

**SOMERSET NURSERY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE**



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

SENCO: Harriet Page

Governor: Helen Tovey

Reviewed and updated in November 2021

Due to be reviewed in November 2022

# Legal Requirements and Statutory Guidance

## **Equal Opportunities**

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE, 2012)

### Section 3.66

"Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities. The policy should cover: how the individual needs of all children will be met (including how those children who are disabled or have special educational needs, will be included, valued and supported, and how reasonable adjustments will be made for them); the name of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (in group provision); arrangements for reviewing, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive practices that promote and value diversity and difference; how inappropriate attitudes and practices will be challenged; and how the provision will encourage children to value and respect others."

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/AllPublications/Page1/DFE-00023-2012>

## **Special Educational Needs**

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DfE, 2014)

"Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. Maintained nursery schools and other providers who are funded by the local authority to deliver early education places must have regard to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice. Maintained nursery schools must identify a member of staff to act as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and other providers (in group provision) are expected to identify a SENCO."

## Contents

Chapter 1: Aims of our Policy.....	4
Chapter 2: Our Commitment to Inclusion .....	4
Welcoming New Families to Somerset.....	5
Admission .....	5
Settling .....	5
Partnership with Families.....	5
Chapter 3: Guidance for Staff at Somerset.....	5
Chapter 4: What are Special Educational Needs? .....	6
Chapter 5: The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) .....	7
Chapter 6: Intervention for Children with Special Educational Needs .....	7
Identifying Needs, Providing Support and Monitoring Progress .....	8
Provision of Support .....	8
Individual Education Plan (IEP) .....	8
Reviewing IEPs.....	8
Resources .....	8
The Environment and Facilities.....	8
The Graduated Approach .....	9
Signs of Wellbeing (SOWB) .....	9
Requests for an Education Health and Care (EHC) assessment .....	10
The Education Health and Care (EHC) plan.....	10
Transition .....	11
Chapter 7: The Governing Body .....	11
Chapter 8: Complaints.....	11
Chapter 9: Implementing our Policy .....	12
Reviewing, Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy .....	12
Success Criteria .....	12
Appendix 1.....	12

## **Chapter 1: Aims of our Policy**

The aim of our policy is to ensure that we have a considered, consistent approach to providing for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), and to establish a framework of action which ensures their needs are met.

To implement our policy we aim to;

- follow all statutory guidelines<sup>1</sup>
- provide continuity of inclusive provision for those children who enter Somerset with identified SEND
- ensure early identification of SEND
- provide effective monitoring and planning procedures to provide appropriately for children with SEND
- provide quality first teaching, a stimulating and inclusive learning environment, removing barriers to learning to ensure equal access to the curriculum
- foster positive staff attitudes and provide training and development for staff in relation to SEND provision
- develop effective relationships with outside agencies in order to ensure best provision for children with SEND.

## **Chapter 2: Our Commitment to Inclusion**

At Somerset we provide an inclusive environment and curriculum which meets the diverse needs of all children. The environment and activities are planned following careful observation of children's developing learning, behaviour and interests.

We believe that most children learn effectively through independent, self-chosen activity in a stimulating, planned environment. We recognise that some children may need other strategies and resources to fully access learning. We aim for the experience of all children to be fulfilling and result in a sense of achievement and self-worth.

Overall we aim to;

- ensure all children feel valued and secure
- have high expectations for all children regardless of differences in gender, special needs, disability, ethnicity or culture
- ensure the physical environment and learning resources are accessible to all
- ensure the cultural diversity of the community is valued and used as a resource to enrich children's learning
- actively challenge attitudes and behaviour which may lead to social isolation of children

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<sup>1</sup> The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfE, 2015); The Equality Act (2010); the Education Act 2002; Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001; the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Regulations 2014.; The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014; Children and Families Act (2014)

## Welcoming New Families to Somerset

### Admission

At Somerset places are allocated according to need. We liaise closely with family and agencies, including the Health Visiting team and the Early Years Assessment Centre, to prioritise places for children with SEND or those who for some reason are not achieving developmental norms.

