

Displaced Children's Education and Wellbeing Fund 2026/2027

Service Specification for Prospective Delivery Partners

1. Overview of Fund

Croydon Council established the Displaced Children's Education and Wellbeing Fund (DCEWF) to provide additional support for children and young people who have experienced displacement and are living within Croydon.

The funding originated through Department for Education funding provided to support children and young people arriving from Ukraine. Croydon Council has used the funding more broadly to support displaced children and young people, including refugees and asylum seekers, where activity supports education, integration and wellbeing.

The Fund is intended to provide additional support beyond that which would ordinarily be available through schools or other statutory services. Programmes should respond to the particular challenges experienced by displaced children, young people and their families to build confidence, develop positive relationships and understand their local community.

Through the Fund, Croydon Council is particularly interested in programmes which can contribute towards:

- improving educational engagement and attainment;
- supporting English language development;
- improving emotional and mental wellbeing;
- building confidence, resilience and positive relationships;
- reducing isolation and supporting community integration;
- providing enriching and developmental opportunities;
- providing appropriate trauma-informed support; and
- helping children and families access wider services and support where required.

It is not expected that every programme will deliver against all of these areas. Applications should instead clearly identify the needs they are seeking to address and demonstrate how the proposed activity will deliver meaningful outcomes for the children, young people and families involved.

2. Croydon DCEWF Priorities for 2026/2027

Learning from the first round of the DCEWF has provided Croydon Council with a much stronger understanding of the needs of displaced children and families within the borough, as well as the types of provision which have demonstrated the greatest impact.

Funding available during 2026/27 will be significantly reduced compared with the previous funding round. As a result, the Council will need to be more targeted in the programmes it supports and will prioritise applications which demonstrate a strong response to identified need and provide clear additional benefit.

For 2026/27, particular consideration will be given to the following areas:

a. Targeted and bespoke provision

Applications should demonstrate a clear understanding of the displaced children, young people or families they intend to support. General activities which happen to be accessible to displaced children are unlikely, on their own, to demonstrate sufficient alignment with the Fund.

Applicants should be able to explain the need they have identified, how they know that need exists and how their proposed programme has been designed to respond to it.

b. Increasing engagement with girls

Previous delivery has seen significantly lower participation amongst girls. The Council particularly welcomes proposals which provide targeted opportunities for displaced girls and young women, including programmes which demonstrate an understanding of the barriers which may prevent them from participating.

c. Early years and whole-family support

There has previously been more limited provision for children aged 0–5 and their families. Applications which provide appropriate early years or family-based support are therefore particularly welcomed.

This could include activity which reduces isolation, supports language and communication, improves access to services, builds parental confidence or provides opportunities for children and families to develop relationships within their local community.

d. High-need groups and areas of unmet demand

Applications should demonstrate that proposed activity responds to an identified gap or need. Funding should add to the support already available within Croydon rather than unnecessarily duplicate existing provision.

The Council will consider the geographical distribution of programmes and the extent to which proposals are able to reach children and families experiencing the greatest need.

e. Sport and physical activity with wider support

Sport and physical activity can provide an effective way of engaging displaced children and young people. However, applications based around sport should demonstrate benefits beyond participation in the activity alone.

The Council will particularly welcome models which combine sport or physical activity with wider wellbeing, mentoring, integration, health, education or family support.

f. Strong and measurable outcomes

All funded organisations will be expected to demonstrate the difference their programme makes.

Applications should identify clear and realistic outcomes and explain how progress will be measured. Simply reporting the number of sessions delivered or children attending will not, in itself, be sufficient to demonstrate impact.

Applicants do not need to address every priority listed above. Funding decisions will consider the strength of the identified need, the quality of the proposed response and the outcomes that can reasonably be achieved.

3. Target Audience

The primary beneficiaries of the DCEWF are children and young people who have experienced displacement and who are currently living in Croydon.

This may include children and young people who have arrived in the UK as:

- refugees;
- asylum seekers;
- children arriving through resettlement or humanitarian routes;
- unaccompanied asylum-seeking children; or
- children and families who have otherwise experienced displacement as a result of conflict, persecution, disaster or other circumstances.

