

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

This policy has been created with regard to:

- The SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2017)

3.67 providers **must** have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. Maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and all providers who are funded by the Local Authority to deliver early education places **must** have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Maintained schools and maintained nursery schools **must** identify a member of staff to act as Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and other providers (in group settings) are expected to identify a SENCO (EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements).

### Terminology

Additional Needs (short term) – A child who is not making rapid progress within certain areas of the EYFS and will need extra support from practitioners to close the gap in their learning.

Special Educational Need and/or Disability (long term) – A child who is not making rapid progress within the EYFS and the gap in attainment is widening. The child will need specialist support and interventions to learn and develop throughout their life.

### Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice.

The nursery has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice (DfE 2015) to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

We use the SEND Code of Practice (2015) definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability:

*'A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her'.*

### Statement of intent

ICP Nurseries are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to develop to their full potential alongside their peers through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn from each other. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs and we work hard to ensure no children are discriminated against or put at a disadvantage as a consequence of their needs. Each child's needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents in order to meet their child's individual needs and develop to their full potential. We are committed to working with any child who has a specific need and/or disability and making reasonable adjustments to enable every child to make full use of the nursery's facilities. All children have a right to a broad and well-balanced early learning environment.

The nursery will undertake a Progress Check of all children at age two in accordance with the Code of Practice. The early years provider will also undertake an assessment each term which will be shared with the parents.

Where we believe a child may have additional needs that have previously been unacknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish if any additional action is required.

Where a child has additional needs, we feel it is paramount to find out as much as possible about those needs; any way that this may affect their early learning or care needs and any additional help they may need by:

- Liaising with the child's parents and, where appropriate, the child
- Liaising with any professional agencies
- Reading any reports that have been prepared
- Attending any review meetings with the local authority/professionals
- Observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly.

All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the nursery according to their individual needs.

We will:

- Recognise each child's individual needs and ensure all staff are aware of, and have regard for, the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2015).
- Ensure that all children are treated as individuals and are supported to take part in every aspect of the nursery day according to their individual needs and abilities.
- Include all children and their families in our provision.
- Identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies.
- Ensure that children who learn at an accelerated pace e.g. 'most able' are also supported.
- Encourage children to value and respect each other.
- Train our practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational and/or disabilities.
- Develop and maintain a core team of practitioners who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs and identify a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in the care and assessment of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training relating to SEND and the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments, and seek specialist equipment and services if needed.
- Challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices.
- Promote positive images during play experiences of those with additional needs.
- Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning.
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet individual children's needs, including the education, health and care authorities, and seek advice, support and training where required.
- Share any statutory and other assessments made by the nursery with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need.

Our nursery Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) is: **[insert name]**

The Company SEND Lead is: Cara Munnery

The role of the SENCO in our setting includes:

- Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting special educational needs.
- Advising and supporting colleagues.
- Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting.

- Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting, including the local authority Area SENCO.
- Taking the lead in implementing the graduated approach and Supporting colleagues through each stage of the process.
- Attend Local Area SENDCO forums.
- Lead on completing inclusion funding applications and making referrals to other professionals.
- To complete the Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) and be the lead professional at the nursery for developing the EHC Plan.

Please refer to the SENCO role analysis for further information.

We will:

- Designate a named member of staff to be the SENCO and share their name with parents by displaying information about them on the parent board.
- Have high aspirations for all children and support them to achieve to their full potential.
- Develop respectful partnerships with parents and families.
- Ensure parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education and where possible include the thoughts and feelings voiced by the child.
- Signpost parents and families to **insert local authority** Local Offer in order to access local support and services.
- Undertake formal Progress Checks and Assessments of all children in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Ensure that the provision for children with SEN and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the nursery through training and professional discussions.
- Set out in our inclusive admissions practice on how we meet equality of access and opportunity.
- Make reasonable adjustments to our physical environment to ensure it is, as far as possible suitable for children and adults with disabilities using the facilities.
- Provide a broad, balanced, aspirational early learning environment for all children with SEN and/or disabilities and differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities.
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families, including managing transition arrangements to other settings and schools.
- Use the graduated response system to assess, plan, do and review to ensure early identification of any Special Educational Need and/or Disability.
- Ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their parents are consulted at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability.
- Review children's progress and Inclusion Support Booklet (ISB) every six weeks and work with parents to agree on the priorities for the next inclusion plan.
- Ensure privacy of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities when intimate care is being provided
- Raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.

- Ensure the effectiveness of our Special Educational Need and/or disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. additional support reviews, Education and Healthcare (EHC) plans, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies' views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually
- Provide a complaints procedure and make available to all parents in a format that meets their needs e.g. Braille, audio, large print, additional languages
- Monitor and review our policy and procedures annually.

The company SEND Lead will support the nursery SENDCO in their role and offer advice and guidance on the next steps the nursery should take when they are concerned about a child. They will also take the lead for training practitioners on all aspects of SEND and take an active in reviewing policies and procedures relating to SEND.

When the nursery SENDCO identifies a child that may have a special educational need and/or disability they will contact the SEND lead to discuss the child's needs and make a decision as to whether it is an additional need or a special educational need and/or disability. The nursery SENDCO should not make a decision on this without prior consultation with the Company SEND Lead.

### **The Graduated Response**

When we identify that a child has a special educational need and/or disability we will follow the graduated approach as set out below:

#### **Universal Offer**

At this stage we will start to differentiate activities to support children who need extra support and also for those who are achieving beyond their expected age band. We may also adapt the environment if we feel that this will support children's needs. The universal offer also includes having a nursery SENDCO, completing EYFS trackers and the progress check when a child turns two years old.

#### **Setting SEND Support**

We will start to offer additional support to children at this stage and may use early language monitoring tools to look more closely at the child's language development. An Inclusion Support booklet will be started, and we will set very targets to support a child to make progress. We may decide that we will apply for Inclusion Funding which will support the setting to offer higher ratios for children with SEND to work on targets that have been set and offer additional support, purchase resources that will help the child further and deliver training, such as, Makaton.

#### **Specialist SEND Support**

After offering setting SEND support, we may decide that a child requires specialist support from a professional, such as, a speech and language therapist. The nursery SENDCO will make the referral to the appropriate professional. We may also decide that an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA) will be necessary to support the child in the setting and also at school.

At this stage the nursery may receive a SEND support notification. This is a letter that is sent to the local authority by a Paediatrician stating that the child may have a special educational need or disability. The letter will state what action the nursery needs to take, and we will implement this.

### **Graduated Approach**

We follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015) recommendation that, in addition to the formal checks above, nurseries should adopt a graduated approach to assessment and planning, led and coordinated by a SENCO. Good practice of working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of children's individual progress, will help identify any child with special educational needs or disability. This graduated approach will be led and coordinated by the SENCO and appropriate records will be kept according to the Code of Practice.

### **Assess**

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the key person, working with the SENCO and the child's parents, will carry out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need. Where there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, more specialist assessment may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, social services or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENCO will contact them, with the parents' agreement.

### **Plan**

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the key person and the SENCO, in consultation with the parents, will agree the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review.

The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed. Parents will be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

### **Do**

The child's key person will be responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, they will oversee the implementation of the intervention agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO will support the key person in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

### **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date (six weeks from the start of the plan). The impact and quality of the support will be evaluated by the key person and the SENCO in full consultation with the child's parents and taking into account the

child's views. Information will be shared with parents about the impact of the support provided.

Each SEND child has an Inclusion Support Booklet where the steps of the graduated approach are recorded.

### **Education and Health Plan (EHCP)**

Some children and young people may require an EHC needs assessment (EHCNA) in order to decide whether it is necessary to develop an EHC plan. The purpose of an EHC plan is to make adjustments and offer support to meet the special educational needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care.

The local authority will conduct the EHC needs assessment (EHCNA) and take into account a wide range of evidence, including:

- Evidence of the child's developmental milestones and rate of progress.
- Information about the nature, extent and context of the child's SEN.
- Evidence of the action already being taken by us as the early years provider to meet the child's SEN.
- Evidence that, where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided.
- Information about the child's communication and interaction (C&I), cognition and learning (C&L), social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and physical and sensory needs (P&SI).
- Evidence of the child's physical, emotional and social development and health needs, drawing on relevant evidence from clinicians and other health professionals and what has been done to meet these by other agencies.

When the EHCNA has been submitted to the local authority they will respond to the within six weeks and a statutory assessment which will be carried out by an Educational Psychologist will be completed within this time frame. This is usually carried out in the nursery but may also be done at home.

Once the EHCNA has been approved the child we be assigned a case worker who will act as the single point of contact for the parent/carers and co-ordinate the process while resolving any issues that arise.

The Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will be developed and then finalised within twenty weeks.

We will then work with the local authority and other bodies to ensure that the child receives the support they need to gain the best outcomes.

### **Effective assessment of the need for Early Help**

Local agencies should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. Children and families may need support from a wide range of local agencies. Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from

more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These early help assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. The lead professional role could be undertaken by a General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions about who should be the lead professional should be taken on a case by case basis and should be informed by the child and their family.

For an early help assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child (where possible) and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them.
- A teacher, GP, health visitor, early years' worker or other professional should be able to discuss concerns they may have about a child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local authority children's social care should set out the process for how this will happen; and
- If parents do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary.

If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need as defined in the Children Act 1989, or that the child has suffered significant harm, or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to local authority children's social care. This referral can be made by any professional. *Working together to safeguard children 2018.*