



# Special Educational Needs Policy

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# Golden Owls Day Nursery



## Special Educational/Additional Needs Policy

### Principles

- This nursery understands its responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference – not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that they learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.
- We aim to meet the needs of each child as an individual regardless of difference and diversity.
- All children are entitled to enjoy a full life in conditions which will help them take part in society and develop as an individual, with their own cultural and spiritual beliefs.
- We believe that all children should feel valued and confident and should be cared for in a warm and loving environment. We will work with parents at all stages of the child's education and care to ensure our principles are put into practice.

**Our Special Educational Needs co-ordinators (SENCO) are Alexia Thornton and Carly Clark.**

We will endeavour to:

- Be alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties and respond quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as necessary.
- Stretch and challenge all children.
- Encourage children to recognise their own unique qualities and the characteristics they share with other children.
- Challenge any inappropriate/negative attitudes displayed by staff, parents/carers or children.
- Engage children in anti-bias activities e.g. stories or persona dolls, which promote positive attitudes to all people regardless of their level of ability, appearance, mobility etc.
- Maintain records suitable for sharing with colleagues in an inter-agency team while acting as a point of contact for a child and their family.



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Where staff feel that a child is not progressing in line with his/her peers developmentally, they will speak to parents in the first instance to seek their opinion and to discuss how the child can best be helped. We aim to make any reasonable adjustments to our setting required by individual children or parents. No outside agencies will be contacted without parental permission.

Where children are identified as needing extra support within the setting we involve the SENCO, the parents/carers and the child's key person who will work together to create a Surrey Support Plan (SSP) to identify how the child will be given extra support. SSPs will be reviewed every 12 weeks by the SENCO, the child's key person and the parents. Should this group, and particularly the parent, decide that the child needs further support then outside agencies will be contacted as appropriate.

Special educational provision should be matched to the child's identified SEN. Children's SEN are generally thought of in four broad areas of need and support - communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health, and sensory and/or physical needs.

The information below is taken from '**Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years**'

Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, September 2014

### **Principles underpinning this Code of Practice**

Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 makes clear that local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the Act in relation to disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN), **must** have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents
- the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
- the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood

These principles are designed to support:

- the participation of children, their parents and young people in decision making
- the early identification of children and young people's needs and early intervention to support them

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- greater choice and control for young people and parents over support
- collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support
- high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN
- a focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment

### The Local Offer

Local authorities have a duty to publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available in their area 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 EHC plans.

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
- 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

Local authorities and their partner bodies and agencies, **including early years settings**, must co-operate with each other in the development and review of the Local Offer. This is essential so that the Local Offer provides a comprehensive, transparent and accessible picture of the range of services available.

### Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years

Everyone working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities should support them to prepare for adult life and help them go on to achieve the best outcomes in employment, independent living, and health and community participation.

When a child is very young, or SEN is first identified, families need to know that the great majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities, with the right support, can find work, be supported to live independently, and participate in their community. Health workers, social workers, early years providers and schools should encourage these ambitions right from the start. They should seek to understand the interests, strengths and motivations of children and young people and use this as a basis for planning support around 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



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child has SEN. However, where there are concerns, there should 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 Early Help Assessment, should be adopted.

### **SEN support in the early years**

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 a setting identifies a child as having SEN they **must** work in partnership with parents to establish the support the child needs.

Where a setting makes special educational provision for a child with SEN they should inform the parents. All settings should adopt a graduated approach with four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review.

### **Assess**

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the early years practitioner, working with the setting SENCO and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need. 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 should contact them, with the parents' agreement.

### **Plan**

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCO should 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. Plans should take into account the views of the child. The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed.

Parents should be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

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### Do

The early years practitioner, usually the child's key person, remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, they should oversee the implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO should support the practitioner 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 should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support should be evaluated by the practitioner and the SENCO working with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views. They should agree any changes to the outcomes and support for the child in light of the child's progress and development. Parents should have clear information about the impact of the support provided and be involved in planning next steps.

This cycle of action should be revisited in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress. At each stage parents should be engaged with the setting, contributing their insights to assessment and planning. Intended outcomes should be shared with parents and reviewed with them, along with action taken by the setting, at agreed times.

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

For the very small number of children whose needs cannot be met in the above way and whose needs are more severe and complex, the nursery staff will, with parents/carer's permission request an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

### EHC needs assessments

Where, despite the early years provider having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of a child, the child has not made expected progress, the provider could bring that child to the attention of the local authority, if they think an EHC needs assessment might be necessary. This should be done with the knowledge and, where possible, agreement of the child's parent.

During the course of an EHC needs assessment, the local authority has a duty to gather advice from relevant professionals about the young person's education, health and care needs, desired outcomes and special educational, health and care provision that may be required to meet the identified needs and achieve desired outcomes. The early years provider should co-operate with the local authority in this, by providing the requested advice and information.

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### Children aged 2 to 5

Where young children are attending an early years setting, the local authority should seek advice from the setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC needs assessment and preparing an EHC plan. Local authorities should consider whether the child's current early years setting can support the child's SEN, or whether they need to offer additional support through an EHC plan, which may include a placement in an alternative early years setting.

### Reviews of EHC plans for children aged 0 to 5

Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under five at least every three to six months to ensure that the provision continues to be appropriate. Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child's parent must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

### Transfer between settings and phases of education

When children transfers to their next setting we will work closely with that setting and the child's parents to ensure a smooth transition for the child. SEN support should include planning and preparing for transition, before a child moves into another setting or school. This can also include a review of the SEN support being provided or the EHC plan. To support the transition, information should be shared by the current setting with the receiving setting or school. The current setting should agree with parents the information to be shared as part of this planning process.

An EHC plan **must** be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to a child moving between key phases of education, such as from an early years provider to school, to allow for planning for and, where necessary, commissioning of support and provision at the new institution. The review and any amendments must be completed by 15 February in the calendar year of the transfer at the latest for transfers into or between schools.

### Review Process

This setting is aware of the need to constantly review, monitor and evaluate our practices to ensure that they are effective. It is the duty of the SENCO and the Manager/s to review the SEN policy annually and to be aware on a daily basis of how this policy works in practice.

**All information kept on each child is confidential and parents and carers have free access to all information kept on their own child. (Except in exceptional cases where the Data Protection Act 1998 stipulates it is against the best interests of the child to do so.)**

If one or both parents have significant needs, we will support them to the best of our ability whilst keeping a focus on the child's needs.

