TO REMEMBER



Support is time-limited and focused on building capacity.



The EY-TSP guides support across all visits.



Strategies should be embedded into everyday practice.



Families should be involved wherever appropriate.



Reviews help ensure support remains responsive.



Contact us if you need advice before your next visit.



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CONTACT US

If you have any questions or would like advice about supporting a child with SEND, please contact your EY SEND Locality Lead or email the Early Years SEND Team.



EMAIL

earlyyearssendteam@croydon.gov.uk

(Referrals and general enquiries)



YOUR EY SEND LOCALITY LEAD

Please contact your Locality Lead for advice and to discuss support.



RESPONSE TIME

We aim to respond to all emails within 5 working days.



USEFUL DOCUMENTS

Please refer to the Croydon Local Offer or Family Space website for documents and templates.



We aim to respond as soon as we can.

Please allow up to **5 working days** for a response.



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