

## 6.3 Supporting children with special educational needs



### Policy statement

Tiddley Tots Nursery aims to provide our children with the best start in life. Working alongside other agencies, we support children by engaging their parents, carers, extended families and the wider community. Through play, in a safe caring environment, all our children are encouraged to become creative, confident, independent, lifelong learners. We provide an environment in which all children with special educational needs (SEN) are supported to reach their full potential.

- We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015).
- We have in place a clear approach for identifying, responding to, and meeting children's SEN<sup>1</sup>.
- We support and involve parents (and where relevant children), actively listening to, and acting on their wishes and concerns.
  - We work in partnership with the local authority and other external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEN and their families.
  - We regularly monitor and review our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments.

### Aims for Inclusion

At Tiddley Tots Nursery, we aim to create a listening atmosphere and environment where everyone is welcomed, all individual needs are met, support is given, and information is shared. We also want to ensure that we enable all children to become confident learners with a growing ability to communicate their own views. We are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies to raise aspirations and expectations for children with SEND by focusing on the whole child to ensure positive outcomes and to enable all children to fulfill their potential.

### Procedures

- We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (**SENCO**) and give his/her name to parents.
  - Our SENCO for East Finchley branch is **Nadia Islam**.
  - Our SENCO for Hoddesdon branch is **Teodora Pyrzyna**.
  - Our SENCO for Stoke Newington branch is **Rumi Forid**.
- The SENCO works closely with our manager and other colleagues and has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy and for co-ordinating provision for children with SEN.
  - We ensure that the provision for children with SEN is the responsibility of all members of the setting.
    - We ensure that our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity.
    - We provide a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum for all children.
    - We apply SEN support to ensure early identification of children with SEN.
    - We use the graduated approach system (assess, plan, do and review) applied in increasing detail and frequency to ensure that children progress.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes disabled children with special educational needs

- We ensure that parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's special education including all decision-making processes.
- We where appropriate, take into account children's views and wishes in decisions being made about them, relevant to their level understanding.
- We provide parents with information on local sources of support and advice e.g. Local Offer, Information, Advice and Support Service.
- We liaise and work with other external agencies to help improve outcomes for children with SEN.
- We have systems in place for referring children for further assessment e.g. Common Assessment Framework/Early Help Assessment and Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment.
- We provide resources to implement our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy.
- We ensure that all our staff are aware of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEN. We provide in-service training for practitioners.
- We ensure the effectiveness of our special educational needs provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. action plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually.
  - We provide a complaints procedure.
  - We monitor and review our policy annually.

### **Roles and Responsibilities for SEND at Tiddley Tots Nursery**

We take a whole Nursery approach to the management of children with special needs. This involves the SENCO, Early Years Practitioners and other support staff in:

- Developing a range of strategies to meet the needs of all children.
- Building on the achievements of all children.
- Having positive attitudes and high expectations of all children.
- Valuing individuals and accepting each child for themselves.
- Working in partnership with parents.
- Making sure the child's voice is heard and included in planning.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the named SENCo:**

The role of the SENCO involves:

- ensuring that relevant background information about each child is collected, recorded and updated, and that records are kept of each child's progress.
- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN;
  - working closely with and advising, and supporting colleagues;
  - ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting and their views are sought;
- ensuring appropriate Individual Education Plans are in place which are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis, and plan support through Early Years and Early Years Action Plus when necessary;

- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting to support the needs of the child;
- ensuring that all relevant paperwork is completed by all parties;
- ensuring that all records held are current and relevant;
- ensuring that parent/s have copies of all completed paperwork for their own records;
- attends meetings as appropriate;
- ensuring that any SEND issues are taken into account on transfer to primary school;

The SENCo is also responsible to oversee that the objectives of the SEN policy is reflected in the daily practice of our setting and that the policy is monitored, reviewed and evaluated at least annually.

## **Definition of SEND**

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (Jan 2015) explains that a pupil has special educational needs (SEN) if:

- they have a learning difficulty or disability which makes it much harder for them to learn than other pupils of the same age; and
- they require special educational provision to be made for them.

