



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Policy

Statement of Intent

At Little Explorers Day Nursery and Preschool, we are committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming, and nurturing environment where every child is valued, respected, and supported to reach their full potential.

We believe all children are unique and entitled to high quality early education and care regardless of:

- ability
- disability
- special educational need
- medical need
- neurodiversity
- communication need
- culture
- ethnicity
- religion or belief
- gender
- home language
- family background
- social or economic circumstances.

We are committed to ensuring that all children can access a broad, balanced, ambitious, and inclusive curriculum in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

We recognise the importance of early identification and intervention and work closely with parents, carers, professionals, and external agencies to ensure children receive the support they need as early as possible.

Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy is implemented in accordance with:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Human Rights Act 1998
- EYFS Statutory Framework 2025
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Somerset Local Offer guidance

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Admissions Policy
- EAL Policy
- Accessibility arrangements
- Curriculum documentation.

Definition of SEND

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice, a child is considered to have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) if they have:

- a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, and/or
- a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age.

SEND may relate to:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs.

Inclusive Practice

We are committed to inclusive practice throughout the nursery.

We will:

- value every child as an individual
- maintain high expectations for all children
- adapt teaching, environments, and experiences to meet individual needs
- ensure children with SEND are fully included in nursery life
- make reasonable adjustments in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- promote positive attitudes towards diversity and difference
- provide inclusive resources, books, displays, and experiences
- support children's independence, confidence, and self-esteem
- ensure children are treated with dignity and respect at all times.

Children will never be excluded from activities due to disability or additional needs unless there is a legitimate safety reason that cannot reasonably be reduced.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We recognise that speaking English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not a Special Educational Need.

Children learning English as an additional language will be supported through inclusive and language-rich practice while recognising and valuing their home language, culture, and identity.

We will:

- gather information about children's home language(s) and communication styles
- work closely with families to understand children's linguistic and cultural backgrounds
- support continued development of the child's first language
- use visual supports, gestures, routines, songs, stories, and repetition to aid communication
- provide bilingual books, visual resources, labels, and language-rich experiences where possible
- ensure staff model clear language and communication
- monitor children's language acquisition carefully over time
- distinguish between language acquisition needs and potential SEND
- seek specialist advice where there are concerns regarding speech, language, communication, or development across all languages spoken.

Our EAL Lead is Megan Murphy.

Children learning EAL will not be regarded as having learning difficulties solely because English is not their home language.

The Role of the SENCO

Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is:
Claire Aquilina

The SENCO will:

- oversee the day-to-day operation of SEND provision
- support staff in identifying and meeting children's needs
- coordinate the graduated approach
- liaise with parents and carers
- work with external agencies and professionals
- monitor progress and interventions
- support staff training and professional development
- ensure records are accurate and confidential
- support inclusive practice across the nursery
- assist with transitions and EHCP processes
- maintain awareness of current legislation and best practice.

Early Identification and Assessment

We recognise the importance of early identification and intervention.

Children's progress and development are monitored through:

- observations
- assessments
- daily interactions
- discussions with parents
- developmental monitoring
- progress checks at age two
- ongoing EYFS assessment.

Concerns may be identified by:

- parents or carers
- key persons
- SENCO
- health professionals
- other professionals involved with the child.

Where concerns arise, we will:

- discuss concerns sensitively with parents
- gather observations and evidence
- consider the child's strengths as well as areas of need
- implement appropriate strategies and support
- seek advice from external professionals where appropriate.

Graduated Approach: Assess – Plan – Do – Review

We follow the graduated approach outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

Assess

We assess the child's strengths, needs, progress, interests, communication, and learning environment.

Plan

Support strategies and outcomes are agreed with parents and, where appropriate, the child.

Plans may include:

- targeted interventions
- communication strategies
- environmental adaptations
- behaviour support
- sensory support
- adult support strategies
- next steps.

Do

The agreed support is implemented by practitioners with guidance from the SENCO and professionals where required.

Review

Support plans are reviewed regularly with parents, usually every 6–8 weeks, to evaluate effectiveness and identify next steps.

The child's voice and views will be included wherever developmentally appropriate.

Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as children's first and most important educators.

We will:

- work in partnership with families
- share information openly and honestly
- involve parents in decision-making
- provide regular updates and reviews
- respect family knowledge, culture, and experiences
- support parents in accessing services and advice
- signpost families to the Local Offer and support agencies.

Information can be provided in alternative formats or languages where reasonably practicable.

External Agencies and Early Help

Where appropriate, we may work with:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Health Visitors
- Paediatricians
- Occupational Therapy
- Portage
- Educational Psychology
- Inclusion services
- Early Years Advisory Teams
- Social Care
- Family support services.

With parental consent, referrals may be made to access specialist support.

Where children or families require coordinated multi-agency support, we may support Early Help processes.

Safeguarding concerns will always be acted upon in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Where a child requires support beyond ordinarily available provision, we may support families in requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.

The nursery will contribute evidence including:

- assessments
- observations
- support plans
- professional reports
- review information
- records of interventions and progress.

Where an EHCP is issued, we will work collaboratively with families and professionals to implement and review the provision.

Transitions

We recognise that transitions can be particularly important for children with SEND and/or EAL.

We will support transitions by:

- sharing information appropriately with consent
- arranging transition visits where possible
- preparing visual supports/social stories where appropriate
- liaising with schools and professionals
- supporting children emotionally throughout changes.

Training and Professional Development

We are committed to ongoing staff training and development.

Staff receive training and supervision relating to:

- SEND awareness
- inclusive practice
- communication and interaction
- neurodiversity
- speech and language development
- behaviour support
- safeguarding
- EAL support strategies
- medical needs where relevant.

Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

We will make reasonable adjustments wherever possible to:

- the physical environment

- resources
- routines
- communication methods
- activities
- policies and procedures.

We aim to ensure all children and families can access our provision fairly and safely.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information regarding children’s SEND, medical needs, or support arrangements will be:

- treated confidentially
- stored securely
- shared only on a need-to-know basis
- processed in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

Parental consent will normally be sought before sharing information unless safeguarding concerns require otherwise.

Complaints

We aim to resolve concerns quickly, fairly, and collaboratively.

Parents who are unhappy with any aspect of SEND provision should initially speak with:

- the child’s key person
- the SENCO
- the Nursery Manager.

Formal complaints will be managed in accordance with the nursery Complaints Policy.

Accessible formats and support will be provided where needed.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following:

- legislative changes
- updated guidance
- local authority updates
- operational changes
- identified best practice developments.

This policy was adopted on	This policy was reviewed on:
24/01/2022	18/05/2026