Australian Government

Department of Education and Training

Inclusion Support Programme Guidelines

2016-2017 to 2018-2019

Version Control

Date	Version	Description
February 2016	1.0	First release of the 2016-17 to 2018-19 ISP Guidelines
May 2016	1.1	Update prior to commencement of the program on 1 July 2016 including addition of transition arrangements for In Home Care services (clause 7.2), changes to reflect the delay of the *Jobs for Families Child Care Package* from 2017 to 2018 and minor corrections.
March 2017	1.2	Update following the commencement of the ISP on 1 July 2016 including clarifications to confirm policy intent for C4.3 (shared care arrangements) and D1 (Eligibility for IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support) and other minor corrections including 'programme' to 'program'.

Contents

1. About the ISP Guidelines

1.1 Purpose of the guidelines

These guidelines contain information for early childhood and child care (ECCC) services about the Inclusion Support Programme (ISP), including:

- program objectives

- types of support available

- eligibility requirements

- how to access support.

These guidelines commenced on 1 July 2016 and conclude on 30 June 2019.

These guidelines may be amended (including an extension of the time for which they apply) at any time during the program period to reflect Australian Government priorities.

ECCC services and ISP providers will be advised in writing of any changes to these guidelines through the existing departmental communication methods such as notices to ECCC services sent through the Child Care Management System (2016-17) and its replacement from 1 July 2018. Changes to these guidelines will also be reflected on the Department of Education and Training ('the department') website.

These guidelines are available on the department's website.

1.2 Legislative authority

Legislative authority for the ISP has been established through its inclusion in Schedule 1AB of the *Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Regulations 1997* (*Financial Framework (Supplementary Powers) Amendment (2015 Measures No. 9) Regulation 2015* refers).

## 2.	About the program

On 8 May 2015, the Australian Government announced a $409 million Inclusion Support Programme (ISP). The ISP is a key component of the Government's Child Care Safety Net and will provide support to early childhood and child care (ECCC) services to build their capacity and capability to include children with additional needs in mainstream services; providing them with an opportunity to learn and develop alongside their typically developing peers.

The ISP commenced on 1 July 2016, following the closure of the Inclusion and Professional Support Program (IPSP) on 30 June 2016.

## 3.	Program objectives

The ISP has dual objectives to:

- support mainstream ECCC services to improve their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices, address participation barriers and include children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers

- provide parents and carers of children with additional needs with access to appropriate ECCC services that assist those parents to participate in the workforce.

The guiding principles that underpin the ongoing delivery of the ISP are outlined at Appendix 1.

## 4.	Children with additional needs

While there is no national definition of 'additional needs', a range of risk factors may (but not always) lead children with particular characteristics to be vulnerable to suboptimal learning and life outcomes. These include (but are not limited to):

- children with disability including those undergoing assessment for disability

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

- children from a refugee or humanitarian background

- children with serious medical condition/s

- children presenting with language and speech delays

- children presenting with disruptive behaviour

5.   Service delivery model

The ISP consists of three key elements:

- **Inclusion Agencies (IAs)** – in each state and territory, an Inclusion Agency is contracted to assist eligible services build their capacity and capability to provide and embed inclusive practice in their delivery of early learning and care programs. Section A of these guidelines outlines the role of IAs and how ECCC services can access IA non-financial support.

- **Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) –** the IDF provides funding to assist eligible services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be addressed by the support provided by an Inclusion Agency. Sections B, C, D, E and F of these guidelines outline the Inclusion Development Fund and how services can apply for support.

- **Inclusion Development Fund Manager** – a single national Inclusion Development Fund Manager is contracted to provide nationally consistent and equitable management of the IDF through assessing applications for funding and communicating outcomes to services. Section G of these guidelines outlines the role of the Inclusion Development Fund Manager and how it interacts with services.

6.   Outcomes and Evaluation of the ISP

6.1   Outcomes of the ISP

The desired outcomes of the ISP include that:

- ECCC services have embedded inclusive practices in their service delivery model and, over time, have the capacity and capability to include children with additional needs with limited or no additional support from the program

- children with additional needs have an increased representation in mainstream ECCC services, commensurate with their representation in the overall population

- parents and carers of children with additional needs have better access to, and are aware of appropriate and inclusive ECCC services that support their workforce, study or training choices.

A range of data will be collected and analysed at regular points throughout the program, for example, through provider reporting, surveys to ECCC services and program data to help determine the degree to which the program is achieving its desired outcomes.

6.2   Evaluation of the ISP

The department will undertake an evaluation of the ISP before 30 June 2019 to assess the effectiveness of the program and the extent to which the objectives (see Section 3) and outcomes have been achieved. All ISP providers will be required to participate and ECCC services may elect to participate in evaluation activities.

The measures of success in relation to ECCC services include:

- an increased number of services with a Strategic Inclusion Plan

- an increased number of services embedding inclusion strategies and practices

- an increase in knowledge, skills and confidence of educators in implementing inclusive strategies and practices

- greater awareness among ECCC services about support provided by IAs

- an increased number of services receive support from IAs

- an increased number of ECCC services reducing their reliance on IDF funding i.e. ECCC services have increased capacity and capability to include children and have reduced reliance on IDF funding

- improved assessment and rating for the elements relating to inclusion in the National Quality Standards.

The measures of success in relation to children with additional needs and their families include:

- an increased number of children with additional needs accessing ECCC services

- increased participation of children with additional needs in mainstream ECCC services

- increased awareness of inclusion support services available for families of children with additional needs

- increased usage (hours) of care as a measure for parents' increased engagement with the workforce.

In addition, the performance of ISP providers, including IAs and the IDF Manager will also be monitored and evaluated.

Data to support the evaluation of the ISP will be obtained from a range of sources including, for example, management information and other administered data from the IS Portal and child care IT system, and data sets from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Early Childhood Development Census. Measures of success will be benchmarked to data collected for the IPSP.

The ISP will also be considered in the broader evaluation established as part of the *Jobs for Families* Child Care Package to determine whether the proposed policy and program changes arising from the Government's response to the Productivity Commission Inquiry are achieving their intended outcomes and remain effective over time.

7.   IPSP to ISP transition

7.1   Transition of Inclusion Support Subsidy

The ISP will continue to provide support to eligible services that have an approved case for the Inclusion Support Subsidy (ISS), an element of the IPSP.

Under the IPSP, ISS cases can be approved for up to 52 weeks. As such, the ISP will honour active ISS cases approved under the IPSP according to original approval arrangements.

Eligible services with an active ISS case prior to the commencement of ISP will be entitled to the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator (see Section C) or the IDF Family Day Care Top Up, where eligible (see Section E), in the ISP from 1 July 2016. From this date, those services will receive the higher hourly payment as per these guidelines.

Any changes to an approved case after 1 July 2016 will trigger a new application as per these guidelines.

7.2 Transition of Inclusion Support Subsidy Arrangements for In Home Care services

The ISP will continue to support In Home Care (IHC) services in receipt of Tier 2 funding subsidy for an eligible child with disability through the IPSP as at 30 July 2016. At the commencement of the ISP, these IHC services will be entitled to the Inclusion Development Fund Family Day Care Top Up rate for the eligible child for the same or less number of hours they were receiving support under the IPSP.

Through these arrangements, ISP funding support will be attached to the eligible child, so if there are circumstances where the family requires support from a different IHC service, the different IHC service can apply for continued assistance of the approval as set out in the original approval in IPSP.

This transition arrangement will apply until a review is undertaken of the Government's policy for care in the family home which is expected in 2018.

7.3   Exemptions

Where a service has an ISS exemption approved under the IPSP Guidelines, the ISP will honour the exemption until 30 September 2016. During this period, services will be required to apply for assistance under the ISP Guidelines.

Exemptions are not available in ISP unless otherwise agreed with the department. Existing exemptions under the IPSP will be overwhelmingly resolved through flexible arrangements available under the ISP including shared care arrangements in the IDF Subsidy and the IDF Innovative Solutions Support.

8.   Eligibility requirements

8.1   Services eligible for support through the ISP

ECCC services eligible for support through the ISP are:

- Approved services:
    - Long Day Care (LDC)
    - Outside School Hours Care, including Vacation Care, and
    - Family Day Care
    - Occasional Care
- Mobile Services, and
- Budget Based Funded (BBF) Program services

An approved service is a service that has been assessed as satisfying the eligibility rules under the Family Assistance Law[1] and has been approved to administer Australian Government child care payments on behalf of families.

With the exception of BBF services, the child (or children) a service is seeking to include through support from the ISP must be the Family Tax Benefit child of a parent or carer assessed as eligible for child care fee assistance under Family Assistance Law.

Additional eligibility requirements apply to particular elements of the ISP, particularly the IDF, and are outlined in the relevant sections of these guidelines.

8.2   Services not eligible for support through ISP

Service types not listed in Section 8.1 are not eligible for support from the ISP. This includes (but is not limited to):

- In Home Care services, including those participating in the Interim Home Based Carer Subsidy Pilot Programme
- Specialist early childhood and child care services
- Registered Care services, and
- State and territory government occasional care, preschools, kindergartens and early intervention services.

8.3   Specialist services

Services specifically designed to meet the needs of children with ongoing high support needs are considered specialist services. By their nature, specialist services have inherent capacity and capability to include children with ongoing high support needs. Additionally, as generally all of the children enrolled at a specialist service have ongoing high support needs, the environment does not

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[1] The Family Assistance Law is the basis for Commonwealth child care fee assistance, which includes, but is not limited to, the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate. Family Assistance Law also provides for the approval of child care services to administer child care fee assistance on behalf of families using the service, and also provides for many other associated matters. The Australian Government introduced the Family Assistance Legislation Amendment (Jobs for Families Child Care Package) Bill 2015 into the Parliament of Australia on 2 December 2015 which introduces major child care reforms from 1 July 2018.

provide an opportunity for children with ongoing high support needs to be included alongside typically developing peers, which is a key objective of the program. Given this, specialist services are not eligible for assistance under the ISP.

8.4   LDC services providing a preschool program

LDC services that provide state or territory government funded kindergarten/preschool programs are eligible to apply to access support from the ISP for the hours outside the period funded through the kindergarten/preschool program. All program eligibility requirements, as outlined in these guidelines will be applied.

SECTION A - INCLUSION AGENCIES

A1. Description

A1.1 Who are they?

As part of the ISP, the department will fund seven Inclusion Agencies (IA) across eight states and territories ('jurisdictions') to work with eligible early childhood and child care (ECCC) services in their jurisdiction to build their capacity and capability to provide and embed inclusive practice and address barriers to inclusion experienced by children with additional needs.

IA services will be delivered by the same organisation in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Contact details for the IA organisation in each jurisdiction are available on the department's website.

A1.2 What do they do?

In each jurisdiction, the contracted IA establishes a network of inclusion professionals to provide tailored support to eligible ECCC services in their jurisdiction to support the inclusion of children with additional needs through capacity and capability building, and providing solutions to barriers to inclusion. Support may include (but is not limited to):

- site visits to services to assess care environments and existing inclusion capability and assist with reflective practice

- assistance to develop and/or review a tailored Strategic Inclusion Plan (outlined in Section A2.2)

- practical advice and strategies on effective inclusive practice, including techniques for improvement and solutions to address particular barriers

- facilitating access to the Specialist Equipment Library (outlined in Section A3.1)

- reviewing and endorsing applications for support from the Inclusion Development Fund (outlined in Section B).

Where feasible and appropriate IAs may also use technologies such as teleconferencing, email, social networking and other developments in information technology to deliver inclusion support to ECCC services.

A2. How do services access support from an Inclusion Agency?

A2.1 Referral to an Inclusion Agency

Eligible services seeking IA support may self-refer directly via telephone or email. IAs are also expected to engage early childhood and child care services – especially those who have not been aware of the assistance available under the ISP – directly to offer inclusion support.

Following a referral, the specific arrangements for accessing support from an IA may vary according to each jurisdiction and are outlined on the relevant IA's website.

Contact details for the IA in each jurisdiction are available on the department's website.

A2.2 Development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan

All services receiving support through the ISP must develop a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP).

The development of a SIP is the first step to accessing support from the program including funding through the IDF.

A SIP is developed in collaboration with, and is endorsed by the IA. The SIP is implemented and evaluated within a 12 month period. A SIP can be updated during this period to reflect any changes and record the progress made.

A SIP is a self-guided inclusion assessment and planning tool for ECCC services that includes short and longer term strategies for improving and embedding inclusive practice. The development of a SIP recognises current inclusive capacity and capability and outlines objectives for inclusion practices. The SIP will include an inclusion profile for each care environment a ECCC service is seeking inclusion assistance.

A service's SIP must identify:

- the barriers that impact the service's capacity to include children with additional needs

- the proposed strategies to address barriers to inclusion. These may include (but are not limited to):

  - modifications educators may have to make to policy, pedagogy, planning, activities and the physical environment, including social play to include children with additional needs

  - inclusion related training or resources educators may require

  - development of policies and practices the service may use to support future inclusion

  - identifying resources and support services available in the local community to assist with the inclusion of children with additional needs, and

  - accessing an Additional Educator to increase educator to child ratios above the minimum requirements mandated in the National Regulations.

A2.3 Inclusion Support Portal

Services complete their SIP online through a web-based application called the Inclusion Support Portal (IS Portal). Where a service does not have the necessary infrastructure to support the IS Portal, a paper-based SIP is available through the IA.

To access the IS Portal the service must contact the IA to obtain Login details. Once the service has made initial contact with its IA to seek support (see Section A2.1), the IA will generate an IS Portal profile for the service, including login details and a shell SIP.

Depending on what has been agreed between the service and its IA, the service may commence developing a SIP immediately or wait to develop it in collaboration with their IA during a site visit.

A3. Need for additional support identified in Strategic Inclusion Plan

Through developing a SIP, an inclusion barrier or barriers may be identified that cannot be resolved by support from an IA alone and require additional intervention to address.

In these circumstances, the ISP provides further support to services through the Specialist Equipment Library and the Inclusion Development Fund.

A3.1 Specialist Equipment Library

Each IA manages a Specialist Equipment Library (SEL) for services in their jurisdiction to loan items of specialist equipment that facilitate and support the inclusion of a child (or children) with additional needs.

A3.2 Types of Equipment

Equipment available from the SEL may include (but is not limited to):

- portable ramps to create access to the environment

- standing frames and full support swings to allow a child with high physical needs to participate in the daily program and activities

- hoists, slings, harnesses, change tables, toilet sets or steps, potty chairs, mobile stools and seating or posture aids for educators to assist them to lift and transfer children safely when carrying out basic care functions such as changing or going to the toilet

- specialised inclusion toys such as switch toys

- specialised furniture such as chairs, tables, desk and positioning equipment

- communication cards or charts, and Auslan dictionaries to enable the child and educators to communicate effectively.

Equipment not available from the SEL includes (but is not limited to):

- therapeutic equipment (for example, hearing aids and therapist tables)

- equipment that the service would reasonably be expected to supply

- equipment that the parent or carer would reasonably be expected to supply for their child (for example, wheelchairs, walking frames and body suits)

- equipment for which there are hygiene issues (for example, padded cots)

- equipment provided under the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

A3.3 Process and conditions for accessing the SEL

A service's need for specialist equipment must be identified in its SIP (see Section A2.2), or be recommended by a relevant professional, such as an occupational therapist or physiotherapist, with knowledge of the child's biomechanical functional needs.

If equipment is recommended by a relevant professional, the IA must endorse and agree to the recommendation prior to a SEL application being submitted.

It is the responsibility of each ECCC service accessing equipment from the SEL to ensure it is fitted by an appropriate professional. In some cases the IA may be suitable, but in other cases an occupational therapist or physiotherapist who has knowledge of the child's biomechanical functioning and needs may be required.

A service seeking equipment from the SEL must sign a Loan Agreement Form with its IA prior to accessing equipment, which sets out the Terms and Conditions associated with borrowing equipment from the SEL.

The process for accessing equipment from the SEL, including expected timeframes, transportation arrangements, return arrangements and the Terms and Conditions associated with borrowing the equipment are determined by each IA and may vary across jurisdictions.

Eligible ECCC services can access information about the SEL directly from its IA. Contact details for the IA in each jurisdiction are available on the department's website.

A3.4 Inclusion Development Fund

The Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) provides funding to assist eligible services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be resolved by support provided by an IA or the SEL.

There are four discrete streams of IDF support which each have different eligibility criteria, application processes and approved funding purposes.

A national manager assesses, and where appropriate, approves IDF applications for all streams of funding from eligible ECCC services to ensure a nationally consistent and equitable application of the IDF eligibility requirements outlined in these guidelines.

Section B-F of these guidelines provides comprehensive information about the IDF and Section G of these guidelines outlines the IDF Manager.

SECTION B – INCLUSION DEVELOPMENT FUND

B1. Description

The Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) provides funding to assist eligible early childhood and child care (ECCC) services to address a barrier to inclusion that cannot be resolved by support provided by an Inclusion Agency (IA). There are four discrete streams of IDF support which have different eligibility criteria, application processes and approved funding purposes. The four streams of support are:

A. IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

B. IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time-Limited Support

C. IDF Subsidy – Family Day Care Top Up

D. IDF – Innovative Solutions

The sections following outline each IDF stream in detail.

B1.1 Available Funding

The IDF has an annual capped funding allocation which is set each financial year to take into account indexation requirements and other program parameters.

The department will advise ECCC services and contracted ISP providers of the capped annual funding allocation for the program early in each financial year. In the unlikely circumstance where available funding for any IDF stream is exhausted prior to the end of each financial year, ECCC services and ISP contracted providers will be notified. The IDF Manager would establish and maintain a register of applications which may be considered if funding becomes available. Such notifications will be made through existing departmental communication methods (e.g. notices sent via the Child Care Management System in 2016-17 and its replacement from 1 July 2018).

Services may check with the IDF Manager to ensure applications for funding are not developed and submitted for which funding is not available.

The department will provide, within the annual capped funding, a notional funding allocation to the IDF Manager for each stream of the IDF and will keep these notional allocations under regular review to enable the IDF – as a whole – to respond to demand from ECCC services for inclusion support funding throughout each financial year.

