

VANESSA NURSERY SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

Updated September 2023

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance to staff on how we provide effective inclusive provision for children and families with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies relating to interaction between adults and children. These policies include: - Relationships, Safeguarding and Child Protection. The school reports annually on the implementation of this policy in its SEND Information Report, and on equalities (Public Sector Equality Duty Report).

Staff and governors at Vanessa Nursery School are committed to the full implementation of the 2014, SEND code of Practice 0 to 25 years.

We believe that early education is of crucial importance for young children with disabilities and/or special educational needs and endorse the right of these children to be educated in mainstream school.

All staff should expect to teach children with special educational needs and the school educates children from the local community whatever their background or ability. We welcome children with disabilities and/or special educational needs (referred to hereafter as 'SEND') and their families. We appreciate their contributions and recognise that they enrich the learning environment for all the children and adults in our school.

All children have the right to learn through play and are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage. We will strive to overcome actual or potential barriers to learning faced by children to ensure every child is able to play and learn in a way that is appropriate for them. Due to the age of our children, their overall well-being is of primary importance to us. We are an inclusive school and want all of our children to feel a sense of 'belonging'. All children are valued individuals with unique interests and strengths. All children should be given opportunities to reach their full potential educationally, emotionally and physically.

Definition of the term 'Special Educational Needs'

A child has special educational needs if they have significant learning difficulties in comparison to the majority of children of the same age or if they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from using educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age.

Special Educational Provision is provision which is additional to or different from the educational provision made for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

A child with a medical condition does not automatically have special educational needs.

Identification of special educational needs

Children with special needs may become known to our setting in a number of ways, including:

- A family may indicate that their child has a particular need when they register their child for a nursery place.
- Staff may become aware of children with special needs during home visits/ meet the key person visit prior to their starting date at Nursery.
- A health Practitioner may become aware of a child with special needs through our links with the Health Visiting Service
- Learning support services, such as the Stephen Wilshire Centre staff who are working with the families in the area may contact the school or advise the family to contact the school.

In most of the above cases that professional will visit the family and offer a range of support, services and activities. The SENDCo will liaise with support services to assess the child's level of need and a programme of transition visits can be arranged prior to the child starting Nursery.

We also, on occasion, organise Pre-Nursery sessions to enable the children to become familiar with the Nursery School and Children's Centre and to begin getting to know their key person before they come on roll.

The Head teacher, Centre managers and the SENDCo will liaise to varying degrees as needed to ensure that any necessary arrangements that need to be made prior to admitting the child can be made.

Admitting and Settling Children to the Nursery School

The governing body has agreed to the Local Authority's Admissions Arrangements which do not discriminate against children with SEND. We will work with each child and their family individually in regard to a settling in period to ensure the well-being of the child. When children with an identified Special Educational Need are on the waiting list for a place at the centre they may be given priority, as set out in our Admissions Policy.

There are occasions where we are not able to offer a place immediately to a child with high needs. This will be discussed with the parent and a plan of support put in place.

Home Visits/Meet your Key Person visit

Every family on the Nursery waiting list is offered a home visit or meet your Key Person visit at nursery. usually two members of staff will visit with the family (one will be the child's key person) to gather information about the child and begin to build up a picture of their background and development.

Key Person approach

We believe it is important that all children and their families feel they are accepted, safe and secure and valued in our school. From the start of the nursery school placement each child and family are allocated a key person. This system of bonding provides a good opportunity for individual interaction and support to enable a trusting relationship to develop. Every child becomes part of a key group, which meets together either during or at the last part of the nursery session. The relationship between key person and parents is developed as much as possible and we are keen to involve parents at every stage of their child's learning. Everyone

involved in the education of the child – parents, teachers, Early Years Educators, Childcare Assistants, Learning Support Assistants and all other staff including those from partner agencies – should share their knowledge and understanding of the child and work in partnership for the good of the child.

The Curriculum

Our curriculum is broad and balanced. Staff plan activities, which are appropriate and flexible enough to meet the needs of all children, including those with a range of special needs. We recognise that early identification of difficulties and appropriate intervention will give children the best possible start and help them to progress and achieve. Through our curriculum and organisation, we aim to enable all children to have equality of access and to reach a high standard of achievement in relation to their potential. Our Curriculum Policy tells you more about how we make sure our curriculum is inclusive and ambitious for children with SEND.

