

EYSFF Consultation Feedback 2022 – 2023

January 2022

Summary

There were 24 responses received: 17 from Merton schools, 6 from Merton PVI providers and one from a childminder. Feedback from the responses is provided below

Funding formula for 3 and 4-year-olds

Merton Council is proposing no change to the existing EYSFF. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	No	Don't know	No answer
22	1	1	0

Comment:

- *The current rate does not cover the hourly cost of my nursery. The rate needs to be increased to the actual cost. (PVI)*

Response to comment:

- *The hourly rate has increased by .13p per hour*

Funding formula for 2-year-olds

Merton Council intends to continue to use the funding allocation for 2-year-olds solely for this purpose and not move any funding between 2-year-old and 3 and 4-year-old allocations.

Comments:

- *The 2-year funding is not enough per child so we will now not take any 2-year funded places as financially it is not possible (PVI).*
- *No problem with this (PVI)*

Response to comment:

- *The DfE hourly rate is distributed fully to places, with an increase to base rate of .15p an hour*

SEND Inclusion Fund (SENDIF)

It is proposed that the value of the SENDIF continues to be based on the factors as described in the document on paragraph 4.3.6. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	No	Don't know	No answer
23	1	0	0

Comments:

- We would like to point out that the SENIF funding does not go very far at all in school. Some of our funding is allocated on a £10 per hour basis but we have to pay £16+ for each hour of LSA time, including on-costs, meaning we cannot afford to provide support for the number of hours 'granted'. Our salary rates are fixed (school)*
- Not enough (School)*
- The SENDIF funding must be consistent with the needs of child / children. Insufficient SEND and SENDIF is being paid to schools (school)*

Response to comment:

- SENDIF is used to support children with additional needs above what is ordinarily available in a setting, which is partially supported by funding via the base rate and any supplements i.e. deprivation, EYPP or Disability Access Fund. Increases have been applied to the base rate for all places, which can support a whole setting approach, including targeted interventions to support children. A review of SEND support, as part of the LA and DfE Safety Valve programme, will include how the SENDIF operates in Merton.*

Contingency

Merton Council continues to propose a contingency as part of the high pass through rate, which is allocated at the end of the year. Do you agree with this proposal?

Yes	No	Don't know	No answer
20	2	2	0

Comment:

- I assume this is part of the 5% allocated to Merton Council. How does the sector know where this has been spent at the end of the year if there is unspent moneys? (PVI)*

Response to comment:

- This is not part of the 5% that the LA uses to support delivery/central services. It is part of the 95%, which is either spent to meet budget pressures due to increased SENDIF, deprivation or late starters. If there is unallocated budget within the 95%, this is usually distributed to settings in the summer term, following the financial year*

Comments:

- We've agreed the overspend for SEND. LA and schools need to keep within budget. Schools already having to make savings (school)*

- *But contingency should be spread out between schools/nurseries if not used that year (PVI)*

Response to comment:

- *See above*

Comments:

I do not know what the 'high pass through rate is' (school)

Response to comment:

- *The DFE statutory guidance states that 95% of Early Years DSG which is allocated to the LA must be passed through to settings. This means that the LA cannot retain more than 5% of each year's allocation.*

Early Years retained items

Merton Council intends to retain 5% of the total budget to fund key statutory duties (administration, information, securing training for staff in the sector) support and advice to the sector, focussing on support to weaker settings and settings working with children with additional needs/SEND.

Comments:

- *I agree that the training opportunities need to be funded and that they play a big role in the support nurseries receive. (PVI)*
- *Do not think that the quality of support, training and advice justifies keeping 5% of the total budget back from schools. Most clusters are carrying out their own moderating and sharing of good practice. (school)*

Response to comment:

- *We will contact schools to follow up further this feedback*

Comment:

- *We would question the quality of the support, advice and support offered to Early Years. (school)*

Response to Comment:

- *See above*

Comment:

- *We have not really benefitted from this over the past couple of years, directly. I am unsure of its value currently in terms of training/advice. (school)*

Response to Comment:

- *See above*

Comment:

- *How was the figure of 5% agreed (school)*

Response to Comment:

- *It has been agreed year on year by schools forum, following on from consultation and budget setting*

Comment:

- *We disagree with such a high percentage of the funding to be redirected towards the key statutory duties. We are particularly concerned about the accessibility of the EY Teams services. There is no telephone number to contact them and often we have to wait days before we receive a reply to our emails. We are struggling to see the value for money in this service. (school)*

Response to Comment:

- *See above*

Comment:

- *We would question the quality of training and advice and therefore retaining 5%. (school)*

Response to Comment:

- *See above*

Other comments

- *Is the basic rate/per child set by the local authority open to negotiation, on a setting-by-setting basis, as I would like to suggest a much lower basic rate with a much higher proportion being given to children from deprivation and SEN. It seems obscene that funding is being given to children that have no need for it, when there are so many in the borough that are in desperate need (PVI)*
- *Thank you for this opportunity (PVI)*

Response to Comment:

- *The deprivation rate has increased substantially this year, to support children who are more vulnerable to poor outcomes*