

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

This policy has been created with regard to:

- The SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS (2021)

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice

The school has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice (DfE 2015) to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

At Grantham Farm Montessori School we use the SEND Code of Practice (2015) definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability:

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

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, or*
- *has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools*
- *are under compulsory school age and are likely to fall within the definition above when of compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014; Code of Practice for SEN)*

Children do not have a learning difficulty or disability, within the legal definition, solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which s/he will be taught. A pupil has SEN, disability or high learning potential where their learning, difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. Pupils who might require additional support at Grantham Farm Montessori School include:

- pupils with specific learning differences e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia
- pupils with emotional, social or behavioural difficulties e.g. ADHD and ASD
- the more able and talented
- pupils with hearing and/or visual impairment and
- pupils with specific physical and medical conditions

Statement of intent

We are committed to the inclusion of all children at our school. We ensure all children are cared for and educated to develop to their full potential alongside their peers through positive experiences We enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn from

each other. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs and we work hard to ensure no child is discriminated against or put at a disadvantage as a consequence of their needs. Each child's needs are unique and we do not attempt to categorise children.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents in order to meet each child's individual needs and develop to their full potential. We are committed to working with any child who has a special educational need and/or disability and making reasonable adjustments to enable every child to make full use of the school's facilities. All children have a right to a broad and well-balanced learning environment.

We undertake a Progress Check of all children at age two in accordance with the Code of Practice (2015) and statutory framework for EYFS. We will also undertake an assessment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage for any children that remain with us in the final term of the year in which they turn five, as per the statutory framework for EYFS.

All our children are assessed (parents complete a baseline assessment) when they join the school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children. If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty or high learning potential, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. This level of support is called SEN Support. The child's teacher will offer interventions that are different from or additional to those provided as part of the school's usual working practices. The teacher will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. The SENCo, if not already involved, will become involved if the teacher and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support. The SENCo will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs.

We will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals if we identify any areas where a child's progress is less than expected to establish if any additional action is required. This may include:

- Liaising with any professional agencies
- Reading any reports that have been prepared
- Attending any review meetings with the local authority and other professionals
- Observing each child's development and assessing such observations regularly to monitor progress.

All new children will be given a full settling in period when joining the school according to their individual needs.

We will:

- Recognise each child's individual needs and ensure all staff are aware of, and have regard for, the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2015)
- Ensure that all children are treated as individuals/equals and are supported to take part in every aspect of the school day according to their individual needs and abilities
- Include all children and their families in our provision
- Identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies
- Ensure that children who learn at an accelerated pace e.g. 'more able and/or talented' are also supported
- Encourage children to value and respect others

- Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational difficulties and/or disabilities
- Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs and identify a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in the care and assessment of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training relating to SEND and the SEND Code of Practice
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments, and seek specialist equipment and services where required
- Challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices
- Promote positive images and role models during play experiences of those with additional needs wherever possible
- Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet individual children's needs, including the education, health and care authorities, and seek advice, support and training where required
- Share any statutory and other assessments made by the school with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need

Educational Inclusion

We have high expectations of all our children and aim to remove barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different strategies for learning
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy
- planning to develop the children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely
- helping individual children to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

More Able and Talented Pupils

Occasionally a pupil will stand out from their peers as having exceptional abilities. If the need is considered very different from his/her peer group, the pupil has special needs. If a child is more able this relates to their academic abilities, if they are talented then this might apply to an extra curricula area such as music or art. In most cases these special abilities can be nurtured within the classroom by differentiation of the curriculum. The child's individual learning plan would be vital to support them with this. If required, an assessment is sought from an Education Psychologist (EP).

Dual and multiple exceptionality

These terms describe learners who are more or exceptionally able and who also have additional learning needs e.g. dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorders, developmental coordination disorder, developmental language disorder, emotional and behavioural difficulties, physical and sensory differences. These additional learning needs or a disability can make it difficult to identify their high intellectual ability.

It is important to include this definition in more able policies as these pupils may otherwise be overlooked.

The Role of the SenCo

Our school Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) is Caroline Imi; the deputy SENCO is Emma Wetherley

The role of the SENCO in our school includes:

- ensuring all teachers and guides in the school understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEND
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting
- taking the lead in implementing the graduated response approach and supporting colleagues through each stage of the process.

