

Peter Pan Playgroup

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Our Playgroup aims to have regard to The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) and to provide an inclusive policy, with appropriate learning opportunities for all children.

The term 'SEN support' defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for. Children's SEND generally falls within the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
 - cognition and learning
 - social, emotional and mental health
 - sensory and/or physical needs
- Our system of observation and record keeping, which operates in partnership with parents, enables us to monitor children's needs and progress individually.
 - Children's progress and needs will be monitored carefully and will be shared with parents, taking account of information from parents, and appropriate steps taken.
 - We work in liaison with staff outside the Playgroup, including therapists, health visitors, psychologists, social workers, paediatricians and Portage workers, to meet children's specific needs.
 - Children with special educational needs, like all other children, are admitted to the Playgroup after consultation between parents, the Manager/Supervisor, SENCO, keyworker and other agency professionals as appropriate. We make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of children with SEN.
 - If a child requires specific medical interventions during their time in the Playgroup, a health care plan form will be completed with the child's parents and integrated into the general plans to ensure the child's medical needs are known and safely met.
 - If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met in the Playgroup without the support of a one-to-one worker, funding will be sought to employ one.
 - If a child has not made progress through ongoing support and strategies, then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
 - Our staff attend, whenever possible, in-service training on special educational needs, as appropriate, with a number of professional providers.

Identification, Assessment and Support for Children With SEND

- Children identified as having difficulty with one or more area of development will be given support by applying some simple strategies and resources. For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop.
- Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern, such as at the progress check at age two, we will consider all the information about the child's learning and development from observation and assessment plus observations from parents then plan accordingly.
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, then the keyworker will raise a concern with our SENCO/Manager and the child's parents.
- If external specialist advice has been sought, this is used to help determine whether or not a child has a special educational need (SEN).
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

- Parental consent must be given before the child can be referred for 'early intervention' such as speech and language or to the local authority's SEND Under 5 (or equivalent) whose process seeks to establish proactive, practical support for families at an early stage, as well as identifying the support needed throughout the child's early years and into school.
- An action plan is drawn up which is shared with relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach.
- The action plan highlights areas in which a child is progressing well; areas in which some additional support might be needed, and any areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate a special educational need or disability). It should state the targeted support to help achieve outcomes for the child which is reviewed regularly.
- The plan should also focus on the child's needs, views, true characteristics, preferences, and aspirations. It should also involve the parents with a clear set of targets and their expectations for the outcomes for their child.
- External agencies already involved at this stage, will help decide on what appropriate interventions are needed to help meet outcomes for the child.
- The action plan should provide an accessible summary of the child's needs, which can be used if further assessment is required including a statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) Assessment, and development of an EHC Plan.
- If the child's needs cannot be met from within Playgroup's core funding, then with evidence collated we will apply for top up/enhanced funding from the local authority's inclusion fund to provide one-to-one support. If a new or existing child is disabled, then Playgroup will check if the family is in receipt or have applied for Disability Living Allowance. If so, we will be able to apply to the local authority for the local Disability Access Fund.

Statutory Education, Health and Care (EHC) Assessment and Plan

- If a child has not made progress, then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- The local authority will conduct an EHC needs assessment if they consider that the child's needs cannot be met within the resources normally available to the early years setting. They should fully involve the parent and must seek advice from the setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC assessment and preparing an EHC plan.
- When a child's needs appear to be sufficiently complex, or the evidence suggest specialist intervention then the local authority is likely to conclude that an EHC plan is necessary.
- The setting will collate information about the child's SEND including:
 - documentation on the child's progress in the setting
 - interventions and support provided to date
 - evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations
 - parental views and wishes (and where appropriate those of the child)
- The information will then be submitted to the local authority to allow them to accurately assess the child in the context of the support already given.
- The assessment process can take a total of 20 weeks from the initial request to the final decision.
- The local authority must inform the child's parents of their decision within six weeks of receiving a request for an assessment whether to conduct one or not, and give its reasons for their decision.
- If the local authority decides to conduct an assessment, it must ensure the child's parents are fully included right from the beginning and are invited to contribute their views.
- If the local authority subsequently decides not to conduct an assessment it must then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.
- If the local authority decides that a statutory EHC plan is not necessary, it must notify the parents and inform the setting, within 16 weeks of the initial request, giving the reasons for the decision, informing the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.

- If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult collaboratively with the parents in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child's preferences are taken into account and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date.
- EHC plans are evidenced based and focus on short term outcomes and long-term aspirations for the child including family and community support. Parents have the right to request a particular provision for their child to be named within their EHC plan.
- Local authorities review an EHC plan for a child under age five at least every three to six months. The child's parents must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

Further Guidance

- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE 2015)
- Ready, Steady, SENCO (Early Years Alliance Publication)