

Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Equal Opportunities

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities

This policy represents the agreed principles for Special Educational Needs throughout Yaxley & Mellis 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 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. Our Special Needs Coordinators (SENCO) are Zoe Wright and Rosie Gooderham. Allie Turner-Clay and Anna Norton have also completed the Suffolk accredited SENCO course. Allie has also completed the City and Guilds Work with Parents Award Level 3.

At Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School 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 setting.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, staff will consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting the practitioners will 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 will also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEN. All the information will 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 will 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 Common Assessment Framework (CAF) will be adopted. CAF is a key part of delivering early intervention services that are joined-up and focused around the needs of children and young people in Suffolk.

Children may have Special Educational Needs either throughout or at any time during their early year's 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.

Our Aims and Objectives

- to create an environment that meets the Special Educational Needs of each child;
- to be aware and recognise the individual needs for all children
- to ensure that the Special Educational Needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for; to enable them to reach their full potential
- 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 preschool Early Years curriculum;
- to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education; always maintaining confidentiality
- to ensure that our children have a voice in this process
- to liaise with other professionals, if appropriate, in full consultation with the parents to ensure we are offering effective provision to meet all needs.

Educational Inclusion

At Yaxley & Mellis School 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 setting. To achieve this we ask parents to give us as much information as possible on their holding/ admission forms. This will enable us to explore with parents and professionals, how we can provide most effectively for that child to ensure that all aspects pertinent to the child's needs have been addressed.

Medical Needs would be discussed with parents, before the child is admitted to the setting to enable us to put a Health Care Plan into place if necessary. We will seek approval for additional funding if appropriate.

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 will 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.

Some children at Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School 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 clearly outline

key targets for the child to work towards achieving, as well as the strategies and support being offered to the child.

Where a child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers, or a disability that prevents or hinders a child from making use of the facilities in the setting and requires special educational provision, the setting will make that provision. In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly reduce the need for more costly interventions at a later stage.

The EYFS is monitored and evaluated meeting individual needs. We place an emphasis on responsive planning where the needs, wishes and interests of the child are taken into account and use these interests to plan the next steps in the child's learning. We offer inclusive play activities, both inside and outside.

Special educational provision will be matched to the child's identified SEN. Children's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support.

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

These areas give an overview of the range of needs that we as a setting plan for. However, individual children often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. For instance speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder may have needs across all areas. The special educational provision made for a child within our setting will always be based on an understanding of their particular strengths and needs and we will seek to address them all, using well-evidenced interventions targeted at areas of difficulty. This will help to overcome barriers to learning and participation. Support will be family centred and we will consider the individual family's needs and the best ways to support them.

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.

We feel 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 a 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;

Staff have received Makaton, Epi- pen, Behavioural Management and Including Everyone training. The setting has regard for the Disability Discrimination Act (Equality Act 2010) and will look into seeking funding to make reasonable adjustments as appropriate. The pre-school building is on one level with excellent wheelchair access, and wide doors and an accessible toilet.

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 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 preschool situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we engage the children in activities in smaller groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the main learning environment.

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. Pre-School 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 pre-school practices. This is an ongoing process.
- The SENCO works closely with parents and the child's 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 setting. The Key person and the SENCO will break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

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), and the child's Key person we will offer interventions that are 'different from' or 'additional to' those provided as part of the pre-school'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) has been designed to be completed if we as 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 our setting in collaboration with parents or carers. The IAELD is regularly reviewed and the child is also assessed against the appropriate developmental stage within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

SEN Support

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. Where it is decided to provide SEN support, we will formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCO will agree, in consultation with the parent, 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.

As a setting we adopt a graduated approach with four stages of action:

Assess.

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

When it is decided to provide SEN support, we will formally notified the parents, the child's key person and the SENCO will agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking. Individual Education Plans (IEPs), which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the setting. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success.

The Individual Education Plan will also take into account the views of the child. The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child on the IAELD, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, provided by the child's key person. Any related staff development needs will be identified and addressed. 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 planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

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 setting by external support services. 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 IEP. The new strategies within the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the setting.

Do

The child's key person remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, who will oversee the implementation of the interventions on the IEP as agreed. The SENCO will also 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. The impact and quality of the support will be evaluated by the child's key person and the SENCO working with the child's parents. We will also take into account the child's views. Together we will agree to any changes to the outcomes and support for the child in light of the child's progress and development. The parents will be given clear information about the impact of the support provided and be involved in planning next steps. This cycle of action will be revisited in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress. At each stage parents will be engaged with the staff, contributing their insights to assessment and planning. Intended outcomes will be shared with parents and reviewed with them, along with action taken by us, at agreed times.

The graduated approach will be led and co-ordinated by the setting SENCO working with and supporting individual practitioners in the setting. EYFS materials, the Early Years Outcomes guidance and Early Support resources, will be used.

Where a child already 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.

Involving Specialists

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 (IAELD and IEP's) about the child will support this request. The decision when to involve specialists will be taken with the child's parents.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHC)

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 will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment

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

Responsibilities of the SENCO's:

At Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School

- manage the day-to-day operation of the policy;
- regular meetings with staff – to discuss the policy and practice of the preschool.
- co-ordinate the provision for and manage the responses to children's special needs; with staff and parents
- support and advise staff; contribute to their professional development
- oversee the records of all children with Special Educational Needs; with key person and parents
- act as the link with parents; ensuring they are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- act as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- monitor, review and evaluate the Special Educational Needs provision, with staff and parents
- manage a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with Special Educational Needs;
- planning and preparing for transition, support during the transition. All records will be passed on to the child's receiving placement.

The SENCO's are also responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the setting, including the provision for children with additional needs. They may apply with parental permission for additional funding through Suffolk County Council.

If you would like to discuss your child's special needs and support please speak to Zoe our lead SENCO.

Partnership with parents

At Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School we work closely with parents in the support of those children with Special Educational Needs. We encourage an active partnership 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

Special Educational Needs
and Disability Information,
Advice & Support Service

We inform parents of **sendiass** in Suffolk (formerly Parent Partnership)

Helpline - 01473 265210 (office hours Mon-Fri)

Email - parent.partnership@suffolk.gov.uk

Pupil participation

In our pre-school we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our setting and relates to children of all ages and all abilities. The work in the pre-school 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 a school nursery and or reception class.

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.

Links - with support services

When required we access the support of the Early Education Team, Advisory Teachers, Educational Psychologists, Portage workers, Health Visitors, Speech & Language Therapists, Children Centres, Family Support Workers and other involved professionals. In full consultation with the parents.

Links – with other early years settings

The Pre-school has links with schools, other pre-schools/nurseries and professional bodies .The pre-school aims to support a positive transition to primary school/other settings for all children. This will involve direct liaison with the receiving school/setting and provision of appropriate reports. At transition, a transition meeting will take place. Parents and all other professionals are invited to attend to share information.

Complaints Procedure

Please refer to separate Complaints Policy.

SEN Training

Staff training in relation to Special Needs is met through attendance on recognised courses and in service training in the Pre-school setting. Staff take part in training sessions organised by SENCO and have opportunities to discuss practice, policy and procedure through regular meetings. We offer a range of books / information on special educational needs, which are available for staff to borrow at any time.

We monitor and evaluate our SEN policy as follows:

We will review our SEN policy in September and in responses to changes to legislation, guidance and any changes in the setting. SENCO and staff are responsible for monitoring and evaluating policy and practice, for example:

- How well our identification procedures has enabled us to attend to the children with difficulties, and put in place the appropriate observation and assessment processes in place.
- How well children have attained individual targets
- How efficient our record keeping has been in following a child's progress
- How effective the delivery of the EYFS is in our setting ensuring access to a board range of experiences and learning activities with other children within the setting.
- How well parents have informed us about their child's provision and how effective they feel it has been
- How staff feel about our procedures of early identification, assessment and planning in relation to SEN/disabilities and whether they feel themselves the children have made progress.

Additional Information relating to SEN

Early Support

Early Support is a programme to deliver better co-ordinated services for disabled children under five, as soon as a child is identified as needing additional help. Early Support is the Government's recommended mainstream delivery mechanism to achieve effective, integrated early intervention for families with young disabled children. Early Support brings together education, social care, health services and the voluntary sector, working in partnership with parents to deliver the highest quality services. The programme aims to ensure that professionals are better informed about families' needs and how best to meet them. 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.

There are a range of Early Support materials which have been developed in consultation with professionals and families around the country. They include:

- information booklets for families to help when their child has been diagnosed with a disability
- professional guidance
- a family pack which will keep all the information parents need relating to the care, support, and development of their child. The family pack contains a family service plan to co-ordinate help and support for the family

The materials and guidance are available free to families and professionals.

For further information and details of how to order Early Support Materials please see the Early Support website www.earlysupport.org.uk

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.

Local Offer

Local authorities (Suffolk) 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 to view on our website.

Role and Responsibilities of SENCO – Main responsibilities:

Ensure your setting has regard to the SEN Code of Practice (2014), the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995) and the Equality Act 2010.

Be Responsible for ensuring:

An SEN Inclusion Policy is in place;

The policy is put into Practice;

The policy is reviewed annually

Observation, Recording, Assessment and Planning

Take the lead in observations and assessments of children with SEN including their strengths and areas to develop using the Individual Assessment of Early Learning and Development (IAELD) where appropriate

Liaise with the key person to complete the IAELD and set IEPs

Gather evidence and co-ordinate support; work with colleagues to develop the child's skills through inclusive planning in line with Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Keep appropriate records which are regularly reviewed and monitored;

Ensure appropriate Individual Education Plans are in place and regularly monitored and reviewed;

Apply for Exceptional Needs Funding where appropriate.

Support agencies and families with Educational Health Care Plans

Work closely with parents to ensure background information is collected and shared appropriately.

Liaison

Liaise with colleagues as appropriate;

Promote a positive working relationship with parents/carers;

Develop links and liaise as appropriate with other professionals, Health Visitors, SEN preschool Advisory Teacher, Speech and Language Therapists, Inclusion Development Officer, Educational Psychologists.

Professional Development

Attend SENCo clusters regularly to update and inform;

Identify individual setting's needs and arrange in-house training where appropriate.

Have an awareness of Early Support and Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Use your knowledge and experience to support your setting to develop their inclusive practice.