

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY (SEND)**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

At Hopes and Dreams Nursery School we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to develop to their full potential alongside each other through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn from each other. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs and we work hard to ensure no children are discriminated against or put at a disadvantage as a consequence of their needs. Furthermore, we will ensure that all children with SEN will have an opportunity to fully engage in the Nursery School's curriculum

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice.**

The Nursery School has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice (DfE 2015) to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

At Hopes and Dreams Nursery School we use the SEND Code of Practice (2015) definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

We believe that all children have a right to experience and develop alongside their peers no matter what their individual needs. Each child's needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate.

We are committed to working alongside parents in the provision for their child's individual needs to enable us to help the child to develop to their full potential. We are committed to working with any child who has a specific need and/or disability and making reasonable adjustments to enable every child to make full use of the Nursery School's facilities. All children have a right to a broad and well-balanced early learning environment.

Where we believe a child may have additional needs that have previously been unacknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish if any additional action is required.

Where a child has additional needs, we feel it is paramount to find out as much as possible about those needs; any way that this may affect his/her early learning or care needs and any additional help he/she may need by:

- Liaising with the child's parents and, where appropriate, the child
- Liaising with any professional agencies
- Reading any reports that have been prepared
- Attending any review meetings with the local authority/professionals

- Observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly.

All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the Nursery School according to their individual needs.

## **Aims**

We will:

- Recognise each child's individual needs and ensure all staff are aware of, and have regard for, the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of any needs not being met by the universal service provided by the Nursery School
- Include all children and their families in our provision
- Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational difficulties and/or disabilities
- Identify a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in the care and assessment of children with additional needs. The SENCO be provided with specific training relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and the SEND Code of Practice
- Identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies
- Ensure that children who learn quicker, e.g. gifted and talented children are also supported
- Share any statutory and other assessments made by the Nursery School with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet individual children's needs, including the education, health and care authorities, and seek advice, support and training where required
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments, and seek specialist equipment and services if needed
- Ensure that all children are treated as individuals/equals and are encouraged to take part in every aspect of the nursery day according to their individual needs and abilities
- Encourage children to value and respect others
- Challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices
- Promote positive images and role models during play experiences of those with additional needs wherever possible
- Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning.

The Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) at Hopes and Dreams is Lynn Thorpe.

The role of the SENCO is to take the lead in further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses; in planning future support for the child in discussion with colleagues; and in monitoring and subsequently reviewing the action taken. The SENCO will ensure that appropriate records are kept including a record of children's SEN support and those with Education, Health and Care plans. The key person responsible for the child will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for 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 (code of practice 2015).

The SENCO works closely with all staff to make sure there are systems in place to plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the special educational needs practice and policy of the Nursery School, always making sure plans and records are shared with parents.

## **Role of the SENCO**

- Supporting colleagues in planning to meet the needs of a child with SEN.
- Advising colleagues about the range of strategies available to use.
- Keep up to date with legislation and attend relevant training.
- Identifying staff training needs and encouraging colleagues to attend relevant training.
- All children will have a six-eight week settling in period. The SENCO will identify children's needs both through observation and by talking to their parents, monitoring the progress and development of individuals through ongoing observation using the graduated response of Assess, Plan, Do and Review.
- To be aware of any concerns about the development of individual children and share with all relevant staff within the setting at staff and room meetings.
- To support staff in differentiating the curriculum for individual children.
- The SENCO is responsible for organising a number of meetings such as the Settling in review (SIR) Team around the Child (TAC) Short Term Plan (STP) SEN Support Plan (SSP) Education and Health Care Plan (EHC) and Transition Plan (TP) with parents, keyworker and other outside agencies/professionals where appropriate. The SENCO will organise meetings to review the STP every eight weeks and support the child to prepare them for their transition to school.
- The SENCO will set up a confidential file for each child and ensure all records assessment reports are filed and kept securely in line with Data Protection (2014).
- To work closely with partner agencies including those in education and health and social care. To work in partnership with parents/carers to make referrals where necessary. This may include contributing and initiating an Early Help Assessment (EHA), (formerly Common Assessment Framework (CAF)).
- Assist with the annual review of the Special Educational needs and Disability Policy (SEND)

## **Effective assessment of the need for early help**

Local agencies should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. An EHA allows professionals to effectively identify any emerging needs and if these children do have emerging needs that require action, then these children are generally referred to as having 'additional needs'.

Children and families may need support from a wide range of local agencies.

Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These early help assessments, such as the Early Help Assessment, should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

The Early Help Assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. The lead professional role could be undertaken by a General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions about who should be the lead professional should be taken on a case by case basis and should be informed by the child and their family.

For the Early Help Assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them;

- A teacher, GP, health visitor, early years' worker or other professional should be able to discuss concerns they may have about a child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local authority children's social care should set out the process for how this will happen; and
- If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary.

If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need as defined in the Children Act 1989, or that the child has suffered significant harm, or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to local authority children's social care. This referral can be made by any professional. (*Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*)

### **Statutory guidance and Legislation**

The Nursery School has regard to the statutory guidance set out in

- The SEND Code Of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- EYFS

Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School will undertake a Progress Check of all children at age two in accordance with the Code of Practice. The Nursery School will also undertake an assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (in the final term of the year in which a child turns 5) to prepare an EYFS Profile of the child.

### **Graduated Approach**

The Nursery School will follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015) recommendation that, in addition to the formal checks above, nurseries should adopt a graduated approach to assessment and planning, led and coordinated by a SENCO. Good practice of working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of children's individual progress, will help identify any child with special educational needs or disabilities. This graduated approach will be led and coordinated by the SENCO and appropriate records will be kept according to the Code of Practice.

### **Assess**

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the key person, working with the SENCO and the child's parents, will carry out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment will 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 from specialist teachers or from health, social services or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENCO will contact them, with the parents' agreement.

### **Plan**

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the key person and the SENCO, in consultation with the parent, will agree 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 after eight weeks or sooner if necessary. Plans will take into account the views of the child. This is known as the child's individual Short Term Plan (STP).

The support and intervention provided will 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.

Parents will be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

**Do**

The child's key person will be responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, they will oversee the implementation of the intervention agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO will support the key person in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of the STP.

**Review**

The effectiveness of the STP and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date, after the initial eight weeks and using the same timescale thereafter. The impact and quality of the STP will be evaluated by the key person and the SENCO in full consultation with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views. Information will be shared with parents about the impact of the support provided.

**Education, Health Care Plan (EHC)**

Some children and young people may require an EHC needs assessment in order to decide whether it is necessary to develop an EHC plan. The purpose of an EHC plan is to make adjustments and offer support to meet the special educational needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care.

The local authority will conduct the EHC needs assessment and take into account a wide range of evidence, including

- evidence of the child's developmental milestones and rate of progress
- information about the nature, extent and context of the child's SEN
- evidence of the action already being taken by the Nursery School as the early years provider to meet the child's SEN
- evidence that, where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided
- evidence of the child's physical, emotional and social development and health needs, drawing on relevant evidence from clinicians and other health professionals and what has been done to meet these by other agencies.

Hopes and Dreams Montessori Nursery School will then work with the local authority and other bodies to ensure that the child receives the support they need to gain the best outcomes.

Reviewed on: March 2020

Signed on behalf of the Nursery School..... *Mikki Parkes* .....

Next review date: March 2021

