



St. Thomas a Becket Nursery

3 Tutts Barn Lane
Eastbourne
BN22 8XT

Tel: 01323 725977

Email: Office@stthomasabecketnursery.co.uk

Website: <https://stthomasabecketnursery.co.uk/>

Registered Charity No. 1097448

Ofsted URN 507912

Supporting children with SEND

(Special Educational Needs and Disability)

Responsibility: Nursery Lead / Nursery Manager (SENCO Lead)

Review Cycle: Every 2 years

Date of adoption / last review:	Signed / Role	Date of next review:
Sept 2015	CHarrison	June 2017
June 2017	CHarrison	June 2018
June 2018	CHarrison	June 2020
March 2020	CHarrison	March 2022
March 2022	CHarrison	March 2024
March 2024	CHarrison	March 2026

Introduction

EYFS January 2024

Special educational needs

3.61 Providers must have arrangements in place to support children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and all providers who are funded by the local authority to deliver early education places must take into account the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. Maintained schools and maintained nursery schools must identify a member of staff to act as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and other providers (in **group provision**) **are expected to identify a SENCO**. Providers may find it helpful to familiarise themselves with the early years section of the [SEND Code of Practice](#) (page 78-90)

This policy sets out our nursery approach to supporting children/young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). For more information about how we support children/young people with SEN please also see our Local Offer for SEND and can be found on our website.

<http://www.stthomasabecknursery.co.uk/>

Our local offer includes information about accessibility provision. An Accessibility Plan is also included as an appendix to this policy.

There is information about the support that the Local Authority and other services provide in the East Sussex Local Offer for SEN <https://localoffer.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

Special educational needs (SEN)

A child ... has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

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 ... the same age 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 was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014)

(SEND Code of Practice, 2015)

Disabled children and young people

Many children who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined

as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that ... early years providers... have towards disabled children ...:

- *They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people*
- *They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child ... disability*
- *They must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children ... are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage (SEND Code of Practice, 2015)*

1. Policy Statement

We are committed to providing an inclusive and supportive environment for all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We believe that every child has the right to feel valued and confident; to access high-quality early years education that meets their individual needs and supports their development to their full potential alongside their peers through positive experiences; to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn from each other. We provide a welcoming, positive and stimulating environment where children are supported according to their individual needs.

2. Aims

To identify children with SEND as early as possible and provide them with the appropriate support to ensure their needs are met.

To create an inclusive learning environment where all children, including those with SEND, can thrive and reach their full potential.

To work in partnership with parents, carers, and external professionals to ensure that our provision for children with SEND is effective and tailored to their individual needs.

To comply with the statutory requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015) and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework.

3. Definition of SEND

A child is considered to have SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them. This may include:

Communication and interaction needs

Cognitive and learning needs

Social, emotional, and mental health needs

Sensory and/or physical needs

4. SEND Leadership, Identification and Assessment

4.1 Early Identification

The Nursery Manager is the SENDCO and leads the nursery SEND provision, supported by the Deputies and Nursery Practitioners. The Nursery manager has day-to-day responsibility for delivery of SEND practice and policy and coordinates specific support provision for individual children within the nursery.

The Nursery Manager and all staff work closely with parents and other agencies, to the SEND Code of Practice 2015 (Chptr 5 – Early Years) and access advice and guidance from the team of professionals at East Sussex, who provide a support role to families <https://localoffer.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

We believe that early identification of SEND is crucial to ensuring that children receive the support they need. We will regularly observe and assess all children's progress to identify any areas of concern.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share any concerns they may have about their child's development with the nursery staff.

We will always ask for your permission to refer to specialist support if we feel this is required.

4.2 Identification and Assessment

If a child is identified as having potential SEND, we will conduct further observations and assessments to determine their specific needs. We may use a range of assessment tools and seek advice from external professionals (e.g., speech and language therapists, educational psychologists) as part of the assessment process.

We will assess each child's level of attainment on entry to the nursery. We will make regular assessments of progress for all children. These will seek to identify children who are making less than expected progress and put the necessary strategies in place.

Generally - Staff work in age group teams and the two room leaders confer with each other to allow all staff to get to know all children extremely well. Every child has a key person who will be the member of staff who has the closest bond with the child. The key persons role is to get to know the parent and child, to ensure they are happy and developing within the Nursery and to plan the child's next steps in consultation with the parent. All staff in each key team build strong relationships with all the children and are available to talk to at any time should your key person not be available for any reason. Please

see our key person policy for more information about this Early Years Practitioner role. We recognise that all children need different types and levels of support so any decisions will be based solely on that child's needs.

