



Australian Government  
Department of Education and Training

# Inclusion Support Programme

## User Guide

## Section 2: Strategic Inclusion Plan

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## Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Description</b>
CALD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCMS	Child Care Management System
ECCC service	Early childhood and child care service
FDC	Family day care
IA	Inclusion Agency
IDF	Inclusion Development Fund
IDFM	Inclusion Development Fund Manager
ISP	Inclusion Support Programme
IS Portal	Inclusion Support Portal
SEL	Specialist Equipment Library
SIP	Strategic Inclusion Plan

# 1 Strategic Inclusion Plan

A Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP) is a self-guided inclusion assessment and planning tool for Early Childhood and Child Care (ECCC) services accessing the Inclusion Support Programme (ISP). The SIP includes short and long-term strategies for improving and embedding inclusive practice for the inclusion of children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers. The development of a SIP recognises a service's current inclusive capacity and capability and outlines objectives for inclusion practices.

The development of a SIP is the first step to accessing support from the ISP, including funding through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF). The SIP is the foundation to identifying and understanding the reasons for the support required and forms part of the application when a service is applying for funding from the IDF.

An Inclusion Agency (IA) will be responsible for creating a SIP record in the IS Portal and working collaboratively with ECCC services to complete the SIP.

Each service provider requiring inclusion support through ISP will have one SIP regardless of the number of service types they operate. A service provider is the individual child care service.

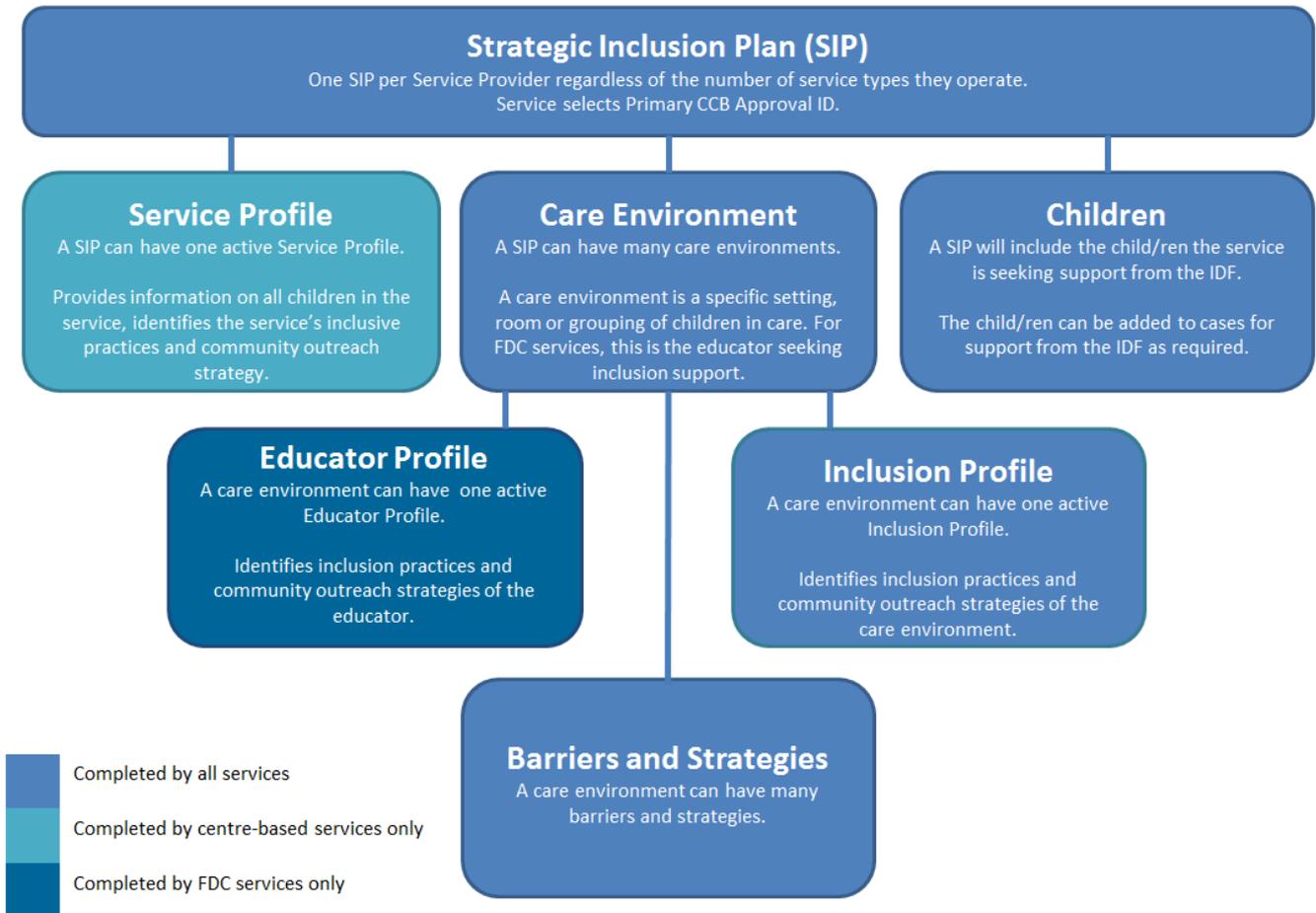
- A large child care operator with multiple child care services at different locations would have multiple SIPs – one for each service location.
- Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services that operate three service types (before school care, after school care and vacation care) will have one SIP for the three service types. A primary CCB Approval ID must be selected on the SIP.

