



8. Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

This policy links to the following Legislation & Key Guidance

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 – 25 years
January 2015
 - Children & Families Act 2014 Section 19
 - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
 - Children Act 1989 & 2004
 - GDPR – May 2018
 - Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - The Human Rights Act 2014
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Education Act 1996
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning & Development
Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.	Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships	Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.	Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years' provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

8. Special Educational Needs & Disability

Policy statement

The nursery has regard to the current legislation and guidelines for children with additional needs and will make all reasonable adjustments for the inclusion of all children and aims to ensure the best for each of them as individuals. This approach means that every effort is made to promote a positive climate within the nursery that recognises the right of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities not to stand out from their peers.

We believe that the purpose of education for all children is the same but the help individual children need will be different. (Warnock Report 1978).

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty/disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty/disability if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age.

Special Educational Provision means educational provision which is additional to or otherwise different from the educational provision made generally for children of their age.

The Nursery aims to: -

1. Identify a child with special educational needs/disabilities as early as possible.
2. Promote an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, and respect for achievements in which all children can thrive.
3. Develop sensitivity to individual needs and a climate of warmth and support in which self-confidence and self-esteem can grow.
4. Develop skills in identifying children with learning problems and construct suitable programmes of work.
5. Adopt positive and consistent strategies to help children with behavioural difficulties and/or emotional problems.
6. Affect a programme of support and referral that will enable all children to receive the help they need quickly and effectively.
7. Inform parents of the needs and progress of their child and to work in partnership with them.
8. Consider the wishes of the child relevant to their age and development.

Procedures

- The Nursery has an appointed Special Educational Needs & Disability Coordinator (SENDSCO) who is responsible for coordinating the special needs provision within the nursery.
- The SENDSCO will provide support and advice to staff and parents and liaise with outside agencies and monitor and develop the special needs provision within the Nursery.
- The Nursery follows **The Graduated Approach** - See attached document for flow charts.

Initial identification and support (identifying special educational needs)

- Ongoing formative assessment forms part of a continuous process for observing, assessing, planning and reviewing children's progress.
- All Nursery staff members are responsible for the learning and development of all the children in the nursery, including those with special needs/disabilities.

- Children identified as having difficulty with one or more area of development should be given support by applying some simple strategies and resources.
- For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop. The SEN Support: Initial record of concern form can be used for this purpose (see appendix 8.1).
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, then the key person should raise a concern with the SENDCO and the child's parents.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to report to the SENDCO if a special need and/or disability is identified or suspected with any child who attends the nursery.
- The child's key person, SENDCO, and the child's parents will then work together in setting appropriate strategies and programmes of work following a graduated approach (My Profile → My Plan → My Plan+ → EHCP).
- Children's Profile's/Plans are considered when planning nursery activities to ensure inclusion for all.

Observation and assessment of children's SEN

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern, educators should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting.

- Information can be collated from formal checks such as the progress check at age two, observations from parents and observation and assessment by the setting of the child's progress.
- When specialist advice has been sought externally, this is used to help determine whether or not a child has a special educational need (SEN).
- The child's key person and SENDCO use this information to decide if the child has a special educational need.
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

Planning intervention

- Everyone involved with the child should be given an opportunity to share their views. Parents should be encouraged to share their thoughts on the child's difficulties and be involved in the decision as to what will happen next.
- A first intervention option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If the child's needs are more complex, then the decision maybe to go straight ahead and prepare a My Plan with detailed evidence-based interventions being applied straight away and simultaneously external referrals made, as appropriate.
- A My Plan/My Plan+ ensures that children that are identified, or suspected of having a SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.

My Plan/My Plan+

- A My Plan/My Plan+ should show what support is required to help achieve outcomes for the child and detail the frequency of these interventions and who will apply them and with what resources.
- A review date (at least termly) should be agreed with the parents so that the child's progress can be reviewed against expected outcomes and next steps agreed.
- A copy of the plan is stored under the child's name in the SEN file (stored in a lockable filing cabinet) so that any other member of staff or an inspector looking at the file will see how the child is progressing and what interventions have been or are being applied.
- If a child requires specific medical interventions during their time in the setting, a Health care plan form should also be completed and integrated into the general plans to ensure the child's medical needs are known and safely met.
- If external agencies are already involved at this stage, then they should also be invited to help decide on what appropriate interventions are needed to help meet outcomes for the child. A My Assessment Form should be completed. The SENDCO should take the lead in coordinating further actions including preparation of the My Plan/My Plan+ and setting short-term targets.
- The My Plan/My Plan+ and My Assessment should provide an accessible summary of the child's needs, which can be used if further assessment is required including a statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) Assessment, and development of an EHC plan.