Programmes may include wider family members where there is a clear connection between this support and improved outcomes for displaced children and young people.

The Council recognises the importance of integration. Programmes do not necessarily need to operate exclusively for displaced children and young people where involving the wider community supports integration and positive relationships. However, DCEWF funding must be demonstrably used for the benefit of the Fund's intended beneficiaries.

Applicants will need to demonstrate how they will identify, reach and engage the children and families they intend to support.

4. Applications

Applications are welcomed from organisations with the appropriate experience, governance and capacity to deliver high-quality services for children and young people.

This may include:

- community and voluntary organisations;
- registered charities;
- faith organisations;
- constituted community groups;
- social enterprises and not-for-profit organisations;
- schools; and
- other educational settings.

Where schools apply, the Council particularly welcomes proposals which can provide benefit beyond pupils already attending that individual school or which address a clearly identified need amongst displaced pupils.

Partnership and collaborative approaches are welcomed where these enable organisations to provide a stronger or more joined-up offer. The organisation applying for funding must, however, be clear about which organisation will hold the grant agreement and be accountable to Croydon Council for the use of public funding.

5. Delivery Timeframes

Croydon Council is seeking programmes capable of delivering across the 2026/27 academic year.

For organisations with an established track record and evidence of successful previous delivery, programmes may operate from Autumn Term 1 through to the end of Summer Term 2.

The Council also welcomes applications from organisations which have not previously delivered through the DCEWF. In these circumstances, the Council may consider awarding a shorter initial grant, with delivery commencing from Autumn Term 2 or Spring Term 1 and continuing through to the end of Summer Term 2.

A shorter grant period will allow new organisations to demonstrate the quality, reach and impact of their work while ensuring that the Council manages the remaining funding responsibly.

Applicants should propose a delivery model and timetable which is appropriate for the needs of their intended participants. Programmes may include term-time, weekend, school holiday or other delivery where this is supported by the identified need.

6. Funding

Funding available through the DCEWF is limited and will be considerably lower than in the previous round. Applicants should therefore consider carefully the level of funding required and demonstrate strong value for money.

Applications must not exceed £30,000.

£30,000 represents the absolute maximum award available and should not be regarded as the expected level of funding for an individual project.

Applications requesting funding at or close to the £30,000 maximum will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. An applicant seeking this level of funding would be expected to demonstrate:

- substantial and relevant experience of delivering comparable work;
- a strong track record of successfully engaging displaced children, young people or similarly vulnerable communities;
- clear evidence of high outcomes achieved through previous delivery;
- sufficient organisational capacity and governance to deliver the proposed programme;

- a clear and evidenced level of need for the proposed activity;
- a significant level of reach and/or impact; and
- strong value for money.

Previous receipt of DCEWF funding does not guarantee further funding.

Croydon Council may decide to award an applicant less funding than has been requested, or discuss changes to the scale or delivery model of a proposal before making a final award.

Applicants will be expected to provide a clear breakdown of how funding will be spent. Proposed costs must be reasonable, proportionate to the activity being delivered and represent appropriate use of public money.

Funding should primarily support direct programme delivery and activity which contributes towards the agreed outcomes of the Fund.

Funding will not normally support:

- activity with no clear benefit to displaced children or young people;
- activity which duplicates existing provision without demonstrating additional need;
- retrospective expenditure;
- costs incurred in preparing an application;
- recoverable VAT;
- loans or interest payments; or
- expenditure which cannot be clearly linked to the agreed programme.

Any unspent grant funding will remain repayable to Croydon Council.

7. Programme Requirements

All organisations receiving DCEWF funding will be expected to deliver safe, inclusive and high-quality provision.

a. Safeguarding

Safeguarding children and young people is a fundamental requirement of the programme.

Applicants must have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place, including relevant policies, safer recruitment procedures, DBS arrangements where applicable, staff training and clear procedures for identifying and responding to concerns.

An application which does not provide sufficient assurance regarding safeguarding will not be considered for funding.

b. Inclusion and accessibility

Programmes should be inclusive and accessible and must have appropriate regard to equality, diversity and the different needs of the communities being supported.

Applicants should consider potential barriers to participation, including language, culture, gender, disability, location, transport, childcare and confidence in accessing services.

c. Trauma-informed practice

Organisations working with children, young people and families affected by displacement should recognise that individuals may have experienced trauma, instability or significant changes in their circumstances.

Applicants should demonstrate how their approach and staffing arrangements will provide safe and supportive environments and how staff will respond appropriately to the needs of participants.

d. Working with other services

The Council expects organisations to work collaboratively where appropriate. Providers should understand the limits of their own service and be able to signpost or refer children and families to appropriate services where additional needs are identified.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

Croydon Council will continue to place a strong emphasis on demonstrating the impact of DCEWF-funded activity.

Successful organisations will be required to agree clear outputs and outcomes as part of their grant agreement.

Funded organisations will be required to participate in **termly one-to-one monitoring meetings with Croydon Council**. These meetings will provide an opportunity to review progress against agreed delivery plans, participation, emerging outcomes, expenditure and any issues or barriers affecting delivery.

Organisations will also be required to complete a **termly monitoring return**, providing both quantitative and qualitative information about their programme.

Information required is likely to include:

- numbers and characteristics of children, young people and families engaged;
- attendance and repeat engagement;
- progress against agreed delivery plans;
- evidence of outcomes achieved;
- participant and family feedback;
- case studies where appropriate;
- programme expenditure and use of grant funding; and
- challenges, learning and changes made during delivery.

Croydon Council may undertake announced or unannounced visits to funded provision and may request additional evidence where required to assure itself that activity is being delivered in accordance with the grant agreement.

Where there are concerns regarding delivery, participation, safeguarding, financial management or the achievement of agreed outcomes, the Council may introduce additional monitoring or improvement requirements.

Continued funding will be dependent upon satisfactory delivery against the terms of the grant agreement.

9. How to Apply

All organisations wishing to be considered for funding must complete the DCEWF application form through Microsoft Forms:

[Displaced Children Education and Wellbeing fund - Round 2 Application Form - 2026 – Fill in form](#)

Applications submitted through another method will not be considered.

Application deadline: 13/09/2026 – 23:59

Applicants should ensure that all questions are completed fully. Information regarding an organisation's previous delivery or experience must be included within the application and should not be assumed to be known by the assessment panel.

As part of the application and due diligence process, organisations may also be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation, including:

- Public Liability Insurance;

- Employer's Liability Insurance, where applicable;
- Safeguarding Policy;
- Recruitment/Safer Recruitment Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Privacy/GDPR Policy; and
- relevant programme and venue risk assessments.

Croydon Council may request references or further information where required to establish an organisation's experience and suitability.

10. Assessment

Applications will be assessed by an evaluation panel within Croydon Council.

Funding is limited and meeting the basic eligibility requirements of the programme will not guarantee an award.

In assessing applications, the Council will consider:

Need and alignment with DCEWF priorities	How clearly the proposal identifies and responds to the needs of displaced children, young people and families in Croydon, including alignment with the priorities set out within this specification.
Quality of the proposed programme	Whether the proposed activity provides a clear, coherent and appropriate response to the identified need and is likely to achieve the intended outcomes.
Track record and delivery capability	The organisation's previous experience, evidence of successful delivery, staffing, governance and ability to manage the proposed programme. Where an organisation has previously received DCEWF funding, Croydon Council will take previous performance into account. This may include participation, quality of delivery, achievement of agreed outcomes, monitoring information, responsiveness to the Council and compliance with previous grant agreements.
Engagement and reach	How the organisation will identify and engage eligible children, young people and families, including those who may currently be less likely to access services.

Outcomes and impact	The strength of the proposed outcomes and the organisation's ability to demonstrate and evidence the difference the programme has made.
Value for money	Whether the level of funding requested is proportionate to the scale, quality, reach and expected impact of the programme.
Safeguarding and organisational assurance	Whether the applicant can demonstrate appropriate arrangements to deliver the programme safely and responsibly.

