



DAF Policy (Disability Access Fund)

Aims and Principles

Skylarks Community Preschool is committed to providing an inclusive environment that ensures all children can access their early education entitlement. We adhere to the **Equality Act 2010**, which requires us to make reasonable adjustments for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The Disability Access Fund (DAF) helps us to make these adjustments and build capacity to support eligible children's individual needs.

What is the Disability Access Fund (DAF)?

The DAF is additional funding provided to early years providers by the local authority to support children who are aged 9 months to 4 years old and in receipt of child Disability Living Allowance (DLA). The funding is a fixed annual lump sum payment per eligible child and is not based on an hourly rate or the number of hours the child takes up their funded entitlement.

Eligibility Criteria

A child is eligible for the DAF if they meet the following criteria:

- They are aged between 9 months and 4 years old (note: 4-year-olds in a primary school reception class are not eligible).
- They are accessing a funded early education place (e.g., 15 or 30 hours free childcare).
- They are in receipt of child DLA.

Identifying Eligible Children

- We will use the parental declaration form and discussions during the settling-in period to identify children who may be eligible for the DAF.
- We encourage parents to inform us if their child receives DLA.
- Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) or manager will discuss DAF eligibility with parents and explain how the funding can be used to support their child in the setting.

Making a Claim

- Parents of an eligible child must provide the nursery with a copy of their current DLA award letter from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- If a child splits their funded entitlement across two or more providers, parents must nominate which provider will receive the DAF payment. This will usually be the main setting.
- The nursery will submit the claim to the local authority using the required process (e.g., online portal, email) and provide the necessary evidence.

Purpose of Funding

The DAF must be used to make reasonable adjustments to the setting to enable the child to access their early education entitlement, in line with the Equality Act 2010. This funding should not be used for general running costs, to top up additional hours of childcare, or for general staffing costs.

Deciding how to spend the funding

The nursery manager and/or SENCo will consult with parents and, where appropriate, other professionals involved with the child (e.g., physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, health visitors) to determine the most effective use of the fund to meet the child's individual needs.

Decisions should focus on ensuring equity of access to the learning environment and the seven areas of learning and development outlined in the EYFS framework.

Examples of appropriate use include:

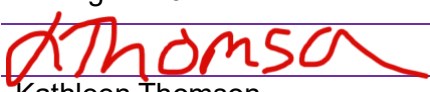
- Purchasing specialist equipment or sensory resources (e.g., sensory tent, communication aids, adapted cutlery, physical aids).
- Minor physical adaptations to the setting (e.g., handrails, ramps).
- Specialist staff training that directly relates to improving the access and experience for the eligible child.
- Resources to support communication needs or self-care.
- Educational resources.

Transferability of Resources

- Any non-static resources or equipment purchased with DAF funding remain the property of the provider in the first instance.
- If a child moves to another setting or school, the nursery may, at its discretion and in consultation with the parents, arrange for the transfer of relevant resources that will continue to benefit the child's access in their new setting.

Financial Management and Audit

- The DAF is paid as a lump sum once a year per eligible child.
- If an eligible child moves to a new setting within the same financial year, the original setting retains the funding, and the new setting cannot claim a second payment until the next academic year.
- The nursery must keep accurate records, including receipts and proof of spending, for audit purposes by the local authority.

This policy was adopted by	Skylarks Community Preschool	(name of provider)
On	1 st August 2026	(date)
Date to be reviewed	1 st August 2027	(date)
Signed on behalf of the provider		
Name of signatory	Kathleen Thomson	
Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)	Manager/Trustee	

Date Reviewed	Changes	Signature

