



# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) AND DISABILITIES POLICY

*The new Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice was published in June 2014 for implementation in September 2014 and updated in January 2015. It is available at [SEND Code of Practice January 2015.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25)*

At Snug Nursery Schools, we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences, develop and learn alongside their peers. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children and their families are supported according to their individual needs.

We recognise that some children have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in the child's life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. We will always work alongside each child's parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.

In accordance with our admissions policy we are committed to providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities according to their individual circumstances, and the nursery school's ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care. All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the nursery school which is delivered according to their individual needs.

Where we believe a child may have learning difficulties and/or a disability that has not previously been recognised we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish the child's needs and to secure any action that may be required. We recognise that children with disabilities may not have SEN but may need the nursery school to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to make full use of the nursery school's facilities.

Where we have emerging concerns about a child and/or where a child has identified additional needs or a disability, we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and any support the child or family may need to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:

- liaising with the child's parents
- observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly
- liaising with any other relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family
- seeking any specialist help or support
- researching relevant publications/sources of help
- reading any reports that have been prepared/provided
- attending any assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals.

## **The role of the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

The role of the SENCO is to provide a lead for staff in relation to SEN and disabilities and to make sure procedures are followed, appropriate records kept and parents are involved. The child's practitioner (key person) will normally remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised programme. The particular responsibilities of our SENCO are:

- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and supporting children with SEN
- advising and supporting colleagues
- maintaining appropriate records
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.

**Our nursery school Special Educational Need and Inclusion Co-ordinators are identified on the notice board in the staff room.**

## **Legal framework and definitions**

The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:

- Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years; 2014 (revised January 2015)
- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
- The Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014;
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

We use the definitions set out in the law to describe **special educational needs** and **disabilities**.

A child has SEN if they have a **learning difficulty or disability** which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for them.

A **learning difficulty or disability** means that a child of compulsory school age has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children of the same age; and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the sort of facilities generally provided for others of the same age.

For children aged two or more, **special educational provision** is educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

A child under compulsory school age has SEN if he or she is likely to have a learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

A **disability** is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. '**Long-term**' is defined as 'a year or more' and '**substantial**' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision they are also be covered by the SEN definition.

### **Aims**

The nursery school has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014 (revised January 2015). We have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEN and disabilities. We aim to:

- recognise each child's individual needs through gathering information from parents and others involved with the child on admission and through our procedures for observation and assessment
- ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and disabilities and have regard to the guidance given in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 (revised January 2015)
- plan, provide or help parents to obtain any additional help or support for any needs not being met by the universal service provided by the nursery
- include all children and their families in our provision, making reasonable adjustments where needed
- provide well-informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- identify any emerging concerns that might suggest a child has special educational needs and/or disabilities at the earliest opportunity and plan for those needs through a range of strategies
- share any information received and assessments made by the nursery with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need
- seek any additional help needed including requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the nursery's own actions are not helping the child to make progress;
- work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet individual children's needs, including health services and the local authority, and seek advice, support and training where required
- monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments and seek specialist equipment and services if needed
- ensure that all children are treated as individuals>equals and are encouraged to take part in every aspect of the day according to their individual needs and abilities
- ensure that gifted and talented children who learn more quickly are also supported
- encourage children to value and respect others
- challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices

- promote positive images and role models during play experiences of those with additional needs wherever possible
- celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning

## Methods

We will:

- develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training to help them make any special educational provision needed and meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 (revised 2015)
- identify a member of staff to be our Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Co-ordinator(SENCO) and share their name with parents (see below for an explanation of their role)
- provide a statement showing how we provide for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and share this with staff, parents and other professionals
- ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the nursery
- ensure that our inclusive admissions practice includes equality of access and opportunity
- ensure that our physical environment is, as far as possible, suitable for children and adults with disabilities
- work closely with parents to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their child(ren)
- provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities to give a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- ensure that parents are consulted with, and kept informed at all stages of, the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education, including seeking any specialist advice
- ensure that children's views are sought, listened to and where ever possible, acted on
- use a graduated approach (see explanation below) to identifying, assessing and responding to children who have emerging difficulties, suggesting they may have special educational needs or a disability that requires a different approach
- when planning interventions and support, agree the outcomes and the expected impact on progress and a date for review
- hold review meetings with parents at the agreed times and agree any changes or adjustments to support
- seek any further advice or support needed including multi-agency approaches, Early Support and/or requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the nursery's own actions are not helping the child make progress
- liaise with other professionals involved with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools. We work closely with the next school or care setting and meet with them to discuss the child's needs to ensure information exchange and continuity of care
- provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support

