



Special Educational Needs

This policy represents the agreed principles for Special Educational Needs throughout the Nursery. All Nursery staff, representing Carter's Sunflowers Nursery have agreed this policy.

At Carter's Sunflowers we aim to provide the highest quality education and care for all our children. We provide a warm welcome to each individual child and family and offer a caring environment where all children can learn and develop to become curious independent learners within their play.

Please read this policy in conjunction with our Inclusion and Data Protection policy for the information collected by Carter's Sunflowers, the professionals this information may be shared with and the retention periods this data is held for.

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEND)

“Children have a Special Educational Need if they have a learning difficulty which calls for Special Educational provision to be made for them”. As defined by the Code of Practice 2015 for those who have Special Educational Needs and disabled children.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) affect a child or young person's ability to learn. They can affect their:

- Behaviour or ability to socialise, eg they struggle to make friends
- reading and writing
- ability to understand things
- concentration levels
- physical ability

Introduction

This policy is in line with the Code of Practice 2015 and Equality Act 2010. The Special Needs Coordinators (SENCO) is Lucy Oliveira

Carter's Sunflowers is an inclusive nursery for children who benefit from a personalised approach to learning. Our approaches are particularly suited to children with autism and associated conditions. Our nursery has been designed to encourage communication and interaction. We provide a low arousal environment that enables children to focus their attention and learn new skills.

At Carter's Sunflowers we follow the equality act 2010 and the SEND code of practise 2015 where two core duties apply to our early years setting:

- Not to treat a child or an adult with a disability "less favourably"
- To make "reasonable adjustments" for children and adults with a disability

At Carter's Sunflowers Nursery we strive to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children for them to become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, staff set suitable learning challenges that are developmentally appropriate and respond to children's diverse learning needs. The majority of our children will have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the nursery.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development, and personal, social, and emotional development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions about whether a child has SEND. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

A delay in learning and development in the early years may or may not indicate that a child has SEND, that is, that they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision. Equally, difficult, or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a child has SEND. However, where there are concerns, there should be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as an underlying learning or communication difficulty. If it is thought housing, family or other domestic circumstances may be contributing to the presenting behaviour, a multi-agency approach, such as the Early Help Assessment or Families First, should be adopted.

Children may have Special Educational Needs and Disability either throughout or at any time during their nursery development. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

Aims and objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- To create an environment that meets the Special Educational Needs and disabilities of each child.

- To ensure that the Special Educational Needs and disabilities of children are identified, assessed, and provided for.
- To make clear the expectations of all partners in the process.
- To identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's Special Educational Needs and Disability.
- To enable all children to have full access to all elements of the nursery's curriculum.
- To ensure that parents can play their part in supporting their child's education.
- To ensure that our children have a voice in this process.

Educational Inclusion

At Carter's Sunflowers Nursery we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our nursery community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- Have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations.
- Require different strategies for learning.
- Assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- Need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Identifying and assessing SEND for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early year's practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEND or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEND.

Staff respond to children's needs by:

- Providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy.
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences.
- Planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities.
- Helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely.
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.
- It is particularly important in the early years that there is no delay in making any necessary special educational provision. Delay at this stage can give rise to learning difficulty and subsequently to loss of self-esteem, frustration in learning and to behaviour difficulties. Early action to address identified needs is critical to the future progress and improved outcomes that are essential in helping the child to prepare for adult life.

Special Educational Needs

Children with Special Educational Needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Children have a learning difficulty if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age or they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities that are provided for children of the same age.

All our children are assessed when they join our nursery, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available resources. In liaison with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), the child's Key person will offer interventions that are 'different from' or 'additional to' those provided as part of the nursery's usual working practices. The Key person will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. If the SENCo, Key person and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support, the SENCo will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs. The Early Years Development Journal is designed to be completed if practitioners are concerned about a child's rate of progress compared with their peers, or when some of their skills appear to be delayed. The development journal assesses a child's skills within the setting in collaboration with parents or carers.

We follow a graduated approach- Assess, plan, do, review
We use this to plan our next steps and set out an IEP.

We will record the strategies used to support the child within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP 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 IEP. If the IEP review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents prior to any support being actioned. 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 nursery. External support services will provide information for the child's new IEP. The new strategies within the IEP will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's nursery setting.