### ***There are four main areas of SEN:***

- **communication and interaction needs** - children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. These needs may change over time.
- **cognition and learning difficulties** - support for learning difficulties may be required when children learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, affect one or more specific aspects of learning.
- **social, emotional and mental health difficulties** - children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behavior. These behaviors can reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, attention deficit disorder or an attachment disorder.
- **sensory and/or physical needs** - some children have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. This may include vision impairment, hearing impairment or multisensory impairment. Some children with a physical disability require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as ***'a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'***

Importantly, the following needs/factors are **NOT** considered SEN, but may impact on progress and attainment:

- Disabilities (it is the duty of all schools to make “reasonable adjustments” to their setting to include children with disabilities as described in the Equality Act 2010—this alone does not constitute SEN).
- Attendance and punctuality.
- Health and Welfare.
- EAL (English as an Additional Language).
- Receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant.
- Looked After Child (LAC).
- Child of a serviceman/woman.
- Behavior- no longer a way of describing SEN but a sign that a child has an unmet need.

### **Identification and assessment of children with SEND**

The four main areas of SEN described in our **Definition of SEND paragraph**, give an overview of the range of needs that the nursery plans for. However, individual children often have needs that cut across all of these areas and their needs may change over time. The SEN and disability code of practice is clear that the purpose of identification is to work out what action is needed, not to fit a child into a category. Where there is a need for more specialist expertise to identify the nature of the child’s needs, or to determine the most effective approach, specialist teachers, educational psychologists or health, social services or other agencies may need to be involved.

These needs may have been identified by parents/carers, doctors, health visitors or a pediatrician before the child starts at nursery. Specialized agencies such as Portage, Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology, Social Care etc. may therefore already be involved.

At Tiddley Tots Nursery we believe that all children develop and learn at different rates, as is reflected in the EYFS and our Policy Statement. However, there are some children who, at some time in nursery, may find it harder to learn than other children. It is important that we identify a child’s individual needs as early as possible and put things in place to help them quickly, as early intervention has been shown to improve children’s long-term outcomes. Children are routinely assessed and monitored from their first settling-in session at nursery. This includes a baseline assessment being carried out in collaboration with parents/carers and termly assessments thereafter including a child’s Progress Check at age 2 years. Progress is monitored and tracked in individual Learning Journeys in our EyLog learning journey software. This system lends itself very well to early identification of any additional support children may require.

At Tiddley Tots Nursery we have adopted the graduated approach to the assessment through Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus model as follows:

- **Graduated approach** - Through regular record keeping of each child's individual progress, key workers will be able to identify when children are not making the progress expected of them. When a concern arises over a particular individual it may be necessary to offer different opportunities or use alternative approaches to encourage their learning. The key person will share and discuss the areas of concern with the parents who will be continually informed. The nursery adopts a ‘Graduated

Approach' to SEND which will follow the four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review as outlined below:

**1. Assess** – the child's key worker works with the SENCO and the child's parents and:

- Brings together all the information.
- Analyses the child's needs.

This discussion will build on, and may be held at the same time as, the discussion with parents about their child's SEN and the decision to make special educational provision for them.

**2. Plan** - Where the broad approach to SEN Support has been agreed, the child's key worker and the SENCO will agree, in consultation with the parent:

- The outcomes they are seeking for the child.
- The interventions and support to be put in place.
- The expected impact on progress, development, behaviour.
- Date for review.

**Plans should:**

- Take into account the views of the child.
- Select the interventions and support to meet the outcomes identified.
- Base interventions and support on reliable evidence of effectiveness.
- Be delivered by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge.
- Identify and address any related staff development needs.

**3. Do** - The child's key person:

- Remains responsible for working with child on daily basis.
- Implements the agreed interventions or programmes.

**The SENCO supports the key person in:**

- Assessing the child's response to action taken.
- Problem solving.
- Advising on effective implementation.

**4. Review and record** - On the agreed date, the child's key worker and the SENCO working with the child's parents, and taking into account the child's views, will:

- Review the effectiveness of the support.
- Review the impact of the support on the child's progress.
- Evaluate the impact and quality of support.

