



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

All children are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education. (DfE, p9, 2014) Our vision at Woodpeckers Pre-School is to provide a safe and caring learning environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities are supported to reach their full potential.

The Children's and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities (Kent County Council) to publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, transport, health and social care for children and young people aged 0-25 years in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have EHC plans. The purpose of this 'Local Offer' is to enable parents, carers, and young people to see more clearly what services are available and how to access them. The process extends to early years settings and the information below forms our settings 'offer' and shows how we provide for children with SEND.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator takes responsibility for delivering our settings 'offer' and supporting staff in their roles as key person to meet children's needs with SEN. The SENCO ensures any relevant issues are discussed regularly at staff meetings to maintain staff awareness when appropriate.

Our SENCO has completed specific SENCO training courses, Makaton training and regularly attends Network meetings and forums.

The SEN Co-ordinator is Sarah Bartholomew (SENCO).

Aims and Objectives of SEND Policy

For us to support children and families within our setting, we comply with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2017 and Equalities Act 2010 and have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 2014.

We aim to:

- ensure that our setting is inclusive to all children with SEND
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the pre-school's curriculum.
- to create an environment where all children are supported to reach their potential.
- to ensure that our children have a voice in the process.

- To work in partnership with parents and carers and other agencies
- to support parents and carers of children with SEND and help them to access support, enabling them to play an active part in supporting their child's education.
- to ensure that the SEN of children are identified, assessed and provided for.
- to bring children identified with SEND to the attention of the local authority and attend LIFT (Local Authority Forum Team) meetings.
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process.
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's SEN.
- to ensure staff receive training and support to enable them to meet the children's specific needs.

Early Identification

The benefits of early identification of SEN are widely recognised, and Woodpeckers Pre-School regularly assesses children's learning and development and progress against the Early Years Outcomes and Development Matters ages and stages of development as outlined in the revised Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2025. This information is gathered through a variety of sources, including parent/carers observations, daily observations, end of term summative assessments and other audits including Leavers Well-being and Involvement Scales, Every Child a Talker, and the 2 Year Progress Check (which carried out between the age of 24 and 36 months). This information is used to alert emerging difficulties and is shared with parents/carers.

Before a child joins our setting, parents and carers are encouraged to share as much information as possible about their child (either during trial sessions or home visits) with the key person and the SENCO so we may plan for their transition into the setting. Key person's will also share information with parents/carers when their child joins the setting about their child's strengths and needs.

Supporting Children with SEND

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or where's a child's progress gives cause for concern, practitioners will consider all the information about a child's learning and development in partnership with parents/carers and consider whether it is appropriate to seek specialist advice from beyond the setting. This initial discussion forms part of the 'graduated approach system' we use for identifying, assessing, and responding to children with SEND. This means using a step-by-step response through the various levels of intervention which are:

- discussion of concern.
- targeted support
- Educational Health and Care Plan (EHC)

This is a continuous cycle of assess, plan, do and review to ensure children with SEND are progressing and parents/carers are always part of the planning and review process.

It is important to remember that a delay in learning and development in the early years may or may not indicate that a child has SEN, as children's learning and development can equally be affected by other factors or circumstances. If it is thought that housing, family, or other domestic circumstances maybe contributing to the presenting behaviour, a multi-agency approach, supported by the use of approaches such as Early Help Assessment, should be adopted.

Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early year's 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.

Working with other Professionals

We have a Early Years Quality and Childcare Advisor who supports us with accessing outside professional help if needed and if deemed necessary by a panel of professionals we then have regular contact with other professionals such as Early Years Specialist Teachers, Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, Children's Health Centre Staff, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists and can signpost parents/carers to other professionals that may be able to help.

The child's key person and SENCO are always available for advice and support.

Transitions

We aim to gain as much information as possible from parent/carers about children joining our setting before they start at Woodpeckers Pre-School through home visits and trials sessions. Where children are already being supported by outside agencies, we will also aim to include them in the transition period into the school.

This information helps us assess and plan for children's care and learning and development needs before they start, so we can build up picture of children's current stages of learning and development and where possible adapt our environment and activities/routines to enable the child full access to our setting and curriculum. This information provides the pre-school with starting points for the development of an appropriate learning environment and curriculum for each child.

When children with SEN are transferring to a new early year setting or primary school, the pre-school are happy to support children throughout this transfer period (with the parent/carers permission) by holding transition meetings, accompanying children on visits, inviting new key person's/teachers into Woodpeckers to visit, and providing a written summary of children's learning and development to date, targeted approach forms and any other information documentation which is appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

We ensure the effectiveness of our SEND provision by collecting information from a range of sources, target plan reviews, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies views, inspections, and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated, and reviewed at least yearly.

We provide a complaints procedure

We monitor and review our policy annually.

This policy was adopted on 17th November 2014 and will be reviewed annually

Signed 
Steven White (Chairperson)

Trustee of Woodpeckers Preschool CIO
26th August 2025