

To: All Directors of Children's Services  
Local Authorities (England)

CC: Head of Early Years  
CC: Head of School Funding

10 December 2009

### **Early Years Single Funding Formula**

I am writing to let you know that Dawn Primarolo, Minister for Children, Young People and Families, has taken the decision to postpone implementation of the Early Years Single Funding Formula by one year. A written ministerial statement was laid in Parliament to that effect today (attached).

The Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) was intended to be implemented in every Local Authority from April 2010 and we know local authorities have been working hard to meet this challenging deadline.

However, we also know that many providers, parents and local authorities themselves have been concerned about the potential disruption to the early years sector that an under-developed formula could cause. The Minister has therefore decided that local authorities will not be required to implement their EYSFF until April 2011. However, the Department will invite those local authorities that believe they will be ready to implement the EYSFF from April 2010 to continue as planned and to join a new wave of pathfinders for 2010-11.

By taking this approach, we hope to build on the experience of the nine pilot local authorities that implemented their formulae in April of this year and, working with them and the new wave of pathfinders, gather further learning and good practice which can be used to support the remaining local authorities to implement their formulae successfully in April 2011.

We will write again next week in order to set out the steps to be taken by those LAs which may wish to apply to become pathfinders. In the meantime, please contact your Government Office Early Years team in the first instance if you have any questions.

We recognise that this may be frustrating to those of you that have worked hard to implement the EYSFF within a challenging timescale and in full partnership with providers. However, the work you have all undertaken so far will be necessary for taking the process into the next year. Postponing implementation will allow more time to reflect on any aspects of the formula that have caused concern and ensure that the final version supports the provision required to meet the needs of the children in your area and meets the needs of all your providers.

We look forward to working with you further over the next year to ensure the successful implementation of the EYSFF.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ann Gross in black ink.

Ann Gross  
Director  
– Early Years, Extended Services and  
SEN Group  
DCSF

Handwritten signature of Stephen Kingdom in black ink.

Stephen Kingdom  
Head of School Funding Unit  
DCSF