

# Meppershall Pre-School

## Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

### Statement of intent

We provide an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential.

### Aims

- We have regard for the Department for Education (DFE) and Department of Health (DOH) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (Jan 2015)
- We include all children in our provision.
- We provide practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and disabilities. (SEND)
- We identify the specific needs of children with SEND and meet those needs through a range of strategies.
- We work in partnership with parents, carers and other agencies in meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

### Methods

- We have a nominated Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Our named Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator is **Tamsin Wiseman**.
- We identify the needs of a child using the Guidance on Special Educational Needs and Disability in the Early Years: A Graduated Approach 2014.
- We ensure that the provision for children with SEND is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity. While the setting would require prior knowledge of a child's particular special needs and/or disability, this would in no way affect their admission to the Pre-school. A risk assessment would be undertaken to highlight any problems for a child with specific needs and adaptations made as necessary.
- We ensure that our physical environment is as far as possible suitable for children with disabilities. Pre-school will adapt any equipment to a child's needs. The Pre-school would consult with the Parents/Carers of the child, the Child Development Officer and the Early Years Support Team if specialist equipment was needed. If needed portable equipment could be arranged to be bought from the child's home.
- We work closely with parents/carers of children with SEND to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents/carers are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education. Any records regarding a child's developmental or specific special needs are regarded as confidential and will only be shown to the child's parents/carers and, with consent from the parent/carers, to outside agencies if necessary.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with SEND and their families,

- including transition arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children with SEND.
- We provide a differentiated curriculum to meet individual needs and abilities.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing SEND support plans for children with SEND.
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with SEND.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our SEND policy.
- We ensure the privacy of children with SEND when intimate care is being provided.
- We provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.
- We raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer via our Local Offer.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our SEND provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Send Support Plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed regularly.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.
- Our Pre School aims to have regard for the Department for Education (DFE) and Department of Health (DOH) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (Jan 2015) to aid with the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs and Disability.
- We aim to provide a warm welcome, and appropriate learning opportunities, for all children.
- We use a graduated approach system for identifying, assessing and responding to children's special educational needs and disabilities. (See procedures to identify and assess children who need extra support)
- We ensure that children with SEND are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated approach, taking into account their levels of ability.
- SEND Support Plans are reviewed according to need, usually every six weeks. Individual progress is assessed on an ongoing basis for all children including those with SEND by their key person. Where the child involved has SEND the key person is supported by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator.

## **Procedures to identify and assess children who need extra support**

The early identification of children who may need some kind of extra support is very important, as children whose needs are not being met are essentially in danger of losing out.

It is important to understand that early identification is not about sorting children into groups of 'less able' and 'more able', nor about labelling children. It should be about considering how we can best meet children's needs.

### **How do we do this?**

It is the early years practitioners role to notice children who do not appear to show the same behaviour, progress or development as other children, and then if necessary, act to inform parents and to refer. In some cases it is the parents who bring their concerns to the staff.

By having a clear idea of the 'expected' ranges of development and observation we can build up a picture of the child – and any particular needs using the Guidance on Special Educational

Needs and Disability in the Early Years: A Graduated Approach 2014.

The Department for Education (DFE) and Department of Health (DOH) Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (Jan 2015) is the latest code which practitioners, LAs and other professionals should use to interpret the legislation relating to children with SEND. The code of practice applies to any setting that receives government funding. The code of practice suggests a 'graduated approach' to meeting children's needs.

The stages are:

1. Stage 1
2. Stage 2
3. Child meets criteria for request for Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

### **Initial Concern / Identification of Needs**

(This may come from the parent, carer, staff or other)

- An appropriate discussion with the child's parent / carer, key person and the SENCO takes place, and may include other relevant staff members.
- The Early Years Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Advisory Teachers/ Early Years Support Team may be called on for advice and there will be an agreement on specific observations between both parties. These are documented and reviewed.

### **Stage 1**

When observations confirm concerns, parents / carers, the SENCO and Early Years Support Team or other relevant professional will discuss the child's needs.

When Early Years practitioners working with children identify a child with special educational need or disability they should plan interventions that are additional to or different from those already provided as part of the setting's usual curriculum. This is referred to as *Stage 1*.

