

Bedford Nursery Schools Federation

Policy Document



Special Educational Needs and Disability

Reviewed by: Suzie Hoefkens
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Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Rationale, Definitions & Principles

This policy meets the statutory requirements of the 1996 Education Act and is reviewed and redrafted annually in the context of the Special Educational Needs & Disability Code of Practice (2015) Children & Families Act (2014) and Equality Act (2010). Every pupil with SEN and disability (SEND) in this inclusive school has an entitlement to fulfil his/her potential. *The Special Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) is Suzie Hoefkens (Assistant Headteacher).*

'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.' (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority

Children should not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or medium of communication in the home is different from the language in which they will be taught (Education Act 1996, Section 312)

This policy is based on the key principles which underpin the **Code of Practice 2015**

- All pupils have the right to a broad, balanced and relevant education
- The recognition of a continuum of need
- Early intervention
- Responsibility for SEND lies collectively with all staff
- The use of best practice can minimise the impact of SEND
- Parents as partners in decision-making and their child's education
- Integration of and collaboration between all agencies involved with the pupil
- Successful preparation for adulthood

Aims and Objectives

We believe that every child is an individual with differing and particular needs and we aim to create a learning environment which enables all children to access the curriculum, enabling them to learn, play and progress at their own pace with adults providing sensitive support and interventions.

We aim to create an ethos in our school which is warm and welcoming to all children and their families, regardless of culture, language, religion or special needs, so long as the particular needs can be met within the school.

(Please refer to our Teaching and Learning Policy)

We believe that identifying children who may have special educational needs is a sensitive and complex process, particularly in the early years. For most children coming into nursery school, it is their first experience of life away from home and we recognise that for some children this may be particularly challenging and that some children take time to manage the transition. Unless we have major concerns

about a child or there is a very clear need for an additional plan of support, we aim to give children time to settle and adjust into nursery – generally around a term – before we escalate our interventions. (Please refer to Settling in Policy)

We know that children will progress at different rates during the Foundation Stage. Children making slower progress may include those who are learning English as an additional language or who have particular learning difficulties. It should not be assumed that children who are making slower progress must therefore have special education needs. But such children will need carefully differentiated learning opportunities to help them progress and regular and frequent careful monitoring of their progress.

We recognise that some children need support which is **additional to and different from** that of their peer group to fully access the curriculum. We aim to support these children with appropriate resources and interventions to ensure that they have full and free access to the same broad, balanced curriculum as all children, in the context of the nursery setting.

We recognise the importance of working with parents and particularly where we have concerns about a child's development and progress we work with parents from the outset, sharing concerns, discussing strategies, planning and reviewing work in partnership with families having a **team approach** where staff, outside support agencies and parents work together for the best outcome for the child.

We aim to work with sensitivity and care, respecting issues of confidentiality.

Admission and Inclusion

We are committed to the philosophy of inclusion as set out in the Code of Practice. The special educational needs of children will normally be met in the mainstream setting.

We will ensure that there are equal opportunities for all pupils including those with learning, communication, behavioural, emotional, sensory and physical needs. We do this by providing suitable physical access arrangements such as a ramp and a disabled toilet and changing area (further arrangements can be found in our Accessibility Plan). We provide support for emotional well-being through following the Personal, Social and Emotional curriculum guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We also engage with the children through circle time and we monitor their well-being and involvement levels. We give pupils a voice regarding their SEND provision and progress through individual or small group discussion and observation.

We aim to be flexible in our approach to cater for all children's individual needs. (Please refer to our SEND Information Report)

Identification and provision of needs

We analyse and use whole-school data to identify pupils with SEND, as well as provision mapping and monitoring children's progress through Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Staff meet twice daily to discuss children's progress, plan for their interests and discuss any difficulties individual children are having in accessing the nursery curriculum. IEPs are continually updated and written observations and photographs are used as evidence towards achieving their targets. IEPs are reviewed half-termly by key people, with support from the SENDCO, along with the children's parents.

We make transition arrangements with primary/lower schools to ensure early intervention and continuity for pupils identified as having special educational needs; these include transition meetings which include other agencies as appropriate and transition visits, over and above those for the majority of children, with children accompanied by their current SEND Support Practitioner. We have good links with St John's Special School.

Role of staff

It is the responsibility of the class teacher/key person to oversee the particular needs of each child within their class group.

Staff working most directly with a child have responsibility for making initial assessments about their particular needs. The assessments will take the form of observations, both formal and informal, undertaken within the nursery to identify specific issues and concerns, and information from other sources such as health visitors or past records; these to be accessed with parents' consent and knowledge. If, after a period of high-quality personalised teaching a child's development continues to be of concern the child's teacher/key person will make a referral for SENDCO involvement.

