The Meadows

Cheeky Chimps Childcare

Supporting children with Special Educational Needs

Introduction

At The Meadows Nursery we welcome children with special educational needs, we aim to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to access and engage in the Early Years Foundation stage.

The Meadows recognises that some children may have additional needs that may require interventions and support. These needs may be short term or may require longer term or lifelong support. At all times we will work alongside each child's parents/carers, key person and any relevant professionals to share information, to identify need and help the child and their family access the support they need.

We believe that all children have the right to experience and develop alongside their peers no matter what their individual needs. Each child's needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate.

At The Meadows Nursery we ensure that:

- All children are treated fairly,
- We have a Senco (Sophie Houston) who has knowledge of the Special educational needs and disability code of practice 0-25years and Special educational needs and Disability regulations 2014.
- Ensures that's practitioners, parents/carers are aware of the policy and procedures
- Always ensure confidentiality.
- All information is shared with parents.

The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (Dfe 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Dfe 2015)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (Dfe & DoH 2015)
- The Equality Act 2010
- Special educational needs and Disabilities Regulations 2014
- Unicef 1991

We use the definition set out in law to describe SEN and disabilities.

A child has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2-1- as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Long term is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial.' The definition included sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, Epilepsy and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN. Where a disabled child required special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEN definition.

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Aims and Values

We recognise that we will need to consider the individual needs of children when planning our curriculum. We aim to provide a curriculum, which is accessible to the individual needs of all our children.

•We recognise that some children will need additional support to access the whole curriculum. We will ensure that the developmental needs of children are identified early and where needed the appropriate support is sought. We aim to provide appropriate support and strategies to achieve this.

• We recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of children with special educational needs. This is particularly important in the area of early years care and education.

• We have a statutory duty to complete a progress check for two-year-olds. This is always shared with parents, and a written summary is competed. The progress check will be carried out by a key person that knows your child well. If there are any areas where progress is less than expected in partnership with parents, we would agree further action. We would also share information with the local health visiting team.

• We believe in the involvement of the child and the importance of taking their views into account. We will make every effort to involve the child in a manner appropriate to their stage of development, understanding and communication style e.g. Signalong /symbols/pictures/ Objects of reference when making choices, participating and interests.

• We are committed to effective collaboration using a multi-disciplinary approach to meet the needs of children with SEND. We will actively support the children and families and maintain close links with all agencies working with the child.

• We will make reasonable adjustments to our provision and practice to meet the needs of individual children with SEND in line with the SEND code of practice and the Equality Act (2010). For example; providing a standing frame for a child with cerebral palsy, or a raised board for a child with a vision impairment.

• We will make sure our planning, and our environment is differentiated to meet the individual needs of children which enables them to participate fully within the early year's foundation stage. We also take part in additional training to support children.
We regularly update our risk assessment which we share with the staff and parent/carers.

• We aim to consider and will always seek the child's voice. We will do this by using differentiated methods such as observation, child interests, level of attention and engagement.

The united convention on the rights of the child state; 'Children who are capable of forming views have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter affecting them. The views of the child should be given where possible and according to the age, stage of development, maturity and capability of the child'

• Children who are capable of forming views have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to the age, stage of development, maturity and capability of the child.

• The child's views, feelings and wishes will be sought whenever possible, by asking, listening, observing, and in a variety of ways through play and through collaboration with parents, carers, key person and Early Help Record.

Named Senco

The Name of our Special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is Sophie Houston, and our Deputy is Gemma Farrar.

Role of the SENCO

Supporting colleagues in planning to meet the needs of a child with SEN.
• Advising colleagues about the range of strategies available to use.
• Identifying staff training needs and encouraging colleagues to attend relevant training.
• In our setting we give all children a 4-6 week settling in period.
We identify children's needs both through observation, conversations with the key person. and by talking to their parents//carers. We monitor the progress and development of individuals through ongoing observation using the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review.
• We share any concerns about the development of individual children with all staff within the setting at staff and staff meetings.
• We support staff in differentiating the curriculum for individual children.
• If we feel that the provision in our setting does not meet the needs of an individual child we will adapt it accordingly differentiating the curriculum for the individual child for example: accessing the water tray if is it too high or too low and adjusting.
• The SENCO is responsible for organising and attending a number of meetings such as Early Help record and plan meetings (EHR) Individual play plan /Support plan (ipp/Support plan) Education and Health Care Plan (EHC), keyperson and other outside agencies/professionals where appropriate. She will also organise meetings, reviews and attend early help meetings every approximately every six to eight weeks.
• Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (2014 pg:78- 90).
• The SENCO will set up a confidential file for each child and ensure all records; assessment reports are filed and kept securely in line with Data Protection (2014).
• We work closely with partner agencies including those in education and health and social care and seek help and support from specialist. We work in partnership with parents/carers to make referrals where necessary. This may include contributing and initiating Early Help Record and Plan.
- We will research relevant publications.
- Read any reports that have been prepared.
- Attend relevant training to support individual children.