### **Triggers for intervention through Stage 1.**

- Despite receiving early education experiences, parent's or practitioner's are concerned because the child:
  - makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified area of weakness
  - continues working at levels significantly below those expected for children of a similar age in certain areas
  - presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which may be due to an additional need, which are not improved by usual behavioural management techniques
  - has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment (hearing aids, glasses etc.)
  - has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

### **Action to be taken**

- Seek the help of the SENCO (Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator)
- Collect all known information about the child and seek additional new information from parents/carers.
- Undertake additional assessment.
- Involve outside professionals from health or social services who are already involved with the child.
- Keep parents fully informed about how the setting is working towards meeting their

child's needs.

- The SENCO and relevant members of staff, in consultation with parents should decide on appropriate action to enable progress. It is sometimes expected that *action* will comprise of 1:1 support for the child. This may not be the most appropriate way forward.

Interventions might include:

- Providing different learning material or specialist equipment;
- Individual or group support;
- Staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies;
- Speedy access to one-off advice on strategies, equipment or staff training.

### **SEND Support Plans**

Strategies employed to enable a child to progress should be recorded within a Special Educational Needs and Disability Support Plan (SSP)

- SSPs are not for differentiation but for the *additional and different* needs of the child
- SSPs must be created and outcomes agreed with parents/carers

The SSP should include:-

- No more than four, clear and specific short-term targets for the child;
- The teaching strategies and the provision to be put in place;
- When the plan is to be reviewed;
- The outcome of any action taken.
- SSPs should be reviewed at least three times a year, ideally every six weeks or more as necessary.

(Guidance on SSPs can be found in the SEND additional information file in the setting)

### **Stage 2**

*Stage 2* is characterised by the involvement of external support services who can help early education providers:

- With advice on new Send Support Plans and targets
- Provide more specialist assessments
- In some cases, provide support for particular activities.

### **Triggers for moving child to Stage 2.**

If the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period of time;
- continues working through the Early Years Foundation Stage at a substantially lower level than expected of children of a similar age;
- has **social, emotional or mental health** difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the group, despite having strategies in place;
- has **sensory and/or physical needs**, and requires additional equipment or regular visits for direct intervention or advice by practitioners from a specialist service;
- has ongoing **communication or interaction** difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.
- has difficulties with **cognition and learning** which persist, to impede their development

at the expected level for their age / stage through the early years outcomes despite having strategies in place to give additional support to the child's learning.

#### **External Support Services:**

- Will need to see the records on the child to establish which strategies have already been employed and which targets have been set and achieved
- They will then observe the child, in the setting if that is practical and advise on new and appropriate targets and accompanying strategies.

#### **Referral for and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)**

- For a very few children help given through Stage 2 will not be enough to enable the child to progress satisfactorily.
- The provider, in consultation with parents and external agencies, will consider whether a statutory multi-disciplinary assessment (MDA) may be appropriate.
- Parents/Carers, schools, settings and professionals supporting a child can make a request to the LA for an EHC Plan.
- Settings in receipt of government funding to provide early education, have the statutory right to request an EHC Plan assessment for three, four and five year olds for whom they provide nursery education and can bring to the attention of the LA any other child who may have SEND.
- The LA is then responsible for determining whether an EHC Plan is required.

After the assessment the LA may decide it is necessary to write-down all the information they have collected in a document called the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

#### **EHC Plan**

An EHC Plan will describe all the child's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the specialist support the child should receive. The LA will usually make a decision to provide an EHC Plan if they decide that all the support the child needs cannot be provided from within the school's resources.

EHC plans are reviewed at least annually by the LA to ensure that the provision continues to be appropriate and until such time as they are no longer needed.

#### **Role of a SENCO**

Main duties:

- The day to day operation of the group's Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Offering advice and liaising with other staff on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy
- Co-ordinating provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability
- Maintaining the group's SEND register and overseeing the records on all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- To ensure Special Educational Needs and Disability training is accessed where appropriate and that professional study groups are attended termly to keep knowledge updated
- Contributing to the continuing professional development of other staff
- Liaising with external agencies including the Early Years SEND Advisory teachers and the Early Years Support Team and other support agencies, medical and social services and voluntary bodies as appropriate
- Responsible for production and implementation of SEND Support Plans