The class teacher/key person has responsibility for liaising with others – parents, colleagues, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO).

Staff working most directly with the child will work under the guidance of the class teacher to gather information and do observations, and to keep records of the child's work and development. Where appropriate the class teacher/key person, under the guidance of the SENDCO and in consultation with parents will write an Individual Education Plan. The SENDCO will use the child's records, assessments and IEPs to complete requests for statutory assessment using the criteria set out in the local authority guidance.

Staff will support children through a range of strategies and interventions generally in the context of the nursery setting alongside other children. Staff will undertake training and individual research to keep themselves informed of practice and thinking, supported by the SENDCO.

The Role of the SENDCO

The SENDCO is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the SEND provision as laid out in this policy and in the framework of the Code of Practice.
- Ensuring liaison with parents and other professionals in respect of children with SEND.
- Advising and supporting practitioners in the setting.
- Ensuring that appropriate IEPs are in place.
- Ensuring that relevant information about children is collected, recorded and updated.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff and working with external agencies including the Educational Psychology Service and other support agencies.
- Supporting the application for statutory assessment as and when appropriate.
- Undertaking reading, personal research and training to keep informed about relevant and current research thinking and practice.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will appoint a nominated governor to oversee the school's approach to provision for children with special needs. In conjunction with the Head Teacher and the SENDCO they will monitor the arrangements of funding for appropriate staffing, resources and training. The governors responsible for Special Educational Needs provision are Lesley Boyle and Rebecca Lund. Governors will also ensure that

the annual report to parents will include an update on the success of the school's SEND Policy and any significant changes in this policy, as well as any consultations with the LA or other Governing Bodies involved in co-ordination of provision and the allocation of resources to and among special needs children in the school since the last report.

The day to day responsibility for overseeing the operation of this policy will be the *SENDCO Suzie Hoefkens* and the Governors.

The Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will have responsibility for the day to day management of all aspects of the school including special needs provision. It is her job to keep the Governing Body fully informed and to work closely with the SENDCO.

Monitoring and Assessment

A graduated response will be used to support children with SEND.

The Code of Practice guidance for monitoring and assessing children is used to provide support and interventions.

When an early education practitioner who works day to day with the child, or the SENDCO, identifies a child with special educational needs, they should devise interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the setting's usual curriculum offer and strategies (*School Support*).

The triggers for intervention through *School Support* could be the practitioner's or parent's concern about a child who despite receiving appropriate early education experiences:

- Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified area of weakness.
- Continues working at levels significantly below those expected for children of a similar age in certain areas.
- Presents persistent emotional and /or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the setting.
- Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment.
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

There are some children who may be experiencing short term, transient difficulties due to specific issues, i.e. returning from long term absence, unsettled due to family issues etc. Here we would put in a short term intervention but would not necessarily deem that child to have Special Educational Needs.

Strategies used to help children make progress may be recorded on Individual Education Plans, (IEPs), which include clear information about short term goals for the child, teaching strategies and the provision to be made.

IEPs are working documents and are reviewed as an ongoing process, but are formally reviewed at least half-terminly. Parents will have direct involvement in the review process, will be given opportunities to share their views and will be invited to contribute towards their child's new targets. IEPs will be shared with all adults involved in the child's life in school including support staff, lunchtime supervisors as well as parents, who will have direct involvement with the review process.

If a child does not make any measurable progress and outside agencies become involved, the SENDCO takes a leading role in reviewing the IEP targets in conjunction with teachers, support staff, external agencies and parents.

In some cases the support given to a child through School Support may not be enough and it may be necessary for an **Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment** to be requested from the Local Authority, in order that additional and appropriate support for the child can be accessed.

The Education Health and Care Needs Assessment will be made by the school in partnership with parents/carers and in consultation with other professionals involved in the child's education and welfare. Once this assessment takes place the Local Authority may agree to draw up an **Education Health and Care Plan** (EHCP). This will be reviewed with all relevant professionals at least every six months for children under five years of age, or more often if requested by parents.

The review process will identify the continuing need for an EHCP and recommend any necessary amendments to the plan. Action points for the next IEP will be identified.

Policy review

All teaching and non-teaching staff will be involved in the development and review of this policy and must make themselves familiar with all procedures for identifying, assessing, monitoring and making provision for children with special needs, especially special educational needs. This policy will be reviewed and monitored annually by the Governing Body and School Staff.