



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

This policy represents the agreed principles for Special Educational Needs throughout our Pre-School.

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 SEN Code of Practice 2014 for those who have Special Educational Needs and disabled children.

Introduction

This policy is in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014), the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), the Equality Act 2010 and also reflects our Local Offer.

We designate a member of staff to be our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Our SENCO is Claire Parker.

At Micklands Pre-School, we strive to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children to enable them to become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and be ready to make the transition into compulsory education.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, the key person will set suitable learning challenges based on individual assessments and planned next steps. If a child appears to have a delay in a particular area of learning and development, this will be referred to our SENCO who will make further observations. If there is deemed to be a cause for concern, the SENCO will arrange to meet with the parents or carer and plan next steps for an Individual Support Plan (ISP).

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



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Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the SEN of each child;
- to ensure that the SEN of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to work in partnership with the Local Authority (LA) and other external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEN and their families;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's SEN;
- to ensure that parents can play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that the child has a voice in this process (where relevant).

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

We designate a member of staff to be our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Our SENCO is Claire Parker. The SENCO is over seen by the Pre-School Supervisor.

Role and Responsibilities of SENCO

The role and responsibilities of the SENCO are to:

- to manage the day-to-day operation of the SEN Policy;
- to co-ordinate the provision for and manage the responses to children's SEN;
- to support and advise colleagues;
- to oversee the records of all children with SEN;
- to act as the link with parents;
- to act as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- to monitor and evaluate the SEN provision.
- to manage a range of resources to enable appropriate provision for children with SEN;
- to contribute to the professional development of all staff;
- to regularly monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and if necessary, make adjustments (together with the Pre-School Supervisor).



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- monitor the movement of children within the SEN system in the setting;
- provide staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the setting;
- draw up ISPs for children;
- monitor the progress of children with SEN termly and discuss findings with all staff and parents;
- oversee observations and assessments of children with SEN including their strengths and areas to develop;
- gather evidence and co-ordinate support work with colleagues to develop the child's skills through inclusive planning in line with the EYFS;
- keep appropriate records which are regularly reviewed and monitored;
- ensure appropriate ISPs are in place and regularly monitored and reviewed;
- apply for Early Intervention Support and funding where appropriate;
- work closely with parents to ensure background information is collected and shared appropriately.
- liaise with colleagues and the Pre-School Supervisor as appropriate;
- promote a positive working relationship with parents and carers;
- develop links and liaise as appropriate with other professionals such as Health Visitors, SEN preschool Advisory Teacher, Speech and Language Therapists, Inclusion Development Officer, Educational Psychologists.
- ensure own professional development by:
 - attending SENCo clusters regularly to update and inform;
 - identifying the setting's needs and arrange in-house training where appropriate;
 - having an awareness of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF);
 - using knowledge and experience to support the setting to develop their inclusive practice.

To discuss your child's special educational needs and support, please talk to our SENCO.

Educational Inclusion

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.



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We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our pre-school 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. Our practitioners 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. However, plans will be put in place to support the child in learning to speak and understand English prior to moving onto primary school.

Our 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.



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Physical Disability Inclusion

Our Local Offer (see below) sets out our provision in supporting children with additional needs and physical disabilities.

Our environment is as accessible as possible for all children. If access to the building or outside area is found to treat disabled children less favourably, we will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs. We do this by:

- Making children feel valued and good about themselves and others;
- Ensuring that children have equality of access to learning;
- Making adjustments wherever possible to the environment and resources to accommodate a wide range of learning, physical and sensory impairment;
- Making appropriate provision within the curriculum to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities;
- Avoiding stereotypes or derogatory images in visual materials;
- Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance;
- Ensuring that the curriculum offered is inclusive of children with special educational needs and children with disabilities.

Special Educational Needs

Assessment

All our children are assessed when they join our setting 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.

Early identification is vital. Our staff will inform 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 pre-school practices. This is an ongoing process.

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



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The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the pre-school. The key person and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps 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.

Our practitioner's use a range of strategies to meet children's SEN. Learning and activities have clear learning objectives. We differentiate work appropriately and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

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 pre-school 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.

Individual Support Plans (ISPs)

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 SENCO, the child's key person will offer interventions that are 'different from' or 'additional to' those provided as part of our 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.



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ISPs, which employ a graduated approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the pre-school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success.

We will record the strategies used to support the child within an ISP. The ISP will show the short-term targets set for the child and the support 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 ISP.

If the ISP review identifies that support is needed from outside services, or if the provision required to meet your child's needs is beyond what might reasonably be expected of the pre-school, we will consult parents prior to any support being actioned. We may apply, with parental permission, for Early Intervention Funding through Reading Borough Council. This may lead to 'additional' or 'different' strategies and external support outside of the setting. External support services will provide information for the child's new ISP. The new strategies within the ISP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the pre-school.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Where the child has not made expected progress, despite the pre-school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child, and if the provision required to meet your child's needs is beyond what might reasonably be expected of the pre-school, we will consider requesting the Local Authority to start an EHCP needs assessment.

The purpose of an EHCP is to make special educational provision to meet the SEN of the child 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's SEN 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;



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- 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.

The statutory timescale for the Local Authority to produce an EHC Plan is 20 weeks from the date that the request to carry out a Needs Assessment is received.

The child's parents can ask for a particular maintained nursery school to be named in their child's EHCP. The child's parents may also make representations in favour of an independent, private or voluntary early years setting for their child. The Local Authority cannot require an independent, private or voluntary early years setting to admit a child unless the setting agrees.

Local authorities have a duty to review EHCPs as a minimum every 12 months. Reviews must focus on the child's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHCP and must also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate.

Partnership with Parents

We work closely with parents in the support of those children with SEN. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with SEN.

We have termly meetings with parents to review the progress of their children against the targets set in the ISP 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 SEN.

If the provision required to meet the child's needs is beyond what might reasonably be expected of the pre-school, we meet with parents to discuss this and support them in the next stages for the child, which may include recommending another early years setting.

Independent Therapists

We are aware that parents may seek the use of private and independent therapists as support for their child. We welcome a wide range of professional advice and support in the best interests of children.



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- Where possible and in the best interest of the child, we will work with all professionals;
- Parents and carers can of course seek private therapists. However, we reserve the right to agree or disagree to working with independent or private therapists;
- We reserve the right to making any decision on recommended training etc. by the private therapist;
- We work with and take guidance from the local authority Early Years Team and Berkshire Health Foundation Trust. Staff have continuous professional development that ensures we are compliant with training and offer an inclusive and supporting environment to all children;
- We reserve the right to discuss any suggestion made by a private therapist with the local authority's Early Years Team; and
- We reserve the right to make and decide any final decision.

Child Participation

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

Partnership with the Local Authority and Other Professionals

The Local Authority and Early Years team, along with the Early Intervention Panel, will support us by:

- providing advice and practical support 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;



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- developing links with existing SENCO networks to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes;
- 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.

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 to promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them. The CAF is aimed at children and young people with additional needs that are not being met by their current service provision

The Local Offer

Reading Borough Council 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 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.

Our Local Offer is available on our website. Reading Borough Council's local offer can be viewed on the Family Information Service website, along with the local offer of all other childcare establishments.