Methods

We will:

- Designate a named member of staff to be the SENCO (Caroline Imi) and share their name/role with all staff and parents
- Have high aspirations for all children and support them to achieve their full potential
- Develop respectful partnerships with parents and families
- Ensure parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education and include the thoughts and feelings voiced by the child, where possible/appropriate
- Signpost parents and families to our Local Offer in order to access local support and services
- Undertake formal Progress Checks and Assessments of all children in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice January (2015)/statutory framework for the EYFS (2021)
- Provide a statement showing how we provide for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and share this with staff, parents and other professionals
- Ensure that the provision for children with SEN and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the school through training and professional discussions
- Set out in our inclusive admissions practice on how we meet equality of access and opportunity
- Make reasonable adjustments to our physical environment to ensure it is, as far as possible suitable for children and adults with disabilities using the facilities
- Provide a broad, balanced, aspirational early learning environment for all children with SEN and/or disabilities and differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities

- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families, including transition arrangements to other settings and schools. (See our transitions policy).
- Use the graduated response system to assess, plan, do and review to ensure early identification of any SEND
- Ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their parents are consulted at all stages of the graduated response, taking into account their levels of ability
- Review children's progress and target plans:
 - 1. at weekly focus group meetings
 - 2. Every 3 weeks, and work with parents to agree on further support plans
 - Termly when each child's records are reviewed and updated
- Provide privacy of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities when intimate care is being provided
- Raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff
- Ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. additional support reviews, Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies' views, inspections and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually
- Provide a complaints procedure and make available to all parents in a format that meets their needs e.g. Braille, audio, large print, additional languages
- Monitor and review our policy and procedures annually.

Effective assessment of the need for early help

We are aware of the process for early help and follow the following procedure:

Local agencies should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. Children and families may need support from a wide range of local agencies. Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These early help assessments should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. The lead professional role could be undertaken by a General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions about who should be the lead professional should be taken on a case by case basis and should be informed by the child and their family.

For an early help assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them;
- A teacher, GP, health visitor, early years worker, teacher or other professional should be able to discuss concerns they may have about a child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local authority children's social care should set out the process for how this will happen; and

- If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary.

If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need as defined in the Children Act 1989, or that the child has suffered significant harm, or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to local authority children's social care. This referral can be made by any professional (*Working together to safeguard children 2018*).

Graduated Approach

We follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015) recommendation that, in addition to the formal checks above, we adopt a graduated approach to assessment and planning, led and coordinated by a SENCO. Good practice of working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of children's individual progress, will help identify any child with special educational needs or disability. This graduated approach will be led and coordinated by our SENCO and appropriate records will be kept according to the Code of Practice.

Assess

In identifying a child as needing SEND support, the key person or teacher, working with the SENCO and the child's parents, will carry out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment will 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 will contact them, with the parents' agreement.

Plan

Where it is decided to provide SEND support, and having formally notified the parents, the key person or teacher and the SENCO, in consultation with the parents, will agree 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 will take into account the views of the child.

The support and intervention provided will 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 are identified and addressed. Parents will be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

Do

The child's key person or teacher will be responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, they will oversee the implementation of the intervention agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO will support the key person or teacher in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

Review

The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support will be evaluated by the key person

or teacher and the SENCO in full consultation with the child’s parents and taking into account the child’s views. Information will be shared with parents about the impact of the support provided.

Education and Health Plan (EHC)

Some children and young people may require an EHC needs assessment in order to decide whether it is necessary to develop an EHC plan. The purpose of an EHC plan is to make adjustments and offer support to meet the special educational needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care.

The local authority will conduct the EHC needs assessment and take into account a wide range of evidence, including:

- evidence of the child’s developmental milestones and rate of progress
- information about the nature, extent and context of the child’s SEND
- evidence of the action already being taken by us as the early years provider to meet the child’s SEND
- evidence that, where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided
- evidence of the child’s physical, emotional and social development and health needs, drawing on relevant evidence from clinicians and other health professionals and what has been done to meet these by other agencies.

We will then work with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that the child receives the support they need to gain the best outcomes.

We will review this policy annually to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the children/parents and our school.

Useful sources of information

For Parents and Professionals

- <https://potentialplusuk.org/> (for children with high learning potential)
- [BBC Tiny Happy People](#) (language skills activities)
- [British Dyslexia Association](#)
- [The Makaton Charity](#)
- [NHS Children’s Therapy Service](#) (physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech & language therapy)
- [Nuffield Early Language Intervention](#)
- [Selective Mutism Information & Research Association](#) (SMIRA)

- [Speech & Language info.](#)
- [Stammering Support](#)

For Professionals

- [Hampshire Inclusion Setting Support Officers](#) (links to advice and surgery bookings)
- [Montessori Education for Autism](#) (Wendy Fiddler)
- [National Association for Special Educational Needs](#)
- [National Association for Able Children in Education](#)

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the school	Date for review
September 2023	E. Wetherley, Caroline Imi	September 2024