Specifically – Working in partnership with parents, we communicate regularly to share a child's learning and development progress and to share any concerns the parent may have or answer any questions. We recognise that parents know their children best and listen and understand when parents' express concerns about their child's development. If there are any concerns regarding a child's development, the first point of contact should be their key person and a meeting will be held between the parent and the key person to explore ways of supporting the child.

The Nursery Manager, as SENDCO, will oversee all support needed for any child requiring additional support within the Nursery. Should a child benefit from additional, professional support, the nursery manager will talk to the parent and request their permission to approach the East Sussex Local Offer, Early Years support services, who will carry out some observations to form clear analysis of the child's needs.

Regular meetings with parents of children with additional needs, Early Years support services and the key person will take place at least once every 6 weeks, or a parent is welcome to attend when a support service is visiting nursery, to discuss the child's progress and next steps and any ongoing concerns. We operate an open-door policy and ensure that we are always available to speak to parents when they need it.

4.3 Individual Support Plans

Nursery will put together a written plan for each child with SEND. We will create this alongside parents and carers, health visitors or other SEND specialists. The written plan is called a Specific Support Plan or a Setting-Based Support Plan. This document should help assess your child's needs and plan their support.

- Your child's key person will be the lead for your child's learning needs.
- Our Nursery SEND Policy and our Local Offer can be found on our website <https://stthomasabecketnursery.co.uk/about-us/nursery-policies/>
- If you feel your child should have a written plan then ask your child's key person.

A written plan lists different ways of helping children with their learning needs such as: identifying activities a child needs to practise, like communicating, focusing attention or socialising using the childcare setting space in a creative way. This is to provide and promote independent learning opportunities for children with SEND.

SEND Early Years' Service (SEYS) supports pre-school aged children with SEND. This may include complex needs that create a barrier to learning and inclusion. SEYS can provide support if universal and targeted strategies are in place, but a child is not making progress

SEYS support children with one or more of the following:

Severe or profound learning difficulties affecting communication and independence

Significant developmental delays

Significant physical delay or disability

Autism or social communication difficulties that impact on inclusion

Syndromes and neurological conditions with a lifelong impact on development

Severe speech, language, and communication difficulties due to the above

SEYS offer advice and training for behavioural difficulties that affect attendance. They also support children who have English as an Additional Language:

Find out more about the SEND Early Years' Service (SEYS) on [1Space](#)

5. Provision and Support

5.1 The Child's Voice in an Inclusive Environment

We are committed to involving the children in decisions about their learning as much as is possible.

- With advice from specialists, we aim to access support from our Early Years Support Services who allocate funding for children SEND. The funds available are spent specifically according to the child's needs and interests to ensure maximum stimulation, learning and progression for the child.
- We provide our children with the necessary levels of support to enable their full participation in daily decision making about their choices
- We support our children to enable their development and help them achieve the best possible Early Years' experience and education outcomes. Regular assessments and observations will be carried out by your child's key person and recorded on Tapestry, written and pictorial evidence provided as an online learning journal which is accessible to parents at all times. Parents are encouraged to contribute to Tapestry to ensure a holistic view of the child's development at home and at Nursery is available.
- We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where all children can participate fully in nursery activities.
- We will make reasonable adjustments to the physical environment, curriculum, and resources to accommodate the needs of children with SEND.

- We will differentiate activities and teaching strategies to ensure that children with SEND can access the learning opportunities provided.

5.2 Additional Support

Where necessary, we will provide additional support to children with SEND, which may include one-to-one assistance, small group work, or the use of specialist resources.

We will work closely with external professionals to implement any recommended interventions or strategies.

5.3 Transition Support

We will work with parents, carers, and receiving schools to ensure a smooth transition for children with SEND when they move on to primary education. This may involve sharing relevant information, attending transition meetings, and supporting the child's emotional and social needs during the transition. The key person will take responsibility for ensuring their key child makes a safe and secure transition. Support and school ready activities will be tailored according to the child's specific needs and full consultation with the child's parent and new teacher will be sought to ensure a full and detailed hand over.

