

Guideline for Completion

The purpose of the local offer is to improve choice for families by providing information about services available for young children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All Early Years settings in Essex are expected to identify and support children with special educational needs to make the best possible progress. Early Years settings are supported to be as inclusive as possible by the LA so that the needs of young children with SEND are met.

1. How our setting knows if young children need extra help and what our parents/carers should do if they think their child may have SEND.

How do you identify children with special educational needs? How are parents/carers able to raise concerns?

Our qualified and experienced staff carry out regular observations, tracking and record keeping; this enables us to monitor and evaluate individual children's progress and quickly recognise and respond where there may be any lack of progression. We recognise that all children learn at a different pace and ensure that regular observations, particularly in areas that may be of concern, are carried out before any further action is taken.

Parents are encouraged to bring to our attention any concerns they may have about their child's development. St Mary's playschool have an open door policy where parents are encouraged into the setting, where and when appropriate.

2. How our setting supports young children with SEND.

Include SENCO, Area SENCO, key person and how this information is shared with parents/carers. How do you know how effective your arrangements and provision are for young children with SEND?

St Mary's playschool has a qualified SENCO who is always in attendance.

Each child is allocated a key person and together the Senco and keyperson gather information to share with parents at regular meetings and gather information from the parent's about what is/ isn't working well at home.

Continued observations, meetings and the use of a 'graduated approach' (Assess, Plan, Do, review) ensures that we are able to set smart targets and regularly evaluate progress made and address any new concerns or lack of progress.

3. How our setting creates learning and development opportunities for individual children with SEND.

What are your approaches to differentiation? How does this support a child with SEND?

St Mary's playschool prides itself on a differentiated approach, ensuring that adjustments are made to make playschool inclusive for all children regardless of ability/disability.

Outside support is requested from specialists e.g physiotherapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists as and when needed; This is to ensure we are acquiring the best possible advice from specialists enabling us to provide the best care to all children within the setting.

We strive to ensure we take into account the children's views, likes and dislikes and attempt to accommodate e.g providing equipment to support children's needs, sensory toys/play, accessing additional funding to enhance staffing ratios to give additional support.

4. How our setting works in partnership with parents/carers.

How and when do you share information about a child with SEND with their parent/carer? What opportunities are there for parents/carers to share their information about their child? What methods do you use to maintain contact with the parents/carers if the primary carer doesn't collect every day? How do you involve parents/carers in planning for their child's learning and development? How do you track the progress of young children with SEND? Do you offer any parent training or learning events? Do you work with parents/carers to support the Home Learning Environment (HLE)?

We recognise that the parents & primary carers are the first educators of their children; prior to children starting playschool we will meet with the parent and child to find out all we can.

Parents are encouraged to join our online platform; this enables us to easily communicate, even when the parent is unable to attend. Some parents prefer a home/school book where we can share information. Parents are invited into playschool for set sessions throughout the year, we also have an open door policy where we welcome parents into the setting. If this is not possible then a meeting would be arranged at a time convenient to all.

Parents are encouraged to attend open sessions where we share the child's next steps/ learning and discuss how this can be supported at home. Parents' views are taken into account when planning the child's 'graduated approach' to ensure both the setting and family are working in partnership to meet the needs of the child.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to record keeping and are given the opportunity to discuss progress and share any concerns they may have about their child.

5. How our setting supports the wellbeing of young children with SEND.

What risk assessments are in place to ensure children's safety? What support is there for positive behaviour? Are Health and Safety/Risk Assessments carried out in partnership with the primary carer? How do you manage the administration of medicines and provide personal care? How are children with SEND able to contribute their views?

Prior to a child starting playschool visits and a meeting will take place to ensure we can meet the needs of the child. Risk assessments are undertaken and if additional support is required then this will be sought prior to the child's start date.

Depending on the need, training may be essential prior to the child starting playschool and a care plan may be in place.

Parents may be encouraged to attend playschool initially to support staff.

Medication must be supplied in packaging with the child's details clearly on the prescribing label, medication will be stored as appropriate and must be in date. Children requiring medication will never be admitted into playschool without their in date medication. When medication is administered it is recorded and witnessed, parents will be asked to sign at the end of the day.

6. Staff training and experience in supporting young children with SEND.

Experience and training undertaken by the setting SENCO and all other members of staff. You may also include First Aid training and Safeguarding.

At St Mary's playschool our Senco is always in attendance.

Staff are encouraged to attend training such as Speech & language, autism etc.

When a child joins the setting with a medical need i.e. epilepsy, training will be undertaken by all staff caring for the child.

All staff undertake regular paediatric first aid training

The safeguarding lead and manager both hold level 3 safeguarding qualifications, All other staff undertake Level 2 safeguarding training.

