

# Weoley Castle Nursery School

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

'All children are special' – some have different needs to enable them to compete on a level playing field we provide an environment in which all children are supported to reach their full potential including those with Special Educational Needs. We provide an Early Support programme which reaches out from birth upwards to 5 years old.

### Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

*As defined by the Code of Practice 2014 for those who have Special Educational Needs and disabled children; "Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them."*

Children have a learning *difficulty* if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in settings within the area of the local education authority.
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must 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.

Special Education Provision means:

- For children of two or over, educational provision is that, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the Local Education Authority, other than special schools, in the area.
- For children under two, special educational provision of any kind.

This SEN Policy details how **Weoley Castle Nursery School** will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any child who has special educational needs and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them. Each setting will use its best endeavours to ensure that practitioners in the setting are able to identify and provide for those children who have special educational needs to allow children with special educational needs to join in the activities of the setting together with children who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision and the efficient education of the children with whom they are educated.

## Rationale

Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by **Weoley Castle Nursery School**.

**Weoley Castle Nursery School** are committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all the children accessing our services. We believe that all children, including those identified as having special educational needs have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced learning environment, which is accessible to them, and is committed to the integration of children with Special Needs. Our philosophy is that all children with or without Special Needs should have the opportunity to develop their full potential alongside other children in an educational environment and that they are fully included in all aspects of the life of the school/extended service.

We believe that all children should be equally valued across the settings. We will strive to eliminate prejudice and discrimination, and to develop an environment where all children can flourish and feel safe.

**Weoley Castle Nursery School** are committed to inclusion. Part of the settings ongoing strategic planning for improvement is to continually develop cultures, policies and practices that include all learners. We aim to engender a sense of community and belonging, and to offer new opportunities to learners who may have experienced previous difficulties. This does not mean that we will treat all learners in the same way, but that we will respond to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs.

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of learners:

- Girls and boys,
  - Minority ethnic and faith groups, Travellers, asylum seekers and refugees
  - Learners who need support to learn English as an additional language (EAL)
  - Learners with special educational needs
  - Learners who are disabled
  - Learners who are gifted and talented
  - Learners who are looked after by the local authority
  - Others such as those who are sick and those who are in families under stress
  - Any learners who are at risk of disaffection and exclusion
- (This list is not exhaustive)

This policy describes the way we meet the needs of children who experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development, or may relate to factors in their environment, including the learning environment they experience in the setting. We recognise that children learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and maturity. We believe that many children, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

At **Weoley Castle Nursery School** we aim to identify these needs as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve his or her full potential. We see the inclusion of children identified as having special educational needs as an equal opportunities issue, and we will also aim to model inclusion in our staffing policies, relationships with parents/carers and the community. We are trying to move from an SEN approach that locates a problem with the child to looking at what additional provision we need to make for specific children.

The Inclusion Team consists of:

**Katy Wood** SEN / Inclusion Co-ordinator

**Kate Taylor** Assistant SENCO

**Greg Harris** Early Years SEN

The SEN and Equal Opportunities / Educational Inclusion Governor is: Ken Lewis

### **At Weoley Castle Nursery School we aim:-**

1. To ensure the SEN and Disability Act and relevant Codes of Practice and guidance are implemented effectively across the settings.
2. To ensure equality of opportunity for and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against, children with special educational needs.
3. To promote mutual respect amongst the child's peer group.
4. To continually monitor the progress of all children, to identify needs as they arise and to provide support as early as possible and meet these needs as far as resources permit.
5. To provide full access to the curriculum\* through differentiated planning by key workers, the SENCo and Nurture Key Worker as appropriate. (\*Except where disapplication, arising from a Statement occurs, disapplication is very rare, and we aim to offer the full curriculum to all our children.)
6. To provide specific input, matched to individual needs, in addition to differentiated provision, for those children recorded as having SEN at **Early Years Action** or **Early Years Action Plus**.
7. To ensure that children with SEN are perceived positively by all members of the school community, and that SEN and inclusive provision is positively valued and accessed by staff and parents/carers.
8. To ensure that we are able to meet the needs of as wide a range as possible of children who live in our catchment area.
9. To enable children where possible to be ready to integrate into mainstream school and promote suitable life skills for his/her future development.
10. To have an inclusive admissions practice that ensures equality of access and opportunity. We will admit a child with SEN providing that the inclusion is in the best interests of the child and that this does not adversely affect provision for the other children in the setting.
11. We aim to provide a stimulating environment in order to motivate and cater for the needs of the more able child.
12. To involve parents/carers at every stage in plans to meet their child's additional needs.

13. For most pupils with special educational needs, needs can be met through the universal support of the Birmingham Local Authority Local Offer which can be viewed at, [www.mycareinbirmingham.com](http://www.mycareinbirmingham.com)

## **Parent / Carer Partnerships**

**Weoley Castle Nursery School** values its' good working relationships with parents / carers and recognises its' importance in the education and development of every child. We welcome a parent's guidance and knowledge because they know their child best. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with Special Educational Needs.

We like parents / carers to know that they are always welcome in our setting to discuss any concerns they may have.

If any member of staff has any concerns about a child in our care they will always meet with the parents / carers privately (after consulting with the SENCo) to discuss any action that may need to be taken.

**Weoley Castle Nursery School** welcomes the opportunity for parents / carers and children to come for visits prior to starting nursery and to discuss ways in which the provision can meet the child's individual special educational needs. It will also make the child's integration into the provision less frightening for the child.

At review meetings with parents / carers we try to always make sure that the child's strengths as well as weaknesses are discussed. Where we make suggestions as to how parents / carers can help at home, these are specific and achievable and that all parents / carers go away from the meeting clear about the action to be taken and the way in which outcomes will be monitored and reviewed.

## **Arrangements for Coordinating SEN Provision**

1. The Inclusion Team will be alerted to newly arising concerns through the appropriate referral form.
2. The Inclusion Team will meet with each teacher and key worker at least once per term to discuss additional needs and concerns, and to review Education and Health Care Plans (EHCs).
3. Where necessary, reviews will be held more frequently for some children.
4. Targets arising from EHC meetings and reviews will be used to inform and support Nurture provision and whole class approaches to inclusion, e.g. differentiation, varied teaching styles.
5. The SENCo monitors planning for SEN and supports teachers and key workers with planning.
6. The SENCo, together with the Head Teacher, monitors the quality and effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN through classroom observation and data analysis.
7. SEN support is primarily delivered by teachers and key workers through differentiated teaching methods. Additional support is provided by the SENCo and Nurture key worker.

This is funded from the settings annual budget. Additional support is funded through individual allocations from the Local Education Authority.

8. Key workers, teachers, the SENCo, Nurture key worker and outside agencies liaise and share developments in order to inform reviews and forward planning.

## Procedures

Identification of SEN will be made at as early stage as possible:-

1. By discussion with parents / carers when they register their child for a place within the provision.
2. By further discussion with parents / carers during a home visit.
3. By an entry 'Brushstroke' assessment and ongoing records of the children based on observation.
4. We also use a range of early indicator assessment materials (e.g. SOG's, Self-esteem indicator profiles, Boxall profiles)
5. At a later stage the staff/parent/professional, from an outside medical agency or social services may bring a problem to our attention.
6. We use early identification sheets to record any concerns.

The SENCo, Nurture key worker, teachers and the key workers will use this information to:

1. Provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum.
2. Identify and focus attention on action to support the child within the class
3. Use the assessment processes to identify any learning difficulties
4. Ensure ongoing observation and assessment provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning
5. Involve parents / carers in implementing a joint learning approach at home.

Support will be given to the child as far as resources allow, in the way considered to be the most effective in the individual case concerned.

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of children whose first language is not English, requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual child, teachers will look carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different areas to establish whether the problems they have in the setting are due to limitations in their command of the language that is used there or arise from special educational needs.

At **Weoley Castle Nursery School** we aim to provide stimulating and exciting experiences for all children. Sometimes a child may show a particular talent or high ability in one or more aspects of learning. We feel it is important to encourage and extend learning for these children. Daily planning for focussed activities in each area of learning is differentiated to take account of all learning abilities, including the more able child. Through differentiated grouping we aim to provide extended activities which will motivate and challenge them.

In order to help children who have special educational needs, the setting will adopt a **graduated response** that recognises there is a continuum of special educational needs and brings increasing

specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. The setting will record the steps taken to meet the needs of individual children. The SENCo will have responsibility for ensuring that the records are kept and available as needed. If the setting refers a child for a statutory assessment, they should provide the LEA with a record of their work with the child including the arrangements they have already made.

### **The Role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)**

Our SENCo/Inclusion Co-ordinator (Katy Wood) and her Assistant SENCo (Kate Taylor) have responsibility for all children with Special Educational Needs.

The SENCo and Assistant SENCo's responsibilities include:

1. Working closely with the Head Teacher and colleagues in overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN Policy
2. Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs
3. Liaising with, supporting and advising fellow practitioners
4. Overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs
5. Liaising with parents of children with special educational needs
6. Contributing to the in-service training of staff
7. Liaising with external agencies including the LEA's support and educational psychology services, Early Years SENCO, speech, language and communication services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies.
8. Providing support in drawing up, implementing, monitoring and reviewing EHC's
9. Referring children thought to be in need of statutory assessment
10. Consulting with the Head Teacher and keeping her informed about concerns, additions to the SEN register, monitoring and assessment.

### **Monitoring Children's Progress**

**Weoley Castle Nursery School** system for observing and assessing the progress of individual children will provide information about areas where a child is not progressing satisfactorily. Under these circumstances, key workers will work with the SENCo to consider what else might be done. This review may lead to the conclusion that the child requires help over and above that which is normally available within the setting. The key test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are inadequate. Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It might be progress which:

- Closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers
- Matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress
- Ensures access to the full curriculum
- Demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- Demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour.

The school will follow a 3-stage model as outlined in the Code of Practice. The first two stages are school based.

