



INTEGRATING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES **AND SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice 2014 introduced several important changes to the ways in which educational establishments should work with and for children and young people with special needs and disabilities. These changes similarly affect early years settings, whereby the legislation now provides that children from birth to vulnerable young people of 25, have a right to certain entitlements under this Act. The Act also aimed at improving educational and developmental outcomes for children and young people with SEND, working at early intervention. However, St. Joseph's Nursery have always placed a priority in meeting the needs of children with identified needs and disabilities and have continually promoted integrated multi-professional working to support children's development.

We work in close partnership with the borough and fellow professionals, to provide a broad range of support systems to specifically aid those children who require further input and will also work in partnership with parent/carers, who become part of the graduated approach of individual planning processes for their child/ren, aimed at reaching a common set of outcomes. The nursery will also ensure that parent/carers are kept informed about what support systems and professionals are available to them and their child/ren are available locally, and/or more broadly in the borough.

Some children may require an Education, health or care plan (EHC) to be put in place, under the new regulations, if their child's need or disability is of a more complex nature, whereby we as the educators, work collaboratively, at a local level, with any health professionals and social workers (if appropriate to an individual child & family), sharing information through

regular meetings, in order to put achievable and realistic targets in place for those children to obtain, via individual action plans. These are regularly reviewed and monitored by both the key person and the centre SENCO (special educational needs officer). The SENCO is also responsible for working with schools and with the Local Education Authority (LEA) on behalf of children with SEND. Parent/carers are also part of this process.

The SENCO at St. Joseph's Nursery is Andrea Varga Pellizzon

The role of the SENCO within our centre is to:

- Work in partnership with parent/carers who have children with a disability or special need, as well as any other professionals involved with the child – under the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' Act 2015, The SEND Code of Practice 2014 and 'The Children and Families Act' 2014.
- To inform LEAs of children whom they think may have SEND and request the borough SENCO to come and carry out initial assessments of the child/ren.
- Co-ordinate the advice for statutory assessment and ensure a body of evidence is obtained from all the professional partners working with the child/ren, in preparation towards gaining an EHC for the child/ren.
- Partake in multi-agency meetings on assessments and formulating EHCs
- To link with Educational Psychologists at regular intervals
- To ensure accurate recordings with all users and professionals
- To ensure Individual Development Action Plans are completed for each child with SEND
- To participate in statutory assessment of a child in determining the appropriate educational setting, prior to the child reaching statutory school age.
- To plan and organise the diagnostic transfer meeting prior to the child starting at the designated Primary School

The Nursery is committed to providing services for individual children with a disability by taking into account their racial, cultural, religious and communication needs. Successful integration of a child with a disability into the nursery, which has been identified as suitable in terms of access etc, should include the following:

- Working in partnership with parent/carers prior to and during admission to the Nursery. The settling-in procedure may require a longer time span. A home visit may be appropriate and an opportunity for the family to visit the nursery, prior to admission.

- Appropriate staff-child ratios to be agreed with the nursery manager prior to the child being admitted – and where funds are available this can include budgeting for a 1-2-1 support for particular disabilities or special needs.
- Adequate access to specialised equipment and other resources also adequate access to the building
- Information on specialised training and current research on the relevant disability to be provided for staff
- Staff should ensure the integration of a child with a special need or disability is a positive experience for all the children in the centre, whereby promoting diversity and equality with all the children on an on-going basis is key to successful integration

The SENCO and the Nursery manager have a responsibility to the parent/carers of children with SEND to ensure the borough is meeting legal requirements, whereby:

- The LEA should conduct an EHC needs assessment for children under compulsory school age (Early Years) when the special educational provision required to meet the child's needs cannot reasonably be provided from the resources normally available to the early education provider or school, or when it is likely the child will need an EHC plan in school.
- Where young children do need an EHC plan, the local authority must seek advice from the early years setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC needs assessment and preparing an EHC plan. LEAs should consider whether the child's current early years provider can support the child's SEN or whether they need to offer additional support through a plan.

Date reviewed: January 2017

Next review: January 2018