

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

This policy is situated within the context of the legal framework for children with special educational and disability needs (SEND): the Children and Families Act (2014) (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014>); the SEND Code of Practice (2014) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications>); and the Equality Act (2010) (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk>). It takes its place alongside the Centre's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, Inclusion Policy, Medications Policy, Disability Equality Scheme, and Accessibility Plan. It is a working document that is incorporated within the Centre Development Plan.

Definition: A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or a disability which calls for special educational provision to be made; has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age (COP, 2014: 5). For simplicity, special educational needs and/or disabilities will hereafter be referred to in this policy as 'SEND'.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is the Deputy Head Teacher, who is the delegated person responsible for the co-ordination and management of SEND within the Centre, and for recording information and maintaining a coherent record of provision.

The holistic development and fulfilment of potential of all children is at the heart of our practice, and we recognise every child's right to an education that *'enables them to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views'* (COP 2014: 68). All young children and their families need advocates and supporters, and Randolph Beresford endeavours to fulfil these roles.

The Centre works within the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (<https://early-education.org.uk>) which is based on established principles of effective early learning and focuses on processes rather than end-products. We recognise that whilst broad similarities exist between all 1 - 4 year olds, children differ in their rate of maturation and in the knowledge, skills and experience they bring to the Centre.

Children with physical and/or sensory difficulties may require specialised equipment and resources, and where possible these are identified pre-entry, following discussion with parents/carers, specialist health professionals (eg paediatric physiotherapist, occupational therapist, diabetes nurse), and sometimes special school outreach. Where there are medical needs a Health Care Plan will be completed with the parents, and staff training arranged where necessary. The School's Accessibility Plan is informed by the SEND disability questionnaire which details the adaptations and adjustments that will be made, in order to facilitate full inclusion and the highest possible level of dignity and independence for the child.

Key elements of the 2014 SEND Code of Practice.

- Transparency;
- Early Identification and Intervention;
- Parental/Child participation;
- Personalisation of provision;
- Assess; Plan; Do; Review;
- Transitions.

The four stage model of Assess, Plan, Do, Review is embedded in our everyday working practice.

Transparency

The Centre recognises that many parents of children with SEND will need support on a potentially stressful journey with their child. Honesty and transparency are at the heart of this process, and the school is committed to supporting and empowering parents to navigate the journey successfully, to meet the best interests of their child.

An open and honest dialogue with parents needs to take place when concerns arise regarding an individual child's development. In the first instance Keyworkers will raise concerns with Team Leaders, who will lead team discussion at daily planning, and alert the SENCO at their SEN meeting.

Where development is believed to be following a delayed or atypical pattern, the Team Leader or SENCO will open a sensitive dialogue with parents to discover whether the parent also has concerns, and to share those of the staff. Together with families, a decision can be made as to whether to refer the child for specialist assessment, put in a programme of additional support, or carry out a further period of monitoring and assessment.

Early identification

Early Years Centres are often the first setting a child enters, and are thus ideally situated for the early identification of developmental difficulties. The Centre has a particular responsibility to assess and to intervene quickly in order to promote access to learning for all children. It is important that there is no delay in making special educational provision for children in the early years, since not doing so can lead to learning difficulty, loss of self-esteem, and behaviour difficulties. Early intervention is unequivocally linked to better life outcomes for children with SEND (Lerner and Kline, 2006:17).

Whilst some children with additional needs entering Nursery will have been diagnosed pre-entry, many will not, and it is the responsibility of all staff in the Centre to hold in mind individual children's progress, and to speak to their line manager if they have concerns. The staff will bear in mind that at this very young age children are developing at differing rates and that it is not helpful to talk to parents until the situation becomes clear. Whilst difficulties may appear clear to experienced professionals, the child's family may not yet be ready to consider the possibility of SEN, and will benefit from a sensitive and supportive approach. When a decision is made to talk with parents, depending on the severity of

the difficulty, the keyworker, team leader or SENCO will meet with the parent to decide on the best way forward. Should onward referral be agreed, this is the responsibility of the SENCO.

Parent Participation

Randolph Beresford values the depth of knowledge parents have about their children, and encourages and supports parental participation in the SEND assessment, planning, monitoring, and review process. A two-way dialogue between school and parents is essential if the team around the child are to work together successfully. The provision of additional support is only put in place following discussion and agreement with parents, and children are not referred for specialist assessment without parental consent.

Pre-entry Home Visits and the Settling Meeting provide the forum for initial information gathering. Where children entering the Centre are known to have significant needs, a Transition meeting is held between parent(s), keyworker and SENCO at the child's home. This provides a relaxed space for meeting the child and their family, and for a full exchange of information, so as to ensure that the child's needs are fully planned for, and can be met.

Parental involvement is maintained throughout the time the child attends the Centre, both informally at drop off and pick up time, and formally at termly Parent Consultation meetings and SEN Progress Reviews. Where parents are in work or study and are not coming into the Centre daily, the SENCO will ensure that procedures are put in place to keep parents informed and involved: eg a simple home-school diary, and Progress Review meetings to be held at suitable times.

Where children are to be put forward for an Education, Health and Care Plan, the SENCO will support parents through this process, and provide them with copies of all supporting documentation (these may require translation). In cases where parents wish to appeal local authority decisions, the SENCO will support them in accessing the appropriate avenues through which to do so.

Personalisation, Planning of Provision and Monitoring of Progress

The graduated approach of 'Assess; Plan; Do; Review' (COP 2014: 75) is led and co-ordinated by the SENCO, who will support and advise the teaching team around the child, and arrange or carry out liaison with specialist professionals.

Some children with SEND will be able to access the curriculum with minimal support, additional teaching input, or a curriculum which has been differentiated or adapted. Other children, particularly those with severe cognitive delays, will be learning at a much younger developmental level and will need a 'developmental curriculum', matched to their ability but pitched to their potential. Some children who are developing atypically or have a severe global developmental delay may require an *alternative* curriculum.

Where children are following severely delayed or atypical patterns of development, the SENCO will seek advice from specialist professionals on appropriate targets, and will advise the teaching team. The Team Leader and Keyworker will plan differentiated or alternative learning experiences at the daily team planning, and monitor the impact of interventions and resources over time, feeding back to the SENCO at their monthly SEN meetings. On an on-going basis the class team will consider and discuss any additional specific strategies which may benefit the child (e.g. a Behaviour Response Plan; Planned Attention), and provide on-going progress feedback to families. Formal review of individual progress takes place termly at each child's SEN Progress Review meeting between the parent(s), and the SENCO

or team leader. The SENCO or Team Leader will feed back keyworker and LSA observations at this Review Meeting; these will have been recorded at the termly internal SEN Review.

Where children do not make the anticipated progress over time, despite appropriate interventions being put in place to meet the needs of the child, discussion will take place between the SENCO and the parent(s) regarding whether to make a request for a statutory assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan. The responsibility for making this request, gathering the necessary evidence and reports, and liaison with the local authority is the SENCO's.

Adult Support

Whilst we recognise that some children with SEND will need one-to-one support (eg children with severe and complex, or profound and multiple difficulties), where this is the case we will at all times work over time towards encouraging and maximising children's independence so that they do not learn to become inappropriately dependent on adults. Some children will need a high level of adult support when they start at nursery, but will manage increasingly well on their own over time, providing the withdrawal of support is carefully managed and monitored. Support levels are the responsibility of the SENCO.

Working with children at all levels of need requires a skilled frontline staff to deliver the level of expertise necessary to support the child's learning needs. The SENCO has responsibility for support staff training.

Transitions

Children cope well with transitions when they are carefully planned and managed. Internal Transition meetings, where children with SEND move up from the Under 3s to the 3-5s, are attended by the current and new team leaders, keyworkers, LSAs working with the child, and the SENCO. A Transition Plan is completed and forms the record (Appendix). The new Keyworker will make at least three visits to play with the child in their current room, followed by the child making at least three visits with their current keyworker/LSA to the new room, before formally joining the 3-5s. Thereafter, a two week settling period will begin where parents support their child's settling in.

Where children are leaving the Centre to go to an onward school, the Head and/or SENCO from the new school are invited in to meet the child, the SENCO, and their staff team. A formal Transition Plan meeting is convened for the beginning of the term before the child leaves, to plan in detail for a successful transition. This meeting will include the parents, SENCO, team leader, LSA, representative from the new school, and key professionals (eg Speech and Language therapist). Where possible, a schedule of visits to the new school will be planned for the child, at first with the parents, and then, where applicable and possible, with their LSA or keyworker.

Children with an EHC Plan will have six monthly Person-Centred Reviews to which parents and all professionals working with the child will be invited. A Person-Centred Review will always take place in the term before the child leaves, to which the new school's Head and/or SENCO and/or Class Teacher will be invited.