6. Partnership with Parents and Carers

We value the input of parents and carers and believe that they play a key role in supporting their child's development. We will maintain regular communication with parents and carers to discuss their child's progress, review support plans, and address any concerns.

We will provide information and resources to help parents and carers support their child's learning and development at home.

We acknowledge the primary-carer role of the Parent and respect that they know their child best. We will:

- Have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of parents.
- Provide parents with the information and support necessary to enable full participation in decision making.
- Support parents in order to facilitate the development of their child to help them achieve the best possible Early Years' experience and education outcomes, preparing them effectively for transition on to school.

If there are areas of disagreement with parents about support for their child, we will work with them to try to resolve these. If parents have a complaint, they can use the nursery's complaints procedure.

7. Staff Training and Development

We are committed to ongoing professional development and will provide staff with opportunities to attend relevant training courses and access resources on SEND best practices.

8. Working with External Professionals

We will work in partnership with a range of external professionals, including speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, and health visitors, to provide the best possible support for children with SEND.

We will seek advice and input from these professionals to inform our practice and ensure that our provision is meeting the needs of the children.

9. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of our SEND provision will be monitored regularly through observations, assessments, and reviews of setting based support plans). Clear dates for reviewing progress are agreed. This forms part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress, expected outcomes and planned next steps.

SEND support takes the form of a four part cycle: assess, plan, do and review. Decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child's needs and of what supports the child in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach.

10. Complaints

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any concerns or complaints related to our SEND provision. If a parent or carer has a concern, they should speak with the nursery manager in the first instance. If the concern is not resolved, the parent or carer may follow formal complaints procedure.

11. Emergency Procedures

our nursery's

- All staff understand and are trained in the nursery's general emergency procedures
- All staff, including bank staff and volunteers, know what action to take in an emergency
- All staff understand and are trained in what to do in an emergency for children with SEND or medical conditions
- All staff, including bank staff and volunteers, are aware of children's medical conditions and understand their duty of care to children should an emergency evacuation be necessary.

- Any child who may need a PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan) will have been assessed to record what help they need in an emergency. The PEEP will be known by all staff, including bank staff and volunteers.
- If a child needs to attend hospital, their key person will stay with them until a parent arrives, or accompany a child taken to hospital by ambulance.

Other relevant nursery policies:

Administration of Medicines policy

Equality of Opportunity policy

Intimate Care / Nappy Changing

Local Offer

Managing Behaviour Positively policy

Suite of Child Protection and Safeguarding policies

Appendix 1 – St Thomas a Becket Nursery Local Offer

Appendix 2 - SEND Code of Practice 2015, Chapter 5, Early Years Providers

St Thomas a Becket Nursery
Local Offer 2024-2025

What is the Local Offer?

When the Children and Families Bill was enacted in 2014, local authorities were required to publish and keep under review information from services that expect to be available for children and young people with SEND aged 0-25. The intention of the Local Offer is to improve choice and transparency for families. From the Local Offer parents will know what they can reasonably expect from their local area and make informed choices about suitability of early years settings (and schools) for their child.

What does St Thomas a Becket Nursery offer?

St Thomas a Becket Nursery aims to provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment for children in our care. It is our desire to offer parents a reliable and quality service that will, where possible, responds to their needs for childcare. The nursery will at all times operate within the guidelines as defined by OFSTED, through prioritising the safety and welfare of the child above all else.

Our Day Care service is for children between the ages of two and five years of age, or to the age of entering primary school.

Nursery opens at 8.30am and closes at 3.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Our Nursery runs in the school term time only.

We will try to accommodate requests for extra childcare time but this is dependent on strict staff to child ratios being observed.

Who do the nursery provide Early Years Education for?

The nursery is a registered Early Years Education provider, offering childcare to all local families who have children aged 2-5 years, subject to admissions policy and process:

