

Early Years SEND Offer

September 2022 – August 2023



Supporting Children to
Play, Learn and Grow... Together!

Information for Early Years Providers

Contents

- [Portage](#)
- [Best Practice Guidance](#)
- [Early Years and Childcare Service Support](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Early Years Local Inclusion Forum Team EY LIFT](#)
- [Special Educational Needs Support Allowance](#)
- [Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund SENIF](#)
- [Specialist Nursery Intervention](#)
- [Headcount](#)

Portage

Portage will continue to offer Pre-school Learning Groups and Home Learning Sessions along with virtual support this academic year.

Portage Practitioners will continue to be involved at points of transition for families. Setting practitioners, families and sometimes Specialist Teachers will meet in the home, at a group session, or virtually, depending on the needs of the family and the child, to plan an effective transition into the setting.

Early years providers have a responsibility at Early Years LIFT meetings to raise the needs of children in advance, for children who have received Portage, to ensure the provision meets the needs of the child when they start.

Portage Practitioners will continue to support the transition into the setting, once the child has settled in.

Referrals to Portage

The Portage referral form is a digital online form and can be found on the Portage page of KELSI and on the SEND Information Hub Local Offer pages for early years.

[Kent Portage](#)



Best Practice Guidance (BPG)

KCC, via The Education People provides the Best Practice Guidance document and associated training to support settings with practical examples of universal and targeted ideas, to ensure that they are compliant with all equality legislation and are meeting the needs of all children in their settings.

The accompanying audit tools, further support early years practitioners to plan and implement targeted strategies for the child. These have been successful in many settings where they have been used as working documents that capture the totality of progress and interventions, implemented for children with SEND. They have been used effectively to inform discussions with parents, other professionals and where required, have been used as evidence for ongoing referrals.

The document offers examples of how strategies can be implemented in settings. For more information, please visit [Best Practice Guidance for the Early Years](#)



A parent leaflet is available for you to share with your families and can be found on The SEND Information Hub via this link [SEND Information Hub](#)

Early Years and Childcare Service Support

The Education People's, Early Years and Childcare Equality and Inclusion Team, continues to be commissioned by KCC as part of the Early Years SEND offer.

Visits can take place, well in advance of any potential referral, to support children who are at risk of delay or who may have SEND and are designed to ensure that your universal offer meets the needs of all children in line with Kent's graduated approach.

Please request support using this link: [Equality and Inclusion Service request for support](#)

Training

Core Early Years training continues to be provided by the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS) this could be virtually or face to face according to local district decisions. Please liaise with your local STLS team for dates and booking.

A wide range of training is also provided by The Education People via Threads of Success, including;

- Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)
- Prime Importance of Communication Language (PICL)
- Prime Importance of Physical Development (PIPD)
- Targeted Support for Communication and Language

This is a blended offer of face to face, virtual and e-learning training. To learn more and book please visit the [CPD website](#) .

What is LIFT?

When pre-school settings identify concerns about learning issues in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), for an individual child or a group of children, they should first use the Best Practice Guidance to identify what can be done to support the child's access to the Early Years curriculum from within the setting's own resources.

If it is considered that additional advice, training, or support is needed then the Early Years Local Inclusion Forum Team Request Form should be completed.

Pre-school settings should discuss the referral with parents, which can be evidenced by completing an EY LIFT Agreement to Engage form.

For further information on Early Years LIFT, referral forms, parent information leaflet, and roles and responsibilities, please visit the [Early Years LIFT](#) .

EY LIFT Paperwork

There will still be an expectation that accompanying evidence is supplied. This can take the form of a Targeted or Personalised Plan, Best Practice Guidance Audit Tools or whatever is specified by your district.

Personalised plans can be created by the setting using their knowledge of the child and including outside agency advice, if appropriate. It is not necessary to wait for input from a specialist teacher.

LIFT meetings will continue to be held in each district this year but the format of these will differ from district to district. You will be informed of how your meetings will take place by your district LIFT team.

Special Educational Needs Support Allowance

The termly SEN Support Allowance for 2022 – 2023 will continue to be paid and is a total of £300. It will be paid directly to Group Private, Voluntary, and Independent PVI settings registered with KCC, to deliver free early education entitlements.

