

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

*Introduction*

This Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy takes account of the Education Act 1996, the Special Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014, the Equality Act 2010, the policy of the Local Education Authority and Thorley Hill Primary School’s SEND policy.

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. As an early year’s provider in the private, voluntary and independent sector we must have regard to the 2014 Code of Practice.

*Children will have a learning difficulty or disability if they:*

* Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age.
* Have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.
* Are under compulsory school age and are likely to fall within the definition above when they reach compulsory school age or would do if special educational provision was not made available for them.

Children’s special educational needs are generally considered to fall into one or more of the following categories.:

* communication and interaction
* cognition and learning
* social, emotional and mental health
* sensory and/or physical needs.

There may often be an overlap between special educational needs and disability. Therefore, a child may be defined as having a special educational need (SEN), a disability, or both a special educational need and a disability (SEND).

*Our Ethos*

At Sunflowers Pre-School we aim to deliver high quality provision for all children and are committed to providing a broad, balanced and fully inclusive curriculum. We believe that each child is unique and has the right to learn and develop to their full potential. We provide a positive and caring environment where children are supported according to their individual needs. We pride ourselves on our Partnership with Parents which plays a key role in a child’s development.

*We follow the following fundamental principles:*

* To recognise each child’s individual needs through gathering information from parents/carers and others who may be involved at the time of admission as well as through our own observations and assessments.
* To ensure a child with SEND is recognised and has their individual needs met.
* To ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and have regard to the guidance given in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
* To ensure that whenever possible the views of the child are sought and considered.
* To ensure that parents are involved at all stages, recognising that they have a vital role to play in supporting their child’s education.
* To promote good practice by ensuring confidentiality and privacy for parents/carers and children, and by respecting the need to seek permission when making assessments or seeking the views of outside professionals regarding their child.
* To promote the importance of working in partnership with parents, health professionals and outside agencies for the good of the child.
* To ensure all children with SEND are offered full access to a broad-balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

*Admissions Policy*

* Sunflowers Pre-School adheres to the admission policy of the LEA and endeavours to provide appropriate support for pupils with a range of special educational needs.
* Parents can discuss with the Manager and/or the SENCO whether additional resources, training or changes to the room layout may be required.

*Access for the Disabled*

* Sunflowers Pre-School is equipped with wide doorways, one level access and disabled toileting facility. The needs of the pupils will be considered to ensure full access to the foundation stage curriculum.

*Identification, Assessment and Provision in Early Education Settings*

* Parents are invited to share information as part of the admission process, including any areas of concern highlighted by the child’s two-year check.
* The Government’s Early Learning Goals set out what most children will have achieved by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (the end of the school reception year). Children will progress at different rates during the EYFS and some children may not reach the goals by the end of their reception year. These children will need differentiated learning opportunities and regular monitoring within our setting to help them make progress. In addition, the ‘Early Years Outcomes’ is an aid to enable practitioners to understand the outcomes they should be working towards.

*Special Educational Provision means…*

* For children of two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.
* A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age.

*English as an Additional Language*

* Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.
* Information will be provided to parents for support on admission.

*The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO)* –

The EYFS framework requires early years providers to have arrangements in place for meeting children’s SEN, including the expectation to identify a SENCO. At Sunflowers Pre-school the SENDCO is *Tracey Corner*, who has completed Early Years SENCO training with Hertfordshire County Council.

The SENDCO will have responsibility for:

* Encouraging all members of staff to take responsibility for the provision of children with SEND and ensuring they are familiar with the SEND Code of Practice, and this SEND Policy.
* Supporting colleagues in identifying children’s additional needs.
* Supporting staff in the development of their inclusive practice, advising them with regard to differentiation and the Graduated Approach.
* Liaising with parents and, when necessary, and with the parent’s permission, seeking additional advice from other professionals regarding a child’s specific needs and how best to provide support within the setting.
* Ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with SEND is collected, recorded and updated at any professional meetings.
* Taking the lead in reviewing progress, planning further assessments and support as well as liaising with other agencies as appropriate e.g., health professionals, Inclusion Development Officer or Children’s Centres.
* Supporting staff in the writing and reviewing of Individual Learning Plans and discussing these with all staff to ensure that strategies and approaches are consistent.
* Identifying any training opportunities that will benefit members of staff working with children with SEND.
* Monitoring and reviewing practice and provision and making reasonable adjustments if necessary, promoting value, diversity and difference.
* Providing parents/carers with information about services offered by the local authority.
* Providing support with transitions to the next setting.

*Initial Concerns*

* Observation and monitoring of the children at Sunflowers Pre-school means that any signs of developmental delay are noted early. If during this process, we note a child is having difficulties in any area of their development their Key Person will make observations and will, with the support of the SENCO, plan and implement simple strategies and interventions to support the child, such as breaking a task down into more achievable steps or using other resources to support the child. Such differentiated approaches could be enough to build the child's confidence and help develop areas they are having difficulties with.
* If, following such differentiation, the child continues to have difficulties and staff feel that there is still cause for concern, parents will be invited in to discuss these concerns with a staff member.
* Parents will be invited to contribute their own knowledge and understanding of their child and raise any concerns they may have. Working in partnership, the child’s Key Person, Parents and the SENCO will agree upon achievable targets for the child resulting in an Individualised Learning Plan which will form part of a graduated approach.

