

## Special Educational Needs

### Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

"Children have a Special Educational Need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for Special Educational provision to be made for them"±.

As defined by the Code of Practice 2014 for those who have Special Educational Needs and disabled children.

### Introduction

This policy is in line with the Code of Practice 2014 and Equality Act 2010.

The Special Needs Coordinators (SENCO) is Kimberley So and Becki Minnis as Assistant SENCO.

At Lyn's Little Ones Day Nursery we strive to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children for them to become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, staff set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the nursery.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEN. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

A delay in learning and development in the early years may or may not indicate that a child has SEN, that is, that they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision. Equally, difficult or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. However, where there are concerns, there should be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as an underlying learning or communication difficulty. If it is thought housing, family or other domestic circumstances may be contributing to the presenting behaviour, a multi-agency approach, supported by the use of approaches such as the Early Help Assessment, should be adopted.

Children may have Special Educational Needs either throughout or at any time during their nursery development. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with Special Educational Needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

### Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the Special Educational Needs of each child;
- to ensure that the Special Educational Needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for;

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- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's Special Educational Needs;
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the nursery's curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that our children have a voice in this process.

### **Educational Inclusion**

At Lyn's Little Ones Day Nursery we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our nursery community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early year's practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN. Staff respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.
- It is particularly important in the early years that there is no delay in making any necessary special educational provision. Delay at this stage can give rise to learning difficulty and subsequently to loss of self-esteem, frustration in learning and to behaviour difficulties. Early action to address identified needs is critical to the future progress and improved outcomes that are essential in helping the child to prepare for adult life.

### **Special Educational Needs**

Children with Special Educational Needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Children have a learning difficulty if:

they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;

they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for children of the same age;

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All our children are assessed when they join our nursery, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available resources. In liaison with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), the child's Key person will offer interventions that are "different from or "additional to those provided as part of the nursery's usual working practices. The Key person will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. If the SENCo, Key person and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support, the SENCo will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs. The Individual Assessment of Early Learning and Development (IAELD) is designed to be completed if practitioners are concerned about a child's rate of progress compared with their peers, or when some of their skills appear to be delayed. The IAELD assesses a child's skills within the setting in collaboration with parents or carers.

We will record the strategies used to support the child within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP will show the short-term targets set for the child and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. In most cases, this review will take place once a term. Parents will be involved in the writing and review of each IEP.

If the IEP review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents prior to any support being actioned. In most cases, children will be seen in the nursery by external support services. This may lead to "additional or "different strategies and external support outside of the nursery. External support services will provide information for the child's new IEP. The new strategies within the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's nursery setting.

If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for statutory assessment will be made to the LEA. The SENCo will start the procedures. A range of written evidence about the child will support the request.

Some children at Lyn's Little Ones Day Nursery may have significant behaviour problems. Staff use a range of strategies for dealing with difficult behaviour, but some children may require further support. In these cases the SENCo, Key person, outside agencies and parents will create a Nurture Plan, clearly outlining key targets for the child to work towards achieving, as well as the strategies and support being offered to the child. At this point advice would also be sought from external support services. Nurture Plans are reviewed.

### **Early Support**

Early Support supports parents and carers of children aged five and under. It brings together all the services and support available from different agencies. This makes it easier for families to co-ordinate their child's health, education and social care needs. Some families will have a key worker who provides advice and support and can help negotiate the system. A key worker may be needed more at some times than at others. Families can decide what works best for them.

Early Support has developed a wide range of resources, training courses and workshops. They include:

- A Family Pack containing information booklets about services and the Family File for sharing information with service providers easily
- materials and resources to record your child's development
- information booklets on a range of disabilities and conditions
- A range of training courses developed for families and carers to help them use the resources and services offered by Early Support

## Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment

Where a child has an EHC plan, the local authority **must** review that plan as a minimum every twelve months. As part of the review, the local authority can ask settings, and require maintained nursery schools, to convene and hold the annual review meeting on its behalf.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. To achieve this, local authorities use the information from the assessment to:

- establish and record the views, interests and aspirations of the parents and child or young person
- provide a full description of the child or young person's special educational needs and any health and social care needs
- establish outcomes across education, health and social care based on the child or young person's needs and aspirations
- specify the provision required and how education, health and care services will work together to meet the child or young person's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes

## Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

The CAF is a shared assessment and planning framework for the use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them. The CAF is aimed at children and young people with additional needs who have needs that are not being met by their current service provision.

At Lyn's Little Ones Day Nursery the SENCO and Assistant SENCo:

- manage the day-to-day operation of the policy;
- co-ordinate the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;
- support and advise colleagues;
- oversee the records of all children with Special Educational Needs;
- act as the link with parents;
- act as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- monitor and evaluate the Special Educational Needs provision.
- manage a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with Special Educational Needs;
- contribute to the professional development of all staff.

## Local Offer

Local authorities **must** publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what

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they "expect to be available, local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available.

The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.

### **Allocation of resources**

The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the nursery, including the provision for children with additional needs. We may apply with parental permission for one to one funding from Wirral Council.

### **Assessment**

Early identification is vital. Nursery staff inform the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.

The staff and the SENCO assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing nursery practices. This is an ongoing process.

The SENCO works closely with parents and Key person to plan an appropriate programme of support.

The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the Nursery. The Key person and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

### **Access to the curriculum**

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Staff use a range of strategies to meet children's Special Educational Needs. Learning and activities have clear learning objectives, we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs), which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the nursery. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success.

We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible we do not withdraw children from the nursery situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the main learning environment.

### **Partnership with parents**

At Lyn's Little Ones Day Nursery we work closely with parents in the support of those children with Special Educational Needs. We encourage an active partnership

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through an ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with Special Educational Needs.

We have termly meetings with parents to review the progress of their children against the targets set in the IEP and to set new targets for the next term. We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with Special Educational Needs.

### **Pupil participation**

In our nursery we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of the nursery and relates to children of all ages and all abilities. The work in the nursery recognises the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills.

### **Partnership with Area SENCO**

The Area SENCO helps make the links between education, health and social care to facilitate appropriate early provision for children with SEN and their transition to compulsory schooling.

Typically, the role of the Area SENCO includes:

- providing advice and practical support to early years providers about approaches to identification, assessment and intervention within the SEN Code of Practice
- providing day-to-day support for setting-based SENCOs in ensuring arrangements are in place to support children with SEN
- strengthening the links between the settings, parents, schools, social care and health services
- developing and disseminating good practice
- supporting the development and delivery of training both for individual settings and on a wider basis
- developing links with existing SENCO networks to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes, and informing parents of and working with local impartial information, advice and support services, to promote effective work with parents of children in the early years

The Area SENCO plays an important part in planning for children with SEN to transfer between early year's provision and schools.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the Special Educational Needs system in the nursery. The SENCO provides staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the nursery.

The SENCO draws up Individual Education Plans for children. The SENCO and the managers hold regular meetings to review the work of the nursery in this area.

The SENCO monitors the progress of children with Special Educational Needs termly and discusses findings with all staff and parents.