

# SEN and the Identification of Children's Needs

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The Nursery is a fully inclusive setting, which strives to support all children to achieve their full potential.

## Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

According to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015 a child has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child 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

Children will 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.

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

All Early Years Educators are required to monitor each child's learning and development through accurate observation and record keeping. Through this process, Early Years Educators are required to identify any child who may be experiencing difficulties in specific areas and ensure the needs of such children, and any children who present to the nursery with individual needs already identified, are met.

Only by working in effective partnership with parents will Early Years Educators be able to meet the needs of the individual children fully. When a child presents with specific needs already identified, Early Years Educators are required to gather from parents (and any other settings attended or

previously attended by the child) all information available to support the inclusion of the child. Ongoing dialogue and shared written information will ensure that an accurate assessment of the child's abilities and needs is maintained. When a child is identified by Early Years Educators as experiencing difficulties in specific areas which may require additional or alternative interventions, the Early Years Educators are best placed to decide when to inform the parents that their child is likely to receive Special Educational Provision. However, this information must be shared at the earliest opportunity and be part of a natural process for regular communication between nursery and home. Early Years Educators should always provide support for parents, recognising that they may not previously have been aware of their child's difficulties, whilst realising that information shared should be full and accurate. At all stages of Special Needs Provision, Early Years Educators must maximise opportunities for parental involvement, ensuring that parents are encouraged to contribute their knowledge of their child's development and learning, and help to set targets through Individual Support Plans (IP's).

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice**

The Nursery will carry out our statutory duties to identify, assess, plan, implement and review provision for children's special educational needs. The code of practice recommends that our nursery should adopt a graduated approach with four stages of action: "assess, plan, do, review". Good practice of working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of children's individual progress, will identify any child with special educational needs. Our nursery 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.

### **Levels of SEN Support**

If a child is identified with Special Educational Needs, The SENCO, working alongside colleagues and parents, will assess and record the child's needs and provide an Individual Plan providing future support. This plan will be continually under review in consultation with the child and his/her parent/carer.

If a child is still not considered to be making sufficient and age appropriate progress, the SENCO and Early Years Educators, in consultation with the parents, will seek the advice of external support services for assessing the child. At this point a meeting will be held and new targets set based on the expertise of the professionals involved. Early Years Educators within the nursery are required to act upon the advice of external professional agencies, incorporating their guidance into the child's IPs and providing relevant information where needed. Ongoing, 8 weekly reviews of the IP should be used to inform overall planning, ensuring that the child's specific needs are addressed.

### **Individual Plans**

Where a child is deemed to be in need of additional support an IP will be drawn up. The IP must state clearly the short-term targets for the child, the nature of the intervention, the use of any particular resources and home support. The IP will also detail when reviews are scheduled and identify any involvement from outside agencies. Copies of the IP should be provided for the parents, as well as kept on record by the child's Key Person and nursery SENCO.

### **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

Our nursery has a designated SENCO whom will work closely with all the staff to make sure there are systems in place to plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the special educational needs and disability policy of the nursery, always ensuring any plans and records are shared with the parents. The following tasks are required of the SENCO:

- To ensure that all Early Years Educators meet the needs of a child with SEN within the setting.
- Regularly review our environment, discussing improvements, modifications and amendments to the layout.
- Establish a strong and supportive relationship with parents, building up trust and mutual respect.
- Research and collate SEN information on up to date findings and government legislation.
- Liaise with other professionals to provide the best possible service to our children.
- Ensure the setting adopts and delivers a broad and balanced curriculum for all children.
- Keep records of assessment, planning and provision for the review of children with SEN.