## **Early Years Action**

When a class teacher or the SENCo identifies a child with special educational needs, the key worker will provide interventions that are additional to those provided as part of the setting's usual differentiated curriculum. This will be called **Early Years Action**. The triggers for intervention through Early Years Action will be concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities makes:

- Little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area to be developed.
- Continues working at levels significantly below those expected for children of a similar age in certain areas
- Presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not improved by the conflict resolution techniques usually employed in the setting
- Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment and personal aids
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

In some cases outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. Where these professionals have not already been working with the setting's staff, the SENCo may contact them if the parents agree. The SENCo will support the further assessment of the child, assisting in planning future support for them in discussion with colleagues and monitoring the action taken. With support from the SENCO the child's key worker will continue working with the child on a daily basis and planning and delivering an individualised programme. Parents will always be consulted and kept informed of the action taken to help the child, and of the outcome of this action.

## **Nature of Intervention**

The SENCo and the child's key worker will decide on the action needed to help the child to progress in the light of their earlier assessment. This may include:

- Different learning materials or special equipment
- Some group or individual support
- Nurture provision
- Extra adult time to devise the nature of the planned intervention and to monitor its effectiveness
- Staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies.
- Access to LEA support services for one-off or occasional advice on strategies or equipment

## **Education and Health Care Plans and Play Plans**

Strategies employed to enable the child to progress will be recorded within an Education and Health Care Plan (EHC) or Play Plan (whichever is most appropriate). The EHC or Play Plan will include information about:

- The short-term targets set for the child

- The teaching strategies to be used
- The provision to be put in place
- When the plan is to be reviewed
- Outcomes of the action taken (to be recorded when EHC/Play Plan is reviewed).

The EHC will only record that which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum and will focus upon three or four individual targets that match the child's needs and have been discussed with the child and the parents. The EHC will be continually kept 'under review,' but are formally reviewed at least twice a year and parents' will be consulted as part of the review process.

### **Early Years Action Plus**

A request for support from external services is likely to follow a decision taken by the SENCo and colleagues, in consultation with parents, at a review of the child's EHC. At *Early Years Action Plus* external support services, will usually see the child so that they can advise practitioners on new EHC's with fresh targets and accompanying strategies, provide more specialist assessments to inform planning and the measurement of a child's progress, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases provide support for particular activities. The triggers for *Early Years Action Plus* will be that, despite receiving individualised support under *Early Years Action*, the child:

- Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- Continues working at EYFS levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the group, despite receiving Nurture Group Provision
- Has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- Has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

When settings seek the help of external support services, those services will need to see the child's records in order to establish which strategies have already been employed and which targets have been set and achieved. The external specialist may act in an advisory capacity, or provide additional specialist assessment or be involved in teaching the child directly. The resulting EHC for the child will set out fresh strategies for supporting the child's progress. These will be implemented, at least in part, in the normal setting. The delivery of the interventions recorded in the EHC continues to be the responsibility of the class teacher.

Parents/carers are informed if any outside agency is involved.

Any links with other schools, including special school, and the provision made for the transition of pupils with special educational needs between schools or between the school and the next stage of life or education.

Liaison with regard to the successful transition of pupils with SEN is undertaken with receiving and sending schools and colleges prior to transfer. Contact is coordinated by the SENCO.

### **Dealing With Complaints**

If a parent/carer wishes to complain about the provision or the policy, they should, in the first instance, raise it with the SENCO, who will try to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 working days, the parent/carer can submit a formal complaint to the Head Teacher in writing or any other accessible format. The Head Teacher will reply within 10 working days.

## LOCAL AUTHORITY GUIDANCE

### Local Offer

Local authorities (Birmingham) **must** publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available 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 Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be available', local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available.

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, and

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. For most pupils with special educational needs, needs can be met through the universal support of the Birmingham Local Authority Local Offer which can be viewed at, [www.mycareinbirmingham.com](http://www.mycareinbirmingham.com)

### Education Health and Care Plans (EHC)

Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. Where a child has an EHC, the local authority **must** review that plan as a minimum every twelve months. As part of the review, the local authority can ask settings, and require maintained nursery schools, to convene and hold the annual review meeting on its behalf.

The purpose of an EHC is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. To achieve this, local authorities use the information from the assessment to:

- establish and record the views, interests and aspirations of the parents and child or young person
- provide a full description of the child or young person's special educational needs and any health and social care needs
- establish outcomes across education, health and social care based on the child or young person's needs and aspirations
- specify the provision required and how education, health and care services will work together to meet the child or young person's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes

### Common Assessment Framework (CAF) now known as Early Help (2018)

The CAF is a shared assessment and planning framework for the use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them. The CAF is aimed at children and young people with additional needs who have needs that are not being met by their current service provision. We aim to:

- manage the day-to-day operation of the policy;
- co-ordinate the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;

- support and advise colleagues;
- oversee the records of all children with Special Educational Needs;
- act as the link with parents;
- act as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- monitor and evaluate the Special Educational Needs provision.
- manage a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with Special Educational Needs;
- contribute to the professional development of all staff.