### Settling

On admission all children are allocated a key person. Home visits by the child's key person are suspended this year and will resume when it is considered safe to do so. The key person is responsible for making observations of the child's development, updating assessment and setting appropriate targets for their learning. We take care to settle children at their own pace so they feel comfortable before staying for the whole session.

### Partnership with Families

Learning Story Books provide a central record of children's interests, achievements and targets which is contributed to by the family and the key person.

We place great importance on our relationship with family and aim to establish a partnership with them from the early stages of visiting. Any concerns raised by the key person would be discussed directly with the family and an "Early Help Assessment" completed.

We hope that parents feel fully involved in the decisions that are made concerning their child. We value parents views and recognise the contribution that is made at home to children's learning. The SEN Code of Practice lays great emphasis on the importance of the relationship between the family of children with SEND and we fully support this view.

## Chapter 3: Guidance for Staff at Somerset

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) provides the legislative guidance for all professionals working with children with SEND.

The fundamental principles in the Code of Practice are that "local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the [Children and Families] Act in relation to disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN), **must** have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents
- the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully in possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
- the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them

achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.”

The Code of Practice recommends a graduated response to SEND provision (See Chapter 5).

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

## **Chapter 4: What are Special Educational Needs?**

It has been estimated that approximately 20% of children may have some degree of Special Educational Needs and / or a Disability (SEND) at some time during their school life. Most children with SEND will be educated in mainstream schools.

2% of those children identified with SEND may require the local authority to fully assess their needs and produce an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan.

There is a wide spectrum of special educational needs which are inter-related and a child may have needs and requirements which fall into more than one area. These needs can be defined in four areas;

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and / or physical needs

### *A legal definition of Special Educational Needs and / or Disability (SEND)*

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

### *Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they;*

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools
- are a child under compulsory school age and they fall within the definitions above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them  
(Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014)

### *Definition of disability*

Many children who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’ *Equality Act 2010* (Section 6)

*Special Educational Provision means;*

- for children aged two or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the local education authority, other than special schools, in the area
- for children under two, educational provision of any kind

*Children do not have a Special Educational Need and / or Disability if;*

- the difficulties are related solely to learning English as an additional language.

## **Chapter 5: The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO is responsible for the day to day operation of the SEND policy and has responsibility for;

- ensuring good liaison between parents, carers and all professionals
- Advising and supporting other practitioners in the setting
- ensuring that appropriate records and Individual Education Plans are in place, monitored, reviewed and implemented
- ensuring relevant background information about children with SEND is collected, recorded and updated

In accordance with government regulations the SENCO must be both a qualified teacher and either holds the National SENCO Award or achieve it within three years of appointment. At the present time the SENCO is Harriet Page.

## **Chapter 6: Intervention for Children with Special Educational Needs**

We recognise that children's needs vary and our aim is to ensure that each child gains maximum benefit from our provision. For some children this will mean offering particular support in accessing the curriculum and may mean seeking specialist help from other service.

We believe that intervention at this very early stage can make a crucial difference to the child's successful entry into primary school and achievement throughout life. We believe that all children have a right to fully access the activities and resources of the nursery. As far as possible all work is carried out as part of the normal day's activities and with the involvement of the child's peer group.

We believe that the contribution of the whole team is vital to the successful implementation of this policy.

## **Identifying Needs, Providing Support and Monitoring Progress**

### **Provision of Support**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. We carefully monitor the progress of all children and plan for their individual needs in the context of the EYFS requirements. Our teaching and learning policy sets out how provision is made for children, and is available on our website or as a paper copy from the office.

When family or staff initially identify a child who may have Special Educational Needs and / or a Disability parents and teaching staff meet. If necessary, further written observations are made by the TAC which provides evidence to make a request for an Education Help Assessment. Staff and family contribute to this document and then agree strategies to address any concerns which become part of the Education Health Care Plan. This follows the child through their education and is reviewed regularly. From this smart targets are made in the form of an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

The IEP will address;

- what the child can confidently do, what they need support with and how school staff, family and other professionals will be helping them
- particular strategies, interventions, and resources which are required
- the frequency of planned activities and interventions
- who is supporting the child (i.e. a staff member, the parent / carer, another professional ,e.g. speech therapist)

### **Reviewing IEPs**

At Somerset we work with the family to review the IEPs regularly. IEPs are formerly reviewed each term in addition to on-going informal conversations about progress.

### **Resources**

In most cases the cost of meeting the needs of children with SEND will be met from the School's budget. Specialised equipment can be bought or borrowed from specialist centres in Wandsworth.

The School pays for in-service training for staff to learn special skills, e.g. Makaton signing, Elkan training or to upgrade their knowledge of SEN procedures. The School has a library of articles, leaflets, and books available to support staff and parents.

### **The Environment and Facilities**

Our building is a single-story ground floor building with open plan indoor areas for play, and open access to outdoor play. Toilet and changing facilities are available and fitted with child-height basins and toilets. A disabled toilet is available for adults. We aim for all children to have access to all activity areas and would make any adaptations necessary.



The children are taken on local walks and outings. Some children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities will require one-to-one support to take part in these opportunities fully and safely, and this extra support is provided by the School.

Children with specific food requirements and / or requiring the administration of medicines are made known to all staff, and procedures are followed to ensure the child's health and safety is monitored.

### **The Graduated Approach**

All children should make good and outstanding progress within the context of the play-based approach to learning at Somerset, and the thorough planning and assessment carried out by staff which tailors planning to individual children's needs. However, if staff and family are concerned that a child is not thriving and making good progress we will follow the 'graduated approach' set out in the Code of Practice (DfE, 2015).

Family and staff may be concerned when;

- a child makes little or no progress
- a child is not acquiring skills expected at their age and stage of development
- a child presents emotional / behavioural difficulties which are not improving
- a child has sensory or physical difficulties, and make limited / no progress despite the provision of necessary personal aids / equipment
- a child has communication / interaction difficulties and needs specific interventions to help them to access learning

### **Signs of Wellbeing (SOWB)**

The Signs of Wellbeing (SOWB) framework is used to record discussions between school and family when any concerns first arise (see Appendix 1). This allows us to establish what the main concerns are for. The child's strengths and current strategies, which are going to be used at home and school, are considered to help them make progress.

At this stage the SENCO will support the staff to gather additional information about the child. If it is noticed that the child goes on to make good progress there is likely to be no need of further support. However, when reviewed, if no progress is being made and / or there are concerns about their level of attainment then it will be recommended that they receive SEN Support.

### **SEN Support**

This stage of support reflects the need for other professionals to become involved in a child's care and education. For example, another professional may be sought to provide advice and strategies for the staff and family to use. Other children may benefit from outside professionals working with them at Somerset or in the home, e.g. a physiotherapist, occupational therapist, or speech and language therapist.

When a child is supported by other professionals it is essential that the information-sharing between family, school and professionals is managed well in order that meaningful targets can be set, and strategies can be provided. The SENCO's role is to coordinate this information sharing so that the child can receive the best possible support from all involved.

### **Requests for an Education Health and Care (EHC) assessment**

This stage is reached when the staff, family and other professionals come to an agreement that the provision at SEN Support has not helped the child to make sufficient progress and either higher levels of support are needed, or long-term support will be needed in order for the child to have their needs met.

The stages involved in seeking an Education Health and Care (EHC) assessment are;

- The SENCO invites the family and any professionals working with the child to a Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting to gather everyone's views about the child's strengths and their special educational needs.
- The SENCO sends a request for an Education Health and Care assessment to the local authority Special Needs Assessment Section (SNAS).
- A case manager in the SNAS team is allocated. They coordinate the submission of the request to a multi-professional 'panel'.
- The panel reviews the information and considers whether an assessment is required.
- The case manager informs the family of the outcome of the panel meeting this can take up to six weeks.
- If an assessment is agreed the case manager coordinates with the SENCO to hold a meeting to draft an EHC plan. This meeting is called a co-production meeting.
- All professionals provide an assessment of the child's needs to the SENCO or case manager to inform the planning process.
- The Local Authority panel review the draft plan and finalise it once agreed.

### **The Education Health and Care (EHC) plan**

The Education Health and Care plan is a legal document which describes all the child's needs and the special help the child will need to meet those needs.

The Education Health and Care plan will set out a 'band' of funding which the local authority will provide the school if the special help required by the child cannot be funded from the schools own budget. When a child attends a specialist setting the funding is allocated to the cost of the specialist placement.

The school is named in the Education Health and Care plan. Where a school with more specialised provision is more suitable to meet the child's needs family will be offered a list of suitable schools and a consultation will take place.

For children at this stage, continuing to be supported at Somerset, the SENCO oversees the provision ensuring;

- the aims of the EHC plan are met
- appropriate provision is made
- the child's progress is monitored carefully
- The family are consulted regularly and review the IEP together
- The EHC plan is reviewed every six months

### **Transition**

When children move from Somerset to another setting the SENCO is responsible for coordinating staff to;

- arrange transition visits to the new school and / or by teachers from the new school
- passing on all relevant information to the new school
- liaising with non-school-based professionals to ensure programme delivery is uninterrupted
- involving staff from the new school in review meetings, where they occur prior to transition

Our aim is for children to move on to their new school with confidence and for the family and child to be sure that their needs will continue to be understood and met.

## **Chapter 7: The Governing Body**

The governors, in conjunction with the Head teacher, are responsible for ensuring;

- that the necessary provision is made for any child with Special Educational needs
- that the needs are made known to all staff involved
- that children with Special Educational Needs and or Disabilities are enabled to join in all the activities at Somerset with their peers

The SENCO and Head teacher report to family and governors each year on the implementation of the SEND policy. This is done by the publication of a short statement in the governor's report to parents.

The SEND governor is responsible for overseeing our arrangements for SEND and evaluating the success for the policy. The SENCO and SEND governor will liaise as necessary to share any current developments and practice.

## **Chapter 8: Complaints**

Any complaints should be raised with the Head teacher or the SENCO who will meet with you at the earliest opportunity to discuss your concerns and try to address them.

If they are unable to resolve the situation Somerset's Complaints Procedure will be followed.<sup>2</sup>

## **Chapter 9: Implementing our Policy**

### **Reviewing, Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy**

This policy will be reviewed biannually in consultation with the SEND governor.

This policy is part of our on-going monitoring and evaluation scheme which involves scrutiny of children's progress, planning and resources. Assessment data is analysed termly to track the progress of children with SEND in contrast with their peers. Our aim is that all children make good or outstanding progress whatever their starting point, and that gaps in attainment are reduced.

### **Success Criteria**

If this policy is successfully implemented the following will be evident;

- a named SENCO and governor are in place
- records of children with SEND are up to date
- observations are contributed by all members of staff involved
- children with SEND are making progress
- regular discussion of children's needs takes place at planning meetings and their targets noted on plans
- review meetings with parents are carried out on time and targets reviewed
- feedback from parents is positive
- staff development needs are identified and met
- policy is reviewed and priorities are reflected in the School Development Plan
- positive feedback from local authority advisors / inspectors or Ofsted.

In addition to the policy we publish a **SEND information report**. This report summarises our offer for children with special educational needs and disabilities and their families, and is designed to show how our SEND policy is put into practice. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report is reviewed yearly and published on the school website.

## **Appendix 1**

### **EY Initial concerns overview/TAC notes (SOWB format)**

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<sup>2</sup> A copy of the Complaints Procedure is available at the school office.

This form will be shared with all professionals & parents/carers involved with child

Date of meeting:	Present:
<b>What Concerns do we have?</b>	
<b>What is Going Well?</b>	
<b>What needs to happen next?</b>	
<b>Scaling: Where 0 is no concerns and 10 is maximum</b>	
0 _____ 10	
<b>What are the desired outcomes for the pupil's progress for this period?</b>	
<b>Provision: targeted Quality First Teaching (QFT) /interventions</b>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	
Present:	
Parent: yes / no. If no, how will review be communicated with parent/carer?	
Progress towards outcomes	
<b>Review decision:</b>	
<b>Return to school monitoring / further class teacher-led intervention / move to SEN support</b>	
Date	Signed

**This documented is located:**

G:\Shared Staff\Early Years Foundation Stage Documents\SEN