**4.6 Supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities**

**Policy statement**

We thrive to be inclusive to all, ensuring that all children, including those with special educational needs, are supported to reach their full potential and have the best start to their early years of education that's tailored to their individual needs. We believe that we are able to provide this because we work closely with the children, their parents/carers and other appropriate agencies. We ensure that we work with the guidance from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015) (recently updated 2020). Below sets out our ‘local offer’ in accordance with the Code of practise and how we ensure we are meeting our children’s needs.

The term SEND defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for.

* Our SENDCo’s at Woolston Preschool are:

**Gemma Woodward- Level 3**

**Hannah Winbourne- Level 2 but currently studying her level 3- 14/11 /23**

**Working in partnership with our parents and carers**

We pride ourselves in working in partnership with our parents and carers. We inform all our parents and carers at every stage we can with our children and the assessment processes. We give feedback after we have had outside agencies visits or we receive any information regarding their children, where appropriate. We include the parents in the review process and ensure that they are able to help us with the reviewing and creating new targets for the children. All targets are shared with the parents and carers and we offer the opportunity to allow parents and carers to come into setting and watch how we do some of the targets for them to carry them out at home, if appropriate. We provide parents with information about parent support groups and we offer support by advising them with some ideas of how they can support their children further at home. We pride ourselves on working in a close partnership with our families to allow the best outcome for the children.

**Initial identification and support (identifying special educational needs)**

When parents and carers are registering their children with us we encourage them to share details of their child’s strengths and needs. As part of our settling process, for all children, we organise a home visit and during this time we carry out an initial baseline assessment. If we feel that the children are below in the three prime areas we are then able to put processes and interventions in place for when the children start with us. For most children these interventions and processes will be enough to build confidence and help the child’s development and close the gap between them and their peers. If despite carrying out these interventions and processes the child continues to struggle and is showing a delay in their learning more than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, the child’s key person will complete a cause for concern form and share this with with the setting’s SENDCo’s and setting manager. The SENDCo’s will then observe the child and arrange a meeting with the child’s parents and carers to share our concerns.

**Ensure the child’s voice is heard**

The SEND Code of Practice supports the rights of children to be involved in decisions about their education. We ensure that all our children are included with all aspects of their education where age appropriate. We recognise ascertaining children’s views may not be easy. Where the children are unable to share their views and aspirations themselves we ensure that the parents and carers become their child’s voice.

**Educating our children about SEND**

We celebrate similarities and differences every day and encourage children to support others who may find tasks difficult. We ensure all children’s views and opinions are listened to and every child gets the opportunity to choose what we have for snacks and what activities and resources we have. We use puppets and story times to educate our children about SEND and how everyone is different and how we can be there to support this and be inclusive. We celebrate individual success, no matter how small at our group times with a ‘clap of the day’. Adults make children aware of their abilities and encourage ways to ask for support when help is needed. Children are also encouraged to help their peers and praise them when they are doing something positive or well. We encourage all children to be inclusive and find solutions to allow everyone to join in with our play. We use sunshine circles to talk about a range of emotions and feelings. Here we explore how we all express emotion differently and why we may be feeling a certain way.

**Asses, plan, do and review process**

The progress of all children is monitored, recorded and reviewed regularly to ensure that any concerns are identified at the earliest opportunity. Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern the key worker will raise their concerns with the SENCO or manager by completing an initial cause for concern form. If appropriate a meeting will then be arranged with parents and carers and the graduated approach of assessing the child using the Assess, Plan, Do and Review process will begin.

**Assess**

The key person with the SENCO and where appropriate, parents, will use their professional judgement and assess the child’s needs using supporting documents to help identify if there is a delay in the child’s learning. This initial assessment will be reviewed regularly, ideally within 6 weeks, to ensure that support is matched to the child’s needs and is relevant to their age and stage of learning ability.

**Plan**

The key person and SENCO will agree in consultation with the parents the outcomes from the assessment. An agreement will be made where, which interventions are best suited to the child’s needs. These will then be put in place and a date for a review will be set. The plan will be considerate of the views of the child.

**Do**

Following the plan process the most qualified person for the interventions will carry them out to the best of their ability having a member of staff, ideally the key worker, shadowing them to learn the best way to carry out the interventions. The plan will state how often the interventions will take place and when they are to be reviewed. However if it's clear that they are not suitable or meeting the child’s needs they can be reviewed and changed earlier.

**Review**

The effectiveness of the support provided will be reviewed at the agreed date. The key person, SENCO and parents will review the effectiveness and will agree to any changes to the outcomes sought and support for the child. Following the do process all evaluations of the interventions will be looked at and new targets will be set. The parents will be involved in planning their child’s next steps.

