Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

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POLICY STATEMENT

This setting is committed to the inclusion of all children and provides a safe, caring and stimulating environment. All children with special educational needs and disability (SEND) are supported to enjoy learning and reach their full potential, ready for transition to school and onward successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment where appropriate.

1. POLICY AIMS

1.1. We identify and respond to children's special educational needs and/or disability as early as possible.

1.2. We recognise that children with disabilities may not have special educational needs.

1.3. We ensure that all staff are suitably trained and aware of the setting's SEND Policy, and of current guidance and legislation.

1.4. We take all reasonable steps to provide a physical environment that promotes inclusion, and enables full access to the curriculum, for children with SEND.

1.5. We follow Gloucestershire's Graduated Pathway of Early Help and Support to identify and respond to children's emerging needs, using the principle Assess, Plan, Do and Review.

1.6. We work in partnership with parents, the local authority and other external agencies to ensure the best outcomes for children with SEND and their families.

1.7. We build positive relationships with parents who are valued as the child's first and foremost educator.

1.8. We promote equality, diversity and difference encouraging children to value and respect each other.

1.9. We promote positive images, role models and appropriate language for children with SEND, and challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices.

1.10. We monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of provision.

1.11. In general, we follow the guidance provided by Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). Gloucestershire Guidance Booklet for Practitioner Working with Children and Young People with Additional Needs including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (Gloucestershire County Council, 2nd ed, 2016). This has regard to the following legislation and guidance:

a. Children and Families Act 2014

b. Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (DfE & DoH June 2014, updated April 2020)
c. Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE Mar 2015, updated December 2023)
d. Statutory guidance Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework (DfE March 2014, updated September 2025)
e. Equality Act (2010).

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1. Special Educational Needs

2.1.1. A child or young person has Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her, i.e. provision additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

2.1.2. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the SEND Code of Practice definition when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.
(see SEND Code of Practice 2015, pp15, 16)

2.2. Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (PMG Lead SENDCO)

The setting appoints Special Educational Needs & Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO) and gives their name to parents.

Our SENCO is: Deborah Ebbrell

Our Deputy SENCO is: Lauren Ronson

The role of the SENCO is to:

3.1.1. Ensure all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEND, and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEND.

3.1.2. Advise and support colleagues:

a. Oversee the daily implementation of the SEND policy and practice.

b. With the key person, regularly review the child's progress against outcomes for My Plan/My Plan+, Education, Health and Care Needs Plan (EHCNP).
c. Offer advice and support to the key person in completing assessments or referrals involving other professionals.
d. With the key person, maintain up to date and confidential written records of the child's progress for staff and other professionals who are involved in the child's care.

3.1.3. Ensure parents are closely involved and their insights inform action taken by the setting.

3.1.4. Liaise and meet with professionals or agencies beyond the setting:

a. Ensure the protection of confidential information when shared electronically (via Microsoft Encryption, or EGRESS) or via the postal service using recorded delivery.
b. Liaise with the key person or teacher, and if appropriate the setting or school SENDCO, when the child is transitioning to a different room or setting.
c. If the child attends more than one setting, agree with other SENDCOs who should take the lead role.
d. Maintain the SEND records for each child at all stages of the graduated pathway.
e. Facilitate regular TAC / TAF meetings and EHCP requests/reviews.

3.2. Key Person

The role of the Key Person is:

3.2.1. To identify any significant emerging concerns when reviewing their key children's progress and development, paying attention to those children who have previously not been identified as requiring additional support.

3.2.2. With the SENDCO, to regularly review the child's progress against outcomes for My Plan/My Plan+.

3.2.3. With the SENDCO, to maintain up to date and confidential written records of the child's progress.

3.2.4. With the SENDCO, to review any EHCNP request or annual review.

3.2.5. Encourage parents to contribute to the planning of their child's provision.

3.3. All Staff

3.3.1. Discuss any emerging concerns with the child's key person, room lead and the SENDCO.

3.3.2. Understand their responsibilities for children with SEND within the setting.

3.3.3. Undertake relevant training or learning to meet the needs of children with SEND.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1. Accessibility

4.1.1. We provide a safe and accessible environment for the children in our care.

4.1.2. We regularly look at ways to improve accessibility through family and staff discussions, observations and questionnaires.

4.1.3. We take a practical approach to looking at the most appropriate ways to overcome challenges, within reasonable parameters.

4.1.4. We look ahead to anticipate the future needs of children with SEND in order to prevent any disadvantage developing.

