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Playgroup Funding Handbook



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

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The Playgroup Funding Handbook sets out the means by which grants for certificated playgroups are calculated and the conditions subject to which grants are paid in accordance with section 311 of the Education Act 1989.

Introduction

Introduction This Handbook sets out the conditions for funding payments to playgroups.

Information about eligibility, the conditions that govern the funding and applying for these funding types can be found in this Handbook.

Who is the Handbook for? The Playgroup Funding Handbook applies to all playgroups funded by the Ministry of Education. In particular, it is intended for the management committees of these playgroups.

Funding Types There are two types of funding for playgroups:

- Playgroup Funding – a general grant available to all eligible playgroups to assist with ongoing operational costs
- the Special Grant – a discretionary grant paid to assist playgroups to meet large operational costs.

For Further Information Contact an Education Adviser at your regional Ministry of Education office.

Regional office contact details, the Playgroup Funding Handbook and financial guidance material are available on www.education.govt.nz.

Playgroup Funding

Introduction Playgroup Funding is intended to assist playgroups to meet their ongoing operational costs.

Eligibility To be eligible to receive Playgroup Funding a playgroup must:

- be certificated (that is hold a valid interim or full certificate) and
- meet the conditions for payment of funding set out in this Handbook.

Funding Rate The funding rate for all playgroups is \$1.51 per hour per child. Playgroup Funding is GST inclusive.

Funding Dates Playgroup Funding is paid in mid-April and mid-October each year. A payment advice notice will be sent to all playgroups that receive funding detailing the amount they have been paid.

The mid-April payment covers the period 1 January to 30 June of the calendar year.

The mid-October payment covers the period 1 July to 31 December of the calendar year.

Updating Contact Details It is important the Ministry of Education has the most up-to-date contact details for each playgroup. If your playgroup's funding contact person, postal address or bank account details have changed please notify your regional Education Adviser as soon as possible. Incorrect playgroup details may result in delayed funding.

Playgroup Funding Conditions

Objectives	<p>Funding is provided to support playgroups to meet the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. to enable a community-initiated response to increase participation in early childhood education2. to support playgroups to provide quality educational programmes consistent with any curriculum prescribed by the Minister of Education, and3. to assist playgroups to be sustainable over time.
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Report on met Objectives	<p>Playgroups are required to provide the Ministry of Education with a report on how the funding received has been used to meet these objectives. See the Playgroup Funding Report page in this Handbook for further details of this requirement.</p>
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Guidelines for Expenditure	<p>Playgroups must ensure that the use of their Playgroup Funding is allocated appropriately to meet the three objectives.</p>
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Example 1: Inappropriate Spending	<p>It would not be appropriate for a playgroup to spend their entire allocation on paying for a playgroup coordinator if there were inappropriate or inadequate curriculum resources.</p>
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Example 2: Inappropriate Spending	<p>It would not be appropriate to use the majority of funding for overheads and transport costs if there was insufficient equipment for children.</p>
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Expenditure Justification	<p>Playgroups need to carefully consider the rationale and justification for any expenditure. This information can then be used to complete the Playgroup Funding Report (PG5).</p>
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Playgroup Funding Conditions, continued

Objective 1: Increase ECE Participation

Objective 1 spending is for premises and facilities or ensuring children's health and safety.

The following examples support this objective:

- to assist with the playgroup's operating costs, such as rent and electricity to support children's health and safety by installing products like safety matting and sunshades, and
 - to make or contribute to repairs or additions to the building used by the playgroup as appropriate.
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Objective 2: Quality Educational Programmes

Objective 2 spending is for learning opportunities and experiences that support the prescribed curriculum framework (see Education (Playgroups) Regulations 2008)

The following examples support this objective:

- to purchase curriculum resources and a range of children's equipment
 - to purchase language and culturally-specific resources
 - to improve learning spaces used by the playgroup, and
 - to support training programmes relevant to the playgroup.
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Objective 3: Sustainable Playgroups

Objective 3 spending is for the playgroup's management and administration costs.

The following examples support this objective:

- to purchase resources for the sound financial and administrative management of the playgroup
 - to recruit and maintain membership to ensure the ongoing success of the playgroup
 - to pay wages or fees to a playgroup coordinator, and
 - to promote the availability of the service within the community.
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Playgroup Funding Conditions, continued

Administrative Requirements

To receive funding playgroups are required to:

- maintain a separate bank account either in the name of the playgroup or the affiliated organisation
 - have two signatories to sign off all expenditure
 - maintain accurate and verified records of income and expenditure and make these available to the Ministry of Education on request
 - complete the Playgroup Funding Report (PG5) to account for the expenditure of government funding, and
 - maintain enrolment and attendance records and make these available to the Ministry of Education on request.
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Conditions on Closure

Funding is provided to playgroups on the condition that, upon closure:

- all remaining funds received from the Ministry of Education are returned to the Ministry of Education, and
 - all equipment purchased with Ministry of Education funding may be reclaimed by the Ministry.
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Restrictions on Funding

Funding must not be claimed for:

- children enrolled in a licensed home-based service who attend the playgroup with their home-based educator, or
 - children over the age of six or who are enrolled in school.
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Claiming Playgroup Funding

Maximum to be Claimed

There are no restrictions on the number of days or hours a certificated playgroup can operate during a week. However, no child may attend for more than four hours per day, and no playgroup may claim funding for more than four hours per day for any child attending.

Playgroup Funding can be claimed for a maximum of 25 children between birth and six years of age for each playgroup session.

Calculating Playgroup Funding

Playgroup Funding is calculated using the formula below:

The funding rate x the average number of children attending x the hours per week the group operates x weeks of operation over the six month period.

Example

Happy Days Playgroup has an average of eight children and operates 20 hours per week. The playgroup expects to operate for 19 weeks over this six month period.

They could claim: $\$1.51 \times 8 \times 20 \times 19 = \4590.40 .

Statutory Holidays

Playgroup Funding can only be claimed for statutory holidays if the playgroup was operating on that day and children attended.

Notional Roll

Where a playgroup has an average number of children attending that is greater than zero but less than five, this will be rounded up to five.

Playgroup Funding Form

Introduction To claim Playgroup Funding, playgroups must fill in and submit a Playgroup Funding Form (PG3).

Receiving the Form The PG3 forms will be sent to eligible playgroups. If you have not received a PG3 form please contact your regional Ministry of Education office.

Returning the Form The completed PG3 form should be returned to your regional Ministry of Education office.

Timelines Forms are due back to your regional Ministry of Education office by:

- 28 February each year for the mid-April payment of claims for the period 1 January to 30 June of the calendar year.
- 20 July each year for the mid-October payment of claims for the period 1 July to 31 December of the calendar year.

Playgroup Special Grant

Introduction The Special Grant is a discretionary grant to assist a playgroup to cover the large costs that cannot be met from other funding. The Special Grant may contribute to or meet the full costs of what is applied for.

There are two grant rounds per year.

As this is a discretionary grant, the applicants are not guaranteed to receive funding applied for.

Eligibility Playgroups eligible for Playgroup Funding are also eligible to apply for the Special Grant.

Special Grant Uses The Special Grant is available for:

- setup costs for new playgroups
- addressing health and safety issues
- increasing participation in quality ECE in priority communities, and
- addressing extraordinary circumstances (like damage to equipment by an extreme weather event).

If funds permit we will also consider applications for resources or activities that will directly benefit children at the playgroup and cannot be funded from operational funding.

Special Grant Conditions The Special Grant is available on the conditions that:

- the grant is used only for the purpose identified in the application
 - the playgroup informs the Ministry of Education as soon as possible in the event of any changes that affect the immediate use of the grant
 - any funds unspent after one year are returned to the Ministry of Education
 - the use of the Special Grant is reported in the playgroup's annual Playgroup Funding Report for the year it was granted, and
 - equipment purchased with the grant may be reclaimed by the Ministry of Education when the playgroup ceases to operate.
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Applying for the Special Grant

Receiving the Form The Special Grant Application Form (PG4) and a supporting Factsheet can be obtained from your regional Education Adviser or from our website at www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/running-an-ece-service/funding/playgroup-funding-handbook/.

Returning the Form The completed PG4 should be returned to your regional Ministry of Education office.

Grant Amount The Special Grant can be claimed for a maximum of \$5000. The maximum granted to a playgroup in any 12 month period cannot exceed \$5000.

Timeline Applications for the Special Grant are due back to your regional office by:

- the last Friday in April each year for the January-June grant round, and
- the last Friday in October each year for the July-December grant round.

Playgroups will receive confirmation from their regional Education Adviser about whether or not their application has been successful. Payment will be made in June or December each year.

Assistance Your regional Education Advisor is available to offer advice and support about applying for a Special Grant.

Playgroup Funding Report

Introduction Every year playgroups are required to complete and return a Playgroup Funding Report (PG5) to the Ministry of Education. This report needs to show the funds the playgroup has received from the Ministry of Education and how this money has been spent.

Process PG5s are sent to all playgroups who received Ministry of Education funding the previous financial year. It is important the PG5 is completed and returned to your regional Ministry of Education office for checking and recording.

Note: for the purposes of playgroup funding, the Ministry's financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June in the following year.

Timeline PG5s for the previous financial year are due at your regional Ministry of Education office by 20 July each year.

Further Funding A PG5 is required before a playgroup can apply for further funding in the next financial year.

Assistance An education advisor can help your playgroup to complete the PG5. The advisor will check that the funding has been used to meet the objectives of Playgroup Funding and the playgroup has met all the Ministry of Education funding rules.