The Council will also consider the overall portfolio of applications received, including geographical coverage, age groups, target communities and the range of needs being addressed.

Where the total value of suitable applications exceeds the funding available, the Council will prioritise those proposals which provide the strongest overall response to the specification.

11. Successful Applications

Successful organisations will receive a conditional funding offer and will be required to enter into a formal grant agreement with Croydon Council before delivery begins.

The grant agreement will confirm:

- the agreed amount of funding;
- the period of delivery;
- agreed activities, outputs and outcomes;
- monitoring and reporting requirements;
- payment arrangements;
- requirements relating to safeguarding and financial management; and
- circumstances in which funding may be withheld or recovered.

No organisation should incur expenditure on the assumption that funding has been awarded until a grant agreement has been formally agreed.

Croydon Council reserves the right to review, reduce, suspend or recover funding where agreed activity is not delivered, outcomes are not being appropriately evidenced, funding has not been spent for its intended purpose or the terms of the grant agreement have not been met.

Displaced Children Education and Wellbeing fund - Round 2 Application Form - 2026

Interested organisations wishing to submit a proposal to provide educational and wellbeing support for eligible children and young people should complete the following form.Croydon Council is seeking to identify potential delivery partners to support children and young people who may require additional educational and wellbeing support as a result of displacement and changes in their circumstances.Before completing the form, organisations should carefully review the accompanying Service Specification, which provides further information on the purpose of the fund, eligibility requirements and expected outcomes.Organisations may submit an Expression of Interest for delivery opportunities during the 2026/27 academic year.Proposals should clearly set out the proposed activity, anticipated outcomes and associated costs. **Funding requests must not exceed £30,000.**
All proposals must be submitted through the online form

The deadline for submitting the form is Sunday, 13th September 2026, at 23:59.

* Required

* This form will record your name, please fill your name.

1. Name of your organisation: *

2. Name of main contact

3. Email address of main contact *

4. Organisation website

5. Organisation type: *

- ☐ Charity
- ☐ School
- ☐ CIC
- ☐ Private business
- ☐ Other

DCEWF Draft Application Form

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5. Organisation type:

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- ☐ CIC
- ☐ Private business
- ☐ Other

Organisation details

6. Please give a description of the type of service your organisation provides

7. Is your organisation based in Croydon?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Does your organisation currently work with children from a displaced background?

9. If you are not based in Croydon, or currently working with this cohort, how will you go about engaging with displaced children within the borough?

10. Have you previously received funding from this programme?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Project Summary

11. Project title:

12. Summary of the project you intend to deliver. Please include the aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the project.

13. How do you intend to successfully deliver the outlined project?
Please detail when sessions/activities will be scheduled

14. Amount of funding requested to deliver the project (up to £x)

15. When and where will your project be delivered

16. Will this project be open for children who are not displaced to attend?

17. How long will your project run for? Please provide a start and end date

Impact of project

18. What will the impact of your project be for displaced children in Croydon?

19. We understand that there are a number of different types of displaced children living in Croydon. Which cohort do you envision your project engaging with the most?

20. What is the key area of need for displaced children your project is addressing?

21. What age range is your project aimed at?

22. How many displaced children do you estimate to engage on a weekly basis?

23. How do you plan on engaging displaced children in Croydon to attend your project?

Budgeting

24. Give a breakdown of how you will budget the fund amount you are requesting

25. How much of the requested grant will be spent on staff, programme delivery and venue hire?

26. Please explain the level of safeguarding anyone working at your project would expected to meet?

27. Please use this space to provide any further detail regarding costs, including other areas of spend predicted

Monitoring and Reporting

All successful providers will be required to submit attendance data and monitoring information to enable the Local Authority to report back to Department for Education.

28. Please confirm the following: *

- ☐ I confirm that my organisation is GDPR compliant
- ☐ I confirm that, if successful, we will provide the required monitoring information such as attendance data, record of activities, participant feedback, case studies, as required

Declaration

29. I confirm that the information provided in this Expression of Interest is accurate and true.

☐ Yes

30. Full Name

31. Role in organisation

32. Date

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

