



## **LITTLE ELLIES**

# **Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy**

<b>Policy Creation &amp; Review</b>	
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## **Little Ellies**

### **Supporting children with special educational needs and disability**

**At Little Ellies we are privileged to have three qualified Level 3 SENCOs at our setting. The SENCOs are Flutera Hasani (Deputy Manager), Shahnaj Sultana (Room Leader) and Maariyah Patel. If you require to contact either of them please do so by phoning Little Ellies on 0207 511 1276 or emailing [childcare@ellenwilkinson.newham.sch.uk](mailto:childcare@ellenwilkinson.newham.sch.uk)**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance to staff on how we provide effective inclusive provision for children and families with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All Little Ellies Staff are committed to the full implementation of the 2015 SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

We believe 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

Furthermore, we believe early education is of crucial importance for young children with disabilities and/or special educational needs and endorse the right to quality care and education. All staff should expect to teach children with special educational needs and the nursery educates children whatever their background or ability. We welcome children with disabilities and/or special educational needs (referred to hereafter as 'special educational needs') and their families. We appreciate their contributions and recognise that they enrich the learning environment for all the children and adults in our setting.

We provide an environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs, are supported to reach their full potential.

- We ensure our provision is inclusive to all children with special educational needs, ensuring reasonable adaptation to the routine and environment.
- We support parents and children with special educational needs.
- We identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and meet those needs through a range of SEND strategies and resources.
- We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in identifying and meeting individual children's needs.
- We monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

All children have the right to learn through play and are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We will strive to overcome actual or potential barriers to learning faced by children to ensure every child is able to play and learn in a way that is appropriate for them. Due to the age of our children, their overall well-being is of primary importance to us. We are an inclusive nursery and want all of our children to feel a sense of 'belonging'. All children are valued individuals with unique interests and strengths. All children should be given opportunities to reach their full potential educationally, emotionally and physically.

#### **Definition of the term 'Special Educational Needs'**

A child who is under compulsory school age has a special educational need if they are likely to have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision when they reach compulsory school age or they would do, if special educational provision were not made for them. Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years  
The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years defines a child or young person as having a Special Educational Need (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision. This means they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most peers their age, or a disability that hinders them from using the standard

educational facilities provided in mainstream schools or settings. SEN involves needs that go beyond typical developmental differences and require tailored educational support to achieve their potential, encompassing areas like cognition, communication, social-emotional health, and physical/sensory needs.

Key aspects of the definition:

*Learning Difficulty:* A significant barrier to learning compared to others of the same age, covering areas like literacy, numeracy, or understanding.

*Disability:* An impairment that prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally available to others their age.

*Special Educational Provision:* Extra support, resources, or different teaching methods provided to meet their needs.

*Exclusions:* A child is not considered to have SEN solely because the language or form of language at home differs from the language of instruction.

**Please note:** A child with a medical condition does not automatically have special educational needs.

## **Procedures**

At Little Ellies:

- We designate a member of staff to be the Lead Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and give his / her name to parents. Despite having a lead SENCO, all SENCOs within the nursery work collaboratively together to ensure the quality of SEND is to the highest level. Please see above the SENCOs for Little Ellies.
- We have clear early identification procedures which enable us to discuss any initial concerns with parents/carers and decide on the best next steps to meet individual children's needs (e.g. through provision or further referrals and specialist advice).
- We ensure that the provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
- We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
- We use the graduated approach for assessing, planning, implementing, and reviewing strategies which support children's special educational needs.
- We provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- We work closely with parents of children with special educational needs to create and maintain a positive partnership.
- We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education.
- We liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and their families, including transition arrangements to other settings and schools.
- We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children with special educational needs.
- We use a system of planning, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and reviewing Early Years Support Plans (EYSPs) for children with special educational needs.
- We ensure that children with special educational needs are appropriately involved at all stages of the graduated approach, taking into account their levels of ability.
- We have systems in place for supporting children during Early Years Action, Early Years Action Plus, Statutory Assessment and the Education, Health and Social Care Plan process.
- We use a system for keeping records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with special educational needs.
- We provide resources (human and financial) to implement our Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We aim to provide in-service training for parents, practitioners and volunteers where possible.

- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Early Years Support 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.

### **Key Person approach**

We believe it is important that all children and their families feel they are accepted, safe and secure, but valued in our nursery. From the start of the nursery placement each child and family are allocated a key person. This system of bonding provides a good opportunity for individual interaction and support to enable a trusting relationship to develop. Every child becomes part of a key group. The relationship between key person and parent is developed as much as possible and we are keen to involve parents at every stage of their child's learning. Everyone involved in the education of the child – parents, key person, practitioners, managers and all other staff including those from partner agencies – should share their knowledge and understanding of the child and work in partnership for the good of the child.

### **The Curriculum**

Our curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff plan activities which are appropriate and flexible enough to meet the needs of all children, including those with a range of special needs. We recognise that early identification of difficulties and appropriate intervention will give children the best possible start and help them to progress and achieve. Through our curriculum and organisation, we aim to enable all children to have equality of access and to reach a high standard of achievement in relation to their potential. All children will have the opportunity to learn outdoors and in the local environment. We have educational visits throughout the year and all children will have the opportunity to take part in these visits. If a child finds it difficult to access these educational visits, we will put the appropriate support in place to meet their needs. Educational visits provide opportunities for children to learn more about the world around them and broaden their experiences.

