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Disability access fund

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The Disability Access Fund (DAF) can help providers make their settings accessible to children with special needs. The funding can help providers make reasonable adjustments to their settings. They could purchase specialist equipment and or seek specialist training that would help them meet the child's needs.

Eligibility for Disability Access Fund (DAF)

A child will be eligible for the DAF if they are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and receive one of the following:

- The universal 15 hours entitlement for 3 and 4 year-olds
- From April 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for disadvantaged 2 year-olds
- From April 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 2 years of working parents
- From September 2024, the 15 hours entitlement for children aged 9 months to 2 years of working parents

Entitlement

- DAF is a one-off payment per year paid at a rate set by the government and is paid to one childcare provider nominated by the parent
- 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 to receive the DAF Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of free entitlement
- The funding is available to help your childcare provider make reasonable adjustments at their setting to improve your child's access to funded early education and childcare. It will be paid directly to your childcare provider and they will be able to decide how it should be spent. The funding cannot be used towards childcare fees

Identifying eligible children

Early years providers are responsible for identifying eligible children. Please speak to parents in order to find out who is eligible for the DAF.

Parents of children qualifying for Disability Living Allowance need evidence of this entitlement.

Providers need to email copies of this evidence when requesting DAF to: freeentitlement@blackpool.gov.uk

How early years providers will receive DAF funding

- Local authorities will fund early years settings for children eligible for DAF, at a fixed annual rate set by the government
- The DAF won't be offset against any other funding the local authority may ordinarily provide 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 setting
- This setting will be where the local authority will pay the DAF for the child
- Please note, some parents may wish to wait until they are confident their child will remain attending a setting for the remainder of the year before accessing DAF
- Once the funding for the year is paid, it will not be reclaimed even if the child leaves the setting. The new setting will not be able to receive any Disability Access Fund payment until the following year
- If a child receiving DAF moves from one setting to another within a financial year, the new setting is not eligible to receive 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

How to apply for the Disability Access Fund

Email completed forms with evidence proving a child is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance to freentitlement@blackpool.gov.uk

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