**Seeking additional funding**

Following on from the plan do review cycle if it is identified that a child requires 1:1 support this will be given by a member of staff specifically employed for this purpose. We will seek additional funding from the local authority. We will use the evidence we have collected through observations and evaluations of the interventions in place and apply to the local authority for funding to support the child further in their education as much as possible.

The setting can ask parents and carers if their child is in receipt or have applied for Disability Living Allowance. If so, the setting will be able to apply to their local authority for the local Disability Access Fund.

**IEP (individual education plan)**

IEP’s, or individual education plans, are used to set out clear specific targets that are tailored to the individual child’s needs. When completing an IEP we identify the child’s strengths and needs and we use the child’s voice, indicating their likes and dislikes, and this allows us to set targets that are individual and specific to them and their needs. The IEP’s clearly shows;

* the child’s strengths and needs
* their likes and dislikes
* the targets they will be working towards achieving,
* How the child will work towards this,
* who will be supporting the child to do this
* how often the intervention/ activity will take place
* the review date ( at least every 6 weeks)

Once the IEP has been agreed with parents the IEP will be shared with all staff at team meetings. It will then be placed on the child’s individual clipboard, as it is a working document so needs to be accessed at all times. A copy will be uploaded to the parents zone app to allow parents to view this as and when they wish too.

Some children may require specific medical interventions during their time with us, in this instance we would tailor a health care plan that is completed and integrated into the general plans to ensure the child’s medical needs are known and safely met. Once this is completed we will share this with the staff and parents to ensure all the information is correct and this is reviewed at least every 6 weeks.

**EHCP and the process (Education health care plan)**

Statutory education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan Statutory assessment. If a child, with interventions and support in place continues to make little progress, there could be a need for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment. If a child is under compulsory school age, the local authority will conduct an EHC needs assessment if they consider that the child’s needs cannot be met within the resources normally available to the early years setting. When a child’s needs appear to be sufficiently complex, or the evidence suggests specialist intervention then the local authority is likely to conclude that an EHC plan is necessary. The local authority are fully involved in the process along with the parents and the setting, during the decisions about undertaking an EHC assessment and preparing an EHC plan.

Settings should prepare by collating information about the child’s SEND needs by including:

* Documentation on the child’s progress in the setting
* The child’s strengths and needs
* Interventions and support provided with supporting observations and evidence to date
* Evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations
* Parental views and wishes (and where appropriate those of the child)

The information will then be submitted to the local authority to allow them to accurately assess the child in the context of the support already given. The local authority must inform the child’s parents of their decision within six weeks of receiving a request for an assessment and give its reasons for their decision. If the local authority decides to conduct an assessment, it must ensure the child’s parents are fully included right from the beginning and are invited to contribute their views. If the local authority subsequently decides not to conduct an assessment it must then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal. If the local authority decides that a statutory EHC plan is not necessary, it must notify the parents and inform the provider, giving the reasons for the decision. This notification must take place within 16 weeks of the initial request or of the child having otherwise been brought to the local authority’s attention. If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult collaboratively with the parents in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child’s preferences are taken into account and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date. Plans are evidenced based and focus on short term outcomes and long-term aspirations for the child including family and community support. Parents have the right to request a particular provision for their child to be named within their EHC plan. If an early years setting is named, the local authority must fund this provision. They cannot force a setting to take a child and can only name the provision in the EHC if the setting agrees. Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under age five at least every three to six months. 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 parents must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

**Outside agencies and other professionals**

We understand that for the children to get the best outcomes there will be times they are with us at preschool that other agencies will need to work with the child and us. We are fully committed to working in partnership with other agencies to ensure the best opportunities for all children. For more information please see working in partnership with other agencies policy 10.8.

**Risk assessments**

We understand and adapt the setting as much as we possibly can to cater for all our children that attend preschool. However we understand that some child’s needs and abilities come with extra risks to themselves, others around them and the setting. Therefore we ensure that when we are registering children into our setting we look at the risks that may be exceeding the risk assessments already in place for the setting. With this in mind we then create a tailored risk assessment for those individual children and their needs. This will be shared with the child’s parents and staff and stored in the child’s personal file.

**Transitions**

We know the importance of a solid and effective transition and how it can affect the child’s school journey if the relevant information is not passed on in an effective and timely manner. We liaise with the new school or setting and make recommendations of a personalised transition plan that would best suit the child and their needs ensuring the importance of extra transition sessions and possibly a social stories to fully explain the school/ settings day and expectations of the daily routines. We ensure that we pass on all relevant information, including reports, assessments and up to date reviews and IEP’s to the next setting.

