

040 Special Educational Needs Policy

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

“A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her “.

(Children and Families Act 2014)

Legal Framework

Children and families Act 2014

Equality Act 2010

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2021

Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015

1. Our Aims and Objectives

Our aim:

At Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup (GEP) we are committed to meeting the individual needs of all children, including children with special educational needs, disabilities and higher achieving children, to ensure they make progress and fulfil their potential.

Objectives:

At GEP we will:

- ensure the special educational needs of each child are identified, assessed, provided for and reviewed regularly;
- create an inclusive environment that meets the special educational needs of each child, including specialist resources and equipment as appropriate;
- ensure all children have access to an appropriately differentiated Early Years curriculum that promotes high standards of attainment, achievement and enjoyment;
- recognise, value and celebrate children’s achievements;
- listen and respond to the child's voice, including their interests, learning styles, motivations, responses and behaviours;
- work in partnership with parents and carers in supporting their child’s education;
- identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs and provide training as necessary;
- work in partnership with the LEA and outside agencies who provide specialist support and teaching for children with special educational needs;
- ensure induction and transition procedures are in place to ensure all relevant information is shared as appropriate.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The name of our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) are: *Donna Booth/Kirsty Fish*

The SENCO will:

- work positively with all members of GEP to promote inclusion;

- ensure appropriate procedures are in place, working with, and including children with SEN and disabilities;
- contact our Early Years SEN service at an early stage for informal advice and support;
- liaise with staff and external agencies to ensure planning and assessment is differentiated to reflect the needs of children with SEN and disabilities;
- maintain an 'SEND Register' naming the children with SEN and disabilities, area of need and their stage within the SEN code of practice;
- keep staff updated regarding the needs of the children with SEN or disabilities;
- offer advice and support to staff, particularly key workers, to observe and identify children's strengths and areas for further development, to develop meaningful "next steps" and provide appropriate strategies for these to be facilitated.
- liaise closely with parents - offering advice and sharing strategies to promote a consistent approach, complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) and organise Team around the Family (TAF) meetings, as appropriate;
- co-ordinate external specialist provision and contribute to assessments and reviews;
- to develop a SEND learning programme for individual children alongside parents and keyworkers creating a graduated response of assess, plan, do, review.
- co-ordinate induction and transition procedures to ensure all relevant information is shared as appropriate to ensure a smooth transition for children with SEN and disabilities between settings;
- work closely with the Chair and staff to ensure GEP's SEND policy and Inclusion policies are adhered to;
- monitor and evaluate the SEND policy and report to the Management Committee on its effectiveness and use of SEN resources;
- ensure information is available on our website to advise parents of our SEN provision.

3. Staffing and training

Staffing:

The pre-school fully complies with the Ofsted requirements in terms of staffing and generally has a greater ratio of staff to children than the minimum requirement.

If there is a need for an increase in staff due to issues surrounding inclusion resources will be met initially within the pre-school's budget and then depending on need additional funding will be sought.

Training:

The SENCO will participate in the training on inclusion provided by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) as well as other training needed to provide a high quality of provision for the pre-school. The SENCO will attend termly SEN network meetings team and will keep up-to-date in changes in legislation.

4. Admissions, settling and initial assessment

The admissions arrangements for children with SEN are:

Children with SEN and/or Disabilities will be admitted to GEP in line with our Admission Policy.

Our admission policy states that children with additional and special educational needs must be admitted as a priority.

The admissions process is the beginning of a partnership between the pre-school and parents. At GEP, the staff are committed to meeting the needs of all children and promoting the culture and ethos of inclusion within the pre-school. Parents are requested to inform the pre-school of any special educational needs, medical conditions, allergies or any other concerns they may have on our registration form.

Home visits may also be offered to enable parents to discuss their child's needs with their child's key worker. The local children's centre or other professionals may notify the SENCO about children with additional needs, with parent's consent. This will enable the SENCO to put into place actions to support each child, such as, a differentiated curriculum or specialist resources.

When a child starts

A member of staff will welcome and help settle the child in to pre-school. At this stage the child's key worker will discuss the child's registration form with the parent.

The parent and the key worker will jointly decide on the best way to help the child to settle into the setting. Parents will be welcome and supported in the pre-school for as long as it takes to settle their child.

Within the first four to six weeks of starting we discuss and work with the child's parents to create their child's learning journey.

Progress check at age two

When a child is aged between two and three, early years practitioners **must** review progress and provide parents with a short written summary of their child's development, focusing in particular on communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. This progress check **must** identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is slower than expected.

The summary **must** highlight areas where:

- good progress is being made
- some additional support might be needed
- there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate SEN or disability)

It **must** describe the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns.

Transition into school:

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.