### **Children's Profiles and Assessment**

We recognise the importance of assessment and recording the children's progress and we have a well-established system. We use Development Matters in the EYFS to assess progress over time for all children in our setting. Where appropriate, we use the Developmental Journal, which adapts Development Matters to make it more suitable for recording the small but significant steps of progress made by young children with special educational needs. Parents contribute to the record system formally at the termly progress meetings. All children's records are updated regularly, reviewed termly with senior staff, and shared with parents. Concerns about progress can be raised by the parent or the key person at any of these meetings or at an informal meeting with the parent at any time. The progress of all children is monitored throughout their nursery experience – at the end of each half term. Any children who are falling significantly below their cohort or who are making limited progress will be identified in this way and appropriate action taken.

### **The Code of Practice Procedures**

Children may enter Nursery with a previously identified special need and may already have involvement from a range of professionals. These children will be placed on the SEND support list. Consideration will be given to the nature of their need and how this will best be met in nursery. In some cases, a special need may not lead to an additional educational need. In the case of some medical conditions, a care plan is put into place and no additional educational provision is needed. Where a parent expresses concerns about the development

of the child, their child will be monitored and assessed by their key person with the support of the SENDCo and the staff team during their settling-in period. After discussion with the parents a suitable referral will be made, or parents sign posted to access services such as advice from Speech and Language Therapy via 'Ready Steady Play'. Other children may remain under observation and offered extra support in Nursery in a range of ways. All nursery staff are informed of individual children's needs by the SENDCo. There are regular staff meetings where individual children are discussed, and any particular concerns or issues can be raised. Staff can also raise concerns about a child with the SENDCo at any time. The SENDCo monitors the implementation of the strategies put in place, offers support to key people and supports staff that are responsible for carrying out certain programmes. The manager holds termly meetings with each key person to discuss individual children's progress and to monitor their records. Key people meet with the children's parents to set individual targets for them together. The SENDCo will also be present in meetings where a child has a special educational need.

### **High Needs Funding**

Children in need of increased support may be allocated high needs funding through an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) or Special Educational Needs Inclusion Fund (SENIF). These allocations will be notified to the local authority. If funding is agreed, then the nursery will liaise with the child's parents on how best to use the funding to support the child's needs. Annual reviews take place for children who receive High Needs Funding, involving parents, manager, SENDCo and appropriate external agencies which allow the Local Educational Authority to continue to monitor the progress of children.

### **Working with Parents**

We work in partnership with parents. We aim to give parents of children with special needs sensitive but informative support and advice, with the opportunity to influence and contribute to their child's education. Parents are involved in discussions about their child, given the information about the assessment procedures, introduced to key workers and other professionals working with their child, invited to meetings and reviews, given a copy of reports. With parental consent referrals can be made to a number of outside agencies such as: Child Development Clinic, Occupational Therapy, and Physiotherapy etc. Where a parent has concerns about a child's development in speech and language they are encouraged to attend one of the 'Ready Steady Play' Speech and Language assessment sessions, which normally is held in a Children's Centre. We have created a leaflet which is a parent-friendly Guide to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

### **Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs)**

Some children with SEND would benefit from an EHC plan. An EHC plan can be triggered (applied for / or An EHC Needs Assessment can be made by the parent or by the nursery.) by the parent or the parent can request that the nursery starts the process. If a request is made, the SENDCo will:

- Coordinate provision for the child based on specification written in the plan.
- Hold an initial planning meeting.
- Formulate a Support Plan, and set review dates, monitor Support Plans regularly.
- Support the key person and the team in delivering set targets.
- Liaise with external support agencies as appropriate.
- Coordinate annual reviews by inviting the parents and all the professionals involved in child's education.

### **Working with Other Agencies and Specialists**

We aim to work in partnership with other agencies and specialists such as the Newham Area SENCo Team. The SENDCo will often take the lead in this ensuring any support, advice and guidance from specialists and programmes is implemented within the setting. We recognise that specialist input can enhance the learning of all children and complement existing teaching methods.

### **Links with Local Schools**

Parents, school staff, outside agencies and representatives from the receiving school are invited. Participation from receiving schools is vital at this stage. The SENDCo works closely with SENDCos of receiving schools and passes on all relevant information relating to all children with special educational needs who are transferring to Primary School.

### **Transition**

Transition from the Nursery to Primary School is given high priority. In addition to a wide programme of activities for all, extra visits can be arranged for children with special needs and those children who seem more vulnerable than others. Transition between rooms also needs to be as smooth as possible, and parents need to be part of this process too. Staff will ensure that all settling in procedures are followed when children are transitioning from room to room.

### **The Role of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)**

The staff responsible for coordinating SEND are Shahnaj Sultana (Room Leader) and Flutera Hasani (Deputy Manager).