8.30 - 9.00 = Early Bird session for which the parents pay

12.00-13:00 = Can be funded or a paid hour

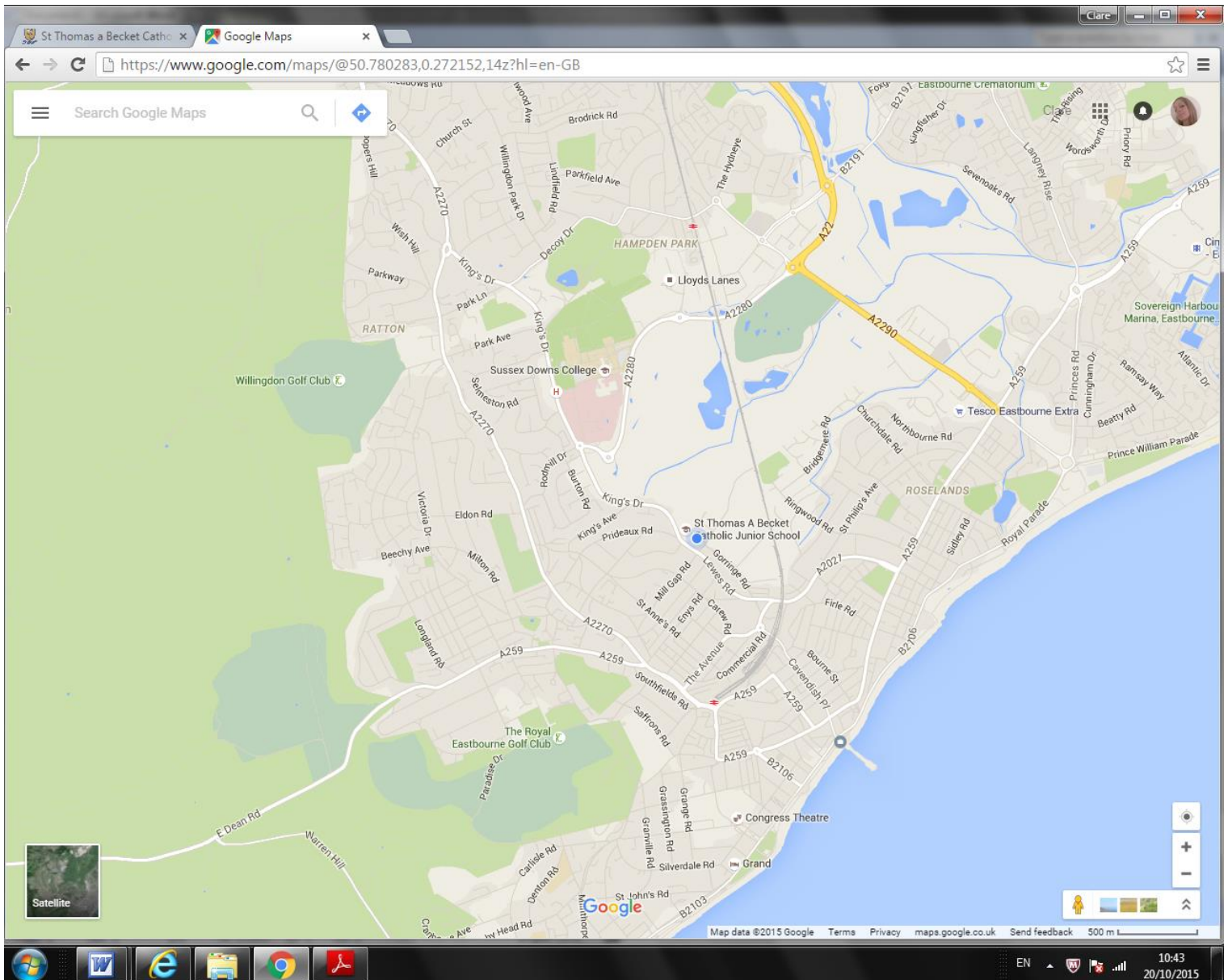
9.00 – 3.00 = Funded hours (broken down into 9.00 – 12.00 / 9.00 – 1.00 / 12 – 3.00)

Please see our website and our Fee Policy for further information about session costs

<https://stthomasabecketnursery.co.uk/about-us/nursery-policies/>

Where is the nursery located?

Map of Eastbourne:



How can families start using the Nursery?

Families may contact the Nursery Office on 01323 725977 or at office@stthomasabecketonursery.co.uk or by completing the enquiry form on our website at <https://stthomasabecketonursery.co.uk/contact-us/> Families are then invited in to look around, children stay for a play and parents meet with the Nursery Manager and relevant staff. Meetings are available in the summer for families who would like their

child to start nursery in September or at any other time of the school year for a start later in the academic year. Any known SEND needs at the time of the visit can be discussed to start nursery's journey in getting to know your child in order to facilitate any additional measures we may need to put in place for their nursery day with us.

How are decisions made about who can use the Nursery?

