

ASGSF Development Pilot 2025/26: Frequently Asked Questions (Providers)

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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 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 site 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 for?

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 the national route to 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 recipients 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 providers:

13. Who will deliver the therapeutic services that are part of the pilot?

It is the pilot site's decision how their therapeutic services are delivered, but it is expected that they will be a combination of externally commissioned and inhouse services.

14. How will the pilot strengthen and support the local market?

Pilot sites are required to work with their local markets with the aim to strengthen and support service providers.

Pilot 1 is developed at a pan-regional level and informed by strategic commissioning, and will deliver better outcomes for children and families. Each pan-region participating in pilot 1 will develop different commissioning frameworks to test this.

Pilot 2 aims to facilitate RAAs with developing in-house specialist assessments and an in-house core offer of therapeutic support.

If you operate in an area where the pilot is being delivered, please contact your commissioning authority to find out more about what is being delivered.

15. Will families within a pilot site continue to be able to access the ASGSF?

Yes, 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.

16. Will being involved in delivering services under the pilot change payment processes?

Pilot sites will receive advance grant payments and will be responsible for managing funding arrangements for all therapeutic services delivered throughout the life of the pilot. For information about payment processes in your local area please contact your commissioning authority.

17. 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 Provider newsflashes and Quarterly Round Up.

If you provide services to a LA or RAA taking part in the pilot, further information will be circulated by your commissioning authority.