

Inclusion Support QLD

The role of the additional educator – FAQ for Families



This factsheet answers frequently asked questions about the role of an additional educator, when an early childhood education and care (ECEC) service is approved to access this support through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF).

Q1. Does Inclusion Support QLD employ the additional educator and allocate them to the ECEC service?

- A.** No, the ECEC service will be fully responsible for employment of an additional educator. The additional educator works as a member of the team sharing the daily work and responsibilities, to support the participation of all children within the environment it is approved for. For further information, please visit the [Families](#) section of the IDFM website.

Q2. If I choose the care environment that I feel best meets my child's needs, can the ECEC service still access funding for an additional educator?

- A.** We recommend that you discuss options with the director of your child's service about the best care environment for your child. The IDF subsidy for an additional educator is available to support the inclusion of children with ongoing high support needs in a care environment alongside their typically developing peers.

Q3. What does the additional educator do?

- A.** The additional educator is employed as an extra staff member to increase the number of educators in the care environment when a child with high support needs is attending. The educator works as a member of the team, sharing the daily tasks and responsibilities to support the participation of all children. For further information, please refer to the [Role of the Additional Educator](#) factsheet.

Q4. Will the additional educator work one-on-one with my child?

- A.** The work of the additional educator will look similar to the roles of other educators in the room. The additional educator will interact with all children and provide support to individual children when needed, including children with high support needs, as with all educators. The additional educator is not solely responsible for a child with high support needs, or for providing ongoing one-on-one support. This funding is used to contribute to the cost of employing an additional educator to increase the educator-to-child ratio above the National Law and Regulation requirements.

Q5. Will the additional educator be shared if there are other children with disabilities in the room?

- A.** Yes, the additional educator is employed as an extra member of the team to increase the number of educators in the care environment when a child or children with high support needs are attending. An additional educator will interact with all children and provide support to individual children when needed, including the child/ren with high support needs, as all educators will do.

Q6. Will the additional educator carry out a separate program for my child?

- A.** No, the additional educator works as a member of the team, sharing the daily work and responsibilities to support the participation of all children in all aspects of the program. Under the [nationally approved learning frameworks](#), ECEC services are aiming to provide an inclusive program to ensure all children can participate and engage successfully.

Q7. Will an additional educator stay with my child for the hours they attend the centre, including arrivals and departures?

- A.** All children have the right to attend an ECEC service for the hours a family requires care, during normal operation. The service and inclusion professional will together identify which part/s of the day that the educator team requires the increased educator:child ratio to be in place. Educators should consider their daily routines and program, and the strategies and actions identified in their Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP), to identify when this support is required.

Q8. Can we use the additional educator to help transport my child to and from the service?

- A.** Yes, under the Inclusion Support Program (ISP) Guidelines an additional educator can support with transporting your child to and from the ECEC service, providing that the additional educator is above the required ratio; the transport is operated by the ECEC service or educator; and is on approved ECEC service/provider transport.

Q9. Do I only communicate directly with the additional educator or the lead educator of the room?

- A.** You can communicate with all educators in your child's room as the additional educator is not solely responsible for sharing information with you. It is important for you to develop a relationship with key educators and discuss the most suitable option for open communication directly with them.

Q10. Will the additional educator be responsible for the medical needs of my child (for example peg feeding, monitoring and recording absent seizures for my GP, monitoring blood glucose levels and giving insulin injections)?

- A.** No, the additional educator is not able to provide medical or nursing assistance to a child, or early intervention therapy. For further information, please refer to the [Inclusion Support Programme \(ISP\) Guidelines](#) section 4.1.4. – Non-approved purposes for funding.

Q11. Will the additional educator have extra skills, knowledge and specialised training that is specific to supporting my child with their high support needs?

- A.** No, the additional educator is not responsible for specialised care or carrying out therapy. All educators within the team will be working with the child with high support needs, so there will be a range of knowledge, experience and skills available to support the child's inclusion within the program. The ECEC service can access the [Innovative Solutions Support](#) stream of funding to build educator knowledge through tailored specialist advice, in conjunction with their inclusion professional.

Q12. Will the additional educator be responsible for communicating with and learning from allied health professionals, to be sure my child's care plan is being followed?

- A.** The additional educator cannot not be used to provide assistance to access other services outside of the care environment, such as one-to-one early intervention or therapy sessions. However, it can be valuable for families and educators to collaborate with allied health professionals to build educators' confidence about including children with on-going high support needs.

ADDITIONAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q13. Why do I need to let the ECEC service know if my child will be late or not in at all, if the additional educator is not for them?

- A.** It is the family's responsibility to notify the service if their child will be absent or is going to be late, as the additional educator is employed above the regulated educator:child ratio. By notifying them, you make it possible for the service to adjust staffing arrangements to ensure the care environment is supported throughout the day.

Q14. Where can families find information about the Inclusion Development Fund Manager (IDFM)?

- A.** The IDFM website provides information for [families](#) about the Inclusion Development Fund, including what it means for their child. This page includes a handy brochure specifically for families, available to view, download and print. More information is available here: [Inclusion Support Program Frequently Asked Questions for Families](#).