

Inclusion Policy

Special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

At Sunny Days we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn alongside their peers. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs.

We recognise that some children may have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in the child's life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. At all times we will work alongside each child's parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.

In accordance with our admissions policy, we are committed to providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities according to their individual circumstances, and the setting's ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care. All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the setting according to their individual needs.

Where we believe a child may have learning difficulties and/or a disability that has not previously been acknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish the child's needs and to secure any action that may be required. We recognise that children with disabilities may not have SEN but may need the setting to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to make full use of the setting's facilities.

Where we have emerging concerns about a child and/or where a child has identified additional needs or a disability, we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and any support the child or family may need to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:

- liaising with the child's parents
- observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly
- liaising with any other relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family
- seeking any specialist help or support
- researching relevant publications/sources of help
- reading any reports that have been prepared
- attending any assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals.

Legal framework and definitions

The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:

- Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
- The Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2015
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (from September 2023)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

We use the definitions set out in the law to describe SEN and disabilities.

- A child has SEN if they have a **learning difficulty or disability** which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for them.
- A **learning difficulty or disability** means that a child of compulsory school age has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children of the same age; and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the sort of facilities generally provided for others of the same age.
- For children aged two or more, **special educational provision** is educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.
- A child under compulsory school age has SEN if he or she is likely to have a learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.
- A **disability** is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEN definition.

Aims

The setting has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015). We have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEN and disabilities. We aim to:

- Recognise each child's individual needs through gathering information from parents and others involved with the child on admission and through our practices for observation and assessment
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and disabilities and have regard to the guidance given in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Plan, provide or help parents to obtain any additional help or support for any needs not being met by the universal service provided by the setting
- Include all children and their families in our provision, making reasonable adjustments where needed
- Provide well-informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Identify any emerging concerns that might suggest a child has special educational needs and/or disabilities at the earliest opportunity and plan for those needs through a range of strategies
- Share any information received and assessments made by the setting with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need
- Seek any additional help needed including requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the setting's own actions are not helping the child to make progress
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet the individual children's needs, including health services and the local authority, and seek advice, support and training where required
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make reasonable

- 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 setting day according to their individual needs and abilities
- Ensure that gifted and talented children who learn more quickly are also supported
- 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.

We will:

- Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training to help them make any special educational provision needed and meet the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Identify a member of staff to be our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and share their name with parents (see below for an explanation of their role)
- Provide a statement showing how we provide for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and share this with staff, parents and other professionals
- Ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the setting
- Ensure that our inclusive admissions practice includes equality of access and opportunity
- Ensure that our physical environment is, as far as possible, suitable for children and adults with disabilities
- Work closely with parents to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their child(ren)
- Provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities to give a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Ensure that parents are consulted with and kept informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education, including seeking any specialist advice
- Ensure that children's views are sought and listened to
- Use a graduated approach (see explanation below) to identifying, assessing and responding to children who have emerging difficulties, suggesting they may have special educational needs or a disability that requires a different approach
- When planning interventions and support, agree the outcomes and the expected impact on progress and a date for review
- Hold review meetings with parents at the agreed times and agree any changes or adjustments to support
- Seek any further advice or support needed including multi-agency approaches, Early Support and requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the setting's own actions are not helping the child make progress
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools. We work closely with the next school or care setting and meet with them to discuss the child's needs to ensure information exchange and continuity of care
- Provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support
- Keep records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Provide resources, in so far as we can (human and financial), to implement our SEN/disability policy
- Ensure the privacy of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when intimate care is

- being provided
- Provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers
- Raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff
- Ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. assessment information, targeted plans and outcomes, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies' views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually
- Provide a complaints practice and make available to all parents in a format that meets their needs e.g. braille, audio, large print, additional languages
- Monitor and review our policy annually.

The role of the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The role of the SENCO is to provide support for staff in relation to SEN and disabilities and to make sure practices are followed, appropriate records kept, and parents are involved. The child's practitioner (key person) will normally remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised programme. The particular responsibilities of our SENCO are:

- to work closely with the Lead SENCO to set targets that raise achievements
- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.

Graduated approach

In line with requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, we take a graduated approach to working with children with emerging concerns and their families. This approach includes:

- An analysis of the child's needs including whether we should seek more specialist help from health, social services or other agencies
- An agreement about the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on progress and a date for review
- Implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed, including assessing the child's response to the action taken
- A review of the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress by the key person, SENCO, the child's parent(s) and the views of the child, including any agreed changes to outcomes and support
- Revisiting this cycle of action in increasing detail and frequency including seeking further specialist help to secure good progress until the SENCO, key person, the child's parent(s) and any other professionals involved agree intervention is no longer needed or decide to request an education, health and care needs assessment.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment and Plan

If the help given through the setting's graduated approach is not sufficient to enable the child to make satisfactory progress, we may request, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, an assessment of the child's needs by the local authority. This is called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. The assessment will decide whether a child needs an EHC assessment plan. This plan sets out in detail the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child who has SEN or a disability. The local authority will consult with parents and let them know the outcome of the assessment.