The setting is inclusive and welcomes all children from diverse backgrounds and of differing abilities. We recognise all children are unique individuals and, as such, we identify and respond to their individual needs and learning styles to support them and to develop their emotional and social skills. There is no specific criteria, such as religion, geographical distance etc. The only stipulation is that all families are taken through the admissions process in which we ensure equality of access and opportunity.

What support is available for a pupil's overall well-being?

Each child has a key worker who is a first point of contact on a daily basis for the child.

How we know if children need support

- Children's progress is tracked to identify less than expected progress
- Concerns for less than expected progress are addressed by the key worker and the nursery manager
- Continued less than expected progress concerns that cannot be met with the nursery support are discussed by staff and parents to plan strategies for support in order to support barriers to learning
- Staff reviewing and planning support targeted at identified areas of need

How does the Nursery consult with its families and how are they involved in decision making / planning

The nursery has strong relationships with its families. We operate an open-door policy and actively encourage parents to seek staff to offer their views and comments, both good or where parents feel we can improve the service we offer. Parents are encouraged to tell us about the 'Wow' moments their children have at home which enables our nursery practitioners to have the best picture about the next steps that can be taken in the nursery and home environment. Parent feedback is continually gathered through the use of Tapestry (online diary).

How St Thomas a Becket Nursery supports children

- Next Steps planning for the individual child
- Staff reviewing and planning support, targeted at identified areas of need

- Through seeking the advice of professionals inside and outside the nursery– such as the SEND and specialist services which may be appropriate or available
- Through monitoring the impact of this support on pupil's progress

Is the nursery fully accessible?

St Thomas a Becket Nursery complies with the Equalities Act 2010 and DDA legislation, the nursery having been purposely built in 2013. The nursery is on one level. This ensures we have designated disabled changing and adult toilet facility plus fully accessible child toilet facilities and nursery indoor and outdoor play environment. Our allotment is accessible to mobility aids and has specially raised beds to facilitate inclusion for all.

Our fully qualified practitioner team care for all children and make best use of the environment by adapting play opportunities and methods of communication to ensure all children are included and can have a voice. Staff training is arranged for any child coming to us who may use specific and specialised equipment.

How do staff support children or parents with SEND?

Staff and children use visual aids to communicate with children who are non-verbal.

Our setting Special Educational Needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is our Nursery Manager. Our SENCO will work with our families, our nursery practitioners, [East Sussex ISEND professionals](#) through their referrals process and all other relevant professionals to access services that support nursery children with SEND.

Please also see our [website policies page](#) for our Supporting Children with SEND policy for further information.

Who to contact for further information

Amy Curtis
Nursery Manager
St Thomas a Becket Nursery
3 Tutts Barn Lane
Eastbourne
BN22 8XT
Telephone: 01323 725977

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities

January 2015

Chapter 5 Early years providers

What this chapter covers

This chapter explains the action early years providers should take to meet their duties in relation to identifying and supporting all children with special educational needs (SEN), whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

Relevant legislation

Primary

The following sections of the Children and Families Act 2014:

- Co-operating generally: governing body functions: Section 29
- Children and young people with SEN but no EHC plan: Section 34
- Children with SEN in maintained nurseries: Section 35
- Using best endeavours to secure special educational provision: Section 66
- 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

The Equality Act 2010

Regulations

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for children with SEN

5.1 All children are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and
- become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education

5.2 Providers of early years education, that is all early years providers in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors that a local authority funds, are required to have regard to this Code including the principles set out in Chapter 1.

5.3 The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework for children aged 0 to 5 years. All early years providers **must** follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS and the learning and development requirements, unless an exemption from these has been granted.

5.4 Providers **must** have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children.

5.5 All those who work with young children should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that all practitioners listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children themselves.

5.6 Maintained nursery schools – NA

5.7 Early years providers **must** provide information for parents on how they support children with SEN and disabilities, and should regularly review and evaluate the quality and breadth of the support they offer or can access for children with SEN or disabilities. Maintained nursery schools and all providers of relevant early education to children with SEN **must** co-operate with the local

authority in reviewing the provision that is available locally (see Chapter 3), and in developing the Local Offer (see Chapter 4). Providers should work in partnership with other local education providers to explore how different types of need can be met most effectively.

5.8 Local authorities **must** ensure that all providers they fund in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors are aware of the requirement on them to have regard to the SEN Code of Practice and to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. When securing funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-olds local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN. This includes removing barriers that prevent children accessing early education and working with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential.