The role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), as defined by current UK legislation including the Children and Families Act 2014 and the associated SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years, is to strategically determine and operationally manage special educational needs (SEN) policy and provision within a school. The SENCO role is also an advisory one, as the SENCO acts as a key point of contact and expertise within a school environment for staff, parents, and external agencies.

### **The Early Years SENCO Job Role**

The Early Years SENCO has a key role in supporting colleagues and coordinating the response of the setting to children with SEND.

#### **1. Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEND**

The Early Years SENCO will:

- Work with the manager of the setting to regularly review the SEND and disability policy and practice within the setting and agree how it will be implemented.
- Be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the setting's SEND policy, and for coordinating provision across the setting.
- Implement SEND support and the graduated approach of: assess, plan, do, review to meet the outcomes identified for the child.
- Support individual practitioners in implementing the approach for individual children.
- Meet the requirements for record-keeping in a way that supports a participative decision-making process.
- Draw on a range of sources, including the views of the child, supported by reliable evidence of effectiveness, to inform their advice and support to colleagues on different approaches to improving children's progress.

#### **2. Advising and supporting colleagues**

The Early Years SENCO will:

- Support practitioners to assess their skills and competencies, identify any gaps and implement next steps in professional development.
- Ensure all practitioners in the setting understand:
  - ✓ Their responsibilities to children with SEND
  - ✓ How to work actively and effectively within the Assess Plan Do Review SEND support in Early Years cycle.

- ✓ The setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEND
- ✓ How the setting: responds to any cause for concern and identifies and responds to special educational needs.
- ✓ How the setting works in partnership with parents to identify a child as having SEND.
- ✓ How the practitioner and the SENCO agree, in consultation with the parent and the child, the outcomes they are seeking for the child.
- Identify and use training and other sources of support available to help explain the duties to colleagues.
- Link with others who have a role in supporting the development and delivery of training both for individual settings and on a wider basis.

### **3. Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting.**

The Early Years SENCO will:

- Make sure parents receive the information, advice and support that they need in order to participate in the SEND decision-making process.
- Ensure parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting.
- Involve parents in the discussion of any early concerns, in identifying any SEND, and agreeing:
  - ✓ The outcomes being sought for the child
  - ✓ The interventions and support to be put in place
  - ✓ The expected impact on progress, development, behaviour
  - ✓ Date for review

### **4. Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting**

The Early Years SENCO will:

- Understand the local offer, including the provision that the Local Authority expects to be available from providers of all relevant early years education.
- Understand the support available including:
  - ✓ Education
  - ✓ Health and social care services for disabled children and children with SEND
  - ✓ Services assisting providers to support young children with medical conditions
  - ✓ Childcare for disabled children and children with SEND
  - ✓ Services providing parents and children with information, advice and support on SEND
  - ✓ Support groups who can support parent carers of disabled children.
- Link with the local authority to liaise over individual children and links on wider strategic issues such as securing sufficient expertise and experience on SEND locally
- Understand how funding supports settings in meeting children's SEND.
- Liaise with professionals or agencies beyond the setting, including, but not limited to:
  - ✓ SEND support or learning support services including 'local offer'
  - ✓ Sensory support services or specialist teachers
  - ✓ Therapies such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy.
  - ✓ Support available to parents to aid their child's development at home, including such services as Portage
  - ✓ Independent Advice and Support Services (IASS)
  - ✓ Local voluntary agencies that provide support to children and their families.
  - ✓ Social Care Services

- ✓ Area SENCO, inclusion officer, or equivalent where available.

## **5. Continually develop own practice**

Effective practitioners reflect on their own practice and undertake continuous professional development. The Early Years SENCO will:

- Understand:
  1. Own responsibilities to children with SEND, their carers/parents
  2. The setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEND
  3. How to determine reliability of evidence of the effectiveness of provision
- Assess own skills and competencies, identify any gaps and next steps in professional development.
- Identify and use training and other sources of support to address own development needs.
- Keep up-to-date with meeting the setting's needs.

### **Local Offer**

The Newham Local Offer is a guide to the services in Newham that are available for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities aged from birth to 25 years old. The Local Offer is available at:

<https://families.newham.gov.uk/kb5/newham/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

### **Staff Development and Training**

The nursery endeavours to promote good inclusive practices and provides appropriate professional development for all staff. Wherever possible, staff receive specialist training appropriate to the needs of the children with whom they work with. Professional development may be delivered by the SENDCo or by outside agencies. All staff have access to a range of courses offered by Newham and are encouraged to attend courses on a regular basis.

### **SEND Inclusion Policy Review**

The policy is reviewed annually to reflect changes within the nursery, changes in policy on a local level and changes in policy on a national level.

### **Complaints**

If a parent is not happy with the provision Little Ellies have made for their child they can:

- ✓ Speak to the child's key person
- ✓ Arrange a meeting with the key person and one of the SENCOs in the room.
- ✓ If they are still not happy then they can arrange a meeting with the manager

Concerns at Little Ellies are almost always resolved informally. Parents are welcome to raise any concerns or issues directly with the SENDCo or the manager, as necessary. We have a Complaints Policy which is accessible to all users of our service and available in our policy folder and on our website.