



**Maidenbower
Pre-School
Playgroup**

Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) 2014 POLICY

Lead Person Responsible: Joanne Brackston

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Aims of the Pre School

Everyone at Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup is committed to providing the conditions and opportunities to enable any child with SEN to be included fully in all aspects of pre-school life. The SEN policy at Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup supports our ethos:

“Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup aims to offer children from two years and six months to five years of age, the opportunity of learning through play activities in a caring, happy and safe environment”.

We aim for children to become confident with a growing ability to communicate their own views and be ready for transitions to school. We follow Safeguarding & Welfare requirements in the EYFS. We have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities, a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN and we recognise the benefits of early identification. The support we offer is family centred, considering the individual family’s needs and the best way to support them.

Legislation & Guidance

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)
- The Children Act 1989
- Equality Act 2010
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)
- The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The following sections of the Children and Families Act (2014)
- Cooperating generally: governing body functions: Section 29
- Children and young people with SEN but no EHC plan: Section 29
- Children with SEN in maintained nurseries: Section 35
- Using best endeavours to secure special educational provision: Section 63
- SEN Co-ordinators: Section 64
- Informing parents and young people: Section 68
- SEN information report: Section 69
- Duty to support pupils with medical conditions: Section 100

Definition of Special Educational Needs

A learning difficulty means that the child either has:

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- A disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16-institutions.

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post 16 institutions or by early years providers. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition above when they reach compulsory school age, or would do so if special educational provision were not made available to them. Special educational provision should be matched to the child's identified SEN. These needs generally fall under one or more of the following broad areas of SEN and disabilities:-

Communicating and interacting
Cognition and learning
Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
Sensory and/or physical needs.

Some children and young people may have SEN that covers more than one of these areas. Throughout this policy the term 'parent' includes all those with parental responsibility, including parents and those who care for the child. This SEN policy details how Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any child who has special educational needs. We will endeavour to ensure that all staff are able to identify and provide for those children with Special Educational Needs.

We will always have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when carrying out our duties towards all children with special educational needs and ensure that we are working closely with families to seek their involvement in the decision-making process, and to help improve outcomes.

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. We recognise that parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. Parents will be provided with information about the SEN provision and have regular updates on their child's progress. If they require practical resources and training, we would contact Early Support for advice and support. We shall ensure that any information provided to parents is accessible, for instance a range of written and electronic easy to read

formats or be given verbally. All information collated on the child whilst at Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup will be confidential (unless it raises a safeguarding concern) and only shared if parental consent has been sought and agreed.

Local Authorities must provide information, advice and support for parents covering Special Educational Needs, Disability, Health and Social Care and services such as Parent Partnership Services, which provide advice and support for parents. Parent Carer Forums – Parents can be involved in shaping local services by joining their local Parent Carer Forum. These forums are made up by a group of parents and carers of disabled children who work with local authorities, education, health and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children and families. These and other services of support will be detailed within our Local Offer.

Seeking the views of children

Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup will seek and take into account the views of children. They will be encouraged to participate in all decision making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, together with their reviews. This is particularly relevant to children with more complex needs, who may not be included due to the assumptions being made about their capabilities. The Code supports the rights of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to contribute towards making decisions and exercising choices wherever possible, right from the start of their education. Wherever appropriate each child should have a clear and accurate understanding of what is being expected and what the outcome will be. Children with special educational needs often have a unique knowledge of their own needs, and their views about what sort of help they would like to help them make the most of their education will be ascertained.

Identification, Assessment and Provision

Initial Assessment

This is compiled from information gathered about the child during early conversations with the child's parents and from observations made on the child during the settling in process. This information gives a base line profile of the child's personal characteristics and learning. The start of capturing and assessing this learning and development in our setting is initiated through establishing children's starting points and continuous observations and assessment of children, as they go about their day to day activities within the provision. To ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe, we have arrangements in place for monitoring children's progress and development. This includes arrangements for applying a clear approach to identifying and responding to children's SEN as early as possible to improve long-term outcomes for children.

Plotting progress

Information gathered is kept in a child's learning journal. These demonstrate the progress the child is making through evidence such as photographs, information from home, examples of the child's work and reflections on the child's learning. This collection of documents helps a child's key person to track the child's development and plan for their learning to be extended. Parents, and where possible and relevant, children, should be invited to contribute to the journal as this is an effective way of engaging parents in their children's learning. The first summative assessment is carried out between the ages of two and three years old. This progress check identifies and summarises a child's individual development in the prime areas of learning and development and provides parents with a snap shot of where their child is in their learning development. Another summative assessment of a child's learning and development is the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile this is carried out at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage and provides a conclusion to the formative assessment. This assessment is added to the child's Early Years Foundation Stage profile and provides a well-rounded snapshot of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. It shows whether a child is meeting or exceeding expected levels of development, or is not yet reaching expected levels (emerging) when taken together, these summaries show a child's chronological progress towards each of the Early Learning Goals.

Identifying concerns

Settling into a new environment such as an early year's provision can be an emotional and unsettling transition for many children. It also tends to coincide at a time of a child's life when they are learning and developing crucial new skills. Therefore, it is not unusual to find that some young children in early year's provision appear to struggle developmentally as they juggle new experiences and challenges. For the majority of children, these delays and difficulties are minor and transient. Most young children quickly catch up with their peers once they become more confident. However, sometimes children may continue to struggle longer than would normally be expected, and may require a little more support if they appear to struggle with one or more of the prime and specific areas of learning and development. To support this process we would use the Graduated Approach.

A child's key person should know enough about a child's individual style of learning to be able to apply adjustments to break down learning into smaller more manageable steps, helping the child move onto the next stage. Usually this type of support is enough to help most children. Occasionally a delay may be an early warning sign that the child has more profound learning needs and will require a more focused support approach. An accurate assessment will help determine the cause of a

delay or difficulty and rule out any other influencing factors which may not be attributed to SEN, such as English as an additional language (EAL) or a safeguarding issue.

Keeping records

An accurate and up to date record of the child's learning and development within the graduated approach must be maintained and shared with the child's parents, and with parental approval used for further assessment.

Children with significant needs

'The code' (5.9) states that "where assessment indicates that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children receive it as quickly as possible". If a child has needs that are significantly 'additional to' or 'different from' other children of their age, they will automatically be placed on the graduated approach of Special Educational Needs support. Where necessary, relevant external agency referrals are made and the local authority notified. Where available, local Area Special Educational Needs Coordinators (Targeting Setting Support) should liaise regularly with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator to help address the child's needs and determine if the child requires long term support, including an Educational Health Care Assessment and Plan (EHC).

Other concerns

For instance, identifying and assessing young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Practitioners will look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development to establish whether any identified delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from an underlying SEN or disability. As an early years provider we will take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support they require. If a child has medical needs which require specific support and intervention, then an individual healthcare plan will be prepared for the child. An individual healthcare plan will clearly document the child's needs and how these will be met and by whom.

Differentiation

It is recommended that on-going formative assessment forms part of a continuous process for assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing children's progress. In our setting we would complete a monitoring tool and do several observations. If during this process a child is identified as having difficulty with one or more of the areas of learning and development, their key person should first try implementing some simple strategies. For most children some simple differentiated approaches (strategies) will be enough to build confidence and help the child to develop. A differentiated approach involves finding other ways of supporting a child; either by introducing an easier activity, breaking the

activity into smaller more achievable steps, trying a different activity, or using resources to help the child.

Applying a graduated approach

If, despite differentiation, a child has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers, or a disability that prevents or hinders a child from making use of the facilities and requires special educational provision, suitable special educational provision should be made through a graduated approach. The new graduated approach is characterised by a continuous cycle of 'assess, plan, do and review', applied in increasing details and frequency to ensure the child progresses. The child's key person and Special Educational Needs Coordinator will utilise the information gathered to decide if the child has a special educational need. If the decision is that the child does have a special educational need and that parents are not already aware of this, then the information will be shared with them as soon as possible. Once parents have been informed, from this point onwards they will be fully engaged in the process contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

Assess, Plan, Do and Review

Assess

During the course of their everyday practice, a key person will observe individual children's progress; these observations provide valuable information that inform assessment of children's needs and determine what progress has been made. Children's progress should be regularly reviewed and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator informed of any changes or concerns with individual children.

Plan

If it is decided that a child requires additional Special Educational Needs support then parents must be notified and have their views and wishes taken into account when planning interventions through a Special Educational Needs action plan. An action plan will include agreed targets, desirable outcomes, relevant interventions and support and how and when the process will be monitored and reviewed. The type of support and interventions applied must be based on reliable evidence of effectiveness and be provided by staff with appropriate skill, knowledge and training. Interventions should be shared with all those that work with that child.

Do

The key person, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and other key staff working with the child should implement the interventions within the provision. The parents should also be given guidance on how to implement the same or similar intervention, if they wish to implement them at home.

Review

Pre-planned reviews should take place regularly. This will help monitor and assess the effectiveness of the support applied and the impact of the child's progress. The key person and the SENCO should work with the parents, and involved agencies, to revise the cycle of support and intervention in light of the review, make appropriate adjustments and set fresh outcomes. The graduated approach should be led and co-ordinated by the SENCO, who will in turn support other practitioners to implement the approach using suitable resources, such as materials from the EYFS and Early Support.

Planning intervention

The first step in this process is to ensure that everyone involved with the child has an opportunity to share views; especially parents who should be invited to share their thoughts, concerns and their own perceptions of their child's difficulties. The key person or SENCO will then formulate the next steps. The first option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If however the child's needs are more complex, then the decision may be to prepare an SEN action plan and apply detailed evidence based interventions immediately. If relevant, external referrals should also be made at this point. An SEN action plan forms part of the graduated approach and ensures that children identified as having, or suspected of having, SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.

Drawing up an action plan

To create an action plan, a planning meeting should be arranged with the parents, key person and SENCO as well as external agencies if they are already involved at this stage, to help decide on what appropriate interventions are needed to achieve the best outcomes for the child. The SENCO should take the lead in coordinating further actions, including finalisation of the action plan and short-term targets. Where there are significant emerging concerns, targeted action plans should be formulated that relate to a clear set of expected outcomes and targets. The summary in the plan must highlight areas in which a child is progressing well, areas in which some additional support may be needed and areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay or difficulty. The plan must also describe the activities and strategies the provision intends to adapt to address any issues or concerns. The plan should focus on the needs of the child, the true characteristics, preferences and aspirations of the child and the involvement of the parents, with a clear set of targets and expected outcomes for the child. Effective planning at this stage should help parents, children and young people express their needs, wishes and goals and should:-

- Focus on the child as an individual rather than the Special Educational Needs label.
- Be easy for children and their parents to understand, using clear ordinary language and image rather than professional jargon.
- Highlight the child's strengths and capabilities.
- Enable the child and those who know them best to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in the future.
- Tailor support to the needs of the individual child.
- Organise assessments to minimise demands on families.
- Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach.

If a child is struggling with any aspect of their learning and development, their key person should gather and analyse observational and assessment evidence to accurately determine the nature of the child's delay or difficulty. When specialist advice has been sought externally, this should be used to help determine whether or not a child has SEN.

Agreeing outcomes for children

One of the themes running through the new legislation is the need to improve outcomes for children. An outcome can be defined as a benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention. An outcome is something that those involved have control and influence over and while it does not always have to be formal or accredited, it should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound (SMART). To achieve such outcomes, there should first be a joint understanding and agreement as to what the outcomes are to be. Outcomes are not a description of what is being provided, for example supporting a child to post shapes into a posting box is not an outcome, but may be an activity to help the child achieve and form part of a set of targets. When deciding outcomes for a child, the key person and parents are integral to the sharing of information that the child may be unable to provide. It will therefore be up to the key person and parents to interpret what is best for the child. This would include sharing knowledge of the child's interest, what is important to the child and what they would like to achieve. The people closest to the child will know the child best and always have their best interests at the core of their actions.

Child-centred plans

The code promotes the use of child-centred approach when planning actions, with outcomes underpinning and informing the detail of these plans, and setting out what needs to be achieved before the next review meeting to ensure the child has progressed sufficiently. If a child is unable

to communicate their preferences then it is essential to use a communication method that they can use, such as Makaton and PECS. If a child is unable to use one of these systems then a familiar and trusted adult, such as a parent or the child's key person, should be invited to interpret the child's wishes or preferences from their observed behaviour. In light of the reforms and to help achieve a child-centred plan, providers should review that SEN documentation and adjust it as necessary to support more child-centred outcomes. A revised plan could include a one page profile, detailing an accurate account of the child's strengths, interests, preferences, barriers to learning and the parent's views and wishes for the child. The rest of the plan could then detail the support already available, such as differentiation of the curriculum, adaptations, resources and external agency support and targets and outcomes as agreed with the parents. Interventions should be:-

- based on the child's preferences and incorporate parental wishes
- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound (SMART)
- aspiration and evidence based
- easily implemented at home as well as in the provision.

The plan should show what support is required to help achieve outcomes for the child and details the frequency of these interventions, who will apply them and with what resources. A review date (at least termly) should be agreed with the parents, so that the child's progress can be reviewed against expected outcomes and next steps agreed. Once prepared, a copy of the plan can be stored in the child's files or learning journal so that any other member of staff or an inspector looking at the file will see how the child is progressing and what interventions have been or are being applied. If a child requires specific medical interventions during their time in the provision, an individual healthcare plan should also be drawn up and integrated into the general plans, to ensure the child's medical needs are known and safely met. 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 Educational Health Care assessment and development of an Educational Health Care plan. If the parents want to use the plan at home, they should be supported to do so. This will help ensure continuity and genuine involvement of the family in all aspects of the implementation of the plan.

Implementation and review of the action plan

The action plan should be shared with all those who work with the child, so that other staff know what is planned for and are able to help implement interventions. During implementation, the key person and other practitioners should carry out frequent observations to help monitor progress and to determine which actions are working and need to be continued, or if adjustments are needed. Planned interventions for the

child should be factored into daily routines as much as possible and considered within general activities. For example, the introduction of a visual timetable could be factored into a whole group activity, so that it benefits all children and not just one child. This wider emphasis ensures that suitable interventions and adjustments can be planned for and relevant resources prepared in advance and wherever possible used by everyone. By factoring individual interventions into wider planning, individual children will be included equally and more effectively. If they wish to do so, parents should be supported by their child's key person to carry out the same or similar interventions at home and be advised of what type of resources may be needed, the preferred location and the best time to carry out the activities. Planned review meetings should be regularly undertaken together with parents, to monitor the overall effectiveness and quality of the intervention and the impact on the child's progress, both at home and in the provision. Review meetings should be led and managed by the SENCO every six weeks (or more frequently if required). A record of the review meeting should be kept, and details of who was present at the meeting, the effectiveness of the interventions, the child's progress in the provision and at home and a record of next steps as agreed between all parties should be recorded. The review should determine if the child should be:-

- placed back within the usual monitoring system because they have made progress
- given continued support through revised interventions because they have made little or no progress over a sustained period of time
- referred for external support and/or statutory assessment.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff at Maidenbower Pre-School Playgroup are aware of the new Special Educational Needs & Disability code of Practice (2014) and this is incorporated into all aspects of our provision and all staff are familiar with the Special Educational Needs & Disability framework and subsequent responsibilities. Relevant policy and procedures are accurate and up-to-date.

Joanne Baynes – Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) – is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate system is in place to meet the child's needs, whilst still being on hand to offer advice and support to parents when required. Also the SENCO must:-

- Have a good understanding of child development and some knowledge and experience of working with children with learning delays and difficulties.

- Be familiar with relevant government legislation and policy on equality and SEN and disabilities and know what duties apply to early years providers.
- Recognise what good practice 'looks like' and are able to confidently promote inclusive practice.
- Be able to identify Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, and apply a graduated approach to identify and meet children's needs.
- Work in partnership with the staff team to ensure that appropriate approaches and material from the EYFS and Early Support are known and used.
- Ensure that relevant external referrals are made.
- Attend relevant training to keep skills and knowledge up to date.
- Work with the manager to identify staff training needs.
- Work with the staff team to ensure that each child has an effective means of communication
- Be familiar with local practices for safeguarding children and instigating Early Help Assessments.
- Be familiar with local services and be able to signpost parents for additional support.
- Be able to Liaise with external agency representatives such as Area SENCO's, Speech and language therapists and local early intervention teams and refer children who are not progressing to the attention of the local authority

Area Special Educational Needs Coordinator

Where available, the Area Special Educational Needs Coordinator will help to provide links between education, health and social care, and early years providers.

Key Person

Our key-person system enables us to ensure a planned curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual child. All staff are aware of the children who have SEN needs and they follow all strategies from the play plans to support the children. The role of the key person is vital to the early identification and support of children with SEN and disabilities and their families. By building a secure and caring relationship with individual key children and their parents, the key person will:-

- Become knowledgeable of the individual characteristics of their key children.

- Learn about children's individual learning styles and stage of development.
- Become familiar with children's preferences and choice.
- Be able to identify any key issues with a child's learning, development and well-being.
- Be able to discuss key concerns with the parents and take their views into account.
- Are able to offer suitable support and advice to parents and other key staff.
- Liaise and plan appropriate action with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator and key staff, to help plan suitable interventions with other staff, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and parents.
- Be able to help implement support in the provision and offer advice and support to parents with regard to activities at home.

Should an additional adult provide support to one of their key children, the key person will still play a key role and have overall responsibility for the child's learning and progress.

Behaviour support Teams

Behaviour support Teams work to support children and young people with emotional and social difficulties. They provide early intervention and preventative work to help support providers in meeting the needs of those with complex needs. These teams may be made up of a variety of professionals, including clinical psychologists, speech and language therapist and other medical professionals.

Transitions

SEN support includes planning for transitions between settings and to school.