4.2. Admissions

4.2.1. Where a child is known to have SEN or disability before enrolling, we arrange a meeting between setting staff and the family to discuss the child's needs in advance of them starting.

4.2.2. If it is agreed that the setting is able to meet the child's needs, we draw up an individual care/educational plan and set a review date.

4.2.3. As far as possible we adapt the physical environment and our care provision. An individual risk assessment may be written for the child as needed.

4.2.4. Where appropriate we offer the child visits or settling in sessions before they take up the agreed hours.

4.2.5. The child's registration form and 'All About Me' / Gloucestershire County Council My Profile booklet to include details of any known SEN or disability, and existing provision.

4.2.6. We provide all staff involved with the child's care with appropriate information and training to help them meet their needs and help them fulfil their potential.

4.2.7. We provide parents with information on local sources of support and advice e.g. Gloucestershire's Local Offer – Early Help, and Information, Advice & Support Service, SENDIASS (see Further Information).

We encourage parents to liaise and work with other agencies to help improve outcomes for their child.

4.2.8. If a child with SEND has or requires statutory involvement from Social Care, we also follow procedures in the Looked After Children Guidance.

4.2.9. For all children, including those not known to have SEN or a disability before enrolling, we work towards early identification of any additional needs, using the EYFS progress checks outlined in the EYFS statutory framework (2023) and SEND Code of Practice (2015).

4.3. Involving Children and Parents

4.3.1. We involve parents at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's learning and development, including all decision-making processes.

4.3.2. We make time to discuss and share information with parents about their child's needs and strengths.

4.3.3. We ensure parents understand the graduated pathway and how this supports their child.

4.3.4. The child's views are listened to and taken into account, where appropriate. They are actively involved in their assessment and reviews of progress.

4.4. English as an Additional Language / Children who speak more than one language

Staff are aware that particular attention may be needed to identify and assess special educational needs among children whose first language is not English.

4.5. Identifying and Responding to Emerging Needs

The SENDCO and Key Person follow Gloucestershire's SEND Graduated Pathway of Early Help and Support to identify and respond to the child's emerging needs. The main stages of this are as follows:

Ready for Learning Toolkit – During a child's Preschool year this toolkit will be used termly to identify and respond to emerging needs.

The Local Offer – Provides information to families about what support services the local authority expect to be available in their local area.

Informed Consent – Must be gained by the SENDCO from the family before we can undertake any aspect of the Graduated Pathway.

My Profile – Requested by the SENDCO from the parents if it is not clear that a child's needs can be met by universal services. This may draw on the information provided in the 'All About Me' booklet at registration.

My Plan – Created if a child is making limited or no progress following the EYFS ages and stages of development, and additional support is required/identified, or their behaviour is a cause for concern. Or a My Plan may be created to support a child to manage their emotions, ability to self–regulate and support their emotional wellbeing. The SENDCO and child's key person, in discussion with the child's parents, agree interventions. Using the assess, plan, do, review approach.

My Assessment – Requested from the local authority by the SENDCO if, despite the additional help provided as part of a My Plan, the child is still making limited or no progress or if outside agencies have become involved.

My Plan+ - Drawn up following a My Assessment to outline additional support for the child, drawing on outside support services or more specialist advice.

Team Around the Child (TAC) and Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings – Bring together relevant professionals in partnership with parents to gain a holistic view of the child and discuss /agree the overall approach and regularly review the outcomes set out by the My Plan/My Plan+.

Request for Education, Health and Care Needs Plan (EHCNP) –Made by the SENDCO or parent when a child's educational or health needs are not being met within existing additional resourcing already accessed by the setting. If the request is accepted, a multiagency team brought together by the local authority make a statutory assessment based on the evidence provided. If the request is refused, the family are signposted to alternative sources of support.

EHCP - Specifies the area(s) of learning and developmental need and identifies outcomes and the extra provision required to meet the child's needs. It includes a budget for any extra resources

agreed. The setting may receive direct funding, in which case it will follow the directions set out in the ECHP.

4.6. Transitions

4.6.1. We plan for when children with SEND move to a different childcare provider or on to school.

4.6.2. In preparation for these transitions, children have the opportunity to visit their new class, and to meet the appropriate staff.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Gloucestershire Graduate Pathway Practice Guidance
- Family Information Service – glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk
- Gloucestershire SEND Local Offer/Early Help
- SENCOSPOT - SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)
- Animated introduction of Gloucestershire's EHC Plan pathway - youtu.be/1GYCcJVnPdY
- SEND: a guide for parents and carers – (DfE Aug 2014, updated Mar 2015)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Gov December 2023, updated June 2025)