Applications for funding can be made at any time during the program to provide responsive support to services as they enrol children with additional needs. Applications will be considered on their merits and the approval of any application made to any stream of the IDF is contingent on the availability of funding.

SECTION C – IDF SUBSIDY FOR AN ADDITIONAL EDUCATOR

C1. Purpose

The IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator provides per hour funding to centre based services to subsidise the employment of an Additional Educator to increase the educator to child ratio in the care environment to support the inclusion of a child (or children) with disability, with ongoing high support needs with typically developing peers. Educators work as a team, including the Additional Educator, to meet the needs of all children within the care environment.

C1.1 Eligibility Requirements

Approved centre based services are eligible to apply for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator. Approved *centre based* services include:

- Long Day Care services

- Outside School Hours Care services, including Vacation Care services

- Occasional Care services

- Mobile Services

- Centre-based Budget Based Funded (BBF) Programme services.

To access funding, an eligible service must be seeking to include a child (or children) with disability, or undergoing assessment for disability, *with ongoing high support needs*. That is, the child requires significant additional support from educators, which is over and above the ratios recommended under the National Quality Framework for that age group.

The ISP does not prescribe an explicit list of disabilities which stipulates if the service is or is not eligible to access the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator. The service seeking funding is responsible for demonstrating that due to the needs of the child (or children) and the inclusion barriers within the care environment, an Additional Educator is required to meet the needs of all children.

This must be demonstrated through the development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), in collaboration with its Inclusion Agency (IA) and supported by the information provided in the application.

The service should be guided by the 'Guide to Social Security Law, 1.1.R.90 Recognised disability CA (child)' in considering the impact of the child's disability.

C1.2 Available Funding

Applications for funding for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator can be made at any time during the program to provide responsive support to services as they enrol children with ongoing high support needs.

The IDF has an annual capped funding allocation, and the approval of any application made to the IDF is contingent on the availability of funding.

C2. Application requirements for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

C2.1 Development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan

Prior to applying for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator, a service must complete a SIP (outlined in Section A2.2) in collaboration with its IA.

If the development of a SIP identifies a barrier to inclusion for which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate solution, the SIP will support the service's application for funding.

C2.2 Provision of documentary evidence

An early childhood and child care (ECCC) service seeking the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator must provide signed documentation by a relevant professional that confirms:

- a diagnosed disability (including development delay) or diagnosed medical condition, or

- a current and ongoing assessment for disability.

Documentary evidence can be provided by a range of relevant professionals including (but not limited to):

- medical practitioners

- registered psychologists

- registered nurses or nurse practitioners

- allied health professionals such as speech pathologists, physiotherapists and audiologists.

Documentary evidence may include (but is not limited to):

- a qualified medical practitioner's confirmation of a diagnosis

- diagnosis by a registered psychologist

- the child's health care card stating the disability code

- documentation stating a child's eligibility for Child Disability Allowance or parent's/guardian's eligibility for Carers Allowance with respect to the child

- supporting documentation, such as a diagnostic report, signed by a qualified medical practitioner or registered psychologist

- a report or supporting documentation signed by an allied health professional, registered nurse or nurse practitioner of the continuing assessment of a child for the purpose of diagnosing disability

- an appointment letter or referral for an assessment by a qualified medical practitioner or registered psychologist.

Documentary evidence that has been supplied by the parent/guardian to their child's service can be shared with a different service following a change in their child's enrolment, if the service requires support from the IDF. The parent/guardian must provide their consent that the service is able to view documentary evidence previously provided for the purposes of the IDF. The parent/guardian may also elect to provide the documentary evidence themselves, or update the documentary evidence provided.

C2.3   Evidence of permanent disability

Documentary evidence that supports permanent disability will not be required to be submitted with future applications while the child is enrolled at the same service (see C2.5 if the child's enrolment changes).

C2.4   Exemptions from documentary evidence

Where a child is a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant under Section 28 of the NDIS Act 2013, the provision of documentary evidence outlining the child's disability is not required.

Evidence that the child is a NDIS participant will be accepted. Documentary evidence of a child undergoing assessment of disability must be dated within two years of an application being submitted for IDF.

C2.5   Provision of Permission to Share Personal Information Form

The documentary evidence requirements outlined above require parents/guardians to share personal information about their child's disability (or assessment for disability) with their ECCC service, and to disclose the information to the IA, IDF Manager and the department, to use for the purpose of administering IDF funding.

To ensure adherence to the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles contained within the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, parents and guardians are required to sign a Permission to Share Personal Information Form between the ECCC service and the parent/guardian.

The form is provided by the IA and the signed form must be attached in the IS Portal with the documentary evidence to support the application for funding.

Where a parent/guardian has previously provided documentary evidence for the purposes of the program, they can consent to this information being provided to a service that has subsequently enrolled their child. This will be supported through the IS Portal.

C2.6   Conditions of Funding

An IDF application can only be submitted and will only be considered for approval by the IDF Manager if the service agrees it will comply with the Conditions of Funding if the application is approved.

The Conditions of Funding outline the requirements the service must adhere to if approved for funding. By agreeing to the Conditions of Funding the service declares it has prepared the

application in accordance with these guidelines and, if approved, to use funding for the approved purposes only and as detailed in the original application.

The service must notify the IDF Manager of any changes to the circumstances in the original application.

The Conditions of Funding are outlined at Appendix 2 in these guidelines and on the department's website.

C3. Submitting an application for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

An application for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator applies to the care environment where the inclusion barrier is present. If a service is seeking the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator for children across different care environments, separate applications are required.

An application can be approved for up to 52 weeks.

An application for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator requires the following information from a service:

- enrolment details of the eligible child (or children)

- the days and hours of attendance of the eligible child (or children)

- the total number of hours the service requires access to an Additional Educator each week

- the length of the approval period required

- the total number of Additional Educators the service requires; if more than one in the same care environment, and

- details of whether the service requires access to an Additional Educator for pupil free days the child (or children) may attend the service.

Once the following steps have been completed, the IDF application is submitted through the IS Portal for consideration by the IDF Manager:

- service has completed a SIP in the IS Portal, in collaboration with its IA

- documentary evidence has been provided by parent/guardian and is attached in the IS Portal

- permission to share personal information has been provided by parent/guardian and is attached in the IS Portal, and

- application has been signed off by the IA.

C4. Outcome of the application for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

The IDF Manager (outlined in Section G) will assess the application for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator against the eligibility requirements set out in these guidelines and notify the service of the outcome of the application.The IDF Manager will consider the following in their assessment:

- whether the service meets the educator to child ratios as required under the National Regulations to ensure the adequate supervision of children within the particular care environment for which IDF support is requested. This will be assessed before the funding application for an additional educator is considered

- the details of the barriers to inclusion presented in the care environment, identified through the SIP

- the ongoing high support needs of the child (or children)

- the degree to which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate solution to the identified inclusion barrier/s

- how the requested Additional Educator will be used to implement strategies to address inclusion barriers and facilitate inclusion of all children

- whether the application has been endorsed by the IA.

The service will be advised of the outcome of their application, by the IDF Manager, within 15 business days.

C4.1 Application Declined Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is not approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Application Declined Letter, via email, advising that the application has been declined and the rationale for which it was declined.

Information about communication processes, including complaints mechanisms and appeals processes is available on the IDF Manager's website, which can be accessed through the [department's website](#).

C4.2 Approval Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Approval Letter, via email, to the contact details on the application outlining the:

- start and end date of the approval period

- approved number of subsidised hours that can be claimed each week

- maximum number of subsidised hours over the approval period

- approved number of non-face to face hours over the approval period, and

- date by which the service should apply for a renewal of funding.

To receive payment for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator, services submit claims retrospectively following the Additional Educator and child's attendance (as outlined in Section C5).

Given this, the service is not required to formally accept the Approval Letter, however submitting claims consistent with the Approval Letter indicates acceptance of funding and the Conditions of Funding.

C4.3   Rates and Limits

Care Type	Care Arrangement	Subsidy rate ($/hour)	Hourly limit	Approval period
LDC, OSHC, OCC, Centre-based BBFs & Mobiles	Single child	$23.00	Up to 25 hours per week	Up to 52 weeks
	Shared care (more than one child)	$23.00	Up to 40 hours per week	Up to 52 weeks
Vacation Care	Single child	$23.00	Up to 40 hours per week	Up to 12 weeks
	Shared care (more than one child)	$23.00	Up to 50 hours per week	Up to 12 weeks

Section C4.3 outlines the maximum hourly limits and approval periods that apply to a single educator subsidised by the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator.

C4.4   Pupil free days

An ECCC service is eligible to apply for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator where a child (or children) on a pre-existing IDF Case attends the service on a pupil free day.

A maximum of 6 pupil free days, at 8 hours per day, can be approved over a 52 week approval period of an IDF Case.

C4.5   Non Face-to-Face hours

Where a child is absent from the service, the educator funded by the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator should receive appropriate notice in line with award provisions.

A service is able to claim the subsidy for a limited number of hours during its approval period, where the child is absent but the Additional Educator attends the care environment. The maximum number of hours for which the subsidy is payable where a child is absent is a percentage of the total number of approved hours in the service's approved period, as set out in the table below.

