

Children Who Have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

Policy Statement

At Little Learners Nursery, we are committed to providing an inclusive environment where all children are valued, respected and supported to achieve their full potential. Every child has the right to access high-quality early education and care, regardless of their abilities, needs, background or circumstances.

We recognise that some children may have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) that require additional support, intervention or reasonable adjustments. These needs may be temporary, long-term or lifelong. We work in partnership with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that every child receives the support necessary to make the best possible progress.

In accordance with our admissions policy, we are committed to offering places to children with SEND wherever reasonably possible and will make appropriate adjustments to ensure children can access our provision fully and safely. All children will be provided with a settling-in period tailored to their individual needs.

Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 Years (2015)
- Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
- Equality Act 2010
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework effective from 1 September 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current version)

Definitions

A child has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which requires special educational provision to be made for them.

A learning difficulty or disability means a child:

- Has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age; and/or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally available to children of the same age.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is:

A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Children with disabilities may not necessarily have SEND but may require reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access to nursery experiences and opportunities.

Aims

We aim to:

- Recognise and meet the individual needs of every child.
- Identify emerging SEND needs at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure all children can access a broad, balanced and inclusive curriculum.



- Promote positive outcomes for children with SEND.
- Work closely with parents as partners in their child's learning and development.
- Ensure children's voices, interests, preferences and aspirations are considered in planning and decision-making.
- Make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to participation and learning.
- Support children to develop confidence, independence and self-esteem.
- Work effectively with external agencies and specialists.
- Ensure all staff are appropriately trained and understand their responsibilities regarding SEND.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of nursery life.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision.

Identification of SEND

Where concerns arise regarding a child's development, learning, behaviour, communication, emotional wellbeing or physical development, practitioners will discuss these concerns promptly with parents and consider whether additional support, SEND intervention or specialist assessment may be required.

We identify needs through:

- Discussions with parents.
- Information gathered during registration and settling-in.
- Ongoing observations and assessments.
- Development reviews.
- Progress checks at age two.
- Information from previous settings.
- Referrals and discussions with relevant professionals.
- Child and family feedback.
- Multi-agency assessments and reviews.

Where concerns are identified, we will work with parents and other professionals to determine appropriate support and next steps.

Inclusive Practice

We will:

- Ensure all children are welcomed and included.
- Provide activities and experiences tailored to individual strengths and needs.
- Promote positive attitudes towards diversity and difference.
- Make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to participation.
- Adapt the environment, resources and learning opportunities where necessary.
- Support children to participate in all aspects of nursery life.
- Challenge discriminatory attitudes and practices.
- Promote positive role models and inclusive resources.

The Role of the SENCO

The nursery will appoint a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

The SENCO's responsibilities include:

- Supporting the identification of SEND.
- Coordinating SEND provision.
- Advising and supporting staff.
- Maintaining accurate SEND records.
- Liaising with parents.



- Liaising with external agencies and professionals.
- Supporting transitions between settings and schools.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Maintaining up-to-date knowledge of SEND legislation, guidance and local authority procedures.
- Supporting staff in implementing inclusive practice across the nursery.

The key person will remain responsible for the child's day-to-day learning and development.

Graduated Approach

The nursery follows the graduated approach outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

Assess

We gather information from:

- Parents
- Practitioners
- Observations
- Assessments
- Other professionals
- The child, where appropriate

to identify strengths, needs and barriers to learning.

Plan

We agree:

- Desired outcomes
- Strategies and interventions
- Responsibilities
- Review dates

with parents and, where appropriate, other professionals.

Do

The agreed support is implemented by practitioners, supported by the SENCO where required.

Review

Progress is reviewed regularly with:

- Parents
- Key person
- SENCO
- Other professionals
- The child, where appropriate

Support will be adjusted according to progress and identified needs.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise that parents know their children best and are essential partners in decision-making.

We will:

- Listen to parents' views and concerns.
- Share observations and assessments.
- Agree outcomes and support strategies together.
- Keep parents informed of progress.
- Support parents to access advice, assessments and services.
- Involve parents fully in reviews and planning.
- Respect confidentiality and family circumstances.



Where a referral to an external agency, specialist service or the Local Authority SEND Team is required, parental consent must be obtained before the referral is made. Parents will be required to complete and sign the relevant Local Authority referral documentation, including the Havering SEND Permission Form where applicable. If parental consent is not provided, the referral cannot proceed; however, the nursery will continue to work in partnership with parents to support the child within the setting and monitor their progress.

Child Voice

We recognise the importance of listening to children and involving them in decisions that affect them. Children's views, preferences, interests and aspirations will be sought through developmentally appropriate methods and used to inform assessment, planning and review processes.

Working with Other Professionals

We work closely with:

- Health Visitors
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Educational Psychologists
- Early Years SEND Teams
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Social Care Services
- Schools and other providers
- Local Authority SEND Teams

to ensure children receive coordinated support.

Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Information relating to a child's SEND will be shared appropriately with parents, schools, health professionals and relevant agencies, with consent where required and in accordance with data protection legislation.

Records will be stored securely and treated confidentially. Access will be limited to those with a legitimate professional need to know.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment

Where a child continues to experience significant difficulties despite targeted support through the graduated approach, the nursery may work with parents and professionals to request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment from the Local Authority.

If an EHC Plan is issued, the nursery will work in partnership with parents and professionals to implement the provision identified within the plan.

Early Help

Where a child and family may benefit from support from multiple services, the nursery may participate in or initiate an Early Help Assessment to ensure support is coordinated and effective.

Training

We will:

- Ensure staff understand their responsibilities regarding SEND.
- Provide induction training relating to inclusion and SEND.



- Access specialist training where required.
- Maintain a culture of ongoing professional development.
- Share knowledge and good practice across the team.
- Ensure staff understand their duties under the Equality Act 2010 and EYFS requirements.

Transitions

We recognise that transitions can be particularly significant for children with SEND.

We will work closely with:

- Parents
- Receiving schools
- Other providers
- Relevant professionals

to ensure information is shared appropriately and transition arrangements support the child's wellbeing and continuity of learning.

If We Cannot Meet a Child's Needs

We are committed to making every reasonable effort to meet children's needs.

Where significant concerns remain regarding our ability to meet a child's needs safely and appropriately, we will:

- Meet with parents.
- Review support arrangements.
- Seek additional specialist advice.
- Work with the Local Authority.
- Explore alternative arrangements where appropriate.

Any decision regarding a placement will only be taken after all reasonable strategies and adjustments have been fully explored.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of SEND provision will be monitored through:

- Assessment and progress data.
- SEND reviews.
- Parent feedback.
- Child feedback.
- Staff meetings.
- External professional advice.
- Complaints and compliments.
- Quality assurance processes.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where legislation or guidance changes.

This policy has regard to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework effective from 1 September 2026 and the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years.

Date policy last reviewed/updated	4 th August 2026	Reviewed by	Terri Noone - Interim Regional Nursery Manager Jodie Richards – Nursery Manager Charlie Walton – Nursery Manager
Date of next review/update	August 2027		