

March 2021

A Quick Guide

Southwick Pre-School Playgroup is committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes alongside each other through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn together.

Southwick Pre-School Playgroup:

- ensures that all children are treated fairly
- has an appointed Special Education Needs Co-ordinator who has knowledge of the Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- ensures that practitioners, parents/carers are aware of the policy and procedure
- ensures confidentiality at all times.

Special Educational Needs Policy

Southwick Pre-School Playgroup is committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes alongside each other through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn together. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs.

Southwick Pre-School Playgroup recognises that some children may have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in the child's life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. At all times we will work alongside each child's parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.

We believe that all children have a right to experience 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 providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities according to their individual circumstances, and the setting's ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care. All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the setting according to their individual needs.

Where we have emerging concerns about a child and/or where a child has identified additional needs or a disability, we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and any support the child or family may need to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:

- Liaising with the child's parents/carers
- observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly
- Liaising with any other relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family
- Seeking any specialist help or support
- Researching relevant publications/sources of help
- Reading any reports that have been prepared
- Attending any assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals
- Attending relevant training.

Legal framework and definitions

The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:

- Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
- The Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (from September 2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

We use the definitions set out in the law to describe SEN and disabilities.

A child has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A learning difficulty or disability means that a child of compulsory school age has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children of the same age; and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the sort of facilities generally provided for others of the same age.

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

A child under compulsory school age has SEN if he or she is likely to have a learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. ‘Long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision they are also covered by the SEN definition.

Our aim

Southwick Pre-School Playgroup has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014). We have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEN and disabilities. We aim to:

- Recognise each child’s individual needs through gathering information from parents and others involved with the child on admission and through our procedures for observation and assessment
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and disabilities and have regard to the guidance given in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Plan, provide or help parents to obtain any additional help or support for any needs not being met by the universal service provided by the setting
- Include all children and their families in our provision.
- Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents/carers and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
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- Identify any emerging concerns that might suggest a child has special educational needs and/or disabilities at the earliest opportunity and plan for those needs through a range of strategies
- Share any information received and assessments made by the setting with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need

- Seek any additional help needed including requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the nursery's own actions are not helping the child to make progress
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet the individual children's needs, including health services and the West Sussex local authority, and seek advice, support and training where required
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments and seek 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 setting's day according to their individual needs and abilities
- Ensure that gifted and talented children who learn more quickly are also supported
- 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.

Our setting's Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) – Kit Davis

She works closely with all practitioners to make sure there are systems in place to plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the special educational needs policy of the setting, always making sure plans and records are shared with parents/carers.

It is the responsibility of the setting's Manager to read, understand and adhere to all policies and procedures and act in accordance with current legislation and good practice. The manager must support team members to do the same and ensure all policies and procedures are followed.

All colleagues must read, understand and adhere to all policies and procedures relevant to their role at all times.

Special Educational Needs Procedures

Southwick Pre-School Playgroup will:

- Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training to help them make any special educational provision needed and meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Designate a colleague to be Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and share his/her name with parents/carers and display on the parents/carers notice board.
- Provide a statement showing how we provide for individual children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and share this with practitioners, parents/carers and other professionals.

- Ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all practitioners in the playgroup.
- 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.
- Work closely with parents/carers to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their child(ren).
- Provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities to give a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Ensure that parents are consulted with and kept informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education, including seeking any specialist advice
- Ensure that children's views are sought and listened to
- Use a graduated approach (see explanation below) to identifying, assessing and responding to children who have emerging difficulties, suggesting they may have special educational needs or a disability that requires a different approach
- Use a system of observation evaluating and reviewing Individual Progress Plans? Action Plan
- Review IPPs and APs regularly and hold review meetings with parents/carers at this time.
- When planning interventions and support, agree the outcomes and the expected impact on progress and a date for review
- Hold review meetings with parents at the agreed times and agree any changes or adjustments to support
- Seek any further advice or support needed including multi-agency approaches, Early Support and requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the setting's own actions are not helping the child make progress
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools. We 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 parents/carers with information on sources of independent advice and help them to engage with any additional more specialist support.
- Keep records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Provide resources (human and financial) to implement our SEN/disability policy.
- Use Early Help Assessment(EHA) where required.
- Ensure the privacy of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when intimate care is being provided.
- Provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.
- Raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained practitioners.
- Ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. IPP reviews, meetings, parental and external agencies' views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- Provide a complaints procedure and make available on request to all parents/carers in a format that meets their needs.
- Monitor and review our policy annually.

The role of the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The role of the SENCO is to provide a lead for staff in relation to SEN and disabilities and to make sure procedures are followed, appropriate records kept and parents are involved. The child's key person will normally remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised programme. The particular responsibilities of our SENCO are:

- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.

Graduated approach

In line with requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, we take a graduated approach to working with children with emerging concerns and their families.

This approach includes:

- An analysis of the child's needs including whether we should seek more specialist help from health, social services or other agencies
- An agreement about the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on progress and a date for review
- Implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed, including assessing the child's response to the action taken
- A review of the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress by the key person, SENCO, the child's parent(s) and the views of the child, including any agreed changes to outcomes and support
- Revisiting this cycle of action in increasing detail and frequency including seeking further specialist help to secure good progress until the SENCO, key person, the child's parent(s) and any other professionals involved agree intervention is no longer needed or decide to request an education, health and care needs assessment (see below).

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment and Plan

If the help given through the setting's graduated approach is not sufficient to enable the child to make satisfactory progress, we may request, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, an assessment of the child's needs by the local authority. This is called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. The assessment will decide whether a child needs an EHC assessment plan. This plan sets out in detail the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child who has SEN or a disability. The local authority will consult with parents and let them know the outcome of the assessment.

Early help assessment

If we believe a child and their family would benefit from support from more than one agency, for example where a child may have difficulties linked to poor housing or difficult domestic circumstances, we may request or carry out an inter-agency assessment to get early help for the family. This early help assessment aims to ensure that early help services are co-ordinated and not delivered in a disjointed way.

In our setting we seek support through the West Sussex Inclusion Team, Early Years Childcare advisor, Family Information Service, use SEN and Disability in the Early Years Toolkit, EYPARM, can request targeted support, refer parents to CDC to seek assessment.

To support in writing this policy the following documents were used:

The Children and Family Act 2014;

- Co-operating generally; governing body functions; Section 29
- Children and young people with SEN but no EHC plan: Section 34
- Children with SEN in maintain nurseries: Section 35
- Using best endeavours to secure special educational provision: Section 66
- SEN co-ordinators: Section 64
- Informing parents/carers and young people: Section 68

- SEN information report: Section 69

- Duty to support pupils with medical conditions: Section 100

The Equality Act 2010

The Statutory Frame for the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

The School and Early Years (England) Regulations 2015

Council for disabled children SEN and Disability in the Early Years Toolkit

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