Staff role and responsivities

All staff in the setting are responsible for meeting the needs of children with SEND. The SENCO will support staff and coordinates the SEN provision across the setting. The SENCO will share information with all staff on the identified needs of the individual children and any agreed strategies to support them.

Providers must inform parents and/or carers of the name of the key person, and explain their role, when a child starts attending a setting.
• The key person must help ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs.
• The key person must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home, eg Toddler talk cards, I can
• They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate. DfE (2026) Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage, para 1.10

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Senco Procedures:

- We will ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and o/or disabilities is the responsibility of all practitioners in the nursery.
- We ensure an inclusive admissions practice including equality of access and opportunity for all.
- We ensure that our physical environment is as far as possible suitable for children and adults with disabilities.
- We will work closely with parents/ carers to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their children.
- We will ensure that parents are consulted with and kept informed at all stages of the assessment planning, provision and reviews of their child's care and education, including seeking any specialist advice
- We ensure that the children views are sought and listened to.
- Use a graduated approach (see section below) to identify, assess and respond to a child why has emerging difficulties, and suggest they may have SEN needs or a disability that requires a different approach.
- Use a system of observations evaluating and reviewing Individual play plan/ My Plans (Ipp/My plans).
- We will review IPP/my plan's regularly and review these with parents. Where possible face to face, teams or via the Famly app.
- We will seek any further advice or support needed including multi agency approaches, early support and requesting for a EHCP where needed.
- Liaises with other professional involved with the child with learning difficulties and or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangement to other settings and school. We work closely with schools or care setting and meet with them to discuss the child's needs to ensure information exchange and continuity of care.
- Provide parents/Carer with information on sources of independent advice and help them to engage with any additional more specialist support.
- Keep records of the assessment, planning provision and review for children with learning difficulties and or disabilities.
- Use the Early Help record or the working together document when needed. Working in partnership with parents and other professionals working with children.

Graduated Approach:

The Graduated Approach as outlined in The SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 years (2015): Below is the SEN Support that we provide for identifying and supporting children with SEN or disabilities within our setting:

Assess

- We use initial observations and assessments from staff; information received from external resources and/or parental concern to support early identification.
- We use on-going observational assessments linked to the Early Years Outcomes/Development Matters to support early identification of needs.

Plan

- We use Individual play plans/my plans to agree targets, interventions and support for a child identified with special educational needs with a child-centred focus and outcomes underpinning and informing the content of the plan.
- The SENCO will liaise with the child's parents/carers, together with the child and external agencies, if appropriate, in planning new IPPs/My plans.
- We encourage parents/carers to any meetings regarding the child's development.
    - We encourage parents to take part in the review on IPP's/My plans

Do
• Key Person will be responsible for working with the child on a daily basis
• Our SENCO will support and oversee implementation of the IPPs.

Review
• The SENCO will organise review meetings with parents/carers, Key Person and external professionals to monitor progress.

The IPP/my plan will show the short-term targets set for the child and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. In most cases, this review will take place once a term. Parents will be involved in the writing and review of each IPP/my plan.
If the IPP/my plan review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents prior to any support being requested, in which they will share consent. In most cases, children will be seen in the nursery by external support services. This may lead to 'additional' or 'different' strategies and external support outside of the preschool. External support services will provide information for the child's new IPP/my plan. The new strategies within the IPP/my plan will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's preschool setting.

Early Help record:

The Meadows we see the Early Help Record and Plan as a tool that aims to help practitioners assess children with additional needs and bring together the extra services they need more effectively. It aims to bring together all professionals working with the child to ensure their individual needs are met.

The EHR will ensure early intervention when practitioners in the nursery have concerns regarding the additional needs a child may have.

The EHR will cover all the needs of a child and encourage all services involved with the child to work together to meet their individual needs.