5.9 Where assessment indicates that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children receive it as quickly as possible. Joint commissioning arrangements should seek to ensure that there are sufficient services to meet the likely need in an area (Chapter 3, Working together across Education, Health and Care for joint outcomes). The Local Offer should set out clearly what support is available from different services, including early years, and how it can be accessed.

Equality Act 2010

5.10 All early years providers have duties under the Equality Act 2010. In particular, they **must not** discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children, and they **must** make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at substantial disadvantage. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be

made to prevent that disadvantage. All publicly funded early years providers **must** promote equality of opportunity for disabled children. There is further detail on the disability discrimination duties under the Equality Act in Chapter 1, Introduction. The guidance in this chapter should be read in the light of the guidance in Chapter 1 which focuses on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.

For more information please see our nursery Equality of Opportunity Policy

Medical conditions

5.11 All early years providers should take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet those needs. This is set out in the EYFS framework.

For more information please see our nursery Administration of Medicine Policy

SEN in the early years

5.12 All early years providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out in the EYFS framework. The EYFS framework also requires practitioners to review children's progress and share a summary with parents. In addition, the 'Early years outcomes' is an aid for practitioners, including child minders, nurseries and others such as inspectors, to help them to understand the outcomes they should be working towards. Links to the EYFS framework and the guide to early years outcomes are provided in the References section under Chapter 5.

5.13 Some children need support for SEN and disabilities at home or in informal settings before, or as well as, the support they receive from an early years provider. Provision for children who need such support should form part of the local joint commissioning arrangements and be included in the Local Offer.

From birth to two – early identification

5.14 Parents' early observations of their child are crucial. Children with more complex developmental and sensory needs may be identified at birth. Health assessments, such as the hearing screening test, which is used to check the hearing of all new-born babies, enable very early identification of a range of medical and physical difficulties. Health services, including paediatricians, the family's general practitioner, and health visitors, should work with the family, support them to understand their child's needs and help them to access early support.

5.15 Where a health body is of the opinion that a young child under compulsory school age has, or probably has, SEN, they **must** inform the child's parents and bring the child to the attention of the appropriate local authority. The health body **must** also give the parents the opportunity to discuss their opinion and let them know about any voluntary organisations that are likely to be able to provide advice or assistance. This

includes the educational advice, guidance and any intervention to be put in place at an early point and before the child starts school.

5.16 This support can take a number of forms, including:

- specialist support from health visitors, educational psychologists, speech and language therapists or specialist teachers, such as a teacher of the deaf or vision impaired. These specialists may visit families at home to provide practical support, answering questions and clarifying needs
- training for parents in using early learning programmes to promote play, communication and language development
- home-based programmes, such as Portage, which offer a carefully structured system to help parents support their child's early learning and development

5.17 Early Support supports the better delivery and co-ordination of services for disabled children, and their families, including training for professional or trained independent volunteers providing a single point of contact or key working. (See References section under Chapter 2 for a link to the Early Support Programme.)

5.18 From September 2014, 2-year-olds for whom Disability Living Allowance is paid will be entitled to free early education.

5.19 Information about these services should be included in the Local Offer.

Early years provision

5.20 The majority of 3- and 4-year-olds, and many younger children, attend some form of early years provision. The EYFS framework sets the standards that all Ofsted-registered early years providers, and schools offering early years provision, **must** meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. This includes ongoing assessment of children's progress. Early years providers and educational settings should have arrangements in place that include a clear approach to assessing SEN. This should be part of the setting's overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children.

5.21 In assessing progress of children in the early years, practitioners can use the non-statutory Early Years Outcomes guidance as a tool to assess the extent to which a young child is developing at expected levels for their age. The guidance sets out what most children do at each

stage of their learning and development. These include typical behaviours across the seven areas of learning:

- communication and language

physical development

- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding of the world
- expressive arts and design

5.22 The EYFS framework includes two specific points for providing written assessments for parents and other professionals – when the child is aged two and at the end of the reception year – which are detailed below.