Once the service has exceeded this number of hours in its approval period, it will not receive any further subsidy for further hours that the child is absent from the service and the educator funded by the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator attends.

Care type	Non Face-to-Face hours Limit (of total IDF case hours)
Long Day Care, Occasional Child Care, Centre-based BBFs & Mobiles	4%
Before School Care & After School Care	5%
Vacation Care	17%

Example: A Long Day Care service is approved for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator for 18 hours per week for 52 weeks. The maximum number of hours it can claim the subsidy for in the approval period, where the child is absent but the Additional Educator attends is 4% of the total approval period (18 hours x 52 weeks x 0.04 Non Face-to-Face hours limit = 37.4 hours)

C4.6   Shared Care arrangements

Where more than one child with disability with ongoing high support needs is in attendance in the same care environment, the service must explore the use of a Shared Care arrangement.

A Shared Care arrangement occurs where one additional educator is employed to support the inclusion of more than one child with ongoing high support needs in the care environment.

When completing the IDF application, the service (in collaboration with its IA) will determine if a Shared Care arrangement could meet the service's needs.

Where a Shared Care arrangement occurs, the service is eligible for an increased number of subsidised hours for an Additional Educator (see Section 4.3).

C4.7   Non-approved purposes for funding

The IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator cannot be approved for the following purposes:

- one-to-one support for a specific child for the majority of time they are in the care environment or the majority of time IDF Subsidy is requested

- to administer medical/nursing assistance[2] or backfill an existing staff member to do so. Medical/nursing assistance is defined as anything that is not covered by general first aid procedures and that requires specific training. Examples of medical/nursing assistance include:

    o administration of insulin and monitoring of glucose levels, or

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[2] The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 provides regulations around child care services managing medical conditions of children (Regulations 90, 91 and 92 refer). In summary, approved child care services must have a policy and appropriate processes for managing medical conditions.
For further details see the Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

- o   oxygen administration and monitoring

- assistance to meet licensing requirements as outlined in the National Regulations including educator to child ratios.

- to provide assistance to access other services, such as one to one early intervention or therapy sessions

- the provision of transportation of a child to/from the ECCC service, on transport not operated by the service

- assistance for which funding is the responsibility of a state or territory government, other Australian Government programs or other bodies. Examples include:

  - o   respite care to assist the parent or carer to take breaks from the care of a child with disability including for holidays, for personal or family needs, or due to ill health

  - o   to support the inclusion of a child/children in a kindergarten/preschool program, and

  - o   school education including home schooling.

C5.   Claiming the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

Services receive payment for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator by submitting claims for the number of hours the Additional Educator was employed, up to the maximum weekly approved hours on the approved IDF Case.

Claims are made retrospectively through the Child Care Management System in 2016-17 (and through the IT system to support the *Jobs for Families* Child Care Package from 1 July 2018) and are also based on the number of hours the child/children's attended, except where Non Face-to-Face hours (outlined in Section C4.5) are claimed.

Claims require services to:

- identify the Additional Educator

- outline the hours the Additional Educator attended the care environment

- provide details of the eligible child (or children) in the care environment, including their enrolment and attendance information.

As outlined in the Conditions of Funding (available at Appendix 2), the service must submit claims within 60 days of the fortnight the eligible child or children listed on the approved case attended the service.

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days during the approval period, the IDF Case will automatically be inactivated and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated by the IDF Manager.

As also outlined in the Conditions of Funding, the service must retain relevant evidence of the eligible child/children on the IDF Case and the Additional Educator. This may include:

- evidence of the child/children's attendance, such as sign in and sign out sheet with parent signature

- additional educator attendance, such as time sheets signed by the Additional Educator.

C6. Payment of the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator

The IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator is paid directly to the service, from the department, to the same payee details it has nominated to receive its child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families.

Payment to BBF services occurs via electronic transfer to a nominated account following the provision of an invoice to the IDF Manager.

Following a successfully executed claim, the service will typically receive payment within 4-6 business days, depending on the banking institution to which it is affiliated.

C7. Review and renewal of funding

The service can apply for a renewal of their approved IDF case. This should occur on or after the renewal date as outlined in the original approval letter which, if approved, will enable continuity of the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator following the original end date of funding.

The service, in collaboration with its IA, must review:

- the SIP and care environment

- whether ongoing IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator is required

- whether there is a change in the number of hours an Additional Educator is needed.

A new application, which indicates it is for renewal of funding on a previously approved IDF case, must be submitted following the processes outlined in C2-C3 of these Guidelines.

The ECCC service must notify the IDF Manager if the approved amount of IDF Subsidy is no longer required.

C8. Changes to the care environment

Changes to the care environment may include situations where:

- the child on an approved IDF case increases or decreases their hours of attendance in the care environment

- more support from an Additional Educator is required due to the enrolment of an additional child with ongoing high support needs

- significant staffing changes, which may result in a loss of inclusion capabilities in the care environment.

The service, in collaboration with its IA, must review:

- the SIP and care environment

- whether additional support of an Additional Educator is required

If the care environment requires a different level of support than the existing IDF approval, the service must submit a change of circumstances application, following the processes outlined in C2-C3 of these Guidelines.

When a child with ongoing high support needs, approved for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator, moves into a different care environment within the service; the service, in collaboration with its IA, must review the SIP and inclusion profile of the different care environment to determine the level of support required.

Where support for the IDF Additional Educator is required for the different care environment, a new application, or change of circumstances application for the new care environment must be submitted following the processes outlined in C2-C3 of these guidelines.

C9.   A service changes owner and/or operator

Where a service in receipt of the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator changes owner and/or operator, both the existing operator and the new operator are required to advise the IDF Manager of the change within 30 days and establish an appropriate way forward to ensure service continuity.

SECTION D - IDF SUBSIDY FOR IMMEDIATE/TIME LIMITED SUPPORT

D1. Purpose

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support enables centre based services to immediately engage an Additional Educator for a time limited period, while an alternative and more stable solution is being determined.

D1.1 Eligibility

Approved centre based services are eligible to apply for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support. Approved *centre based* services include:

- Long Day Care services

- Outside School Hours Care services, including Vacation Care services

- Occasional Care services

- Mobile Services

- Centre-based Budget Based Funded Programme services.

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support can be accessed where there is an immediate barrier associated with a child, for which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate short-term solution.

In most cases, this will be to include a child with disability (or undergoing assessment for disability), but may also include children presenting with challenging or disruptive behaviours, where it is not yet possible for the service to determine if the behaviour is associated with disability, or if the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator is required on an ongoing basis.

D1.2 Available Funding

Applications for funding for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time-Limited Support can be made at any time during the program. This will provide responsive support to services to include children presenting with an immediate inclusion barrier.

The IDF has an annual capped funding allocation, and the approval of any application made to the IDF is contingent on the availability of funding.

D2. Application requirements for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time-Limited Support

D2.1 Development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan

As the intention of funding is to be highly responsive, the service seeking the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited support is not required to develop a completed Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) at the time of application.

The service is however required to develop a short business case in the IS Portal and have its application endorsed by its IA, prior to applying for funding.

The service is required to complete the SIP following the assessment and outcome of the application.

D2.2 Documentary evidence

Documentary evidence is not required for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support.

D2.3 Conditions of Funding

An IDF application can only be submitted and will only be considered for approval by the IDF Manager if the service agrees to the Conditions of Funding.

The Conditions of Funding outline the requirements the service must adhere to if approved for funding. By agreeing to the Conditions of Funding the service declares it has prepared the application in accordance with these guidelines and to only use funding for the approved purposes and as detailed in the original application.

The service must notify the IDF Manager of any changes to the circumstances in the original application.

The Conditions of Funding are outlined at Appendix 2 in these guidelines and on the department's website.

D3. Submitting an application for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

An application for the IDF Subsidy for an Immediate/Time Limited Support applies to the care environment where the inclusion barrier is presented. If a service is seeking the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support for children across different care environments, separate applications are required.

An application can be approved for up to 8 weeks.

An application for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited support requires the following information from a service:

- enrolment details of the eligible child (or children)

- the days and hours of attendance of the eligible child (or children)

- the total number of hours the service requires access to an Additional Educator each week

- the length of the approval period required

- the total number of Additional Educators the service requires; if more than one in the same care environment

- details of whether the service requires access to an Additional Educator for pupil free days the child (or children) may attend the service.

Once the following steps have been completed, the IDF application is submitted through the IS Portal for consideration by the IDF Manager:

- service has partially or fully completed a SIP in the IS Portal and has outlined a business case, and

- application has been signed off by the IA.

D4. Outcome of the application for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

The IDF Manager (outlined in Section G) will assess the application for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support against the eligibility requirements as per these guidelines and notify the service of the outcome of the application.

The IDF Manager will consider the following in their assessment of the application:

- whether the service meets the educator to child ratios as required under the National Regulations to ensure the adequate supervision of children within the particular care environment for which IDF support is requested. This will be assessed before the funding application for an additional educator is considered

- the details of the barriers to inclusion presented in the care environment, identified through the business case

- the high support needs of the child (or children) at this time

- the degree to which an Additional Educator is the most appropriate solution to the presenting barriers to inclusion

- whether the application has been endorsed by the IA, and

- any other inclusion support provided to the service for the same care environment.