A SIP will include:

- A **Service Profile** for centre-based services
- A **care environment** where the service is seeking inclusion assistance through ISP
  - A care environment for the whole service may be created to consider whole of service inclusion barriers and strategies.
- An **Inclusion Profile** for each care environment
- An **Educator Profile** for Family Day Care (FDC) services
- **Barriers and Strategies**
- Information on **children** requiring support
- **Contacts** for the ECCC service
- **Reviews**

**!** The SIP must be in a status of 'Active' before the ECCC service will be able to complete the required components.

The following sections provide information about each component of a SIP. ECCC services can also refer to the ['IS Portal task card – Completing a SIP'](#) for guidance about how to complete each step in the IS Portal.



## 1.1 Manage SIP and CCB Approvals

Manage SIP and CCB Approvals provides contact details for the ECCC service, IA and IDFM. It also allows services to select a primary CCB Approval ID (where one service operates multiple service types).

The email address that is used for the IS Portal to communicate with the service is available from this tile. If a change needs to be made, it needs to be updated via a child care service's Child Care Management System (CCMS) software.

## 1.2 Service Profile

The Service Profile will be completed by **centre-based services** accessing ISP.

The purpose of the Service Profile is to identify the service provider seeking support through the ISP. It also builds a profile of the ECCC service for the IA to understand their inclusion needs and practices of the service. As part of the SIP Yearly Review process, a new Service Profile should be created on an annual basis so the service can reflect on how their enrolments are changing as a result of implementing the strategies in their SIP.

In the Service Profile, the ECCC service provides information on the number of children enrolled in the service broken down by the cohorts the program supports. Children can be counted in more than one cohort.

These include:

- children with disability (including those undergoing assessment for disability)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children from refugee/humanitarian backgrounds
- children presenting with language and speech delays
- children presenting with disruptive behaviour

ECCC services outline their current capacity and capability to include children with additional needs and develop a community outreach strategy by responding to the following questions:

### **Question 1 – How does your service promote learning experiences, interactions and participation to build on children's strengths and encourage involvement?**

Reflective questions for the service to consider in responding to this question include:

- What does the service do on a daily basis to show their commitment to the inclusion of all children?
- What is the service's philosophy and policies in relation to inclusion?
- How is this reflected in the service's practices?
  - How does the service ensure their program and daily routines cater to all children?
  - How is the physical environment organised to encourage participation and interaction between peers?
  - What strategies do educators use to encourage participation and interaction between peers?
  - How does the service identify and build on children's strengths?
  - What resources do educators use or modifications are made to encourage children's engagement?
  - What professional development is provided to educators to increase use of inclusive practices?
  - What are the service's strengths in regards to inclusion of all children?
  - What would the service like to do to build on their strengths in this area?

### **Question 2 – How will your service engage with families in the community who do not currently access ECCC services?**

Reflective questions for the service to consider in responding to this question include:

- How does the service currently engage with the local community to encourage access to their service for children with additional needs?

- How will the service target and engage with families not accessing their services? For example, CALD families, Aboriginal families.
- How will the service highlight the educational benefits for children with additional needs attending their service?
- What involvement does the service have in the local community? How will the service utilise these opportunities to promote access for all children and families?
- How will the service liaise with other sectors and local agencies/groups (e.g. health, migrant services and the other educational institutions in the local area) to build educator knowledge and build community links?
- How will the service seek feedback from the community to identify if their service is catering to the needs of the community and local families?

The date of effect is the date all the information entered in the Service Profile is correct and final. This can be today's date or dated in the future.

### 1.3 Care Environment

A care environment is a specific setting, room or grouping of children in care.

ISP acknowledges that different care environments in child care services present different barriers and strategies that can be implemented based on the physical environment, educators' existing experience and capability, and the age, skills and abilities of the children.

For centre-based services, the service will identify a care environment name and provide a short description of the care environment. For example, the care environment might be called the Kookaburra room and the description is 2-3 year olds. Where a service would like to identify inclusion barriers and strategies in the context of the whole service, a care environment can be established for the whole service.

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) services should have a care environment set up for each service type they operate, for example Before School Care (BSC), After School Care (ASC) and Vacation care. An OSHC service may also have more than one care environment for each service type they offer if they are separate groups of children and educators, for example Junior ASC and Senior ASC.

For FDC services, the care environment is the FDC educator seeking inclusion support. The service is able to identify the FDC educator from their personnel records submitted to their CCMS from their CCMS software and include a short description.

Once a service has created a care environment and begun their inclusion planning for that particular setting, the care environment name should not be changed in the IS Portal. The barriers and strategies identified on the SIP, as well as any associated IS Cases, are specific to a care environment. Renaming the care environment will disassociate the barriers, strategies, action items and IDF funding from the environment where they were originally identified.

When children with ongoing high support needs are changing care environments, the service must create a new care environment on their SIP, if one does not already exist. The service can also create a new IS Case for the new care environment, if needed.

### 1.3.1 Inclusion Profile

The Inclusion Profile will be completed by all services accessing ISP.

The Inclusion Profile is in the context of the care environment. A separate Inclusion Profile must be completed for each care environment engaged in inclusion planning or the service is requiring support from the IDF.

The Inclusion Profile will identify:

- the number and age of children in the care environment
- the number of educators per standard week
- all educators' confidence to include children with additional needs. The service should consider, on average, the confidence of all educators to include children with additional needs for the majority of time.

It is good practice to complete an inclusion profile on an annual basis. Educators can reflect on how their service is changing as a result of implementing strategies for the care environment, and if any changes to the barriers and strategies should be made at this time. A service can copy the current Inclusion Profile and amend it to reflect the current information.

The date of effect is the date all the information entered in the Inclusion Profile is correct and final. This can be today's date or dated in the future.

### 1.3.2 Educator Profile

The Educator Profile will be completed by FDC services accessing ISP.

The purpose of the Educator Profile is to identify the FDC educator's capacity and capability to include children with additional needs. It also identifies the FDC educator's inclusion practices and community outreach strategies by responding to the following questions.

- How does the educator promote learning experiences, interactions and participation to build on children's strengths and encourage involvement?
- How will the educator engage with families in the community who do not currently access ECCC services?

Reflective questions to assist the service respond to these questions are outlined in Section 1.2

### 1.3.3 Barriers and Strategies

Barriers and Strategies will be completed by all services accessing ISP and is completed in the context of the care environment.

A **barrier** is something that is impacting the service's ability to include children with additional needs alongside their typically developing peers. Services will be able to choose from a list of pre-defined barriers or develop a custom barrier as required.

The barrier start date identifies when the barrier was identified in the care environment. The start date should not be updated. When a barrier is no longer relevant for the care environment, the service may provide an end date.

A **strategy** identifies what the service is going to do to address the barrier to inclusion. Services will be able to choose from a list of pre-defined strategies or develop a custom strategy as required.

The ECCC service can identify many barriers that are present in a care environment. The same strategy can be selected to address different barriers in the care environment.

A list of barriers and strategies is available on the [Department's website](#).

### 1.3.4 Action Items and Progress Notes

Each strategy should have at least one action item that outlines how the service will implement the strategy and what, if any, resources will be used. If the same strategy is proposed to overcome multiple inclusion barriers, the action items and progress notes will be recorded against the strategy for all inclusion barriers it is associated with.

Where a service has selected the strategy of “IDF Funding” to overcome an inclusion barrier/s, the Action Items and Progress Notes will provide supporting evidence of how the service will use the relevant stream of the IDF to address the inclusion barrier. This information will be used as part of the IDFM’s assessment of the applications for the IDF.

The IDFM has developed the [SIP Barriers, Strategies and Actions – Fact sheet](#) to assist services complete this section of their SIP.

## 1.4 Children

Where an ECCC service requires support from the IDF for an Additional Educator, Immediate/Time Limited Support and FDC Top Up, the service is required to include information about the specific child or children that supports their request for funding.

Information about the eligible child or children will be added by the service to the SIP. This child can then be added to each relevant IS Case for the IDF. This approach enables the service to re-use information about a child as required.

The following information is collected about the child for each stream of the IDF.

	Inclusion Support Case			Innovative Solutions Case
	IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support	IDF FDC Top Up	IDF Innovative Solutions Support
Parent/Guardian Consent	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Documentary evidence	Yes	No	Yes	No
Date of Birth	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Demographic information, such as Indigenous status, cultural and linguistic diverse background	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Information about disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Additional information about disability	No	Yes	No	No

Once a child has been added to an IS Case, the child cannot be deleted from the SIP. If the child’s record is no longer applicable for the purposes of ISP, the child status on the SIP can be made inactive.

## 1.5 Authorised Personnel

A SIP will include at least one contact within the service, who will be the primary contact for the SIP. This must be sourced from the service’s Authorised or Key Personnel list from the service’s CCMS software.

Additional staff members who are involved in the SIP can be added to the contact list from the service’s Authorised or Key Personnel from the service’s CCMS software.

To add a staff member as an Authorised or Key Personnel, the service must first do so via their CCMS software.

**Please note:** if a staff member is appearing in the Authorised Personnel tile of the IS Portal, it does not mean that individual has access to the IS Portal. To check staff who have access to the IS Portal, the user should check the ‘User Provisioning’ tile.

## 1.6 Reviews

In ISP, Reviews are completed by the IA. This ensures the Inclusion Professional has check points to review how the service is developing and implementing inclusion planning at the service. A review cannot be completed in the IS Portal before the start date has been reached.



Where the service has applied for funding through the IDF, the IA will be unable to submit an IS Case for approval without reviewing the relevant component of the SIP. In most cases, this will include a review of the Service Profile and Care Environment, including the Barriers and Strategies identified for the particular care environment.

IA review findings are a key piece of information for the IDFM in their assessment of the IS Cases for the service and care environment.

There are three types of reviews of the SIP.

### 1.6.1 Service Profile review

When a Service Profile is submitted by the ECCC service and the date of effect is reached, a Service Profile review record will be created for the IA. The IA will review and report findings on their review of the Service Profile. These findings will be visible to the ECCC service, IDFM and IA.

### 1.6.2 Care Environment review

When an Inclusion Profile for a Care Environment is submitted by the ECCC service and the date of effect is reached, a Care Environment review record will be created for the IA. The IA will review and report on findings for the care environment. These findings will be visible to the ECCC service, IDFM and IA.

As part of the Care Environment review, the IA should review the Inclusion Profile and Barriers and Strategies associated to the particular Care Environment.

Where the strategy of “IDF Funding” is added to a barrier (either an existing barrier or a new barrier), a new review record for the Care Environment will be created as it is assumed that a new application or change of circumstances application for the IDF will be submitted by the service.

### 1.6.3 Yearly SIP review

Services can review and update their SIP at any time. Services are encouraged to undertake a whole service evaluation of their Inclusion Planning and outcomes each year, with support from the IA. This will involve creating a new Service Profile and updating the inclusion planning in each care environment, as needed.

The IA will undertake a yearly review of the SIP at this time and record information about the service’s progress towards providing inclusion care environments.

The purpose of the yearly review is for the service to reflect on the changes they have applied through implementing the SIP. ECCC services should consider their current inclusive capacity and capability and how this has helped progress the strategies in place to address the inclusion barriers identified for each care environment.

The first yearly review will be triggered in the IS Portal by one of the following, whichever occurs first:

- The date of effect of the Service Profile is reached and the record becomes ‘Current’, or
- The status of a care environment changes to ‘Active-pending review’. (For example, when an ‘IDF Funding’ strategy is added to the care environment for the first time)

The start date of the yearly review is 300 days from the trigger date.

A new yearly review is triggered once the first yearly review has a status of ‘Complete’. The start date of the second and subsequent yearly reviews will be 300 days from the start date of the previous yearly review.

**!** When undertaking the yearly review of a SIP, services and IPs should not change the start date of the barriers already identified in their SIP. The barrier start date indicates when the barrier first presented in the care environment.

The [IS Portal task card – Reviewing a SIP](#) is available to assist IPs complete the three reviews in the IS Portal, including guiding questions on what can be considered.

## 1.7 SIP support for applications through the Inclusion Development Fund

The table below outlines each component of the SIP that must be completed and reviewed by the IA to apply for each stream of the IDF.

	IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator	IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support	IDF Family Day Care Top Up	IDF Innovative Solutions Support	
				Relating to service	Relating to care environment
<b>Service Profile</b>	Yes	No	No	Yes (centre-based only)	Yes (centre-based only)
<b>Care Environment</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Inclusion Profile</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
<b>Educator Profile</b>	No	No	Yes	No	Yes (FDC only)
<b>Barriers and Strategies*</b>	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

\*An application will not be able to be submitted by an ECCC service where they do not have an inclusion strategy that identifies IDF funding in the Barriers and Strategies for the care environment.