Progress check at age two

5.23 When a child is aged between two and three, early years practitioners **must** review progress and provide parents with a short written summary of their child's development, focusing in particular on communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. This progress check **must** identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is slower than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns (or identified SEN or disability) practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support the child, involving other professionals such as, for example, the setting's SENCO or the Area SENCO, as appropriate. The summary **must** highlight areas where:

- good progress is being made
- some additional support might be needed
- there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate SEN or disability)
-

5. 24. It **must** describe the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns. If a child moves settings between the ages of two and three it is expected that the progress check will be undertaken in the setting where the child has spent most time.

5.25 Health visitors currently check children's physical development milestones between ages two and three as part of the universal Healthy Child Programme. From 2015, it is proposed to introduce an integrated review that will cover the development areas in the Healthy Child Programme two-year review and the EYFS two-year progress check. The integrated review will:

- identify the child's progress, strengths and needs at this age in order to promote positive outcomes in health and wellbeing, learning and development
- enable appropriate intervention and support for children and their families, where progress is less than expected, and
- generate information which can be used to plan services and contribute to the reduction of inequalities in children's outcomes

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the EYFS profile

5.26 The EYFS profile provides parents, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. A profile is usually completed for children in the final term of the year in which they turn five. It is particularly helpful for children with SEN and should inform plans for future learning and identify any additional needs for support.

Identifying needs in the early years

5.27 In addition to the formal checks, early years practitioners working with children should monitor and review the progress and development of all children throughout the early years.

5.28 Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting, from formal checks, from practitioner observations and from any more detailed assessment of the child's needs. From within the setting practitioners should particularly consider information on a child's progress in communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Where any specialist advice has been sought from beyond the setting, this should also inform decisions

about whether or not a child has SEN. All the information should be brought together with the observations of parents and considered with them.

5.29 A delay in learning and development in the early years may or may not indicate that a child has SEN, that is, that they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision. Equally, difficult or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. However, where there are concerns, there should be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as an underlying learning or communication difficulty. If it is thought housing, family or other domestic circumstances may be contributing to the presenting behaviour, a multi-agency approach, supported by the use of approaches such as the Early Help Assessment, should be adopted.

5.30 Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early years practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN.

5.31 Where 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 in the setting and requires special educational provision, the setting should make that provision. In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly reduce the need for more costly interventions at a later stage.

5.32 Special educational provision should be matched to the child's identified SEN. Children's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support – see Chapter 6, paragraph 6.28 onwards, for a fuller explanation:

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

5.33 These areas give an overview of the range of needs that providers should plan for. However, individual children often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change

over time. For instance speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder may have needs across all areas. The special educational provision made for a child should always be based on an understanding of their particular strengths and needs and should seek to address them all, using well-evidenced interventions targeted at areas of difficulty and, where necessary, specialist equipment or software. This will help to overcome barriers to learning and participation. Support should be family centred and should consider the individual family's needs and the best ways to support them.

5.34 Reviewing the effectiveness of interventions in enabling children to make progress can itself be part of the assessment of need, informing the next steps to be taken as part of a graduated approach to support, as described in 'SEN support in the early years' below. It may be necessary to test out interventions as part of this process, both to judge their effectiveness for the child and to provide further information about the precise nature of their needs.

5.35 There is a wide range of information available on early years and early intervention and on different areas of need and the most effective interventions. For more information and links to useful resources see Annex 2: Improving practice and staff training in education settings.

SEN support in the early years

5.36 It is particularly important in the early years that there is no delay in making any necessary special educational provision. Delay at this stage can give rise to learning difficulty and subsequently to loss of self-esteem, frustration in learning and to behaviour difficulties. Early action to address identified needs is critical to the future progress and improved outcomes that are essential in helping the child to prepare for adult life (Chapter 8, Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years).

5.37 Where a setting identifies a child as having SEN they **must** work in partnership with parents to establish the support the child needs.

5.38 Where a setting makes special educational provision for a child with SEN they should inform the parents and a maintained nursery school **must** inform the parents. All settings should adopt a graduated approach with four stages of action: assess, plan, do and review.

Assess

5.39 In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the early years practitioner, working with the setting SENCO and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need. Where there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, more specialist assessment may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, social services or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENCO should contact them, with the parents' agreement.

Plan

5.40 Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, (see 5.38 above), the practitioner and the SENCO should agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review. Plans should take into account the views of the child. The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed.

5.41 Parents should be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

Do

5.42 The early years practitioner, usually the child's key person, remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, they should oversee the implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO should support the practitioner in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

Review

5.43 The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support should be evaluated by the practitioner and the SENCO working with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views. They should agree any changes to the outcomes and support for the child in light of the child's progress and development. Parents should have clear information about the impact of the support provided and be involved in planning next steps.

