

£37 million to support children with complex needs

Children with special educational needs and disabilities in England will benefit from £37.3 million of direct support in 2020-21, which is expected to help more than 75,000 families in England.

Families with children that have complex needs and disabilities will receive grants for vital equipment to make their lives easier while implementing social distancing measures, including computers, specialist equipment and educational toys.

£10 million of the total has been committed specifically in response to the unique difficulties presented by the coronavirus pandemic, helping parents educate and look after disabled or critically ill children who are staying at home more than usual.

The multi-million-pound settlement for [Family Fund](#), detailed today by Children and Families Minister Vicky Ford, will help low-income families with seriously ill or disabled children with the cost of equipment, goods or services – from washing machines and refrigerators to sensory and educational equipment that they might not otherwise be able to afford. The grants are typically worth £400 to £500 per family, but vary depending on need.

Children and Families Minister Vicky Ford said:

Our first priority remains the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. I know that these unprecedented times may put additional pressure on families, particularly those whose children have the most complex needs, and these parents deserve some extra help to look after and educate them at home.

From computers and tablets to household items that many of us take for granted, this new funding will directly benefit tens of thousands of families, making sure parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities get the support they need at this difficult time and beyond.

Cheryl Ward, Chief Executive of Family Fund, said:

Family Fund welcomes this commitment of an additional £10 million in emergency funding. It will make an incredible difference to thousands of families in England during this crisis, providing practical and essential grant support to help improve the quality of life and ease some of the additional daily pressures faced in these difficult times by many disabled children and their families.

Dame Christine Lenehan, Director of the Council for Disabled Children, said:

I am delighted that the government has recognised the needs of the most complex children with disabilities at this critical time. Family Fund provides support for some of the poorest families and £37 million will make a real difference to meet the direct challenges they face. Continued support and a refreshed SEND review, as soon as is reasonably practicable, will be needed to keep momentum in this area.

Family Fund provides grants to low-income families raising disabled or seriously ill children and young people, and aims to improve their quality of life by paying for a wide range of items that can ease the daily pressure. Families in England can find out more and apply for grants from Family Fund directly.