

9.13a Supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities

What are Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)?

“A child or young person has special educational needs if he/she has a **learning difficulty** or **disability** which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for him/her” (Children’s and Families Act 2014)

Special educational provision is provision that is **different or additional to that which is normally available to pupils of the same age.**

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.” Equality Act (2010)

A physical or mental impairment includes learning difficulties, mental health conditions, medical conditions and hidden impairments such as specific learning difficulties, autism, and speech, language and communication impairments.

A **learning difficulty** is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.

A **disability** is something that prevents or hinders a child from taking advantage of the facilities generally available.

SEND can be characterised by a range of needs and difficulties. There are four broad areas:

- Communication and interaction - speech, language, and communication needs and difficulties with interaction with others.
- Cognition and learning - learning difficulties vary in severity and may make it difficult to learn everything or just certain things.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties - this covers a wide range of needs and these may be seen in a child or young person as withdrawn and isolated behaviours or as challenging and unsafe behaviours.
- Sensory and/physical needs - these include visual and hearing impairment and physical and mobility needs.

Policy statement

We provide an environment in which all children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are supported to reach their full potential.

We consider that all children are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and

- become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education

- We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015).
- We have in place a clear approach for identifying, responding to, and meeting children's SEND (see policy 'Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND')
- We support and involve parents (and where relevant children), actively listening to, and acting on their wishes and concerns.
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEND and their families.
- We regularly monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

Procedures

- We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO) and give his/her name to parents. Our SENDCO is:

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- The SENDCO works closely with our manager and other colleagues and has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy, Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND Policy and for co-ordinating provision for children with SEND.
- 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.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children.
- We apply SEND support to ensure early identification of children with SEND.
- We use the graduated approach system (assess, plan, do and review) applied in increasing detail and frequency to ensure that children progress. (see policy 'Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND')
- We ensure that parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's special education including all decision-making processes
- Where appropriate, we take into account children's views and wishes in decisions being made about them, relevant to their level understanding.
- We provide parents with information on local sources of support and advice e.g. Local Offer, Information, Advice and Support Service.
- We liaise and work with other external agencies to help improve outcomes for children with SEND.
- We have systems in place for referring children for further assessment e.g. Common Assessment Framework/Early Help Assessment and Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy.
- We ensure that all our staff are aware of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy, Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND Policy and the

procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEND. We provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers.

- We raise awareness of our special education provision via our website and or promotional materials.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. action plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.

Further guidance

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DfE 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2015)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (DfE and DoH 2015)
www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
- Ready, Steady, SENCO (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2018)
- Guide to the Equality Act and Good Practice (2015)