The Senco will ensure the EHR is reviewed regularly with parent/carers and all professionals involved in the early help.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

Where a child has an EHC plan, the local authority must review that plan as a minimum every twelve months. As part of the review, the local authority can ask settings, and require maintained nursery schools, to convene and hold the annual review meeting on its behalf.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. To achieve this, local authorities use the information from the assessment to:

• establish and record the views, interests and aspirations of the parents and child or young person
• provide a full description of the child or young person's special educational needs and any health and social care needs
• establish outcomes across education, health and social care based on the child or young person's needs and aspirations
• specify the provision required and how education, health and care services will work together to meet the child or young person's needs and support the achievement of the agreed outcomes

Links with support service and outside agencies:

It is our policy to adopt and foster good relationships with outside organisations.
We do this by:
• maintaining close contacts with Ofsted Early Years Team and by our regular inspections
• being a member of Early Years Alliance (formerly Pre-school Learning Alliance)
• making contacts with co-ordinator of Koalas - Swindon opportunity playgroup, Hop, Skip and Jump- respite care and portage service, Special Tots
• links to LEA and Early Years Consultant to seek information.
• SENDIASS (formerly known as Parent Partnership Service) 01793 466515 sendiass@swindon.gov.uk
• Professionals as identified, e.g. Teacher of the Deaf, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, SEMH Team at Nylands.

Local Offer:

The Local offer is published information about what services and support children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) can access in Swindon and surrounding areas. Just as importantly, children and their families must be involved in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. Their comments about the Local Offer will be published along with a response from Swindon Borough council. The aim of this involvement is to make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations.
The local offer cover information on: Education, Health, Social care, Training, transport, preparing for adulthood, finding somewhere to live and participating in the community.
Local authorises must involve children and young people with SEN and their parents in:
Planning the content of the local offer
Deciding how to publish the local offer.
Reviewing the local offer and enabling them to give feedback on the local offer.

Admission Arrangements:

We recognise and value the needs of all children and are therefore keen to ensure that all individuals have an equal opportunity to become an integral part of The Meadows life and experience inclusion. All children are admitted following full consultation with parents/carers and any outside agencies that may be involved. In this way we aim to consider both staffing levels and the physical environment to ensure that we are able to support the child to the best of our ability.
A risk assessment will be carried out to identify hazards. We will endeavour to provide for the needs of the child and will consider acquiring specialist toys and equipment whenever possible.
This applies generally for children:
I) who are not meeting their expected levels or where their progress is giving cause for concern
ii). whose behavioural (mental health)/emotional/social difficulties are causing concern

iii) who are able and need additional challenges
then: -
(iv) the same for any child. If outside agencies are already involved before admission, consultation will be made with parents, relevant outside agencies and other carers/educators.
(v) for children who have a physical disability (or a severe medical condition). Each case would
be discussed with the Management Team who will assess and then make a formal decision as to whether The Meadows is equipped environmentally and resourcefully to admit the child. We are a fully inclusive setting and will work with families to provide the best care for the children.
This would include the financial implication to the Nursery i.e. additional staffing & purchase of specialised equipment, etc. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
We will write up a plan of action (support plan) as to how to meet the needs of the individual child for inclusion. With agreement from parents, additional funding will be sought from the local authority SENRAP Team (Special Educational Needs Resources and Assessment Panel).
(vi) for children who have a visual or hearing impairment, the 'general' admission policy applies along with support from the relevant health department. If extra support is needed the senior team will discuss this.
For children who appear to be making little or no progress, further expertise will be sought with the view for shared care with a Targeted Provision (specialist provider). This applies to any child who:
• makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified areas of concern.
• continues working at levels significantly below those expected for children of a similar age in certain areas.
• presents persistent emotional, social and/or behavioural (mental health) difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the setting.
• has sensory or physical concerns and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment.
• has communication and /or interaction difficulties and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

We will work with these professionals to put EHR plans in place and work together on actions to support the children to make progress within the setting.

Staff training

At The Meadows we value the importance of ongoing access to training to enable staff to meet the needs of individual children. We will review the staff training needs on an annual basis and plan training accordingly.

Transitions:

• Supporting the transition of a child with additional needs from the current placement to a new placement is an important part of the work of the setting SENCO in liaison, if applicable, with the Early Years SEN Advisory Teacher.
• Successful transition for a child with additional needs means that they can be appropriately supported immediately upon starting at their new setting/school and will enable them to continue learning as effectively as possible.
• We hold a transition meeting at the setting in the term before transition takes place.
• The Child's Senco folder along with any relevant paperwork, is sent to next placement with parent/carers permission.

• We share all documentation such as IPP/my plan's, behaviour plans, observations etc.
• We liaise with the child's next placement and invite them to visit our setting to familiarise themselves with, and observe, the child and to share information in partnership with parents.

Premises/ reasonable adjustments

Our building is single storey which enables wheelchair access.
Whilst we don't know what special requirements will be needed for individuals, we ensure we make appropriate adjustments, so that no child is disadvantaged in comparison to children who are not disabled.

Gemma Farrar 14.9.2026
Review 14.9.2027