7. Specialist services and expertise accessed by our setting.

What services do you access? Include - Area SENCO, health visitor, Speech and Language Therapist, Children's Centres etc.

St Mary's Playschool access professional support from many outside services:

Our Inclusion partner, visits to support the setting and to advise on services that may be beneficial.

We work with our health visitor to support families both in the setting and at home

Speech and language is suggested when we feel children may not be at the expected level or where we feel there may be concerns.

We also have support from occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

8. How our setting includes young children with SEND in community based activities and outings.

*How do you involve parent/carers in planning activities and trips? What risk assessments do you undertake?
How do you ensure that all activities/outings are accessible?*

When trips are undertaken a risk assessment will take place to assess the level of risk and what this might be.

Parent helpers are requested to come along and in some cases this may be insisted upon if it is felt that the risk is high e.g if the child may be extremely unsettled or is prone to running.

When trips are undertaken parents receive notice in advance, If it is felt that the trip is not beneficial/is detrimental to the child they can either stay in playschool with another group or attend on a different day.

Children are not excluded from trips, every possible effort is made to include all children.

9. Our accessible environment.

Have you completed an Access Audit? Were actions identified and acted upon within your Single Equality Scheme? Is the building fully wheelchair accessible? Have there been improvements in the auditory and visual environment? Are there disabled changing and toilet facilities? How do you communicate with parent carers whose first language is not English? How do you obtain equipment and resources to support young children with SEND?

St Mary's playschool has a slope entrance at the front of the building and wide doors allowing ample access for wheelchairs.

Toilets are of varying sizes and the building has ample space to allow for flexibility.

Through additional funding (DAF) we may be able to apply for extra support to allow us to buy equipment to support children with SEN.

When English is an additional language we will use all means possible to build up relationships with parents, this may mean emailing rather than spoken conversations or requesting an interpreter or an engagement facilitator.

10. How our setting prepares and supports young children with SEND when joining the setting and when transferring to another setting or school.

Describe your induction and transition processes.

When children with SEND join the setting it is essential we build up vital relationships with the parents and carers to ensure we gain as much information as possible to support the child's needs. Depending on the need training may be required prior to the child's start to ensure we are able to offer the care possible.

This may potentially mean an extended settling in period with the support of parents or outside agencies.

When a child transitions from playschool to school we will invite the SENCO as well as the teachers into playschool for visits. Meetings will be undertaken as required and if beneficial playschool can attend the school with the child to support this transition. Photo books can offer a lot of support during transitions.

11. How our setting organises its resources to meet the needs of young children with SEND.

How does your staff deployment provide targeted support for young children with SEND? How do you adapt your resources and environment?

When supporting children with SEND additional staffing may be required to provide enhanced support.

Funding may be accessed to enable us to offer this support depending on the level of need.

Ratios of staff to children will always take into account the need and safety of the children in our care and not the recommended ratios.

The manager and SENCO is supernumerary which ensures she is able to offer enhanced support when required or in times of staff absence.

Resources are suitable for the ages and stages of children within the groups; if it is felt that a child would benefit from being in a different group due to their stage of development this can be arranged after discussions with the parents/carers.

The playschool environment is large and enables us to be very flexible in our setup. We have a small sensory room which can be extremely beneficial in supporting children with SEND when 1:1 time is required.

12. How we decide on appropriate support for young children with SEND.

Describe the decision making process and how this involves the parent/carer and the child. How are outcomes evaluated?

Outcomes for children with SEND come from information from parents, the needs of the child as well as what we see in playschool. Meeting with parents and the inclusion partner/ outside specialists will help to highlight the most important needs for the child.

Outcomes are evaluated from ongoing assessments, the use of The Graduated approach system (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) as well as a One Plan and tracking.

Regular meetings are held to discuss progress made or concerns that may be arising.

13. How we involve all parents/carers in our setting.

Describe your approach to involving all parents/carers in decision making and day to day setting life including for their own child.

We are extremely welcoming to parents and pride ourselves on our working relationships with parents and carers. We have an open door policy and always make time for discussions be it about the child or home life. Being a village setting we are extremely friendly and approachable.

We send out questionnaires and encourage feedback as well as suggestions on what we could do to improve.

Parents are invited into playschool for stay and play sessions as well as meeting with their child's keyworker.

Class Dojo enables parents to message the manager, senco or room lead. Learning is shared on class dojo.

14. Who to contact for further information.

Who is the first point of contact? Who is the setting SENCO? Include a link to the Local Offer.

Mandy Wanless - Manager & Senco

<https://send.essex.gov.uk/>