**Inclusion & Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy**

At 1st Steps Day Nursery we aim to be a wholly inclusive setting and will make any reasonable adjustments needed, where possible, to enable any child or adult to attend our nursery. Each child is respected as a unique individual with their needs catered for through creative approaches to learning that focus on **quality first teaching**. We recognise that some of our children will present with differences that will affect their learning. We aim to give all of these children the opportunity to achieve to the highest standard and so we ensure that such differences are responded to sensitively and consistently to ensure that each child fulfils their potential.

We follow the SEND code of practice (SEND c of P 2015), EYFS 2017, Children & Family Act 2014, Disability Regulations 2014 and Equality Act (2010) on identification and assessment of special needs.

Special Educational Needs

What are special educational needs?

According to the SEND c of p (2015) 1.8 ‘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 them.’ Children are recognised to have a learning difficulty if they:

(a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

(b) 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions.

(c) Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions above or would do if special educational provision was made for them

Special educational provision is that, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age at 1st Steps.

Roles and Responsibilities

The staff who support pupils with special educational needs at 1st Steps are:

* The child`s key carer.
* The room leader
* Alex Walker, Sam Nolan-Booth, Maria Tomkinson - Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators (S.E.N.D.C.O.)
* Appointed members of staff to support individual programmes of work.

Outside Agencies include, (this is not a definitive list),

* SSENIS. – Sefton Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Service (includes Educational psychologist, inclusion consultants)
* Health Visitors; Speech and language therapists; Physiotherapists; Visual impairment consultants; Occupational therapist; Paediatricians.

Children and young people age 0-25yrs who have special educational needs and / or a disability (SEND), their families and professionals can access information about services and support available locally. This can be found on the Sefton Local Offer website: <https://www.sefton.gov.uk/localoffer> The Local Offer helps us to understand what services we can expect from a range of local agencies, including statutory entitlements, eligibility and referral criteria.

Links have also been developed with our Wellbeing Centres, private providers network, local health visitors and local specialist provisions. Our transition co-ordinator is responsible for initial contact with local schools, and liaison will continue between appropriate staff/SENDCo to ensure continuity of support and a smooth transition between settings.

Some children may require an enhanced transition and this is done with SSENIS supporting the child and ourselves. If the child is going to school, this may involve meetings with the teacher, SENDCo or nursery nurse. All information about the child is kept confidential and only shared with parents, outside agencies and staff that are directly involved with the child with the parent’s permission. Information is treated sensitively as is the child at all times (see our transition policy for further information).

Partnership with Parents - Admissions

The contribution that parents make to their child’s education is extremely valuable and we attempt to develop strong links with all parents. This is particularly crucial for parents of pupils who have special needs. The anticipatory duty supports partnership with parents and plays a key role in enabling all children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. The key knowledge, skills and opinions that parents bring to the nursery are invaluable in identifying a child’s needs. The support that they can provide both at home and in nursery can be immensely beneficial to a child’s progress. Parents are encouraged to inform the key carer or SENDCo, of any problems or difficulties they feel their child may be experiencing and vice versa, particularly during induction stages. Parents of children with special educational needs will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children’s education. This will include active participation by parents in the review processes.

Parents enquiring about places in our nursery for their children, who have SEND, will be treated as every other parent. We will need to discuss the child’s individual needs in more depth. Communication between parents and ourselves at this stage is crucial. Initial consultation may involve any other professionals that are involved with the child and their family, this may be done through a multi agency meeting to ensure that all parties are able to work together to support the child. We openly encourage consultation as we need to identify the needs of the child and whether we can meet those needs effectively. If we cannot meet the child’s needs we must then look at what reasonable adjustments should be made within the setting. We will do everything that we can to provide a smooth transition into nursery for both parents and the child. We encourage those parents of children who have a disability to visit our nursery as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made to offer staff training where needed, along with allowing sufficient time for risk assessments, accessibility audits to be done and equipment purchased, hired, etc.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

As a wholly inclusive nursery we ensure that every effort is made to enable children and parents with an additional language to join the setting. This is supported through our EAL policy. Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Equalities Act 2010

Under the Equalities Act, we currently have the following modifications in place to improve accessibility around the nursery:

* Ramp access to the building
* An accessible toilet available
* Visual support in the rooms for children to help identify toys
* Clear signage around the building
* Appropriate EAL signage in all rooms
* Facility to offer large print on site, e.g. for policies, etc.

If a child requires specialist equipment whilst attending our nursery, we will liaise with SSENIS and other professionals to access the correct equipment for the child.

SENDCO and Staff Training

The SENDCO responsibilities are:

* To oversee the day to day operation of the SEND policy
* Co-ordinate provision for children with SEND
* Liaise with staff, ensuring that they understand needs offering advice and support.
* Oversee the records of all children with SEND
* Liaise with parents of children with SEND using their insights to help to inform actions to be taken including Individual learning plans.
* In-house training on SEND
* Liaise with local agencies regarding children with SEND, training etc…
* Oversee transitions within nursery and to new settings
* Lead and co-ordinate a graduated approach to learning and development.