£100 will be paid at the beginning of terms 1, 3 and 5. It is your responsibility to ring fence this money and use it for the purpose that this has been given. We appreciate that this will not fully fund the additional costs incurred but we hope it will go some way towards enabling attendance at meetings, etc.

Whilst we would encourage settings to attend every EY LIFT meeting we appreciate that this isn't always possible. There is, however, an expectation that this additional money will be used towards enabling staff to attend **at least two EY LIFT Meetings** and **a minimum of one SENCo Forum** in an academic year.

It can also be used towards enabling staff to attend meetings with Equality and Inclusion Advisers, SENIF Practitioners, SENIF Monitoring Officers, Specialist Teachers and other multi agency colleagues.

Portage Checklist as an assessment tool

We have received some feedback that the Milestone Assessment Toolkit does not necessarily meet the needs of children with SEND. Using the revised Portage Checklist gives a clearer picture of a child's needs and developmental levels and is the document recommended, it is available from [The Education People](#) .

The SEND Support Allowance can be used to purchase the checklist. Training will be available to support you when using this assessment tool

Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF)

The SENIF Offer 2022 2023

SENIF Practitioners and Monitoring Officers will continue to provide a blend of virtual and face to face support over the coming year by offering a bespoke service.

SEN Inclusion Officers will

- consider SENIF requests submitted on the digital referral form to be found on Kelsi.
- notify settings if any evidence is missing to avoid delays.
- chair MAP meetings virtually via Microsoft Teams.
- notify the Lead SENIF Practitioner of settings to receive support.

SENIF Practitioners will

- attend LIFT meetings.
- liaise with EY Specialist Teachers.
- contribute to transition meetings when requested to do so by the Specialist Teacher.
- participate in Zoom/MS Teams meetings with STLS settings if appropriate to do so.
- liaise with Portage Practitioners, where children are known to the service.
- offer support earlier via EY LIFT meetings.
- prepare Record of Interventions / Record of Contacts; these will be shared with settings weekly.
- be able to support settings, where there is capacity, if a child is eligible for Free Early Education Entitlement, doesn't have SENIF but has been allocated to a Specialist Teacher.
- liaise with schools where requested to do so by a Specialist Teacher where previous interventions have taken place. 2 virtual support conversations can be offered.
- prepare and create bite sized training to share with settings to illustrate advice and recommendations.

Monitoring Support Officers will...

- contact settings to arrange a time to call to carry out an MS Teams monitoring appointment or face to face visit.
- deliver SENIF Implementation Plan (SIP) workshops.
- support settings with advice regarding the completion of the SENIF Implementation Plan.

For further information and the referral form please visit the following page on KELSIF: [How to apply for SENIF.](#)

The SENIF Hotline will continue to operate during term time from 9.00am - 10.00am and you will be able to speak to Fleur Thorogood, SENIF Practitioner (Support & Inclusion) on 03000 418807

SENIF Workshops

The SENIF team are currently revising and updating our training offer on the following subjects:

- Personalised Plans
- SENIF Request Form – key information to support a successful request
- SENIF Implementation Plan (SIP)
- SENIF Webinar – What is SENIF
- What is Portage?

We will notify you when we have further information and how to book your place or access these trainings.

Specialist Nursery Intervention (SNI)

Specialist Teachers or Portage Practitioners can refer children for an intervention at a Specialist Nursery via the Multi Agency Planning meeting (MAP).

More information about the nurseries can be found on KELSI under [information for settings](#) .

It is the responsibility of the referrer, either Specialist Teacher or Portage Practitioner, to inform the parent/family and Early Years provider if a child is offered a Specialist Intervention and when this will take place.

Headcount

The SEN Inclusion Fund Finance Assistant will contact all Early Years settings who have children accessing Specialist Nursery Intervention to offer support and guidance with the headcount submission.

The calls will be made a week prior to each of the headcount weeks in the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms. If any of the children accessing Specialist Intervention have a SENIF agreement in place then a further discussion will follow to identify whether an adjustment to the SENIF agreement needs to be made, as SENIF is based on a child's actual attendance and in line with the Free Early Education Entitlement FEEE.

The Headcount Submission Guidance Tool can be found here on KELSI together with more detailed guidance on [Information for settings](#)

If you have any questions please contact the relevant team who will be able to help.

This information booklet has been created on behalf of:

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