



# Playgroup Special Grant Factsheet

## About special grants

All certificated playgroups can apply for special grants. The grants are for costs you can't meet from your operational funding. You can apply for up to \$5,000 in a funding year. A funding year runs from 1 July to 30 June.

## What you can apply for

We have a limited amount of funding each year so we prioritise applications. There are **four priority categories**:

1. setup costs for new playgroups
2. health and safety
3. increasing participation in quality ECE
4. extraordinary circumstances.

We also accept applications in a **general category**, for resources and activities of direct benefit to the children attending the playgroup.

Each category has eligibility criteria we consider when making decisions about applications. The list of categories you can apply for, below, also includes what we check when looking at your application.

One is whether or not it's reasonable for the playgroup to pay for any of the costs listed in your application form. We base this on the amount of operational funding the playgroup received in the past 12 months. Small costs that could be met from operational funding will not be approved (except for setup costs for new playgroups).

### 1. Setup costs for new playgroups

This covers any resources or activities you need to help set up your playgroup. It includes everything from crayons to climbing frames.

Check your eligibility:

- is the playgroup new?
- do resources and activities listed have a direct benefit for the children attending?
- are the resources and activities age-appropriate?

## **2. Health and safety**

This covers items and services to fix a health and safety problem at your playgroup. It includes, but isn't limited to, heating, new or replacement bark chip, fencing, replacing worn floor coverings, and sunshades.

Check your eligibility:

- will the items and activities listed fix a health or safety issue for the children attending?
- is it unreasonable to expect the playgroup to meet the costs from operational funding?

## **3. Increasing participation in quality ECE**

This covers expenses for activities and resources to get more children to attend your playgroup and payments or reimbursement to your playgroup coordinator. Your Education Advisor in your local Ministry of Education office will be able to tell you if your playgroup is eligible.

Check your eligibility:

- does the playgroup work with mainly Māori children, Pasifika children, children with special education needs or children from low income families?
- is the playgroup actively working to increase participation in quality ECE among one or more of these groups?
- is it unreasonable to expect the playgroup to meet any or all of the costs from operational funding?
- if the grant is to be used for payment for a playgroup coordinator, will it be used for a payment for services, reimbursement for expenses, koha, a combination of these, or other appropriate uses?

## **4. Extraordinary circumstances**

This covers situations beyond your control like vandalism, theft, fire or an extreme weather event.

Check your eligibility:

- was the situation beyond the playgroup's control, such as vandalism, theft, fire or an extreme weather event?
- were the costs not covered by insurance?
- will the costs have a direct benefit for the children attending the playgroup?
- is it unreasonable to expect the playgroup to meet any or all of the costs from operational funding?

## 5. General category – resources and activities with a direct benefit for children

If there is funding left after we have made decisions on the **priority categories** we also look at applications that fit into the **general** category. These are applications for resources and activities that will directly benefit the children attending the playgroup. This includes but is not limited to resources for the children and professional development that improves the quality of early learning at the playgroup.

If there is only a small amount of funding remaining we may decide not to grant the full amount you applied for in this category.

Check your eligibility:

- will the items and activities listed directly benefit the children attending?
- is it unreasonable to expect the playgroup to meet any or all of the costs from operational funding?

### Special grant conditions

We have five conditions we ask you to agree to if your application is successful:

1. the grant is used only for the purpose identified in the application
2. the playgroup informs the Ministry as soon as possible in the event of any changes that affect the immediate use of special grant money
3. any special grant funds unspent after one year are returned to the Ministry of Education
4. the use of special grant funding is reported in the playgroup's annual Playgroup Funding Report for the year it was granted
5. equipment purchased with Ministry of Education funding may be reclaimed by the Ministry when the playgroup ceases to operate.

### Timing

Applications can be submitted at any time.

Return your form to your local Ministry of Education office. You will find contact information for our regional offices on our website at <http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/contact-us/regional-ministry-contacts/>.

If your special grant application is approved, payment will be made after you are notified of the approval.

## **Further information about playgroup funding**

You will find more information about playgroup funding in the Playgroup Funding Handbook. The Handbook is available from our website at

<http://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/running-an-ece-service/funding/playgroup-funding-handbook/>.