Applications for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support are typically processed and the services notified of the outcome within 5 business days.

D4.1   Application Declined Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is not approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Application Declined Letter, via email, advising that the application has been declined and the rationale for which it was declined.

Information about communication processes, including complaints mechanisms and appeals processes is available on the IDF Manager's website, which can be accessed through the [department's website](#).

D4.2   Approval Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Approval Letter, via email, outlining the:

- start and end date of the approval period

- approved number of subsidised hours that can be claimed each week

- maximum number of subsidised hours over the approval period, and

- approved number of non-face to face hours.

To receive payment for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support, services submit claims retrospectively following the additional educator and child's attendance (as outlined in Section D5).

Given this, the service is not required to formally accept the Approval Letter, however submitting claims consistent with the Approval Letter indicates acceptance of funding and the Conditions of Funding.

D4.3   Rates and limits

Care Type	Subsidy rate ($/hour)	Hourly limit	Approval period	Weekly hourly limit
Long Day Care, Out of School Hours Care, Occasional Child Care, Centre-based BBFs & Mobiles	$23.00	Up to 100 hours per child	Up to 8 weeks per year, from the approval date	Up to 25 hours per week
Vacation Care	$23.00	Up to 100 hours per child	Up to 8 weeks per year, from the approval date	Up to 40 hours per week

Section D4.3 outlines the maximum hourly limits and approval periods that apply to a single educator subsidised by the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support.

Where it can be demonstrated that exceptional circumstances exist that require the approval of the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support beyond the approval period outlined in D4.3, additional support may considered and approved by the IDF Manager. The IDF Manager will consider

exceptional circumstances on a case-by-case basis and must seek agreement from the department prior to granting approval.

D4.4 Pupil free days

An ECCC service is eligible to apply for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited support where a child/children on a pre-existing IDF case attends the service on a pupil free day.

A maximum of 1 pupil free day, at 8 hours per day, can be approved over a 8 week approval period of an IDF case.

D4.5 Non Face-to-Face hours

Where a child is absent from the service, the educator funded by the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited support should receive appropriate notice in line with award provisions.

A service is able to claim the subsidy for a limited number of hours during its approval period, where the child is absent but the Additional Educator attends the care environment. The maximum number of hours for which the subsidy is payable where a child is absent is a percentage of the total number of approved hours in the service's approved period, as set out in the table below.

Once the service has exceeded this number of hours in its approval period, it will not receive any further subsidy for further hours that the child is absent from the service and the educator funded by the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator attends.

Care type	Non Face-to-Face hours Limit (of total IDF case hours)
All service types	10%

Example: A Long Day Care service is approved for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator for 100 hours. The maximum number of hours it can claim the subsidy for in the approval period, where the child is absent but the Additional Educator attends is 10% of the total approved hours (100 hours x 0.10 Non Face-to-Face hours limit = 10 hours)

D4.6 Non-approved purposes for funding

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited support cannot be approved for the following purposes:

- one-to-one support to a specific child for the majority of time they are in the care environment or the majority of time IDF Subsidy is requested

- to subsidise an additional educator to administer medical/nursing assistance[3] or backfill an existing staff member to do so. Medical/nursing assistance is defined as anything that is not covered by general first aid procedures and that requires specific training. Examples of medical/nursing assistance include:

    o administration of insulin and monitoring of glucose levels, or

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[3] See footnote at C4.7

- o   oxygen administration and monitoring

- assistance to meet licensing requirements outlined in the National Regulations including educator to child ratios.

- assistance for which funding is the responsibility of a state or territory government, other Australian Government programs or other bodies. Examples include:

  - o   respite care to assist the parent or carer to take breaks from the care of a child with disability including for holidays, for personal or family needs, or due to ill health

  - o   to support the inclusion of a child (or children) in a kindergarten/preschool program, and

  - o   school education including home schooling.

- to provide assistance to access other services, such as one to one early intervention or therapy sessions

- the provision of transportation of a child to/from the ECCC service, on transport not operated by the service.

D5. Claiming the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

Services receive payment for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited by submitting claims for the number of hours the Additional Educator was employed, up to the maximum weekly approved hours on the approved IDF case.

Claims are made retrospectively through the Child Care Management System in 2016-17 (and through the IT system to support the *Jobs for Families* Child Care Package from 1 July 2018) and are also based on the number of hours the child/children's attended, except where Non Face-to-Face hours (outlined in Section C4.5) are claimed.

Claims require services to:

- identify the Additional Educator

- outline the hours the Additional Educator attended the care environment

- provide details of the eligible child (or children) in the care environment, including their enrolment and attendance records.

As outlined in the Conditions of Funding (available at Appendix 2), the service must submit claims within 60 days of the fortnight the eligible child or children listed on the approved case attended the service.

If a service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days during the approval period, the IDF Case will automatically be inactivated and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated by the IDF Manager.

As also outlined in the Conditions of Funding, the service must retain relevant evidence of the eligible child/children on the IDF Case and the Additional Educator. This may include:

- evidence of the child/children's attendance, such as sign in and sign out sheet with parent signature

- Additional Educator attendance, such as time sheets signed by the Additional Educator.

D6. Payment of the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support is paid directly to the service, from the department, to the same payee details it has nominated to receive its child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families.

Payment to BBF services occurs via electronic transfer to a nominated account following the provision of an invoice to the IDF Manager.

Following a successfully executed claim, the service will typically receive payment within 4-6 business days, depending on the banking institution to which it is affiliated.

D7. Review and renewal of funding

The IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support can only be approved once for a service for the same child.

If a service requires ongoing support from an Additional Educator to include the child, as identified its SIP, it should apply for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator (outlined in Section C).

D8. A service changes owner and/or operator

Where a service in receipt of the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support changes owner and/or operator, both the existing operator and the new operator are required to advise the IDF Manager of the change within 30 days and establish an appropriate way forward to ensure service continuity.

SECTION E – IDF FAMILY DAY CARE TOP UP

E1. Purpose

The Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) Family Day Care (FDC) Top Up supports eligible FDC services to include children with disability with ongoing high support needs, by providing a fee top up payment where including the child results in the educator being unable to enrol the maximum number of children as allowed under the National Law.

E1.1 Eligibility requirements

Services eligible for the IDF FDC Top Up are:

- Approved FDC Services

The IDF FDC Top Up is limited to one payment per FDC educator.

To access funding, an FDC service must be seeking to include a child (or children) with disability, or undergoing assessment for disability, ***with ongoing high support needs***. That is, the child requires significant additional support from the educator, which is over and above what would be expected for children of a similar age in the care environment.

The ISP does not prescribe an explicit list of disabilities which stipulates if the service is or is not eligible to access the subsidy. The service seeking funding is responsible for demonstrating that due to the needs of the child (or children) during their times of attendance, consideration of the other children in the care environment and the overall impact on the educator, an IDF Top Up is appropriate.

This is done through the development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), in collaboration with its Inclusion Agency (IA) and supported by information provided in the application.

The service should be guided by the ['Guide to Social Security Law, 1.1.R.90 Recognised disability CA (child)'](#) in considering the impact of the child's disability.

E1.2 Available Funding

Applications for funding for the IDF FDC Top Up can be made at any time during the program to provide responsive support to services as they enrol children with disability, or undergoing assessment for disability, with ongoing high support needs.

The IDF has an annual capped funding allocation, and the approval of any application made to the IDF is contingent on the availability of funding.

E2. Application requirements for the IDF FDC Top Up

E2.1 Development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan

Prior to applying for the IDF FDC Top Up, the FDC service must complete a SIP (outlined in Section A2.2) in collaboration with its IA.

If through the development of a SIP, it can be demonstrated that including a child with disability with ongoing high support needs results in the FDC educator being unable to enrol the maximum number of children allowed under the National Law, the SIP will support the service's application for funding.

E2.2   Provision of documentary evidence

A FDC service seeking the IDF FDC Top Up must provide signed documentation by a relevant professional that confirms:

- a diagnosed disability (including development delay) or diagnosed medical condition, or

- a current and ongoing assessment for disability.

Documentary evidence can be provided by a range of professionals including (but not limited to):

- medical practitioners

- registered psychologists

- registered nurses or nurse practitioners, or

- allied health professionals such as speech pathologists, physiotherapists and audiologists.

Documentary evidence may include (but is not limited to):

- a qualified medical practitioner's confirmation of a diagnosis

- diagnosis by a registered psychologist

- the child's health care card stating the disability code

- documentation stating a child's eligibility for Child Disability Allowance or parent's/guardian's eligibility for Carers Allowance with respect to the child

- supporting documentation, such as a diagnostic report, signed by a qualified medical practitioner or registered psychologist

- a report or supporting documentation signed by an allied health professional, registered nurse or nurse practitioner of the continuing assessment of a child for the purpose of diagnosing disability, or

- an appointment letter or referral for an assessment by a qualified medical practitioner or registered psychologist.

Documentary evidence that has been supplied by the parent/guardian to their child's service can be shared with a different service following a change in their child's enrolment, if the service requires support from the IDF. The parent/guardian must provide their consent that the service is able to view documentary evidence previously provided for the purposes of the IDF. The parent/guardian may also elect to provide the documentary evidence themselves, or update the documentary evidence provided.

