

Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy (updated Mar '23)

At Little Acorns we aim to promote an inclusive environment where **all** children, whatever their requirements, can learn, develop and fulfil their potential in a happy, caring environment. We provide support and resources to enable every child to participate in our routines and activities as appropriate to their developmental stage. In order to achieve this, we work in partnership with parents and listen to the voice of the child and the child's body language.

Children might be described as having special education needs and disabilities (SEND) for many reasons – a sensory or physical disability, a language or communication/interaction difficulty, behaviour or emotional difficulty including mental health or delayed development. In order to make sure we are able to support each child appropriately, we send all parents a form within the School year before the actual School year that their child will be starting. This gives parents an opportunity to mention any special requirements that might already have been identified. This is important because as a parent you know your child better than anybody else; your knowledge, shared with us, will help us to work with you to support your child. We also work closely with Health Visitors.

Little Acorns aims to adhere to the following:

- SEN & Disability Code of Practice 0-25yrs (2015)
- Children & Families Act (2014)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2021)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child-the 4 core principles being: Non- discrimination; Devotion to the best interests of the child; The right to life, survival and development; Respect for the views of the child.

Our **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)** is Pam Grosvenor. She has had training to enable her to support staff and liaise with parents and other professionals. The Deputy SENCO is Clare Williams.

The Code of Practice sets out the procedures for Early Years Settings to identify, assess and provide for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability using a graduated approach.

Initially parents and Pre-School staff agree that a child has special requirements, which means they would benefit from additional or different input to support their learning and development. We aim to meet every child's individual needs, valuing and supporting children and making reasonable adjustments whenever necessary.

We assess where the child's development level is, plan appropriate activities and implement them. This is known as the Graduated Approach or Assess/Plan/Do/Review method. Throughout the graduated approach, Little Acorns aims to work closely and respectfully with parents.

The graduated approach is maintained and if it is deemed necessary, the involvement of external support services is sought e.g. Portage. They can help with advice on I.E.P's, provide more specialist assessments and in some cases provide support for particular activities. Any Individual Education Plan's (I.E.P) will be agreed between parents and staff, with a date to review progress. The plan identifies and records what is additional to, or different from, the normal planning which takes place.

For some children the help given may not be sufficient for them to progress satisfactorily. In this case, parents, staff or other professionals can request the Local Education Authority (LEA) makes a full education, health and care assessment of the child. The LEA may then agree to issue an Education, Health & Care Plan, (previously known as a statutory assessment leading to a 'Statement of Special educational needs'), which may enable parents or the Pre-school to access additional support.

Several staff are currently undertaking Dingley's Promise Inclusion training, which promotes a whole team approach to children's needs, and during our weekly staff meeting we evaluate our practice and provision. This evaluation includes how inclusive we are and how rigorously we are promoting and valuing diversity and differences. It is a fundamental part of our ethos to model value and respect for all - staff, children, parents and visitors. For this reason staff are prepared to challenge any inappropriate attitudes and practices whenever they become aware of them.