All children will have the opportunity to learn outdoors and in the local environment. We lead Forest School sessions and all children will have the opportunity to take part in these sessions, which run throughout the year. If a child finds it difficult to access these sessions, we will put the appropriate support in place to meet their needs. We plan educational visits in line with children's interests and we encourage all children to come along. Educational visits provide opportunities for children to learn more about the world around them and broaden their experiences. We sometimes arrange additional educational visits for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Children's Profiles and Assessment

We recognise the importance of assessment and recording the children's progress and we have a well-established system. We use a range of assessment tools to look at progress over time for all children in our setting.

Children that have a high level of need will have a 'Support Plan' in place. The SENDCo will write the plan in partnership with staff and parents. The Support plan will be shared with the Local Authority when applying for funding and also for quality assurance purposes.

Parents contribute at the initial visit, during the settling review and add to their child's online Family journal. They also contribute at the termly progress meetings. All children's Family journals are updated regularly, reviewed termly with senior staff, and shared with parents.

The School Provision Map sets out all of the provision in place to meet the different needs of children on roll. It is closely reviewed termly by the SENDCo and is shared with parents where necessary as this system involves contributions from and discussions with parents, it enables early identification of need and offers the means to monitor the development and progress of all children.

Concerns about progress can be raised by the parent or the key person at any of these meetings or at an informal meeting with the parent at any time. The progress of all children is monitored throughout their nursery experience – during the settling review (starting points, in consultation with the parent) then at the end of each term. Any children who are falling significantly below their cohort or who are making limited progress will be identified in this way and appropriate action taken.

Family

We use Family, a secure online learning journal, to record and celebrate every child's play and learning in partnership with families.

Family includes photos, videos and information from home and nursery. Staff encourage parents to take an interest in and contribute to their child's learning journey.

The Code of Practice Procedures

Children may enter Nursery with a previously identified special need and may already be involved with a range of professionals. These children will be placed on the SEND register. Consideration will be given to the nature of their need and how this will best be met in school. In some cases, a special need may not lead to an additional educational need. In the case of some medical conditions a care plan is put into place and no additional educational provision is needed.

Where a parent expresses concerns about the development of the child, their child will be monitored and assessed by their key person with the support of the SENDCo and the staff team during their settling-in period. After discussion with

the parents a suitable referral will be made, or parents sign posted to access services such as advice from Speech and Language Therapy. Other children may remain under observation and offered extra support in Nursery in a range of ways.

All children on the SEND register are included on the School Provision Map, which includes their individual needs and the additional support that will be offered in addition to the nursery curriculum. The School Provision Map is reviewed termly, and the children's progress is also reviewed to show impact from interventions that they have attended.

All nursery staff are informed of individual children's needs by the SENDCo. There are regular staff meetings where individual children are discussed, and any particular concerns or issues can be raised. Staff can also raise concerns about a child with the SENDCo at any time by arranging time to meet with her.

The SENDCo monitors the implementation of the School Provision Map, offers support to key people and supports staff that are responsible for carrying out certain programmes.

The SENDCo and Class Teachers hold termly meetings with each key person to discuss individual children's progress and to monitor their records

Centre Managers, the SENDCo and Inge our child psychotherapist hold monthly meetings in each room to discuss children's progress and support plans.

Key people meet with the children's parents to set individual targets for them together. The SENDCo will also be present in meetings where a child has a special educational need.

High Needs Funding

The SENDCo will apply for either contingency or EHCP funding for children with extremely high need. Other children in need of increased support may be allocated high needs funding, this is called SENiF. These allocations will be

applied for by the school to the local authority. If funding is agreed this will go towards providing additional support, resources and interventions.

Termly reviews take place for children who receive High Needs Funding, involving parents, teacher, SENDCo and appropriate external agencies.

Working with Parents

We work in partnership with parents. We aim to give parents of children with special needs sensitive but informative support and advice, with the opportunity to influence and contribute to their child's education. A number of groups are run within the Local Authority, designed particularly to support parents of children with special educational needs. Parents are involved in discussions about their child, given the information about the assessment procedures, introduced to support workers and other professionals working with their child, invited to meetings and reviews, given a copy of reports. With parental consent referrals can be made to a number of outside agencies such as: Child Development Service, Speech & Language Therapy Service, Physiotherapy etc. Where a parent has concerns about a child's development in speech and language they can be referred to Speech and Language Therapy.