Staff training is essential and we will continue to train our staff in all aspects of child development and SEND. Alex Walker, Sam Nolan-Booth and Maria Tomkinson co-ordinate (SENDCo) the role across the 2 settings to support children and practitioners throughout the nursery with individual learning and development plans, SMART targets, as well as attending training and meetings with parents and other professionals.

The SENDCo offers advice to colleagues who may have concerns about children and will give guidance on how to adapt activities and learning styles that may be more appropriate for the child. They may sit in on activities, observing and interacting with them. They will monitor the progress made by the child and ensure evidence is collected to help with any further investigations.

Staff meetings are used for whole staff training. Alex and Sam have both revised paperwork involved in SEND and Inclusion within our setting. We have also had whole staff training on health and safety, first aid, autism awareness, asthma, Learning Disabilities and the Equality Act as well as Equal Opportunities training. Key staff have also had training on moving and handling. Under the Equalities Act, all staff have been provided with a pack outlining various childhood conditions and symptoms to look for help with early identification and support reasonable adjustment where possible.

There is a career professional development file that contains all details of staff training located in the office.

Identification

Staff need to record as much information as possible. Observations are done in the nursery as part of the key practitioner system for each child. Development milestones are closely monitored in the child’s personal development file. Staff should talk to the SENDCo if a child is not reaching a development milestone. As already stated, activities may be adapted or teaching styles changed to see whether the child reacts differently.

We have a strong parent partnership agreement and feedback information to parents on a daily basis. We may refer parents to Sefton Parent’s Partnership Scheme or Sefton Carers support network for further support. Parents can call the scheme to discuss any matter of SEN with the professionals there who act independently to support parents.

It is the role of the SENDCo and room leaders to identify concerns with children’s development. Each child’s progress is monitored through data analysis each term. It is integral in supporting a child with SEN to identify early any potential barriers to learning and appropriate intervention be put in place to support them to fulfil their potential. Any child who is making limited or no progress will be highlighted at data capture and be offered enhanced support within the specific need by the nursery. If the child continued to make limited or no progress then they will be placed on the school’s Special Educational Needs list and an ILP highlighting the key area of need alongside an agreed strategy or strategies to support progression implemented. This will be monitored and effectiveness at the next data capture will be assessed.

The Graduated Approach

At 1st Steps, the process for implementing SEN support is in line with the standards within the new Code of Practice incorporating the four stages of the Graduated Approach and will support children and staff up to the age of 25.

**Assessment**:

The nursery will gather information from parents, outside agencies and any other relevant people involved in the care or education of the child. In order to gain an accurate picture of the child, they will be tracked on entry to the nursery (usually within 6 weeks) and onging termly throughout the year. The assessment involves formal and informal observations that contribute to the child’s learning journey. If they are not meeting their Age related expectations, they will be identified at the data analysis meetings.

Tracking is completed using the Tapestry SEND statements which are then translated to reflect EYFS scores.

The stages of the SEND on Tapestry can then be divided as follows to reflect whereabout in each age band they are working.

Emerging=1 and is when up top 33% of statements have being achieved. Developing=2 and equates to 34-66% of statements being achieved. Secure= 3 when above 67% of statements have been achieved.

We aim to complete each stage before moving on to the next one, however we recognise that children can work between multiple stages. For example they may be working at STAGE 3 but have achieved a statement from STAGE 5 following a group activity or in spontaneous play.

**Plan**:

Individual Learning Plans (ILP)

Individual learning plans are put into place to support all children who are not meeting Age Related Expectations of the EYFS. These are put in place using reports and feedback from other professionals (if involved) and also parents or carers. They are shared with all people involved to ensure that we are working together to achieve the same goal. ILP's are reviewed 1/2 termly or more frequently if required and 'SMART targets' are used as guidance. The SENDCo will support the review and implementation of new plans.

The ILP is aimed to outline learning goals with specific achievable outcomes.

Each plan should include:

* Clear appropriately monitored and reviewed interventions that are successful in achieving specified targets
* Additional equipment and adaptions necessary to the child needs in relation to access to the curriculum
* Consultation with the child and their parents to ensure partnership working via the key carer and SENDCo.
* **Quality First Inclusive teaching** approaches that motivate and inspire all children in the nursery such as:
  + **Adaptations to learning**. Differentiation is essential to support children’s learning.
    - This might take the form of differentiated input from the key carer,
    - differentiated tasks set for the children,
    - use of a variety of resources to support children’s needs,
    - support from others in the group or targeted intervention or adaptations to the environment.
  + **Focus on effective learning environments** where adaptations are made if needed
    - Create bespoke resources that support ownership and independence linked to learning behaviour
    - Ensure children are motivated and concentrate on providing lessons that motivate and inspire all
    - Use teaching approaches that ensure equality of opportunity focusing on a “can do” approach
    - Make use of appropriate assessment approaches to monitor progress (including early years toolkit)
    - Set the children (achievable) targets for learning
  + **Overcoming potential barriers** to learning and assessment for individuals:
    - To overcome potential barriers teachers will take into consideration the following specific needs of children, and how these might affect children’s approaches to learning:
    - SEN (e.g. Asperger Syndrome, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), general learning difficulties)
* Difficulties with communication, language and literacy
* Behaviour difficulties or emotional difficulties
* Physical impairment
* English as an additional language (EAL)
* Race, ethnicity and Religious belief
* Gender issues or Social background
* Ability.

