



Special Needs Policy

Rationale

At Minnows' Pre-School we believe that every child should have the best possible learning opportunities and we therefore promote inclusive practice. We recognise that some children may have particular needs or disabilities and we take specific action to support and encourage these children within a caring environment.

We enable all children to participate fully in learning activities and experiences by providing a curriculum that responds to the individual development of each child.

We work closely with parents and other agencies to monitor the child's progress carefully, and provide effective, additional support to meet the child's needs.

Implementation of the policy

It is the responsibility of [Governors and Manager](#) to:

- produce a Special Needs Policy for the Pre-School and make it available to all parents. This provides information on how children with special needs and disabilities are supported.
- ensure that all staff, including students and volunteers, are aware of the details of the policy.
- be aware of 'special needs' and 'disabilities' in the context of Early Years provision and understand how statutory, national and local procedures apply in practice to children under 5.
- ensure that the work of the Pre-School has 'due regard' to the DfEE Code of Practice 2001.
- identify the necessary provision and staff arrangements to meet the special needs of the children.

- appoint one member of staff to be Special Needs Co-ordinator. This person will be responsible for supporting children with special needs and will be:
 - familiar with the Code of Practice 2001
 - able to support other staff
 - capable of making links with parents and other agencies.
 - (Our current Special Needs Co-ordinator is Emma Simpson)
- ensure that no child with special needs is refused a place at Minnows' Pre-School.
- set high, but achievable, targets for children with special needs with staff, parents and children.
- liaise with organisations and agencies who are concerned with children's special needs and disabilities.
- ensure that staff have opportunities to undertake specialist training related to special needs, to improve and update their knowledge and understanding.
- make effective use of any available LEA funding and resources to meet the identified needs of children.

Following the DfEE Code of Practice 2001

- To pay 'due regard' to the Code of Practice, staff working with children with special needs focus on the following:
 - early identification
 - early intervention
 - inclusive education
 - physical environment
 - partnership with parents
 - multi-agency collaboration.

Early identification and intervention

- We make regular observations and assessments of all children's play and progress to enable early identification of children's special needs.
- We monitor the progress of children with identified special needs carefully so that we can plan appropriate provision and support for these children.
- We share all reports on children's progress with parents.
- We use a graduated approach to identify and meet children's special needs. This is in line with national and local procedures and involves a systematic cycle of assessment, planning, action and review, recording clear targets and strategies for development and progress.

- ☒ We use a range of strategies, as well as verbal communication, to involve the children in setting and reviewing targets. Children are encouraged to make choices and share their feelings and wishes with staff.

Inclusion

- ☒ We ensure that children with special needs are fully integrated into the daily groupings of the children and their routines.
- ☒ In order to make appropriate and effective provision or adaptations, we collect information from parents to find out the children's:
 - visual/hearing needs
 - physical needs
 - emotional needs
 - learning needs
 - self-help needs
 - communication needs.
- ☒ We ensure that children with special needs and disabilities are involved in play activities alongside the other children wherever possible.
- ☒ We encourage and support children with special needs and disabilities to play confidently with other children and make a positive contribution.
- ☒ We develop activities and experiences to raise the other children's awareness of positive images of disability and difference.
- ☒ We make flexible arrangements for additional adult support to enhance social interaction, avoiding segregating children from playing with their peers.
- ☒ We plan open-ended learning activities and experiences to help all the children to participate and learn, although we may need to differentiate for some learning activities and experiences and provide alternative formats or additional equipment and resources for particular children.
- ☒ We use a range of strategies to engage the children in play, and provide learning activities to suit individual children's most effective style of learning.

Physical environment

- ☒ We make reasonable adaptations and arrangements so that children with special needs and disabilities can join in all play areas of the Pre-School, both indoors and outdoors.
- ☒ We make every effort to organise appropriate space for the children's supported and independent movement.
- ☒ We ensure that children with special needs have easy access to toilet and eating facilities.
- ☒ We arrange respectful privacy for children with special needs at times of specific medical care or welfare.

Partnership with parents

- We encourage parents to work closely with staff to support their children's individual needs.
- We make time to focus on discussion of the children's strengths, as well as their needs.
- We check that parents understand the graduated procedures of intervention.
- We respect the different perspectives and needs of parents.
- The Special Needs Co-ordinator and other staff ensure that there is consistent communication and consultation with parents.
- We consult with parents about information that should be shared with others.

Multi-agency collaboration

- The Special Needs Co-ordinator liaises with other supportive agencies to develop good working relationships.
- We gather information on relevant contacts and services to share with parents.
- We try to achieve a good relationship for information-sharing, collaboration and understanding with other professionals in order to take into account the complete needs of the child.