Education, Health and Care plans (EHCPs)

Some children with SEND would benefit from an EHC Plan. An EHC Plan can be triggered by the parent or the parent can request that the nursery starts the process. If a request is made and agreed by the LA, the SENDCo will:

- Co-ordinate provision for the child based on specification written in the plan.
- Hold an initial planning meeting.
- Formulate a Support Plan, and set review dates, monitor Support Plans regularly.
- Support the Class Teacher and the team of Early Years Educators, Childcare Assistants and Learning Support Assistants in delivering set targets.
- Liaise with external support agencies as appropriate.

- Co-ordinate annual reviews by inviting the parents and all the professionals involved in child's education.

Working with Other Agencies and Specialists

We aim to work in partnership with other agencies and specialists. The SENDCo will often take the lead in this, incorporating any advice from specialists and programmes on to the School Provision Map. We recognise that specialist input can enhance the learning of all children and complement existing teaching methods.

Links with Local Schools

The Nursery holds Person Centred Reviews before transition for all children who have high needs and for any other children who have a particular area of need. Parents, school staff, outside agencies and representatives from the receiving school are invited. Participation from receiving schools is vital at this stage. The SENDCo works closely with SENDCo's of receiving schools and passes on all relevant information relating to children with special educational needs who are transferring to Primary School.

Transition

Transition from the Nursery to Primary School is given high priority. In addition to a wide programme of activities for all, extra visits can be arranged for children with special needs and those children who appear more vulnerable than others.

The Role of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)

The SENDCo role includes:

- The day-to-day operation of SEND Inclusive Education Policy
- Maintaining the SEND register and overseeing the records of all children with SEND
- Liaising with, advising and supporting all staff and children
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEND both internally and externally
- Liaising with parents, involving them in supporting their children and understanding the SEND policy

- Contributing to in-service training for all staff and identifying training needs
- Liaising with external agencies including the Educational Psychology Service, other support agencies and LEA officers and facilitating their work within the centre
- Liaising with team leaders about attainment, assessment and progress
- Ensuring that on-going observation and assessment provide regular feedback to all staff and parents about the child's achievements and experiences and that the outcomes of such assessment form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning
- Monitoring the provision for children on the Code of Practice in terms of planning, delivery and Support Plans when appropriate
- Attending meetings and disseminating information to staff
- Liaising with SEND Inclusion Link Governor
- Raising awareness of the Inclusion policy in the centre
- Linking with schools to ensure smooth transition
- Arranging and chairing meetings including termly and annual reviews and Support Plan meetings
- Co-ordinating the audit and review of SEND policy, procedures and practices in the light of changes to the Code of Practice and Government legislation and borough guidelines.
- Consulting with the Head Teacher on the use of SEND funding

The Role of the Class Teacher/Team Leader

- Identification of a need (Initial Concerns)
- Taking account of the children's and parents views
- Team-planning: for the differentiation of activities and tasks
- Classroom management
- Assessment and record-keeping to demonstrate progress and attainment

- Attending Support Plan reviews

In fulfilling these duties, staff should be supported by the SENDCo, colleagues who have curriculum leadership responsibilities and, in some cases, by visiting advisors for the support services.

Staff Development and Training

The nursery endeavours to promote good inclusive practices and provides appropriate professional development for all staff. Wherever possible, staff receive specialist training appropriate to the needs of the children with whom they work. Professional development may be delivered by the SENDCo or by outside agencies. All staff have access to a range of courses offered by H&F and are encouraged to attend courses on a regular basis.

Equalities Policy and Access Strategy

The Nursery School is compliant with the Public Sector Equality. The Access Strategy monitors accessibility and identifies areas for development.

Management of the SEND Budget

The school holds the budget for children with SEND. The budget is used for: Staffing, Resources, Staff Cover and Professional Development.

SEND Inclusion Policy Review

The policy is reviewed annually to reflect changes within the nursery, changes in policy on a local level and changes in policy on a national level.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints are almost always resolved informally. Parents are welcome to raise any concerns or issues directly with the SENDCo, Centre Managers or the headteacher, as necessary. We have a Complaints Policy which is available on our website and from reception.