



Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy

Policy statement

Little Elms are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to develop to their full potential alongside each other through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn from each other.

We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs and we work hard to ensure no children are discriminated against or put at a disadvantage as a consequence of their needs.

We believe that all children have a 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.

SEND Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice within Early Years details our statutory duty to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs. This policy has been developed to form compliance with the SEND Code of Practice and considers the advice and recommendations detailed within it.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO)

All Little Elms nurseries have a designated Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO). The individual SENCO for each nursery is shared through designated persons lists which are on display at each setting.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Work with colleagues to implement the Special Education Needs & Disability policy
- Providing guidance, training and support to colleagues on all matters relating to SEND
- Co-ordinating the Special Educational Needs provision within the nursery
- Offering support and guidance to parents
- Liaising with external agencies relevant to any child's needs
- Assisting colleagues in making accurate and meaningful observations and assessments on children
- Assisting colleagues in planning for children with Special Educational Needs & Disability
- Understanding procedures for SEND within the nursery local authority and seeking advice, guidance and support from the local authority as required
- Working with practitioners to identify children that require additional support
- Complete relevant referral forms such as Speech & Language alongside the key person
- Keeping up to date with local authority SENDCO training

Early Identification & Intervention

Where we believe a child may have additional needs that have previously been unacknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish if any additional action is required.

Where a child has additional needs, we feel it is paramount to find out as much as possible about those needs; any way that this may affect his/her early learning or care needs and any additional help he/she may need by:

- Liaising with the child's parents and, where appropriate, the child
- Liaising with any professional agencies

Little Elms Day Care

*Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy
Policies and Procedures are reviewed annually*

- Reading any reports that have been prepared
- Attending any review meetings with the local authority/professionals
- Observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly.

Procedures

Either upon admission, or after a period of a child's attendance at nursery there are any SEND concerns observed the following procedure will be carried out with the support of the SENDCO:

Stage 1 – Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Where a practitioner or SENDCO identifies a child with special educational needs, the key person will assess and record those needs through the online observation tool. As part of this process, the key person will consult with parents and seek any additional information from external professionals.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be completed (please see section below). The plan will be continually under review in consultation with the child and his/her parent(s).

Stage 2 – External Support Services

In consultation with the child's parents, the key person may decide external support services are required usually following a review of the IEP. The SENDCO will share our records for the child with those services so that they can advise on any IEP targets and appropriate supportive strategies.

The local authority may be able to advise of appropriate support services. Most services require a referral to be placed and this will be undertaken by the SENDCO with the support of the key person.

Stage 3 - Statutory Assessment

If the help given through an IEP / external support services is not sufficient to enable the child to progress satisfactorily, it may be necessary for the nursery, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved to request a statutory assessment by the local authority. This may lead to the child receiving an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

Where an EHCP is required to be undertaken, the SENDCO will work with the other agencies to determine the most appropriate professional to take the lead professional role in this application.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Little Elms use an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that practitioners use where a child has developmental delay and / or requires additional intervention to support them to reach their full potential.

IEP's are a tool which set out achievable targets children outside of our normal observation, planning and assessment process.

1. IEP's should be completed by the key person with the support of the SENDCO
2. Targets must be SMART and developed based on the individual needs of the child, considering their current level of development
3. Parents must be involved in the development of, and ongoing reviews of IEP's.

Setting Targets

Target setting will be individual to each child. Some children may have 2 or 3 targets which will be reviewed after a period of 6 weeks. Other children may only have 1 target which is reviewed after a period of 3 or 4 weeks.

This will be decided by the key person alongside the SENCO.

Targets should be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time based

Observations

Practitioner should record progress and observations related to the set targets each week. This will enable practitioners to fully determine if the target has been achieved after the review period.

Review

After the review period, the targets should be assessed and practitioners will need to establish whether:

1. The target has been achieved;
2. Significant progress has been made; or
3. Little to no progress has been made.

Next Steps

After the review has been completed, practitioners will need to establish to most appropriate next steps. Some examples of appropriate next steps following a review depending on the individual circumstances are detailed below:

1. IEP no longer required – continue with standard observation, planning and assessment cycle
2. IEP to continue – set new targets
3. IEP to continue – continue with existing targets but amend support provided by practitioners to facilitate achievement of targets
4. Source additional support / referral to the local authority (where little / no progress has been made)

Early Help & Local Authority Intervention

Little Elms welcomes and actively seeks out support from local authorities in the assessment and access to support services which are designed to give children the best possible outcomes.

Where internal assessments / support has been introduced and progress is not demonstrating a closing of the development gaps for an individual child, Little Elms SENCO will go through local authority procedures to access Early Help.

Little Elms works across various local authorities, and each one has a different process to follow to access Early Help, and other support functions for children. Information for each local authority can be accessed via the local authority website.

Early Help Assessment

The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. The lead professional

role could be undertaken by a General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions about who should be the lead professional should be taken on a case by case basis and should be informed by the child and their family.

For an early help assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them;
- A teacher, GP, health visitor, early years' worker or other professional should be able to discuss concerns they may have about a child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local authority children's social care should set out the process for how this will happen; and
- If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary.

Associated Documents:

- *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*
- *SEND Code of Practice*
- *Child Care Plan Policy*