*SEND Support*

* A child in the setting may be identified as having Special Educational Needs and require SEN or SEND Support. The triggers for Support could be that the child:

1. Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child’s identified area of weakness.
2. Continues working at levels significantly lower than those expected for children of a similar age in certain areas.
3. Presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the setting.
4. Has sensory or physical problems and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment.
5. Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and requires specific individual interventions to access learning.

* When a child in our setting is not making the expected progress, it may be necessary to implement further special educational provision. This will be offered through a graduated approach.
* This targeted support recognises that there is a continuum of special educational need and, where necessary, and with parental permission, draws support from a range of specialist expertise to support the child. In our setting the different support mechanisms may include: An initial visit from the health visitor, referrals to outside agencies including speech therapists, paediatricians, educational psychologists etc. as well as support from the Early Years Team/LA support services for advice or equipment.
* Where a child also attends Thorley Hill Primary School’s morning nursery appropriate professional information sharing should also take place.

*SEND Support and The Graduated Approach*

SEND support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people. (Code of practice 2015)

1. **Assess** – Early Years Educators, Key person and SENCO to observe, through focused observations, monitor and share findings with staff and parents.
2. **Plan** – Key person and SENCO to work in partnership with parents to produce an Individual Learning Plan with achievable targets for the child.
3. Do – Implement planned interventions and monitor progress.
4. **Review** – All parties to review the effectiveness of the interventions and support and evaluate the child’s development and progress.

*The Graduated Approach*

A plan is created in consultation with all parties including parents and the child (where possible). This plan will outline specific targets/desired outcomes for the child. Support, interventions and activities will be planned which will help the child achieve these targets. Where appropriate parents should be able to reinforce these targets at home.

A review date will be set. All staff will be made aware of the child’s Independent Education plan.

Assessment is carried out by the child’s Key Person, Parents, SENCO and Manager. Assessment may be qualitative (e.g., though observations) or quantitative (e.g., numerical). Early discussions with parents will help identify the child’s strengths and needs. The SENDCO will contact outside professionals for further support if necessary.

The effectiveness of support and interventions will be reviewed in line with the date previously set. The impact of the interventions and the child’s progress towards targets must be evaluated, and support should be revised in light of the pupil’s progress and development. Where applicable new targets will be set, and further support will be agreed by all parties.

The implementation of interventions will be the responsibility of all staff working with the child. The SENCO will support all staff by modelling strategies and signposting staff to additional training where necessary. Evidence will be collected by all those working with the child, and this will be monitored by the SENCO.

*Requests for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment*

* For a very few children the help given by the early education setting through SEND Support will not be sufficiently effective to enable the child to progress satisfactorily. It will then be necessary for the setting, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, to consider whether a statutory multi-disciplinary assessment may be appropriate. Where a request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment is made to the LA, the child will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the setting will have evidence gathered throughout the stages listed above.

*Annual Review*

* Through an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment the LA will decide whether a child needs provision through an Education, Health and Care Plan. The Education, Health and Care Plan will outline the provision necessary, the name of the setting where the provision is to be made and how the needs will be met; this may be through additional support or equipment and may have a cost implication to the LA. All EHCPs are reviewed at least yearly and all those involved are invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made.

*The Local Offer*

* As a setting we are aware of the Local Offer and will signpost parents to information about the provision they can expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in the area with SEN or disability.
* The local offer for Sunflowers Pre-school can be accessed via our website (sunflowerspreschool.co.uk) or through the following link:

<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/Services/4096>

*Confidentiality*

* We will respect parent’s rights to confidentiality when supporting children with Special Needs; we will always discuss any possible referrals to other services with parents to seek their agreement before we make such referrals. All meetings with parents other than the normal parent staff contact will take place in private.
* Parents will be involved in setting all targets for their child. Support will be reviewed regularly, and parents will be invited to contribute to this review.
* All staff will need to be aware of the agreed targets for a child as they are all likely to be involved in supporting that child. However, all staff are also aware that their knowledge of these targets is privileged information which should not be shared with anyone without the permission of either the settings SENCO or Manager who would discuss any need to share information with the child’s parent or carer.

*Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers*

* Parents/carers will be respected as those who have known the child longest and have the most knowledge about the child.
* From the time of a child’s admission a partnership is formed with the parent/carers and continued throughout the child’s time at Pre-School and through the progression into their next setting.
* If a child has difficulties in any area, parents/carers will be approached in a confidential manner by their key person, the SENCO or the Manager.
* Parents/carers are asked to inform key persons of any outside agencies involved with the child.
* Parents/carers will be kept fully informed of their child’s time at Pre-School and their permission sought if outside professionals are contacted to observe and advise on interventions.

*Transitions*

* Transitions to new settings/primary school will be supported by the Manager, Key Person and SENCO.
* Information will be collected from parents regarding new settings, and we will support the child in preparing for their transition to ensure it is as smooth as possible.
* Transition records will be completed.
* Information sharing will take place with Parental permissions including phone calls made to the new setting/key person/SENCO.

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| Adopted by: Louisa Cowler  Tracey Corner | Role: Sunflowers Pre-School Manager  Role: SENCO |

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