

# **ASGSF Development Pilot 2025/26: Frequently Asked Questions (Local Authorities)**

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## About the ASGSF Development Pilot:

### 1. What is the ASGSF Development Pilot?

The ASGSF development pilot is being run by Adoption England on behalf of the Department for Education, with support from Mott MacDonald. The pilot is looking to test the way in which funding is allocated to RAAs as, during the pilot, funding will be devolved to pan-regions to develop and deliver a core offer and early support provision in their region.

The pilots will allow teams to recruit and retain staff and to develop partnerships, with the aim of improving pathways for children and young people to access support at an improved quality. The involvement of in-house teams will help to build a more comprehensive knowledge of what works, and identify and resolve problems at the earliest opportunity.

The pilots will also test the viability of pan-regional commissioning to achieve sustainable, consistent and quality adoption support services. RAAs will be able to develop services and strategic commissioning on a wide geographical footprint to test the impact on outcomes and value for money.

### 2. How will the pilot work?

There are two approaches being tested as part of the pilot.

**Pilot 1:** is looking to help RAAs develop early intervention support for families to offer timelier and more effective support. These RAAs will offer therapeutic services to families at an earlier point to create a more preventative approach to therapy and begin to move away from reactive responses commissioned via the main ASGSF fund. This aims to prevent escalation and reduce demand for specialist support.

**Pilot 2:** aims to facilitate RAAs with developing in-house specialist assessments and an in-house core offer of therapeutic support. In-house multi-disciplinary teams (MDT) will take responsibility for the delivery and commissioning of specialist assessments and will lead on the subsequent delivery of therapeutic interventions. This will enable recipients to access assessments and therapy timelier and in turn this will lead to improved utilisation of resources and deliver value for money.

### 3. What are the aims of the pilot?

There are four core aims for pilot 1:

- Demonstrate whether a core offer and early support provision developed at a pan-regional level and informed by strategic commissioning methodology will deliver better outcomes for children and families, and better value for money.
- Support a cultural shift, whereby practitioners have increased capacity to support families directly and utilise their skills and expertise.
- Test the impact of creative uses for the ASGSF, effectively tiering down interventions to offer preventative services and move away from reactive responses.
- Provide families with timelier and more effective support, preventing escalation and reducing demand for more specialist support.

There are four core aims for pilot 2:

- Offer an opportunity to test the assumptions that in the long-term the availability of in-house MDT enables more timely access to assessments and support, improved utilisation of resources and value for money, improved relationships with health partners, and increased knowledge of what works.
- Test the funding structures.
- Enable the evaluation of the benefits of an MDT led support model.
- Enable the evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions and building a knowledgebase of what works, highlighted gaps and where further development is needed.

#### 4. What types of therapeutic services are being delivered in the pilot?

The type and number of therapeutic services being delivered in each of the pilot sites is determined by the RAA and are aimed at meeting the specific needs within their localities. Please contact the lead RAA for more information on exactly what is being delivered in your local area.

#### 5. Which RAAs are taking part?

There are 5 pilot sites. They are:

##### Pilot 1:

- **Yorkshire and Humber pan-region:** One Adoption West Yorkshire (lead agency), One Adoption South Yorkshire, One Adoption North and Humber.
- **Eastern pan-region:** Adopt East (lead agency), Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Adoption Connects.

##### Pilot 2

- **Adoption Partnership South East:** Adoption Partnership South East.
- **Coram Ambitious for Adoption:** Adoption Support Gateway, Thomas Coram Foundation for Children VAA Adoption Support.
- **North East pan-region:** Adopt North East (lead agency), Adoption Tees Valley, Adopt Coast to Coast.

#### 6. How long will the pilots run?

The pilot will run from 01 July 2025 until 31 March 2026.

#### 7. How is the pilot funded?

It is being funded from the ASGSF allocation for 2025-2026. The pilot is not additional funding for families.

### How the pilot will work alongside the ASGSF

#### 8. Will the pilot sites still be able to access the ASGSF?

The pilot sites will be delivering a number of pre-agreed therapeutic services as part of the pilot. For services that are not part of the pilot, the RAA should continue to apply to the ASGSF as normal.

#### 9. Is the pilot operating under the same terms as the national route to the ASGSF?

Yes. The therapeutic services being delivered under the pilot must meet the ASGSF scope and eligibility criteria and will follow the same terms and conditions.

**10. Are the pilot sites required to use the ASGSF Outcome Measurement Tools (OMT)?**

Yes. The pilot sites are required to continue to record OMT baseline and endpoint scores for all therapeutic interventions delivered in the pilot.

**11. If a child or family accesses a therapeutic service via the pilot, does it count toward the recipient's Fair Access Limit?**

Yes, if a family accesses a therapeutic service via the pilot, the RAA must ensure that the cost is within the recipient's Fair Access Limit as per the ASGSF terms and conditions. If the family access therapeutic services via the pilot and the main ASGSF, then the total cost of both services must be within the recipients Fair Access Limit.

**12. How will the pilot impact on the recipients accessing therapeutic support?**

Children and families will continue to receive therapeutic support through their LA or RAA either via the ASGSF, through the pilot, or both.

## **Information for LAs and RAAs who are part of the ASGSF pilot**

**13. Do I have to complete an application on the ASGSF portal for services that are delivered as part of the pilot?**

If the therapeutic service is part of the ASGSF pilot, you are not required to submit an application through the ASGSF portal. The pilot lead for your RAA will be able to advise you on the process for recording the service and recipient information for your pan-regional pilot site.

**14. Can I still make applications to the ASGSF for therapeutic services that are not part of the pilot?**

Yes, if the therapeutic service is not one that is being delivered as part of the ASGSF pilot you can apply to the ASGSF as normal. Please check with the pilot lead for your RAA for more information on which therapeutic services are being delivered as part of the pilot. The RAA must ensure that the cost of the service being applied for is within the recipients Fair Access Limit, as per the ASGSF terms and conditions, and to consider the cost of any services which the recipient has received under the pilot when applying.

**15. How do I know which therapeutic services are being delivered via the pilot?**

Please contact the pilot lead in your RAA for information about which services are being delivered via the pilot.

**16. Does this change how we will receive funding for interventions?**

Pilot sites will receive advance grant payments and will be responsible for managing funding arrangements for all therapeutic services delivered through the life of the pilot. Please check with the pilot lead for your RAA for more information on how this is being delivered in your area.

### **17. How will this impact therapy which is across multiple financial years?**

Services which are delivered under the pilot will only occur in the 2025/26 financial year and will not stretch across multiple financial years. Ongoing services from 2024/25 financial year into 2025/26 financial year which are already being funded by the ASGSF will continue to be delivered. Please contact your RAA to understand more about how the pilot will impact families in your LA.

## **Further information**

### **18. How can I keep up to date with the progress of the pilots?**

The ASGSF will provide regular updates on the progress of the pilot via the ASGSF newsflashes and Quarterly Round-up.

If you are an LA or RAA who is participating in the pilot, further communication will be circulated locally by your pilot site lead.

### **19. Is there further information I can share with my service providers and/or families accessing the fund?**

You can find further information for service providers and families on the ASGSF Knowledge Hub.

### **20. Who can I contact for further information about the pilot?**

If you have any further questions about the pilot, please contact Adoption England at [NationalAdoptionCommissioning@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:NationalAdoptionCommissioning@leeds.gov.uk).

If you are an LA or RAA who is participating in the pilot and your question relates to how the pilot is being managed in your region, please contact your RAA pilot lead.