Statutory education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan

- If a child has not made progress or when a child's needs appear to be sufficiently complex, then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- The child's key person and SENDCO should prepare by collating information about the child's SEND including:
 - documentation on the child's progress in the setting.
 - interventions and support provided to date.
 - evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations.
 - parental views and wishes (and where appropriate those of the child).

The information will then be submitted to the local authority to allow them to accurately assess the child in the context of the support already given.

Inclusion

- The Nursery undertakes to ensure that each individual child has access to the full breadth of the early years' curriculum using such strategies as flexible grouping of the children, adapting timetables when necessary and sharing resources and expertise where beneficial.
- Staff will support all children through the differentiation of both planned and unplanned activities. Where appropriate and when possible, staff members are flexible about organizing and managing groups to increase the support available to children with special needs and/or disabilities.
- Nursery teaching and activities are organised to support children with special needs/disabilities in a variety of ways including peer tutoring, appropriate oral language and instructions and support from assistants, parents and cooperative group working.

Resources

- The Nursery recognises the need to provide the maximum amount of assistance for children with special needs/disabilities and accept a variety of means of recording and provide specific aids to learning when appropriate and within the budgetary limitations of the Nursery, using EYPP or DAF funding where appropriate.
- The Nursery organises the room and ensures that access to resources is appropriate for all the children's needs. If necessary, a child may be given extra 1:1 support.
- If a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, the manager may ask them for evidence to enable the nursery to claim the Disability Access Fund (DAF) directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.
- If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding must be made immediately.
- Children with identified SEND must be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager must outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety at all times is paramount.

Partnership with parents

- The Nursery recognises the importance of effective dialogue between staff and parents.
- Parents are consulted and kept informed of their child's progress at every stage and are welcomed into the Nursery to support their child's learning when needed.
- Should any parent be dissatisfied with the Nursery's effort on behalf of their child they will be referred to the SENDCO so that the situation can be investigated and if necessary, altered to better suit the child.
- If the parents are still unhappy with the Nursery special needs provision, then they should follow the complaints procedure. See *10. Confidentiality Policy - 10.3 Compliments, comments and complaints*

Liaison with other agencies

- The records for any child with special needs/disabilities within the Nursery will be passed (with parental permission) to their primary school and in accordance with our Confidentiality policy See *10. Confidentiality Policy – 10.2 Information sharing*
- Other specialists such as speech therapists, Educational Psychologists, Advisory Teachers, Conductive therapists etc are used to support the progress of children.

Early Help

We recognise that every family is unique with its own combination of strengths and weaknesses. Any family can get overwhelmed by what seems like endless challenge when it comes to juggling money, school and each other's needs. And sometimes families are disrupted by an upheaval such as a mental or physical illness, a job loss, or an addiction. Even "joyful" events such as a wedding or a new job can bring unexpected problems. Every family is different; each needs options from which to choose to find an early solution to challenges as they arise.

This solution could be as simple, for example, as talking with a worker in; a Children's Centre; School; with a voluntary worker; a faith worker; a GP; a health visitor or using a self-help checklist. The Early Help Offer (the Offer) is an approach not a service. It respects every family's right to access information to help manage their own lives successfully, whilst guiding them to seek support from appropriate sources. Help can then be agreed as soon as concerns start to emerge. The 'Offer' is for all children, as issues may arise at any point in a child or young person's life. It includes both universal and targeted /specialist services, to reduce or prevent concerns from growing or becoming entrenched.

The "Gloucestershire Family Information Service" provides easy to access information to help families meet their needs and it is also used by professionals when supporting families.

www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk

Paul McLain, Cabinet lead for Children & Young People and Strategic Commissioning said

'The Early Help Offer is about working with partners to help children, young people and families deal with their issues as early as possible; providing information, advice and services at the right time; supporting them to resolve their concerns as needs emerge.'

(See also 9. Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy)