**Disability Living Allowance**

DLA is the main benefit for disabled children and is there to help meet any extra costs of being disabled. It is not means tested so the parent’s financial situation is not taken into account. DLA is also not taxable or treated as income for other benefits.

Any ill or disabled child may qualify and the parent does not have to wait for a diagnosis to make a claim. However, to make a successful claim for DLA you have to show that the child needs substantially more care, attention or supervision than other children of the same age who don’t have a disability or health condition.

DLA has two components:

**Care** – the child needs additional care with personal needs during the day or night (night is viewed as when the parent has gone to bed).

**Mobility** – the lower mobility rate is only paid for children over 5 years and the higher rate for children over 3 years.

For a child to receive DLA the parent would need to show that their child’s care needs in the day or night (or both) are greater than the needs of other children of the same age.

The National Deaf Children’s Society give examples of this in their guide to claiming DLA for a child under 3 with a hearing loss which is available on their website.

Their examples show that the child needs more care due to the additional time taken to fit and remove hearing aids, clean them, monitor the child more closely to ensure that they do not remove them, reassure the child through going to them rather than speaking to them across the room etc.

To claim disability living allowance the parent must complete the application form which is available online at https://www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children.

Citizens Advice Bureau can provide support and advice to complete the form.

Parents should get acknowledgement of receipt of the form within two weeks but it can take up to three months for the decision letter to arrive.

**Disability Access Fund**

From April 2017 all 3 and 4 year old children in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and receives free early education can receive the Disability Access Fund.

4 year olds in reception classes are not eligible for the DAF funding.

Eligible children will be able to receive a one-off payment of £615 per year. This is not based on an hourly rate and is an additional entitlement.

Children do not have to take up the full 570 hours of early education they are entitled to in order to receive the DAF. Children in receipt of the DAF will be eligible where they take-up any period of free entitlement.

Early Years providers are ultimately responsible for identifying eligible children.

Local authorities must check that the DAH eligibility requirements are met.