**Do**:

Support plans and bespoke paperwork will provide the clarity and consistency of individualised support. The key carer manages the plan and is accountable for the outcomes. The SENDCo will monitor the delivery of teaching and the impact this has on learning through peer observation and termly data analysis.

**Review**:

ILP’s will be evaluated half termly in consultation with the key carer and parents and next steps planning via a further plan or if the child has made expected progress then a plan will no longer be needed.

Additional Options:

Further outside agency involvement will be requested should the child continue to make limited or no progress so as to gain a clearer understanding of the child’s need. A referral to SSENIS will be undertaken with the parents permission.

High needs funding may be applied for should the child not make enough progress across the prime areas of the EYFS. This will be actioned by the SENDCo.

Educational Health Care Plans:

EHC Plans are implemented where the special educational provision necessary to meet the child needs cannot be reasonably provided within the resources normally available to mainstream schools and early years setting. Where this occurs nursery will request a referral for an assessment to the local authority

The information presented to the LA when considering an EHC may include:-

* Individual education plans for the pupil
* Records of regular reviews and their outcomes
* The pupil’s health including the child’s medical history where relevant.
* Any EYFS assessments that have been made Educational and other assessments, for example from an advisory Specialist Support Teacher or an Educational Psychologist
* Views of the parent and the child
* Involvement of other professionals such as Health, Social Care, etc

Supporting children with medical conditions:

1st Steps recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the nursery will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs

We have a strong commitment to supporting children’s communication and language needs. Sam Nolan-Booth has completed ELKLAN level 4 and Alex Walker and Christina Neary have both completed level 3. This is used to support practitioners in their delivery of language activities. All staff have had twilight training around basic strategies and monitoring tools to further support language development and identify individual needs or areas for support. This enables us to create individual plans for children whilst they await their speech therapy appointments.

All children who attend 1st Steps Day Nursery have a word log within their development files. This is completed within nursery and there is also a copy to go home. Parents are encouraged to complete this at home too as language can often vary in different environments. It is expected that all children can use around 50 recogniseable words independently by the time they are 2. All children are monitored using the EYFS development matters and the WellComm assessment to gage understanding of their stage of development.

The WellComm tool explores each area of communication and rates them on a traffic light system. This is carried out with all children on a termly basis and the results feed into planning for further development. If after a review of the WellComm, development matters and quality first teaching strategies are in place, a delay is still identified, parents are invited in to discuss the next steps and the child’s key carer would approach the SENDCo for guidance. We will discuss the child’s development and agree on targets to aim for within a learning and development plan, and gain permission to speak to the child’s health visitor to check if a referral has already been made by a health professional. If this was not the case, we would look to gain parental permission to complete a SALT (speech and language therapy) referral form.

Each half-term we offer communication workshops to further support those children with a language delay. This provides some simple ideas for how language and communication skills can be developed at home and ensures that we are using similar strategies to aid progression. We also hold regular coffee mornings for parents of children with SEND and invite other professionals to come along and support parents wherever possible.

Sensory Diet

Some Practitioners have completed SHINE Therapy Training and this has been used to ensure that the sensory needs of children are met with sensory breaks throughout the day. These vary day to day to allow for variation and adaption and run for the whole nursery to follow. Where needed additional sensory breaks are added in to suit the needs of individual children, these are identified on an individual sensory diet plan which highlights the sensory need and a suggested diet to support the need.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy will be monitored regularly. Staff will share any new policies at staff meetings to discuss all issues raised on it.

Complaints Procedure

This is available in your parent pack.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Equal Opportunities and Learning and development policy.

Reviewed by: Alex Walker and Sam Nolan Booth Feb 2021

Next review: Feb 22

**Learning & Development**

**Appendix Covid-19 Update Feb 2021**

We will continue to monitor children’s progress and liaise with other professionals wherever possible. Currently, other professionals will not come out to visit the child unless absolutely necessary. The decision to allow professionals coming into the setting is made with the SENCo, management and professional. Risk assessments are reviewed with the professionals before they are allowed into the setting. Covid lockdown is ongoing and these procedures will be updated regularly.

Children leaving to attend school in September 2021 will be prioritised for visits if needed. Other meetings with professionals will continue remotely until further notice.