Cognus

EARLY YEARS TEAM

Early Years Pupil Premium: Making Every Penny Count

What is Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP)?

Early Years Pupil Premium is additional funding provided to early years settings to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children. It is designed to close the attainment gap and ensure every child has the best start in life. Closing the attainment gap in the early years is crucial because it sets the foundation for a child's lifelong learning and development. Research shows that the first five years are critical for brain development. Gaps in language, social skills, and cognitive development at this stage often persist into later stages of education with the gap doubling at the end of each key stage. Children who start behind are more likely to struggle academically, socially, and emotionally throughout their education. The attainment gap often reflects socio-economic disparities. Closing it helps ensure all children, regardless of background, have equal opportunities to succeed.



Why is EYPP Important?

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds often start school behind their peers in language, communication, and social development. EYPP funding allows settings to provide targeted support that can make a real difference and seek equity for all children. Equity in the early years means ensuring that every child, regardless of their background, has access to high-quality learning experiences and support that meet their individual needs. It goes beyond equality by recognizing that some children may require additional resources or interventions to overcome barriers and thrive. By promoting equity, we create a fair start for all children, reduce the impact of socio-economic disadvantage, and lay the foundation for lifelong learning, well-being, and success.

How Can You Spend EYPP Effectively?

Here are practical, evidence-based ideas:

Language and Communication Development

- Invest in **high-quality storybooks** and **dual-language resources**.
- Provide **small group language interventions**

- Train staff in **speech and language strategies**.
- **Story sacks** with props to encourage interactive storytelling



Example:

Funding Use: EYPP was spent on a Speech and Language Toolkit and staff training.
Impact: Children with delayed speech showed measurable progress in vocabulary and sentence structure within one term. Parents reported increased confidence in communication at home.

Parental Engagement

- Create **home learning packs** with simple activities.
- Host **parent workshops** on language-rich play and routines.
- Use funding for **family story sessions** or lending libraries.
- **Parent lending library** for books and educational games

Example:

Funding Use: Created home learning packs with storybooks and simple maths games.
Impact: Parents became more involved in daily learning routines. Attendance at parent workshops increased by 40%, and children demonstrated improved phonics scores.



Social and Emotional Support

- Purchase **emotion coaching resources** (feelings cards, puppets).
- **Mindfulness and relaxation resources** (calm kits, sensory bottles).
- **Puppet sets** for role-play and emotional expression
- Fund **staff training in attachment and resilience and trauma informed practice**.
- Provide **quiet spaces** for self-regulation.



Enriching Experiences

- Organise **visits to local parks, museums, or farms**.
- Bring in **specialist visitors** (musicians, storytellers).
- **Forest school sessions** or outdoor learning programs.
- **Cooking activities** to develop life skills and maths concepts.



Example:

Funding Use: Organised a trip to a local farm and invested in sensory play resources like water walls and sand trays.
Impact: Children showed greater curiosity and engagement in Understanding the World activities, with improved observational language.

Physical Development

- Invest in **gross motor equipment** (balance bikes, climbing frames, obstacle resources).
- Provide **fine motor kits** (tweezers, threading beads).
- Fund **movement and dance sessions**.

Example:

Funding Use: Bought balance bikes and fine motor kits (threading beads, tweezers).
Impact: Gross motor skills improved significantly, and fine motor activities supported early writing readiness.

Staff CPD

- Use EYPP for **training in inclusive practice**.
- Support staff to attend **EYFS conferences or workshops**.
- Implement **peer coaching** to share best practice.

It is important that staff understand which children are entitled to EYPP funding and know their individual strengths and next steps. This knowledge helps us make informed decisions about how to use the funding effectively. By considering each child as an individual, we can ensure the support provided targets their greatest area of need and makes the biggest difference to their learning and development.

Further Reading:
The EEF Guide to the Pupil Premium | EEF