Early help assessment

If we believe a child and their family would benefit from support from more than one agency, for example where a child may have difficulties linked to poor housing or difficult domestic circumstances, we may request or carry out an inter-agency assessment to get early help for the family. This early help assessment aims to ensure that early help services are co-ordinated and not delivered in a disjointed way.

In our setting we use the Graduated Approach.

Early Support

Where children have disabilities, we may seek additional help and resources through the Early Support Programme which co-ordinates health, education and social care support for the parents and carers of disabled children from birth to adulthood. There is more information on the Council for Disabled Children website: <http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/earlysupport>

Looked After Children

At Sunny Days we are committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive quality environment for all children and families.

Definition and legal framework

The description 'looked after' is generally used to describe a child who is looked after by the local authority. This includes children who are subject to a care order or temporarily classed as looked after on a planned basis for short breaks or respite care. Most looked after children will be cared for by foster carers with a small minority in children's homes, looked after by family members or even placed back within the family home.

The term 'looked after child' denotes a child's current legal status. The setting never uses this term to categorise a child as standing out from others or refers to a child using acronyms such as LAC.

The legal framework for this policy is underpinned by or supported through:

- Childcare Act 2006
- Children Act (1989)
- Adoption & Children Act (2002)
- Children & Young Person Act (2002)
- Children and Families Act (2014).

Our policy

Our setting treats each child as an individual. We recognise that for young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled appropriately with their carer. We will discuss with the child's carer, and social worker where applicable, the length of time the child has been with them carer before they start setting to establish how secure the child feels and whether they are ready to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

We are aware that there a number of reasons why a child may go into care and these reasons may or may not include traumatic experiences or abuse. All our practitioners are committed to doing all they can to support all children to achieve their full potential. The setting staff team are all trained to understand our safeguarding policy and practices. Additional training to support children's individual needs will be planned for where appropriate. Practitioners are supported by management at all times, and we have an open-door policy if they need to discuss any sensitive issues regarding the child.

Where applicable, we contribute to any assessment about the child, and attend any multi- agency meetings, case conferences or strategy meetings in relation to the child's learning and development. The child's key person will attend meetings as appropriate.

Each child is allocated a key person. The key person will support the child initially with transition and settling in and then continue to support and build up a relationship with the child, carers and any other agencies involved. Regular contact will be maintained with the carers throughout the child's time at the setting and with the social worker or other professionals (where applicable).

The key person will carry out regular ongoing practice such as observations to build up a picture of the child's interests, and plan activities accordingly to support the child's stage of learning and development and interests. This information will be shared with carers and other professionals as appropriate as well as any concerns surrounding their developmental stages.

Where necessary we will develop a care plan with carers and professionals. This will include:

- The child's emotional needs and how they are to be met
- How any emotional issues and problems that affect behaviour are to be managed
- The child's sense of self, culture, language/s and identity - how this is to be supported
- The child's need for sociability and friendship
- The child's interests and abilities and possible learning journey pathway
- How any special needs will be supported.

In addition, the care plan may also consider:

- How information will be shared with the foster carer and local authority (as the 'corporate parent') as well as what information is shared with any other organisation or professionals and how it will be recorded and stored
- What contact the child has with his/her birth parent(s) and what arrangements will be in place for supervised contact. If this is to be in the setting, when, where and what form the contact will take will be discussed and agreed
- Who may collect the child from setting and who may receive information about the child
- What written reporting is required
- Wherever possible, and where the plan is for the child to return to their home, the birth parent(s) should be involved in planning
- With the social worker's agreement, and as part of the plan, whether the birth parent(s) should be involved in the setting's activities that include parents, such as outings, fun days etc. alongside the foster carer.

Where applicable, we will complete a Personal Education Plan (PEP) for any children aged three to five in partnership with the social worker and/or care manager and carers. We will also attend all appropriate meetings and contribute to reviews. The key will ensure any onward transition to school or another setting is handled sensitively to ensure that this is as smooth as possible and all necessary information is shared. The child's individual file, including observations, photographs and pieces of artwork and mark making will be passed on to the carer at this stage.

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Review to be undertaken by:	Aimee Scadden and Julie Downton	