

REMOVAL OF EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENT FUNDING POLICY

This policy details the circumstances and processes for the Birth to Five Service to remove the Early Years Entitlement funding from a registered provider.

The service may look to remove funding in the following circumstances:

- Where a provider has failed to demonstrate capacity to improve quality within the agreed timescales laid out in Lincolnshire's Provider Agreement or by instruction from the Head of Service.
NB: The measure of the capacity to improve quality will be determined by the Birth to Five Service RAG ratings. An improved OFSTED outcome without progression in the RAG rating does not demonstrate capacity to improve.
- Where a provider refuses the support of the Birth to Five Service resulting in a breach of the Provider Agreement.
- Where the provider fails to attend Manager's Briefings or EYFS Cluster Meetings or SENCO Network Meetings on 3 or more consecutive occasions.
- Where the provider fails to attend at least the minimum mandatory training to meet needs identified by the Birth to Five Service or through OFSTED inspection within agreed timescales.
- Where a provider fails to comply with the conditions detailed within Lincolnshire's Provider Agreement or the Code of Practice by not completing actions of compliance set by the Early Years Entitlement Team within agreed timescales.
- Where the Birth to Five Service believes that the Early Years Entitlement funding or related additional Early Years funding awarded to the provider has been misappropriated by the provider.

The service will follow the process detailed below when seeking to remove funding from a provider on the Early Years Entitlement Register of Providers:

Stage 1 - Notification

- Provider will receive written notification that the Birth to Five Service intend to take steps to remove them from the Early Years Register.
- The provider will be invited to attend a meeting where the Birth to Five Service will clearly lay out the reasons they are seeking to remove funding. Where a provider declines to attend the meeting the process will move straight to Stage 2.
- The provider will be notified at this meeting of the Birth to Five Service decision on removal of funding.
- Where a decision is made to remove the Early Years Entitlement funding, other funding and projects may also be suspended.

Stage 2 - Removal of Funding

- The provider will receive written details confirming the decision of the initial meeting within 5 working days.
- The termination of funding date will be set to coincide with school termlets to minimise the impact to parents.

Stage 3 - Notice to parents

- Providers will at this stage be required to notify parents that they have been removed from the Early Years Register and amend all literature to reflect this.
- Providers must signpost parents wishing to access the EYE to the Family Information Service: Phone: 0800 195 1635 Email: FIS@lincolnshire.gov.uk
- The Birth to Five Service will notify relevant partners that the provider is no longer in receipt of the Early Years Entitlement funding and has been removed from the list of Registered Early Years Providers.

Stage 4 - Return of Equipment and/or Funding

- Where a provider has received resources as a Registered Early Years Provider these items must be returned to the Birth to Five Service.
- Where payments have been made in advance for the EYE the provider will be required to pay back funding that covers the period after the termination of funding date that has been set.
- Where providers have been deemed to have misappropriated Early Years Entitlement Funding or other associated Early Years Funding the provider will be required to repay the full amount.

PLEASE NOTE:

A provider may appeal against any decision made or action taken in respect of the removal of funding. Please refer to the EYE Complaints Procedure for further details.

Where a complaint is received this process will be suspended whilst the complaint is investigated. After the first two stages of the EYE Complaints Procedure have been implemented, this process will resume.

Where providers have initiated the EYE Complaints Procedure and were unsuccessful, written notification will be issued to notify the provider that the decision to remove funding has been upheld. The provider will, where necessary, be provided with a revised removal of funding date.