



Practice Guidance: The Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF)

Document Title	Practice Guidance: The Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF)
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RELEVANT GUIDANCE

[Adoption and special guardianship support fund \(ASGSF\) – GOV.UK](#)

The ASGSF was set up by the government in recognition that many adoptive families may need therapeutic support following adoption. As a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA), Adopt North East (ANE) can apply to the ASGSF on behalf of adoptive families.

An Assessment of Need by a Qualified Social Worker provides an opportunity to discuss the presenting needs of a family and explores how they can best be met either by the family, universal services, ANE, or ANE in conjunction with therapeutic support/other services. Should the meeting conclude that a family may benefit from additional therapeutic support an application to the ASGSF can be completed by ANE.

To be eligible for funding, ANE must apply to the ASGSF within 3 months of assessing the family's support needs.

Adopt North East will:

- Decide on the type of support required and if it is eligible for payments from the ASGSF
- Apply directly to the ASGSF
- Upon ASGSF approval, commission support from approved therapeutic providers.

Adoption and Specialist Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF) eligibility

The ASGSF is available for children living in England up to and including the age of 21 (or 25 with an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP)), who:

- are living (placed) with a family in England while waiting for adoption
- were adopted from local authority care in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland and live in England
- were adopted from abroad and live in England with a recognised adoption status
- were previously looked after but where the adoption has broken down, irrespective of any reconciliation plans

Maximum funding allocations for each child

Until the end of March 2025, the ASGSF will have 2 Fair Access Limits (FAL):

- £2,500 per child per year for specialist assessment
- £5,000 per child per year for therapy

The majority of applications to the fund fall within these limits. In exceptional cases, where there is an urgent need for higher cost support, local authorities or Regional Adoption Agency (RAAs) are asked to match-fund applications.

Criteria for Match Funding:

- high risk of adoption breakdown without high-cost support

- local authorities and RAAs dealing with an unusually high number of complex cases that they cannot afford to fund without additional support from the ASGSF
- additional funding would help to progress hard to place adoptions
- a lack of available, affordable therapeutic support means higher cost provision is required

The ASGSF can fund up to 50% of the amount above the fair access limits, up to a maximum of £30,000 per child including the fair access limits.

Specialist Assessment

For an assessment to meet the ASGSF's definition of a Specialist Assessment, it must demonstrate that it aims to identify the attachment, trauma and needs of the child and provide a holistic view of the therapy to meet those needs.

Criteria:

The following criteria must be met:

- a. Include an in-depth assessment of the child and family's needs with a focus on trauma and attachment, and how this demonstrates the links to the assessment of support needs.

This needs to show that a range of assessment tools will be used to obtain a holistic view of the child's trauma and attachment needs.

Assessments that focus on specific discipline or intervention, for example attachment based sensory assessment would not meet this criterion.

- b. Be undertaken by a qualified clinician(s). For the purposes of the ASGSF, a qualified clinician would be someone who diagnoses and treats patients; is suitably qualified and is licensed to practice via a

regulator such as the Health and Care Professional Council e.g. a trained Clinical Psychologist or Attachment Psychotherapist.

- c. Result in a therapeutic support plan for the child(ren)/family. An assessment that pre-empts the type of therapy that will be needed e.g. sensory support plan will not meet this criteria.

Standalone assessments for single conditions, such as ADHD, FASD, autism, or sensory integration, are not permitted, unless they are part of a wider specialist assessment which meets the above criteria.

Therapy

The therapies funded are those identified to help achieve the following positive outcomes for you and your child:

- Improved relationships with friends, family members, teachers and school staff
- Improved engagement with learning
- Improved emotional regulation and behaviour management
- Improved confidence and ability to enjoy a positive family life and social relationships

Adopt North East Approved Provider Flexible Framework

We are pleased to share that ANE work with providers registered on the NEPO Portal and are subject to an Approved Provider Flexible Framework. This ensures all providers commissioned through the ASGSF are accredited and have undertaken relevant criteria checks. All providers commissioned by ANE are required to use Outcome Measure Tools (OMT) set by the ASGSF at the start and end of the support. All Providers used by ANE are subject to regulated and formal processes ensuring fair access and regulation of provision for service users.

Further information regarding the ASGSF funding criteria

This information can be found here – [first4adoption](#)