5.44 This cycle of action should be revisited in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress. At each stage parents should be engaged with the setting, contributing their insights to assessment and planning. Intended outcomes should be shared with parents and reviewed with them, along with action taken by the setting, at agreed times.

5.45 The graduated approach should be led and co-ordinated by the setting SENCO working with and supporting individual practitioners in the setting and informed by EYFS materials, the Early Years Outcomes guidance and Early Support resources (information is available at the National Children's Bureau website – see the References section under Chapter 5 for the link).

5.46 Where a child has an EHC plan, the local authority **must** review that plan as a minimum every twelve months. As part of the review, the local authority can ask settings, and require maintained nursery schools, to convene and hold the annual review meeting on its behalf. Further information about EHC plan reviews and the role of early years settings

Transition

5.47 SEN support should include planning and preparing for transition, before a child moves into another setting or school. This can also include a review of the SEN support being provided or the EHC plan. To support the transition, information should be shared by the current setting with the receiving setting or school. The current setting should agree with parents the information to be shared as part of this planning process

Involving specialists

5.48 Where a child continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the child's area of need, practitioners should consider involving appropriate specialists, for example, health visitors, speech and language therapists, Portage workers, educational psychologists or specialist teachers, who may be able to identify effective strategies, equipment, programmes or other interventions to enable the child to make progress towards the desired learning and development outcomes. The decision to involve specialists should be taken with the child's parents.

Requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment

5.49 Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (see Chapter 9, Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans).

Record keeping

5.50 Practitioners **must** maintain a record of children under their care as required under the EYFS framework. Such records about their children **must** be available to parents and they **must** include how the setting supports children with SEN and disabilities.

Keeping provision under review

5.51 Providers should review how well equipped they are to provide support across the four broad areas of SEN. Information on these areas is collected through the Early Years Census, and forms part of the statutory publication '*Children and Young People with SEN: an analysis*' which is issued by DfE each year.

The role of the SENCO in early years provision

5.52 A maintained nursery school **must** ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as the SENCO in order to ensure the detailed implementation of support

for children with SEN. This individual should also have the prescribed qualification for SEN Co-ordination or relevant experience.

5.53 The EYFS framework requires other early years providers to have arrangements in place for meeting children's SEN. Those in group provision are expected to identify a SENCO.

Childminders are encouraged to identify a person to act as SENCO and childminders who are registered with a childminder agency or who are part of a network may wish to share that role between them.

5.54 The role of the SENCO involves:

- ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN
 - advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting, and
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting

The role of the Area SENCO

5.55 To fulfil their role in identifying and planning for the needs of children with SEN, local authorities should ensure that there is sufficient expertise and experience amongst local early years providers to support children with SEN. Local authorities often make use of Area SENCOs to provide advice and guidance to early years providers on the development of inclusive early learning environments. The Area SENCO helps make the links between education, health and social care to facilitate appropriate early provision for children with SEN and their transition to compulsory schooling.

5.56 Typically, the role of the Area SENCO includes:

- providing advice and practical support to early years providers about approaches to identification, assessment and intervention within the SEN Code of Practice

- providing day-to-day support for setting-based SENCOs in ensuring arrangements are in place to support children with SEN
- strengthening the links between the settings, parents, schools, social care and health services
- developing and disseminating good practice
- supporting the development and delivery of training both for individual settings and on a wider basis
- developing links with existing SENCO networks to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes, and
- informing parents of and working with local impartial Information, Advice and Support Services, to promote effective work with parents of children in the early years

5.57 The Area SENCO plays an important part in planning for children with SEN to transfer between early years provision and schools.

5.58 Where there is an Area SENCO in place, they will want to work with early years providers who are registered with either Ofsted or a childminder agency. They should consider how they work with and provide advice to childminder agencies and their registered providers in supporting children with SEN.

Funding for SEN support in the early years

5.59 Local authorities **must** ensure that all providers delivering funded early education places meet the needs of children with SEN and disabled children. In order to do this local authorities should make sure funding arrangements for early education reflect the need to provide suitable support for these children.

5.60 Early years providers should consider how best to use their resources to support the progress of children with SEN. This includes the educational advice, guidance and any intervention to be put in place at an early point and before the child starts school.