If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for statutory assessment will be made to the LEA. The SENCo will start the procedures. A range of written evidence about the child will support the request. The SENCO may also use evidence, reports and referrals to make an application for Local high needs funding, Early years Inclusion funding and Disability access funding

Some children at Carter's Sunflowers Nursery may have behaviour that challenges. Staff use a range of strategies for dealing with difficult behaviour, but

some children may require further support. In these cases, the SENCo, specialist teacher and the Key person alongside outside agencies and parents will create a support plan. This is called a zone of regulation document and will clearly outline triggers, as well as the strategies and support being offered to the child. At this point advice would also be sought from external support services. Zones of Regulation plans are reviewed termly and are implemented by all staff.

Early Support

Early Support supports parents and carers of children aged five and under. It brings together all the services and the support available from different agencies. This makes it easier for families to co-ordinate their child's health, education, and social care needs.

Some families will have a key worker who provides advice and support and can help negotiate the system. A key worker may be needed more at some times than at others. Families can decide what works best for them.

Early Support has developed a wide range of resources, training courses and workshops. They include:

- A Family Pack containing information booklets about services and the Family File for sharing information with service providers easily
- materials and resources to record your child's development
- information booklets on a range of disabilities and conditions
- A range of training courses developed for families and carers to help them use the resources and services offered by Early Support

Education Health and Care Plans (EHC)

Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs and disabilities 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, every 6 months if the child is under 5. 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

Early Help – Families First Assessment

Families First is Hertfordshire's programme of early help services for families. It is aimed at taking action to support a child, young person, or their family, as soon as a problem emerges. This can be at any stage in a child's life from pre-birth to adulthood and applies to any problem or need that the family cannot deal with on their own. www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/familiesfirst

At Carter's Sunflowers Nursery the SENCO

- manage the day-to-day operation of the policy;
 - co-ordinate the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs;
 - support and advise colleagues;
 - oversee the records of all children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities;
 - act as the link with parents;
 - act as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
 - monitor and evaluate the Special Educational Needs and disability provision.
 - manage a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with Special Educational Needs and disabilities;
 - contribute to the professional development of all staff.
-
- Local Offer

Local authorities (Hertfordshire) **must** publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEND or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be available', local authorities should include provision which they believe will be available.

The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible, and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving children with SEND and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEND, and service providers in its development and review.

Please see our attached local offer

Allocation of resources

The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the nursery, including the provision for children with additional needs. We may apply with parental permission for Local high needs funding, Early years inclusion funding and Disability access funding through Herts County Council.

Assessment

Early identification is vital. Nursery staff inform the parents at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.

The staff and the SENCO assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing nursery practices. This is an ongoing process.

The SENCO works closely with parents and Key person to plan an appropriate programme of support.

The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the Nursery. The Key person and the SENCO can break down the assessment into smaller steps to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.

Access to the curriculum

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Staff use a range of strategies to meet children's Special Educational Needs and Disability. Activities have clear learning objectives, we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

Individual Education Plans (IEPs), which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the nursery. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that children experience success.

We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible we do not withdraw children from the nursery situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside or away from the main learning environment.

Partnership with parents

At Carter's Sunflowers Nursery we work closely with parents in the support of those children with Special Educational Needs and Disability. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability.

We have termly meetings with parents to review the progress of their children against the targets set in the IEP and to set new targets for the next term. We inform the parents of any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability.

Pupil participation

In our nursery we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of the nursery and relates to children of all ages and all abilities. The work in the nursery recognises the importance of children developing socially as well as developing their educational skills.

Partnership with Area SEND Team

The Area IDO helps make the links between education, health, and social care to facilitate appropriate early provision for children with SEND and their transition to compulsory schooling.

Typically, the role of the Area IDO includes:

- providing advice and practical support to early years providers about approaches to identification, assessment, and intervention within the SEND Code of Practice
- providing day-to-day support for setting-based SENCOs in ensuring arrangements are in place to support children with SEND
- strengthening the links between the settings, parents, schools, social care, and health services
- developing and disseminating good practice
- supporting the development and delivery of training both for individual settings and on a wider basis
- developing links with existing INCO networks to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes, and informing parents of and working with local impartial information, advice, and support services, to promote effective work with parents of children in the early years

Monitoring and Evaluation

The SENCO monitors the movement of children within the Special Educational Needs Disability system in the nursery. The SENCO provides staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the nursery.

The specialist teacher draws up Individual Education Plans for children. The managers hold regular meetings to review the work of the nursery in this area.

The specialist teacher and SENCO monitors the progress of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability termly and discusses findings with all staff and parents.

If you would like to discuss your child's special needs and support, please talk to

Lucy Oliveira