

The Role of the Additional Educator – Fact Sheet



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This fact sheet answers frequently asked questions about the role of the Additional Educator, when a service is approved to access this support through the Inclusion Development Fund (IDF).

An Additional Educator can be employed with funding available under the **IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator** and **IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support**, outlined in the [ISP Guidelines](#).

What is IDF support and how can funding be used?

IDF support is available to assist educators in early childhood and child care (ECCC) services to include children with high support needs with their peers in a care environment. Eligibility requirements and subsidy limits apply.

This funding is used to contribute to the cost of employing an Additional Educator to increase the educator to child ratio above the licensing requirements. Educators work as a team, including the Additional Educator, to meet the needs of all children within the care environment.

What does the Additional Educator do?

- 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 with high support needs is attending.
- 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.
- The work of the Additional Educator will look similar to the roles of other educators in the room. They will interact with all children and provide support to individual children when needed, including the child with high support needs, as will all educators.

What does the Additional Educator not do?

- The Additional Educator is not solely responsible for a child with high support needs, or for providing ongoing one to one support.
- The Additional Educator does not have the primary relationship with the child's family, including key responsibility for communicating with the family.
- The Additional Educator cannot provide medical or nursing assistance to a child, or provide early intervention therapy.
- The Additional Educator cannot be used to release educators from the care environment for programming and planning purposes, or for training and meetings.
- The Additional Educator does not provide support that would otherwise be provided by the Inclusion Professional (IP).

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Will the Additional Educator have extra skills, knowledge and training that is specific to supporting children with high support needs?

No, 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.

What to consider when advertising for and employing an Additional Educator?

When advertising for and employing an Additional Educator, it is important to remember their role is to be a member of the educator team. Therefore, the skills, knowledge and attributes needed will be similar to other members of the team. Services should review the IDF Approval Letter to consider the number of hours IDF has been approved each week, the approval period dates and the Conditions of Funding. The service must identify and keep attendance records of the Additional Educator employed to make and substantiate claims for payment for the IDF subsidy.

Can a trainee be employed as the Additional Educator?

Trainees cannot be employed as an Additional Educator (either under the IDF Subsidy for Immediate/Time Limited Support or the IDF Subsidy for an Additional Educator) at the same time that they are completing their required trainee hours.

Is the Additional Educator employed for all of the hours that the child with high support needs is in care?

No, the service and Inclusion Professional will together identify which part/s of the day that the educator team requires the increased 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.

What does having an Additional Educator mean for the team?

With an increased educator to child ratio, educators have an extra resource and can work together to implement the Strategies and Actions identified in their Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP). This will help educators to address the Barriers to inclusion identified in the SIP, and support the inclusion of all children.

What information will the Additional Educator need?

The team needs to ensure the Additional Educator has all the information required to be able to work as a team member. This includes being familiar with the care environment routines and program, educator roles and tasks across the day, SIP Strategies and Actions being implemented.

What information will all educators need?

It is important that all educators, including the Additional Educator, have an opportunity to discuss and clarify daily roles and responsibilities within the team, including implementing the Strategies and Actions in the SIP. This means educators will need to know when the Additional Educator will attend each week. This team approach will assist in providing a quality inclusive service, where educators feel supported.



What do families need to know?

Families may not be familiar with the role of the Additional Educator when a service is approved to access Inclusion Development Fund (IDF) subsidy. Families with children with high support needs may expect that the support provided will be similar to early intervention therapy, or may expect one to one support for their child. Services should explain that the Additional Educator works as a member of the team in the care environment, and this increase in educator to child ratio will help educators to meet the needs of their child and all children.

What does an inclusive approach mean for the child with high support needs?

- All educators will know the child and can respond to their needs, strengths and interests throughout the day.
- Provides opportunities for the child to fully engage with their peers and all the learning opportunities the service can offer children.
- Children with high support needs are seen by others and themselves, as capable learners who can participate in the program like their peers.

What does an inclusive approach mean for all children?

- Children are understood, with educators considering and responding to the learning needs of individuals.
- Children learn to recognise and value each other's strengths, and the diversity of abilities and interests among their peers.

Where can families find information about IDF?

The [IDFM website](http://www.idfm.org.au) provides information for families about the Inclusion Development Fund, including what it means for their child <http://www.idfm.org.au/for-families>

There is also a [handy brochure](#) specifically for families available to view, download and print.

Where can I find further information for services and educators?

Inclusion Development Fund Manager

<http://www.idfm.org.au>

The Department of Education and Training

<https://www.education.gov.au/inclusion-support-programme>

Inclusion Agency (IA)

<https://docs.education.gov.au/node/40686>.