**In the light of child's progress, we will agree:**

- Any changes to the outcomes.
- Any changes to the support.
- Next steps.

▪ **Early Years Action** - Where the child makes little or no progress at Graduated Approach, despite receiving an appropriate Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, specialist assessment from outside professionals may be needed. Where outside professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENCO discusses this with the child's parents to get their agreement. Then specific targets will be set for the child in the form of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The SENCO, key person and parents will be included at this stage. A review date will be agreed when all involved will meet to discuss the attainment of the targets and the next appropriate stage of action.

- **Early Years Action Plus** - This is the stage where the SENco seeks written parental permission to involve external support services and professionals who can advise on developing new targets and IEP's. This step may be taken if the child makes little or no progress in the specified areas over a long period of time, or if the child has sensory or physical needs that require additional equipment or regular visits from professionals from a specialist service

- **Statutory Assessment** - Occasionally, despite planned support and intervention, a child may not be able to access the curriculum without receiving further help. At this stage, the SENco will discuss with the key person, parents and external support services and specialists whether to make a referral for a statement of Special Educational Needs. The request of a multi-disciplinary statutory assessment will be done with the aim of the Local Authority producing an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP). Parents/Carers or nursery staff may apply for an EHC needs assessment by the Local Authority if it is evident that the child's needs are complex, will have a long term impact on their learning and/or the child requires more than 20 hours of one to one adult support when at nursery. The decision to request an EHC Plan for a child takes place at a termly review meeting with parents/carers, Key Person, SENCO and all outside agencies represented. In order to proceed with the request for an EHC Plan, a child must be receiving input from a Community Pediatrician, a Speech and Language Therapist and an Educational Psychologist. A Profile will then be prepared by the SENCO in close consultation with parents/carers and with input from any outside agencies involved. A Team Around the Child (TAC) meeting will be held to finalise the child's Profile, which will be submitted by the SENCO, along with supporting documentation, to the Local Authority to request an EHC needs assessment. If successful, the resulting EHC Plan will detail the support required for the child to make progress and state the number of hours of adult support the child is entitled.

At every stage of SEN support mentioned above, children and families are at the centre of planning and wider family needs are considered. Children may move up or down the stages of SEN support depending on progress and needs which may change over time. The decision to move children up or down the stages of SEN support is made as part of the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle within each stage.

### **Supporting Children and their Families**

At Tiddley Tots Nursery we put children and families at the centre of identifying, planning and supporting children with SEND. We recognize the importance of parents as their child's first educator and views on their child's development are sought and recorded as soon as they start nursery. Partnership with parents plays a key role in promoting a culture of co-operation between parents, the nursery, the Local Authority and others. This is important in enabling children with SEND to achieve their potential. Parents should be fully involved in decisions made about their child's needs. Parents/carers are supported at every step to understand what they can expect from us within the nursery's own resources by the staff team.

### **Supporting Children at Nursery with Medical Conditions**

The nursery recognises that children with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including trips out.

- 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).

- Some children may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have an EHC plan. The nursery recognises its responsibility in line with the Equality Act (2010) to identify and remove barriers to learning for all children.

### **Accessibility**

The nursery recognises its responsibility in line with the Equality Act (2010) to identify and remove barriers to learning for all children. This includes:

- Increasing and promoting access for disabled children to the curriculum and wider nursery activities such as trips out.
- Improving access to the physical environment of the nursery by, for example, providing physical aids to facilitate a child's access to education.
- Improving the delivery of written information to disabled children and their families. This could include timetables, newsletters, etc.

### **Storing and Managing Information**

SEND records on individual children are stored on a confidentially. Records are kept for seven years and then deleted.

At every stage of SEN support, the nursery may request help from outside agencies to better assess a child's needs and gain appropriate strategies. These referrals are made only with parental/carer consent and a form will normally need to be filled in. Some of these agencies may include:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Social Communication Worker
- Educational Psychology
- Occupational Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Dietetics
- Physiotherapy
- Sensory Service (for Vision/Hearing Impairments)
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Community Pediatrician.

### **Legislation**

- Equality Act (2010)
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (DfE 2017)
- The Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE & DoH 2015)

### **Further guidance**

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2018)
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities