Little Stars Pre-school
at Emmanuel Church

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Introduction

At Little Stars Pre-school we believe that all children have a right to be cared for and educated and to grow and develop alongside their peers no matter what their individual needs. Each child's needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate. We are committed to the inclusion of all children (see Inclusion, Equality and Discrimination Policy), enabling 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.

We are committed to working alongside parents in the provision for their child's individual needs to enable us to help all children to 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 Pre-school's facilities. All children have a right to a broad and well-balanced early learning environment.

Definition of SEND

The Early Years Alliance provides the following explanation of SEND:

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015) defines **special educational needs** as follows:

> *"A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:*
>
> - *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age,*
> - *has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream-post 16 institutions."*

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is education or training provision that is additional to, or different from that which is generally made for other children of the same age. For a child under the age of two, special educational provision means education provision of any kind. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition shown above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision were not made available for them.

Children's special educational needs 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, and;
- sensory and/or physical needs.

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

The Equality Act (2010) defines **disability** as

> *a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes many children and adults. Long term is defined by the Equality Act as a year or more and substantial is defined as more than minor to trivial.

Purpose

This document sets out the policies of the Pre-school and the procedures to be followed to ensure the inclusion of all children and that all educational needs are identified and met to best ability of the Pre-school and as best benefits the children.

Ensuring and encouraging inclusivity for children who may have SEND

To include all children and their families in our provision, we will:

- Ensure all staff are aware of, and have regard for, the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of any needs not being met by the universal service provided by the Pre-school
- 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
- Recognise each child's individual needs:
    - Identifying the specific needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and meeting those needs through a range of strategies
    - Ensuring that children who learn quicker, e.g. gifted and talented children, are also supported
    - Monitoring and reviewing our practice and provision and, if necessary, making adjustments, and seeking 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 Pre-school day according to their individual needs and abilities
- 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.

Staffing and responsibilities

Staffing Levels

The Pre-school will maintain sufficient and suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of all the children in its care.

We aim to have a high staff/child ratio within our Pre-school, exceeding the statutory minimum ratio of 1:4 for 2 year olds and 1:8 for 3 years and over. All members of staff are aware of the individual needs of children so that consistency and continuity of care can be provided.

In particular we will:

- Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational difficulties and/or disabilities
- Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs.
- identify a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in the care and assessment of children with additional needs and share his/her name with parents.

SENCO

Our Pre-school Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) is:

Suzanne Hoslett

The SENCO works closely with all staff to make sure there are systems in place to plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the special educational needs practice and policy of the Pre-school, always making sure plans and records are shared with parents:

- Co-ordinating the Special Education and Disability Needs provision within our setting.
- Offering support for Parents/Carers.
- Supporting staff development.
- Liaising with other agencies.
- Keeping appropriate records.
- Assisting staff in making observations and assessments.
- Assisting staff in planning for children with SEND.
- Contacting our Early Years Advisor as an early stage for informal advice and support.

Staff Training

We are committed to providing continuing staff training with regards to supporting SEND children and:

- Provide all staff with specific training relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the SEND Code of Practice.
- Provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers

Our SENCO:

- undertakes a three yearly SENCO refresher course or sooner if new legislation is coming into being.
- They attend training in relation to specific needs i.e. autism training or speech and language and attends regular cluster meetings to share approaches and ideas and feeds information from these back to all the members of staff.
- They assist the key person of SEND children to access training to support any children they are caring for.

Facilities

We aim to provide equality of opportunities for all children and adults to make use of the varied facilities available to our setting. Little Stars is based at Emmanuel Church which in turn incorporates a Parish Centre. This includes amongst others a Sports Hall which is accessible for wheelchairs and accessible toilet facilities. We provide a range of learning opportunities both inside and outside, to enable all children to access the 7 areas of learning contained within the EYFS curriculum. We will make reasonable adjustments to our policies, practices, and procedures in order to allow equality of access and to avoid putting children with special needs at a substantial disadvantage.

Curriculum

We aim to ensure that all children have equality of access to the EYFS curriculum. Our plans reflect the children's own interests and home life and also broaden their experiences to celebrate the diversity of the world around us, and will also identify support and extension plans

Resources

We run a continuous provision setting, which means that a majority of our resources are out every day and therefore, always available to children. Our resources support learning in all 7 areas of the EYFS curriculum and are appropriate to the developmental stage of the children in the setting. We consider it important that our resources promote a positive self-image for all children and adults within our setting. Our resources are regularly reviewed and updated as the budget allows. Children with individual needs may require modified or specialist resources and wherever possible these will be provided.

The Learning Environment

The main classroom enables resources to be laid out to support learning, promote confidence and independence, and encourage good behavior and to allow easy access between areas for all children. We make use of our outside play area in developing all areas of the curriculum. We also have use of

the Church and its Parish Centre. Risk factors are taken into account during daily and termly risk assessments where actions are taken to minimise these.

Responding to special educational needs and disabilities

When admitting children with known special needs, or in response to assessments of additional needs, we will:

- Provide a statement showing how we provide for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and share this with staff, parents and other professionals
- Ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the Pre-school
- Work closely with parents to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their child(ren)
- Ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education
- Provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support. Liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools. 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 a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities
- Use the Surrey Support Plan (SSP) to plan, implement, monitor, evaluate and reviewing targets for support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and discuss these with parents
- Review SSP targets half-termly and inform parents of these reviews and changes to targets
- 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
- Use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Provide resources (human and financial) to implement our SEND policy
- Ensure the privacy of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities when intimate care is being provided
- Raise awareness of any specialism the Pre-school has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff
- Provide a complaints procedure and make available to all parents.

Monitoring our SEND policy

We monitor our policy by:

- Reviewing it annually or when new legislation is adopted.
- Circulating it to parents/carers of children with SEND annually.
- Asking parents/carers and staff if they feel we are meeting the requirement of children with SEND.

Links with support services and other agencies

We recognize that to provide a fully inclusive and supportive environment there is a need when considering inclusions/SEND to work closing with the full range of support services and external agencies. We are committed to this approach as we believe that linking with others on inclusion issues and exchanging information is in the best interests of the children. Parental consent will always be obtained before children are referred to other professionals or before records are shared or transferred. Where consent is not given we will strive to have ongoing dialogue with parents and to work to meet the child's needs.

Complaints regarding SEND Provision

Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the Pre-School's Complaints and Compliments Policy.

Links to other documents/guidance:

Statutory requirements

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 ~~(Dfes)~~(DfE)

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Early years: Guide to the 0 to 25 Send code of practice (DfE 2014)

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of practice 0 – 25 years (DfE 2014)

Equality Act 2010

Children and Families Act 2014

Links to other Pre-school policies:

Admissions Policy

Inclusion, Equality and Discrimination Policy

Complaints and Compliments Policy

Appendix: Early Help Assessments

The Pre-school 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.

With the consent of parents, the Pre-school will undertake a Progress Check of all children at age two in accordance with the Code of Practice alongside the Health Assessment completed by a Health Visitor.

The Code of Practice recommends that, in addition to the formal checks above, the Pre-school 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. The Pre-school has identified a member of staff as a SENCO who will work alongside parents to assess the child's strengths and plan for future support. The SENCO will ensure that appropriate records are kept according to the Code of Practice.

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, such as the Common Assessment Framework, 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, Early Years Practitioner, 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 and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them;
- a GP, health visitor, Early Years Practitioner 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 and/or the child 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 2015/17

Review / Version Control				
Review period - 3 years				
Version	Created	Reviewed	Initials	Changes
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy (v1.0)	10/2020		DH SH AP	
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy (v2.0)	10/2021		DH SH AP	Reworded
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy - Nov24 – v2.1	11/2024		DH SH AP	Changed template and version control. Minor changes to wording
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy – v2.2	09/26		DH SH AP	Minor wording changes / typo corrections