**Record keeping**

If a child has or is suspected of having a SEND, a dated record should be kept. We follow procedures with regard to the Code of Practice to meet the child’s SEND needs. All the child’s SEND records are stored in our SEND folder under the individual child’s tab. The following information and documents are secured here:-

* The initial cause for concern and the source of this information, (the progress check at age two and/or outcomes of previous interventions). The initial record of concern form can also be used for this purpose drawing information from other sources
* The initial discussion with parents raising the possibility of the child’s SEND - the views of the parents and other relevant persons including, wherever possible, the child’s views,
* Referrals to external agencies and for statutory assessment
* Evidence of the child’s progress and any identified barriers to learning,
* Advice from other relevant professionals
* All subsequent meetings with parents and other professionals
* Any subsequent referrals,
* Observation and monitoring sheets
* Expressions of further concern
* Risk assessments
* Access audits
* Health care plans (including guidelines for administering medication)
* IEP’s current and reviewed ones
* Minutes from meetings with parents and other agencies
* Any additional information from and to outside agencies
* Agreements with parents
* Referrals to the local authority identifying a child’s special educational needs and request for statutory Education, Health, Care (EHC) needs assessment; and a copy of an EHC plan

**Procedures**

* We have members of staff who are trained to be the special educational needs and disability co-ordinator (SENDCo)
* Our SENDCo’s are:

**Gemma Woodward- Level 3**

**Hannah Winbourne- Level 2 but currently studying her level 3- 14/11 /23**

* Our provision for children with special educational needs is the responsibility of all members of staff within the setting. We ensure that relevant information is shared at staff meetings and as and when any concerns arise.
* If a child wishes to start with us at preschool and has a disability or impairment and would need extra support we would encourage the parents/carers to inform us of this in our registration forms. This is to allow us to put the appropriate adaptations or plans in place before the child starts with us to ensure they have the same opportunities as other children. If this information is not shared upon registration this could impact the child’s start with us as could affect the amount of time we have to be able to adapt and adjust our setting accordingly.
* We carry out a home visit for all our children. This is important to us as this allows us to gather as much information as possible about the child as there could have been important information missed off the registration form.
* We ensure we meet all our children’s needs especially those with Special Educational needs by ensuring we do the following: -
* We carry out an initial assessment at the home visit which is normally our first interaction with the children. During this time if the staff have concerns they would complete an initial cause for concern sheet which is then shared with the SENDCo’s. This is to identify any areas of development a child may be needing extra support in.
* The SENDCo’s would then observe the children and evaluate the concerns that the staff member have raised.
* The Sendco supports the staff with ideas and interventions to support the children to make progress in areas that have been identified as needing extra support. This is reviewed after half a term. For example, a child starts with us in September and this is then reviewed the first week after October half term.
* If progress has been made we then continue to monitor and follow our plan, do, review cycle we use for all children.
* If there is no progress with the support of SENDCo’s, the members of staff and the interventions and plans in place we would then create a tailored plan using IEP’s (individual education plan) and approach the parents to discuss our concerns.
* Our IEP’s are tailored to the individual child’s likes, dislikes, interests and needs and the parents' views are taken into consideration. This allows the child to have a voice and be involved in the learning and development.
* When the SENDCo has spoken to the parents/carers and they share our concerns they can give their consent for us to refer to outside agencies to allow us to get further advice and support that allows us to support our children to the best of our ability.
* If they don't share our concerns we continue to provide the child with all the support and interventions we previously had in place and continue to monitor their progress.
* We would then liaise and work closely with the parents/carers to ensure we took the right pathway to the correct agencies to work with the child.
* During our meetings with the parents we would share any strategies and interventions, where appropriate, with the parents/ carers to allow continuity between home and preschool.
* We ensure we regularly update parents/carers with progress and strategies that we are working on. We do this through meetings, handovers, IEP reviews, Parent zone app with observations and assessments.
* If the need for further training is identified we will send staff, normally those most likely to be supporting the child, whether that's 1:1 or key person, to ensure that our team is provided with the most up to date training and knowledge to support our children.
* Staff would share the training with the rest of the team to ensure that there is continuity and to allow consistency for the children.
* Ensuring all staff are aware of the duty to not treat a child with a disability less favourably and to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and to support staff in the identification of needs
* We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children and adapt the curriculum to suit those of our children with special educational needs where needed.
* We use the graduated approach system for identifying, assessing and responding to children with special educational needs. This means using a step by step response first discussing a concern, then targeting support, arranging specialist intervention if appropriate and then requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment if necessary.
* We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. Individual Education Plan reviews, staff meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
* We monitor and review our policy annually.
* We keep the management committee informed of all SEND needs as and when appropriate.

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Woolston and Woolston Adventure Pre-Schools held in November 2016**

**Updated in December 2023**

**Role on committee: Nominated person Woolston Preschool manager**

Signed by Name Gemma Woodward

Date Date

Name of Signatory: Signature