- keep records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- provide resources, in so far as we can (human, practical and financial), to implement our SEN/disability policy
- ensure the privacy and dignity of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities especially when intimate care is being provided
- provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers
- raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff
- ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. assessment information, targeted plans and outcomes, 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 annually.
- Review and update our Communication and Language strategy intervention policy annually.

We have dedicated communication and language strategy to support children with speech and language delays in the form of SALT sessions. These are short intervention sessions to help children to focus and develop their speech in a small group environment.

## **Graduated approach**

In line with requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014(revised 2015) we take a graduated approach to working with children with emerging concerns and their families. This approach includes:

- an analysis of the child's needs including whether we should seek more specialist help from health, social services or other agencies;
- an agreement about the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on progress and a date for review ;
- implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed, including assessing the child's response to the action taken;
- a review of the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress by the key person, SENCO, the child's parent(s) and the views of the child, including any agreed changes to outcomes and support;
- revisiting this cycle of action in increasing detail and frequency including seeking further specialist help to secure good progress until the SENCO, key person, the child's parent(s) and any other professionals involved agree intervention is no longer needed or decide to request an education, health and care needs assessment (see below).

## **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment and Plan**

If the help given through the nursery's graduated approach is not sufficient to enable the child to make satisfactory progress, we may request, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, an assessment of the child's needs by the local authority. This is called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. The assessment will decide whether a child needs an EHC assessment plan. This plan sets out in detail the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child who has SEN or a disability. The local authority will consult with parents and let them know the outcome of the assessment.

## **Early help assessment**

If we believe a child and their family would benefit from support from more than one agency, for example, where a child may have difficulties linked to poor housing or difficult domestic circumstances, we may request or carry out an inter-agency assessment to get early help for the family. This early help assessment aims to ensure that early help services are co-ordinated and not delivered in a disjointed way.

In our nursery school, we use the Early help assessment for assessing the needs of children, to support early intervention and to improve joint working and communication between practitioners. The EHA uses a common language for assessment purposes thereby giving a more consistent view for delivering the most appropriate response. It improves the coordination and consistency between assessments leading to fewer and shorter specialist assessments.

The CAF is required for children who have additional needs in one or more of three areas:

- their growth and development
- additional educational requirements

- family and environmental issues and any specific needs of the parent.

### **Early Support**

Where children have disabilities we may seek additional help and resources through the Early Support Programme which co-ordinates health, education and social care support for the parents and carers of disabled children from birth to adulthood.

There is more information on the Council for Disabled Children website:

<http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/earlysupport>

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### **Snug Nursery School's Covid Statement**

At Snug Nursery Schools we understand the impact of the Covid pandemic and how it may affect children in the long term, therefore we make sure the supporting of our children emotionally is paramount to what we do. We understand that for some children it may be the first time they are left with anyone that is not family so ensure that we have a flexible approach to our settle sessions which enables the child to get used to the nursery and bond with their key person in a gradual approach that supports their individual needs and interests.

We understand that children and parents may not have had the support of professionals and visits to health visitors, GP's and even two-year checks may not have happened. Therefore, we realise that all children will be at different levels in terms of their development, and we will always discuss with parents any concerns we may have and put strategies in place to best support each individual family.

Children are all individual and behave in different ways, but we will support children to manage their emotions and feelings and would encourage them to express this in a safe and secure way. We understand that not all children will develop at the same rate as others, and we will support and nurture them to develop at a pace that is more suitable to them.