E2.3 Evidence of permanent disability

Documentary evidence that supports permanent disability will not be required to be submitted with future applications while the child is enrolled at the same service.

E2.4 Exemptions from documentary evidence

Where a child is a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant under Section 28 of the NDIS Act 2013, the provision of documentary evidence outlining the child's disability is not required.

Evidence that the child is a NDIS participant will be accepted. Documentary evidence of a child undergoing assessment of disability must be dated within two years of an application being submitted for IDF.

E2.5 Provision of Permission to Share Personal Information Form

The documentary evidence requirements outlined above require parents/guardians to share personal information about their child's disability (or assessment for disability) with their early childhood and child care service (ECCC), and to disclose the information to the IA, IDF Manager and the department, to use for the purpose of administering IDF funding.

To ensure adherence to the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles contained within the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, parents/guardians are required to sign a Permission to Share Personal Information Form between the ECCC service and the parents/guardians.

The form is provided by the IA and the signed form must be attached in the IS Portal with the documentary evidence to support the application for funding.

Where a parent/guardian has previously provided documentary evidence for the purposes of the program, they can consent to this information being provided to a service that has subsequently enrolled their child. This will be supported through the IS Portal.

E2.6 Conditions of Funding

An IDF application can only be submitted and will only be considered for approval by the IDF Manager if the service agrees to the Conditions of Funding.

The Conditions of Funding outline the requirements the service must adhere to if approved for funding. By agreeing to the Conditions of Funding the service declares it has prepared the application in accordance with these guidelines and to only use funding for the approved purposes and as detailed in the original application.

The service must notify the IDF Manager of any changes to the circumstances in the original application.

The Conditions of Funding are outlined at Appendix 2 in these guidelines and on the department's website.

E3. Submitting an application for the IDF FDC Top Up

An application for the IDF FDC Top Up applies to the FDC educator where the inclusion of a child results in the educator being unable to enrol the maximum number of children as allowed under the National Law. If an FDC service is seeking the IDF FDC Top Up for children across different FDC educator's, separate applications are required.

An application can be approved for up to 52 weeks.

An application for the IDF FDC Top Up is in the context of the FDC educator.

An application for the IDF FDC Top Up requires the following information from a service:

- enrolment details of the eligible child (or children)

- the days and hours of attendance of the eligible child (or children)

- the total number of hours the service requires the IDF FDC Top Up

- the length of the approval period required, and

- details of whether the service will require support for pupil free days the child (or children) may attend the service.

Once the following steps have been completed, the IDF application is submitted through the IS Portal for consideration by the IDF Manager:

- service has completed a SIP in the IS Portal, in collaboration with its IA

- documentary evidence has been provided by parent/guardian and is attached in the IS Portal

- permission to share personal information has been provided by parent/guardian and is attached in the IS Portal

- application has been signed off by the IA

E4. Outcome of the IDF FDC Top Up

The IDF Manager (outlined in Section G) will assess the application for the IDF FDC Top Up application against the eligibility requirements as set out in these guidelines and notify the FDC service of the outcome of the application.

The IDF Manager will consider the following in their assessment:

- the ongoing high support needs of the child

- the details of the barriers to inclusion presented in the care environment, identified through the SIP

- whether the application has been endorsed by the IA.

The service will be advised of the outcome of their application, by the IDF Manager, within 15 business days.

E4.1 Application Declined Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is not approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Application Declined Letter, via email, advising that the application has been declined and the rationale for which it was declined.

Information about communication processes, including complaints mechanisms and appeals processes is available on the IDF Manager's website, which can be accessed through the department's website.

E4.2 Approval Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Approval Letter, via email, outlining the:

- start and end date of the approval period

- approved number of subsidised hours that can be claimed each week

- maximum number of subsidised hours over the approval period

- approved number of non-face to face hours, and

- date on which the service should apply for a renewal of funding.

The IDF FDC Top Up is claimed retrospectively based on the eligible child's attendance (as outlined in Section E4).

Given this, the service is not required to formally accept the Approval Letter, however submitting claims consistent with the Approval Letter indicates acceptance of funding and the Conditions of Funding.

E4.3   Rates and limits

Care Type	Subsidy rate ($/hour)	Hourly limit	Approval period
Family Day Care	$10.20/hour (2016-17)	Up to 50 hours per week	Up to 52 weeks per year

E4.4   Pupil free days

An FDC service is eligible to apply for the IDF FDC Top Up where a child (or children) on a pre-existing IDF case attends the service on a pupil free day.

A maximum of 6 pupil free days, at 8 hours per day, can be approved over a 52 week approval period of an IDF case.

E4.5   Non Face-to-Face hours

A capped number of Non Face-to-Face hours will be available per IDF case. Non Face-to Face hours will allow the child care service to claim the IDF FDC Top Up where the child has not attended.

A service is able to claim the subsidy for a limited number of hours during its approval period, where the child is absent. The maximum number of hours for which the subsidy is payable where a child is absent is a percentage of the total number of approved hours in the service's approved period, as set out in the table below.

Once the service has exceeded this number of hours in its approval period, it will not receive any further subsidy for further hours that the child is absent from the service.

Care type	Non Face-to-Face hours Limit (of total IDF case hours)
FDC	10%

Example: A FDC service is approved for the IDF Top Up Payment for 18 hours per week for 52 weeks. The maximum number of hours it can claim the subsidy for in the approval period, where the child is absent is 10% of the total approval period (18 hours x 52 weeks x 0.10 Non Face-to-Face hours limit = 93.6 hours)

E4. 6   Non-approved purposes for funding

The IDF Subsidy for FDC Top Up cannot be approved for the following purposes:

- one-to-one support for a specific child for the majority of time they are in the care environment or the majority of time IDF FDC Top Up is requested

- assistance to meet licensing requirements as outlined in the National Regulations including educator to child ratios and administer medical/nursing assistance[4]

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[4] The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 provides regulations around child care services managing medical conditions of children (Regulations 90, 91 and 92 refer). In summary, approved child care services must have a policy and appropriate processes for managing medical conditions.
For further details see the Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

- o Medical/nursing assistance is defined as anything that is not covered by general first aid procedures and that requires specific training. Examples of medical/nursing assistance include:

    - administration of insulin and monitoring of glucose levels, or

    - oxygen administration and monitoring

- the provision of transportation of a child to/from the FDC service, on transport not operated by the FDC educator or service

- assistance for which funding is the responsibility of a state or territory government, other Australian Government programs or other bodies. Examples include:

    - o respite care to assist the parent or carer to take breaks from the care of a child with disability including for holidays, for personal or family needs, or due to ill health

    - o school education including home schooling

- to provide assistance to access other services, such as one to one early intervention or therapy sessions, andto engage an additional educator/carer in a FDC environment.

E5. Claiming the IDF FDC Top Up

Claims for the IDF FDC Top Up are made retrospectively through Child Care Management System in 2016-17 (and through the IT system to support the *Jobs for Families* Child Care Package from 1 July 2018) and are based on the child's (or children's) attendance.

Claims require services to identify the number of hours they are claiming the FDC Top Up payment each week.

As outlined in the Conditions of Funding (available at Appendix 2), the service must submit claims within 60 days of the fortnight the eligible child or children listed on the approved case attended the service.

If the service does not submit any claims for more than 60 days during the approval period, the IDF Case will be automatically inactivated and new claims cannot be submitted. Cases can be reactivated by the IDF Manager.

As outlined in the Conditions of Funding, the service must retain relevant evidence which may include:

- attendance records for all children in the care environment, such as sign in and sign out sheet with parent/guardian signature, and

- a record of payment made to the educator from the FDC service for the FDC Top Up payment.

E6. Payment of the IDF FDC Top Up

The IDF FDC Top Up is paid to the FDC service, from the Department, to the same Payee details it has nominated to receive its child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families. The FDC service is required to pass the payment directly on to the relevant FDC Educator.

Following a successfully executed claim, the service will typically receive payment within 4-6 business days, depending on the banking institution to which it is affiliated.

E7. Review and renewal of funding

The FDC service can apply for a renewal of the IDF FDC Top Up on or after the renewal date as outlined in the original approval letter, which, if approved, will enable continuity of the IDF FDC Top Up.

The service, in collaboration with its IA, must review:

- the SIP and care environment

- whether ongoing IDF FDC Top Up is required, and

- whether there is a change in the level of funding needed.

A new application, which indicates it is for renewal of funding on a previously approved IDF case, must be submitted following the processes outlined in C2-C3 of these Guidelines.

The FDC service must notify the IDF Manager if the approved amount of IDF FDC Top Up is no longer required.

E8. A service changes owner and/or operator

Where an FDC service in receipt of the IDF Subsidy FDC Top Up changes owner and/or operator, both the existing operator and the new operator are required to advise the IDF Manager of the change within 30 days and establish an appropriate way forward to ensure service continuity.

SECTION F – IDF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS SUPPORT

F1. Purpose

The Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) Innovative Solutions Support assists eligible early childhood and child care (ECCC) services to fund innovative and flexible solutions to inclusion, where a barrier has been identified and it cannot be addressed by the support provided by its Inclusion Agency (IA).

IDF Innovative Solutions Support is available for solutions to barriers to inclusion other than subsidising the employment of an Additional Educator.

Allowing eligible ECCC services to propose innovative and flexible solutions to inclusion, aims to empower services to carefully consider their inclusion challenge/s and take an active role in finding solutions; which intrinsically builds inclusion capacity and capability.

It also provides a valuable opportunity to collect new data and inform best practice for including children with additional needs in mainstream ECCC services.

F1.1 Eligibility requirements

Services eligible to apply for IDF Innovative Solutions Support are:

- Long Day Care services

- Outside School Hours Care services, including Vacation Care services

- Family Day Care services

- Occasional Care services

- Mobile Services

- Budget Based Funded Programme services.

An ECCC service seeking to include children, where a barrier to inclusion can be demonstrated, is eligible to apply for assistance and could include, but is not limited to, children from the following cohorts:

1. children with disability including those undergoing assessment for disability

2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

3. children from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds

4. children from a refugee or humanitarian background

5. children with serious medical condition/s

6. children presenting with language and speech delays

7. children presenting with disruptive behaviour

Applications will be considered for inclusion of other children with additional needs where an inclusion barrier can be demonstrated.

Where necessary, applications for IDF Innovative Solutions Support will be prioritised for the first five cohorts.

F1.2 Available Funding

Applications for funding for the IDF Innovative Solutions Support can be made at any time during the program to provide responsive support to services as they enrol children with additional needs.

The IDF has an annual capped funding allocation, and the approval of any application made to the IDF is contingent on the availability of funding.

Applications for IDF Innovative Solutions Support will be approved on merit, up to the total value of available funds.

F1.3 Approved purposes

Examples of innovative solutions may include (but are not limited to):

- funding to purchase translating and interpreting services and/or bilingual workers to engage with parents and/or settle a child from a CALD background

- funding to purchase services from cultural experts e.g. Indigenous community elders, bicultural support workers

- funding for specialist advice on how to include a particular child, beyond the expertise of the Inclusion Agency e.g. advice from trauma or hearing specialist which may include travel and accommodation costs for the specialist.

F1.4 Non-approved purposes

IDF Innovative Solutions Support cannot be used for the following purposes:

- purchasing specialist equipment or resources

- medical and therapeutic interventions

- settlement services for migrants where funding is available through other programs

- support more appropriately funded through an alternative IDF stream

- support more appropriately funded by state/territory governments or other agencies

- support more appropriately funded by other Australian Government programs.

F2. Application requirements for IDF Innovative Solutions Support

F2.1 Development of a Strategic Inclusion Plan

Prior to applying for IDF Innovative Solutions Support, a service must complete a Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) (outlined in Section A2.2) in collaboration with its IA.

If through the development of a SIP, a barrier or barriers to inclusion are identified, for which additional funding support would assist in addressing the identified inclusion barrier, the service may consider making an application under the IDF Innovative Solutions Support. The SIP will form a component of the application for funding.

Further requirements for IDF Innovative Solutions Support are outlined in Section F2.2 and F2.3.

F2.2 IDF Innovative Solutions Support application

To access IDF Innovative Solutions Support, a service must submit a proposal for funding which has been reviewed by its IA, to the IDF Manager outlining:

- the inclusion barrier, including a description of the child/children the barrier is associated with, and why funding is needed to address it noting this inclusion barrier must be identified in the SIP

- evidence that a SIP has been developed and, if appropriate, endorsed by the IA, and the service has considered its internal capacity to address the inclusion barrier including relevant requirements under the National Quality Framework and support available from its IA

  o Where an Innovative Solutions Support application is not endorsed by the IA, a service is still entitled to submit its application to the IDF Manager for assessment and decision. However the IA must confirm that the application has been reviewed prior to it being submitted to the IDF Manager, irrespective of the IA's evaluation.

- evidence that funding for the required purpose is not available elsewhere

- an overview of the intended outcome of funding, including estimated timeframes and milestones

- financial quotes to support the total value of funding being sought, inclusive of GST

- the total duration and value of funding sought and budget breakdown for goods and services to be funded.

F2.3   Assessment criteria for IDF Innovative Solutions support

All proposals will be assessed by the IDF Manager against the following essential criteria with *equal weighting*:

- the extent to which the proposal would lead to the genuine inclusion of a child or children with additional needs (as outlined in F1.1)

- the extent to which the proposal would lead to enhanced inclusion capacity and capability of the service

- the extent to which the proposal can be realistically implemented

- the capacity of the service to deliver the proposal

- the extent to which no alternative or more appropriate funding sources have been identified or sourced.

All proposals will be assessed against the above essential criteria, but will also take into consideration:

- value for money

- level of innovation

- level of risk involved

- quality of deliverables.

The IDF Manager may seek further information from the service as deemed necessary to determine the merit and likely success of the proposal.

Proposals and any attachments lodged with the IDF Manager become the property of the Australian Government from the date received and will not be returned to the applicant.

F2.4   Conditions of Funding

An IDF application can only be submitted and will only be considered for approval by the IDF Manager if the service agrees it will comply with the Conditions of Funding, if the application is approved.

The Conditions of Funding outline the requirements the service must adhere to if approved for funding. By agreeing to the Conditions of Funding the service declares it has prepared the application in accordance with these guidelines and, if approved, to use funding for the approved purposes only and as detailed in the original application.

The service must notify the IDF Manager of any changes to the circumstances in the original application.

The Conditions of Funding are outlined at Appendix 2 in these guidelines and on the department's website.

F3. Submitting an application for IDF Innovative Solutions Support

An application for IDF Innovative Solutions Support may relate to the care environment where the inclusion barrier is presented. IDF Innovative Solutions Support may also provide funding for innovative solutions that are in the context of the whole ECCC service.

Once the following steps have been completed, the IDF application is submitted through the IS Portal for consideration by the IDF Manager:

- service has completed a SIP in the IS Portal, in collaboration with its IA

- additional IDF Innovative Solutions application requirements have been completed

- application has been signed off by the IA.

Where an application is considered as urgent, the IA will also mark the application accordingly.

F4. Outcome of IDF Innovative Solutions Support

The IDF Manager (outlined in Section G) will assess the application for the IDF Innovative Solutions Support against the eligibility requirements as set out in these guidelines and notify the service of the outcome of the application.

The IDF Manager will consider the assessment criteria outlined in Section F2.3 in their assessment of the application.

The service will be advised of the outcome of their application, by the IDF Manager, within 5 business days where an application has been marked as urgent, or within 15 business days for all other applications.

F4.1 Application Declined Letter from the IDF Manager

If an application is not approved, the IDF Manager will send the service an Application Declined Letter, via email, advising that the application has been declined and the rationale for which it was declined.

Information about communication processes, including complaints mechanisms and appeals processes is available on the IDF Manager's website, which can be accessed through the department's website.

F4.2 Letter of Offer from the IDF Manager

If an application is approved, the IDF Manager will send the service a Letter of Offer, via email, outlining:

- description of the project

- total funding approved

- expected end date of the project

- expected deliverables of the project, and

- any additional terms and conditions (if any).

F4.3   Acceptance of Letter of Offer from the IDF Manager

The service must accept and sign the Letter of Offer, returning it to the IDF Manager via email before funding can be provided.

F4.4   Rates and limits

The allowed range of a single application for IDF Innovative Solutions support is $300-$3,000.

Applications over $3,000 will be referred to the department by the IDF Manager, for approval to consider the application expenditure above the $3,000 limit. The IDF Manager will provide a recommendation to the department to consider expenditure above the $3,000 limit based on the value for money assessment of the proposed application against the criteria outlined in Section F2.3. If the department agrees to the funding over the $3,000 limit for the application, the department will advise the IDF Manager of any additional terms and conditions which are to apply to the approval of the application. This is to take account of potentially higher financial and other risks and could include milestone payments and reporting requirements.

There is no explicit limit on the number of applications a service can make to the IDF Innovative Solutions Support, however the IDF Manger will use discretion when assessing applications and may prioritise support to services that have not yet accessed IDF Innovative Solutions Support over a service that has received previous support.

F5.   Payment of IDF Innovative Solutions Support

IDF Innovative Solutions Support is paid directly to the service, from the department, to the same payee details it has nominated to receive its child care fee assistance payments on behalf of families.

Payment to BBF services occurs via electronic transfer to a nominated account following the provision of an invoice to the IDF Manager.

IDF Innovative Solutions Support is paid upfront after the Letter of Offer has been formally executed and retrospective claiming is not required unless otherwise stated in the Letter of Offer.

Following a successfully executed Letter of Offer, the service will typically receive payment within 4-6 business days, depending on the banking institution to which it is affiliated.

F6. Acquittal of IDF Innovative Solutions support

At the completion of the project, determined as the end date outlined in the Letter of Offer, the service must complete an online declaration through the IS Portal, declaring that funding was expended for the purposes for which it was approved.

The service must also provide details of the outcomes of the project, including confirmation that intended deliverables were achieved, and if necessary, an explanation for why they were not achieved. This is done as an addendum to the original application in the IS Portal.

F7. A service changes owner and/or operator

Where a service in receipt of IDF Innovative Solution Support changes owner and/or operator, both the existing operator and the new operator are required to advise the IDF Manager of the change within 30 days and establish an appropriate way forward to ensure service continuity.

SECTION G – INCLUSION DEVELOPMENT FUND MANAGER

G1. Purpose

The Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDF Manager) is the single national organisation that assesses all IDF applications for all streams of funding from eligible early childhood and child care (ECCC) services.

The purpose of the IDF Manager is to ensure a nationally consistent and equitable application of the IDF eligibility requirements outlined in these guidelines.

G2. The role of the IDF Manager

The IDF Manager is responsible for assessing and determining an outcome for all applications made to the IDF against the eligibility criteria outlined in these guidelines. While the IDF Manager is responsible for approving or rejecting applications for funding, payment is made directly to the ECCC service by the department and occurs retrospectively following a claims process.

The role of the IDF Manager includes (but is not limited to):

- ensuring a nationally consistent application of these guidelines, and any other information provided by the department, when assessing, managing and administering the IDF

- facilitating equitable access to IDF assistance for all eligible services

- processing and notifying services of the outcome of their application according to the following timeframes:

    o within 5 business days of application receipt, for applications for the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support and urgent IDF Innovative Solutions Support applications

    o within 15 business days of receipt, for applications for the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator, the IDF Family Day Care Top Up and routine IDF Innovative Solutions Support applications

- notifying services and the relevant IA within 5 business days if the application is incomplete and seeking further information necessary to process the application

- responding to all inquiries within 5 business days

- maintaining an up-to-date website with information on the IDF, and a 1800 phone number to respond to inquiries and provide guidance on applying for the IDF.

G3. Communication, appeals and complaints

The IDF Manager must engage with ECCC services, IAs and families about the IDF, including providing information about, and support to meet eligibility requirements, application processes, funding levels and responding to queries and complaints.

Information about communication processes, including complaints mechanisms and appeals processes is available on the IDF Manager's website, which can be accessed through the department's website.

G4. Compliance monitoring

The IDF Manager undertakes regular compliance checks on services accessing IDF support to confirm IDF funding is being used in accordance with the service's approved application.

ECCC services must meet all reasonable requests from the IDF Manager in a timely way which relate to the IDF Manager's compliance monitoring functions.

Appendix 1 – Program Principles

The following principles underpin the ongoing delivery of the Inclusion Support Programme to eligible early childhood and child care (ECCC) services:

- Inclusion - the program supports the inclusion of all children with additional needs in eligible mainstream ECCC services.

- Equity of access - eligible ECCC services, regardless of their geographic location or service type, has equitable access to support from the ISP to include children with additional needs.

- National consistency - across the nation, the ISP is delivered in an efficient, flexible, culturally appropriate and timely manner and is tailored to meet the inclusion needs of eligible ECCC services and the children participating in those services.

- Integrated approach - ISP Providers will work collaboratively with each other, State Regulators, Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority and other community and service providers (e.g. National Disability Insurance Scheme, and Settlement Service Providers) to support an integrated approach to service delivery.

- Strengths-based approach – the existing capacity and capability of eligible ECCC services will be a starting point for determining the type and intensity of inclusion assistance and support required.

- Self-sustaining and resilience - eligible ECCC services receiving support through the ISP will endeavour to work towards becoming self-reliant and commit to continuously improving their inclusive practice by:

  - encouraging and adopting innovative and creative solutions to inclusive practice in their service,

  - sharing best practice inclusion information with other services in the sector, and

  - only accessing support from the program's funding streams where other inclusion supports and strategies are insufficient to achieve inclusion of a child with additional needs.

- Workforce participation – the program recognises and supports parents and carers of children with additional needs to participate in the workforce and/or recognised activities.

Appendix 2 – Conditions of Funding

Conditions of Funding:

IDF Subsidy and FDC Top Up

You must comply with the Inclusion Support Programme Guidelines 2016-2019 (the Guidelines). This includes (but is not limited to):

- Use of the funding for the purposes as stated in the Approval Letter sent by the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDF Manager)
- Submitting online claims for IDF payments within 60 days of the fortnight that the child/ren on the approved IDF case attended the service
- Retaining relevant evidence pertaining to the use of the funding, including sign in and sign out sheets of the eligible child/ren on the approved IDF Case, Additional Educator attendance or record of payment to the FDC educator
- Complying with the *Privacy Act* 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles when handling personal information for the purposes of the Inclusion Support Programme
- Advising the IDF Manager via the IS Portal within 15 business days if the child/ren on the approved IDF Case no longer attends the service.
- Advising the IDF Manager in writing within 30 days of any intention of the service to change owner and/or operator
- Meeting all reasonable requests from the IDF Manager to undertake compliance activity where appropriate, including reasonable assistance to provide access to your employees, premises occupied by you and materials relevant to the IDF Subsidy. Reasonable notice will be provided prior to requiring access to premises and records.
- Meeting all reasonable requests from the IDF Manager or Department to participate in reporting and evaluation activities for the Inclusion Support Programme
- Complying with all relevant statutes, regulations, by-laws and requirements of any Commonwealth, State, Territory or local authority, and any of the Department's policies notified in writing

If you are found to be in breach of any of the conditions, your approved IDF case may be terminated, future claims may not be able to be submitted and payments may be withheld. You may also be required to repay any amounts you have received whilst in breach.

Conditions of Funding:

IDF Innovative Solutions

You must comply with the Inclusion Support Programme Guidelines 2016-2019 (the Guidelines). This includes (but is not limited to):

- Using the funding for the purposes as stated in the Letter of Offer sent by the IDF Manager

- Retaining all relevant documentation to support the spending of approved funds.

- Advising the IDF Manager if duplicate funding has been received for the same or similar purpose within 5 business days.

- Complying with the Privacy Act 1988 and Australian Privacy Principles when handling personal information for the purposes of the Inclusion Support Programme.

- Completing an online declaration of funding expenditure on completion of the project, and report on outcomes of the project in the IS Portal.

- Meeting all reasonable requests from the IDF Manager to undertake compliance activity where appropriate, including reasonable assistance to provide access to your employees, premises occupied by you and materials relevant to the IDF Innovative Solutions.

- Meeting all reasonable requests from the IDF Manager or Department to participate in reporting and evaluation activities for the Inclusion Support Programme

- Complying with all relevant statutes, regulations, by-laws and requirements of any Commonwealth, State, Territory or local authority, and any of the Department's policies notified in writing

If you are found to be in breach of any of these conditions, you may be required to repay any amounts of funding you have received whilst in breach.

Glossary

WORD/PHRASE	DEFINITION
Active Inclusion Support Subsidy Cases	Inclusion Support Subsidy cases the National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider has advised would have continued beyond 26 June 2016 if the IPSP did not cease.
Approved Exemption	Where an exemption from the normal eligibility requirements for the ISS has been granted by the National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider under the IPSP guidelines.
Approved Service	An approved service is a service that has been assessed as satisfying the eligibility rules under the Family Assistance Law and has been approved to administer Australian Government child care payments on behalf of families.
Care Environment	A specific setting, room or grouping of children in care (for example, a 0-2 year old room in Long Day Care, or an educator's home in Family Day Care).
Centre Based Care	Centre Based Care refers to Long Day Care, Outside School Hours Care, Occasional Care, Mobile services and centre-based Budget Based Funded Programme services.
Educator	Early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood and child care environments.
GST	The GST is a broad-based tax of ten per cent on the supply of most goods, services and anything else consumed in Australia.
ISP Provider	Organisation in receipt of funding from the Australian Government for the delivery of ISP: • Inclusion Agencies (IAs) • Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDF Manager)
IS Portal	The Inclusion Support (IS) Portal is an online system for lodging IDF applications and claims for payment.
National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider	The National Inclusion Support Subsidy Provider appointed under the IPSP to assess Inclusion Support Subsidy applications and advise services of outcomes.
National Law	The National Quality Framework operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. This is referred to as the Education and Care Services National Law Act, 2010 (National Law)
National Regulations	The Education and Care Services National Regulations support the legislation and provide detail on a range of operational requirements for a service.
National Quality Framework	The overarching framework that includes the regulatory body responsible for ensuring quality in child care; the Early Years Learning Framework; the National Quality

WORD/PHRASE	DEFINITION
	Standards; and the Quality Rating System.
Pupil-free day	A day set by an educational institution where students do not attend school due to teacher training. Also known as multi-purpose day, curriculum day or professional development day.
Strategic Inclusion Plan	The plan developed by early childhood and child care services with support of an IA to identify its capacity and capability to include a child or children with additional needs.
Specialist Equipment	Equipment recommended as necessary for the inclusion of an eligible child with ongoing high support needs.

Acronyms

ACRONYMS	DESCRIPTION
BBF	Budget Based Funded
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCR	Child Care Rebate
CCS	Child Care Subsidy
FDC	Family Day Care
GST	Goods & Services Tax
IA	Inclusion Agency
IDF	Inclusion Development Fund
IPSP	Inclusion and Professional Support Program
ISP	Inclusion Support Programme
LDC	Long Day Care
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NQF	National Quality Framework
OSHC	Outside School Hours Care
SIP	Strategic Inclusion Plan
SEL	Specialist Equipment Library