5. Strategies:

Each child's skills and attainment are assessed on entry building on information from parents and/or other settings. Key people supported by the Supervisor and SENCO will make regular assessments of progress.

The strengths and successes of all children will be recognised and celebrated within the pre-school, allowing all children to build a positive self-image.

High quality planning will ensure that the activities and experiences offered within the pre-school are of an inclusive nature providing curriculum access for all and build on the needs and strengths of all the children.

All staff within the pre-school have collective responsibility for the planning, organisation and provision of appropriate care and education for children with individual and special needs. Staff are expected to show a positive and sensitive attitude to children and families at all times.

A joint partnership approach is taken to supporting both the child and the family. Partnership with parents and carers plays a key role in enabling children with SEN to achieve their potential. Our staff recognise that parents hold key information, knowledge and experience which will help define their child's needs and the best way of supporting them. It is therefore our aim to value and support parents and carers of children with special educational needs at every stage.

We also work in co-operative and productive partnerships with outside agencies to ensure there is a high quality integrated approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.

We work within the framework of the revised Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs, 2015 which sets out the procedures for the early identification of SEN and a set of graduated responses to ensure that the individual needs of children are met.

6. Partnership with Parents and Carers

Parents are consulted at every level of intervention. Parents have a right to be involved in discussions about their child. Procedures should be explained to parents in order to develop a close working relationship and so parents can be made aware of the targets being set for their child. Parents should be offered advice about how they can work with their child at home if they so wish. The effectiveness of any intervention will depend upon the level of involvement of parents.

Consultation with parents is made informally on a daily basis as well as at Parents' Evening. Additional consultation is made at either the parents or the pre-schools request at a mutually convenient time. Meetings for parents of children who have a SEND Learning Programme will be organised termly to review and write plans.

7. Identification of Special Educational Needs:

Monitoring of individual children's progress throughout their time at pre-school is integral to the learning process. Children's development is measured against the Early Years Outcomes document.

Our evaluation of each child's progress will be measured against the following outcomes:

No concerns

The child is meeting development outcomes within expected timescale.

Initial concerns

The child is not meeting development outcomes within expected timescale. Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development.

Provision additional to/different from norm

Measures will be in place to support the child. The setting SENCO will work with the key worker to gather information to assess the child's needs. Short term targets will be identified to monitor progress.

Outside agencies

Additional support from specialists will be called upon. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether or not a child has SEN. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

EHCP needs assessment

For a few children the pre-school SEN support will not be sufficiently effective to enable the child to progress satisfactorily. It will then be necessary for the SENCO, in consultation with the parents and carers plus any agencies involved, to consider requesting an Education, Health and Care Plan needs assessment. This assessment will indicate if the pupil's needs can be met in the pre-school or if further support is required resulting in an Education, Health and Care plan. The purpose of a plan is to make provision for the needs of the child to secure the best outcomes across education, health and social care and as they get older prepare them for adulthood.

If the LEA decides there is sufficient need for assessment further evidence will need to be collected by the pre-school. The SENCO in consultation with staff, parents and carers and outside specialists will write a full assessment. The LEA considers whether there is evidence that despite interventions the child has not made expected progress. The decision to proceed with an EHCP assessment and the notification to parents of the decision must be made within a maximum of six weeks from receiving the request for assessment. If a decision is made not to proceed there is the right of appeal.

EHC Plan

An education, health and care plan (EHCP) is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support.

EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

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 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.

Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early years practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development

to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN.

Where a child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers, or a disability that prevents or hinders a child from making use of the facilities in the setting and requires special educational provision, the setting should make that provision.

Special educational provision should be matched to the child's identified SEN. Children's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs.

Our setting utilises a graduated approach with four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review.

8. The Staged Model of Special Educational Needs

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. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENCO should contact them, with the parents' agreement.

Plan

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.

Do

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.

9. Links with support services and other agencies

The pre-school recognises that to provide a fully inclusive and supportive environment there is a need when considering SEN to work closely with the full range of support services and external agencies. Agencies are called upon when support is required for a specific need. The pre-school also works closely with agencies when information is requested to support a child.

Support services:

Early Years Improvement Officer
Speech and Language Therapy
Derbyshire Portage Service
Early Years SEN Service
Physical Impairment Team
Hearing Impairment Team
Visual Impairment Team
Educational Psychologist
Health Visitors
Multi Agency team (MAT)

10. Complaints

If there are any complaints relating to the provision for children with SEND these will be dealt with in the first instance by the child's key person. If unresolved they will be dealt with by the SENCO. In the case of continuing unresolved complaint the issue should be referred to the Supervisor and if necessary to the Chair of the management committee following the pre-school's complaints procedure.

This procedure was adopted at a meeting of Grindleford and Eyam Playgroup.

Held on:

Date to be reviewed:

Signed on behalf of the committee:

Name of signatory:

Role of signatory: