The Ambleside Nurseries



Special Educational Needs Policy

'*Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for Special Needs Provisions to be made for them'*

SEN code of Practice 1:3

The Ambleside's Aims

- To welcome children with special educational needs as part of our community and to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to engage in the curriculum.
- To provide a curriculum which celebrates individual differences and meets the individual learning needs of all the children, taking account of different interests and learning styles.
- To develop practices and procedures which aim to ensure that all children's special educational needs are identified and assessed and the curriculum planned to meet their needs. If additional specialist advice and support would benefit a child, the appropriate professionals from agencies external to the setting will be contacted.
- To work in true partnership with parents/carers, valuing their views and contributions and keeping them fully involved in their child's education.
- To support all families using the nurseries.
- To involve the child in decision-making about their special educational provision.
- To actively support the development of multi-disciplinary practice, led by the needs of individual children.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

There is a named Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (known as SENCO) who is responsible for co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for children with special educational needs. That person must be trained and have the appropriate qualification for the role of SENCO.

Arrangements for Co-ordinating Special Educational Needs Provisions

The SENCO, Head Teacher, teaching and non-teaching staff are all involved in:-

- Establishing an individual tracking record for children with SEN.
- Liaising about children's SEN, decision making about extra support or additional specialist resources for children with SEN.
- Agreeing strategies and plans for meeting children's SEN.
- Meeting and communicating with parents of children with SEN.
- Liaison with outside agencies.
- Supporting staff and developing their expertise in working with children with speech, language and communication difficulties.

This work is overseen and co-ordinated by the Head Teacher/SENCO.

Admissions

Children with identified special educational needs, at any level, are admitted to the nurseries at the time most appropriate for them. The decision is made in consultation with parents and other relevant professionals.

Special Resources

Meadows is the Authority's designated resource for the hearing-impaired.

- Members of staff have British Sign Language qualifications.
- A teacher of the deaf visits the children at the nurseries and offers staff support and advice.
- Staff have knowledge of Makaton.
- Areas of the nursery for 3-5 year olds are acoustically treated to facilitate listening.

What if I am concerned about my child's speech or communication?

Keyworkers continually monitor children's speech and communication and are regularly in contact with parents.

If parents or keyworkers have concerns about a child's speech and communication they will encourage and support parents to email the speech and language team for further advice.
Parents can look out for information about speech, language and communication topics that the SENCO puts in the reception area.

Facilities

The centre is accessible to wheelchair users.

Nappy changing facilities are available for any child that needs them.

Equipment for physical development has been specifically selected so that disabled children and those children with a cochlear implant can use it. Areas of the building have been acoustically treated to benefit listening-impaired children.

The learning environment has equipment and toys that are easily accessible to all children. Different curriculum areas and equipment are clearly labelled in many different ways, including Makaton signs.

Facilities for disabled children include a toilet and shower accessible to wheelchair users, and an electronically controlled table to be used for changing nappies etc. Laundry facilities are available.

Pictures and photographs are used to illustrate the daily routine, which is consistent.

Children plan their work time using pictures and photographs to help them.

Financial and other resource allocation

A teacher of the deaf and a specialist speech and language therapist visit the nurseries to help support children with hearing impairments. They offer advice to the Staff to enable them to deliver this support.

Alterations to the building and specialist equipment that aid learning for hearing impaired and/or disabled children are provided, funding would be sought as required.

Nurseries are able to apply for Early Years Inclusion Subsidy funding to help towards providing additional support for children who are require extra adult support during their sessions.

Identification of and planning for children with Special Educational Needs

Parents are encouraged to share information about their child's needs from the very first point of contact, and continuously throughout their child's time at the nurseries.

The nursery have very close working relationships with other professionals involved with children prior to entry to the nurseries. E.g. health visitors, speech and language therapists and the Early Years Special Needs Service.

Staff make careful observations and assessments of children's learning on a daily basis, and share any concerns with the SENCO.

Wokingham Local Authority has produced guidance about indicators of special educational need in the early years and these are used to identify children who may require additional support.

Individual Early Years Educational Plans (EYIP) are drawn up, in partnership with parents, for children if progress in learning suggests the need for smaller steps and specific support.

Additional support for families with children who may have Special Educational Needs is provided by our staff in conjunction with other professionals.

Curriculum Access

The curriculum is planned to meet the whole range of children's individual needs. This is done by allowing time for children to choose their own activities and time for adults to lead planned activities. Children are encouraged to participate in these activities at their own level.

During child initiated activities, children take increasing responsibility for planning, undertaking & evaluating their own learning. Adults support and develop their thinking using the child's chosen learning style and interests.

'Next steps" are identified for all children on an individual basis following close observations and interaction with children in their self chosen activities. For some children an EYIP breaks those 'next steps' into much smaller steps.

Inclusion

The Ambleside Centre celebrates the unique quality that each family displays and aims to meet the needs of all children in an inclusive environment.

Key workers engage with children and their families to determine the needs of each child. A package of support to help develop skills and support learning is put in place. This could include intervention groups to support a particular area of learning, 1-1 support to access the environment and/or interact with peers or specific activities and experiences to challenge children at their level.

SEN Complaints

These will be dealt with using the general complaints procedure of the Governing body.

Staff training for SEN

The nurseries are committed to providing in-service training in the area of SEN, and ensuring that staff have opportunities to attend SEN training outside of the setting.

Parent Partnership

For most children, attending the Nurseries marks an important early step towards becoming independent. It is often a first step for parents too, who are now entrusting adult professionals with some responsibility for their child, outside of the home. It is vital that a real working partnership exists between parents and staff and that this partnership is maintained.

Nursery staff have expertise about children's learning and parents are experts about their child. Every opportunity is used to encourage parents to share their knowledge. Their help is enlisted for staff to 'tune in' to the interests and needs of their child.

Visits to the nurseries by parents are encouraged at registration, before entry and throughout the child's time at the nurseries.

Staff share and request information from parents during home visits or meet the key worker sessions before the child starts and, informally, at the beginning & end of every session. Any concern is shared at the earliest stage.

Children's online records, which include staff observations and assessments of the child, are available for parents at any time and every encouragement is given to parents to contribute to them, with support for children to continue their learning at home.
The decision to write an Individual Education Plan for a child, or to involve outside agencies, or to start specific support strategies is always made with parents.

The role of the Governing Body

The governors are responsible for:

Ensuring that a high standard of provision is made for SEN children and that these children are fully involved in the nursery activities.

Monitoring that the SEN policy is implemented and that the SEN code of practice is followed.

Links with other Establishments

Close links are maintained with local pre-school groups that children may have attended before starting at The Ambleside Centre at an individual level and through cluster groups. These same links exist with receiving primary schools, which are maintained by regular staff visits. Transition arrangements for children with SEN are tailored to meet individual needs.