

# OUR LOCAL OFFER FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)



**Qualified SENCO's:** Cheryl Traczyk and Rachel Traczyk

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By Rachel Traczyk

## WHAT IS A LOCAL OFFER AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT MY CHILD?

The purpose of the local offer is to inform parents of the local services available for children with special educational needs and how to access them.

## HOW DOES LITTLE SPARROWS KNOW IF A CHILD NEEDS EXTRA SUPPORT?

We operate a key person system in the nursery where each child has a key person and a back up key person. The key person observes their key child regularly and completes assessments using the Early Years Outcomes tool. This helps to identify any areas of support that the child may need. We aim to identify children with SEN as early as possible so support can be put in place quickly.

How concerns are raised:

- By a parent
- By a early years practitioner
- By other professional's i.e. speech therapist, health visitors
- When limited progress is being made
- When there is a change in the child's progress or behaviour.

When a child starts at Little Sparrows, we ask parents/carers to complete information about their child's development, likes/dislikes, routines and if they need any support. We advise home visits and gradual settling in sessions where the parent/carer and child's key person have an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the children's needs, interests and abilities.

The key person is responsible for observing, assessing and planning the child's learning to meet his/her individual needs. They will also make a judgment about whether a child is showing typical progress for their age, may be at risk of delay or is ahead for their age.

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels or where a child's progress gives cause for concern, the key person or Manager/SENCO will discuss this with the parent and together they can plan how best to support the child, including the child views in the process.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) are Cheryl Traczyk and Rachel Traczyk.

They work closely with all staff to make sure there are systems in place to plan, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the special educational needs practice and policy of the nursery. Individual learning plans and records are always shared with parents.

## HOW WILL STAFF SUPPORT MY CHILD?

At Little Sparrows Day Nursery we treat every child as an individual. We have high expectations of children regardless of special needs or disability. We have a highly qualified and experienced staff team who are confident in monitoring and assessing the ability of all children.

We will adapt practice, the environment and incorporate additional strategies where we feel it is necessary and where we feel it will benefit the child. Our SENCO's work collaboratively with the key person to provide personal plans for each child based on their ability and interest and to ensure targets and strategies are implemented appropriately. We have

policies and procedures in place which are reviewed to ensure that all children have access to the environment and learning resources.

To gain further support for the child and with parents/carers permission, our SENCO's liaise with other professionals such as the Area SENCO, Health Visitors and Speech Therapists.

### **What happens when a concern has been raised?**

- Where a concern has been raised, the key worker and SENCO will gather knowledge to plan for how best to support the child.
- The nursery will work together with the parents/carers and hold regular meetings to discuss plans, strategies and next steps.
- If appropriate, the SENCO/Manager will seek any additional information from outside agencies who could give further support.
- Specific targets will be recorded on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and shared with the parents/carer.
- This cycle of assessment, planning, doing and reviewing will continue to be repeated to support the child. This cycle called the Graduated Approach and further information can be found in the SEN Code of Practice.

### **What happens when progress is not being made?**

If the help given through an IEP does not enable the child to progress satisfactorily, it may be appropriate for the nursery, in consultation with the parents/carer to request a referral of a statutory assessment by the local authority. An education, health and care plan may be put in place to support the child.

Having the right support in place, as soon as possible, can be particularly helpful in getting the child right support that will help them, particularly when transitioning to school.

### **HOW ACCESSIBLE IS THE NURSERY ENVIRONMENT?**

Our nursery is situated in a small, detached bungalow. There is a ramp to the outside play areas. The front door has a step access however wheel chairs and pushchairs can gain access by going around the side of the building.

We have child sized toilets and sinks for the children to use which are easily accessible. Pictures and signs are used to support communication.

We support children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) by asking parents to write down different words in their child's home language with their meaning in English to aid communication with the child. This also helps with settling the child into nursery.

### **HOW ARE PARENTS/CARERS INVOLVED IN OUR NURSERY?**

Parental involvement is highly valued at our setting. The team work together with the parents to ensure that every child's learning is supported, and parents are involved at every step. Parents are given settling in forms when their child starts so that the key person can familiarise themselves with the child's routines and interests. We also ask parents to share their home experiences with the nursery throughout their journey with us.

Parents are also given a Welcome Book which contains information about our nursery, its routines, our policies and procedures. It also includes tips and suggestions to support children's developing language and how to introduce Montessori at home. Children are given a picture book with photographs of the nursery when they start which they can share with their parent/carer at home to familiarise them with the nursery whilst they are settling in.

We have an open door policy whereby we encourage parents/carers to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns with us – the management team are always available.

Parents receive verbal feedback each day for an exchange of information between nursery and home. We also seek out feedback from parents regarding our service each year through questionnaires to evaluate and improve our service. We hold regular parent meetings with our parents/carers which gives the opportunity to have face to face discussion with their child's key person / and the manager.

## **HELPING WITH TRANSITIONS**

### **What are the transition arrangements for supporting children and their families?**

We recognise that transitions can be difficult for any child and we take steps to work together with the child, their families and either the new setting or new room in the nursery, to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Staff are trained to observe their key children and as such will be sensitive to any changes in their behaviour and personality. We respectfully ask that parents inform us of any changes in the home environment that may impact on their child so staff can be aware of the reasons behind any potential changes in the child's character.

### **Moving Rooms**

If the child is due to move up to the older group (the Activity Room) due to age and stage readiness, we will work with the parents to ensure this is a smooth transition.

The child will spend short sessions in the new room to gradually build up familiarity of the environment and emotional security before their move becomes permanent. The child's key worker will go with the child on these visits.

### **Starting School**

Starting school is a huge transition and the nursery will do all it can to facilitate a smooth move. We have a variety of methods that support this:

- A range of resources that relate to going to school i.e. school role play, dressing up in school uniforms
- Photographs of the child's new school
- Story books about starting school
- Walks to local schools
- The nursery invites all schools to visit to meet the key person and child in a familiar setting.

If we feel a child will need additional support in school or has SEN identified then extra meetings are put in place with the parents, new school/setting, key person, SENCO/Manager and any other involved professional to discuss the child's areas of need, strategies that support the child and their interests.

Each child will have at least one last record of their learning which is recorded on a 'Progress to Date plan'. It will include a summary of their development, their strengths, any areas of support and their Early Years Outcomes age bands. This plan is shared with the next setting and helps the teacher have a good understanding of each child.

## **STAFF TRAINING EXPERIENCES**

All of our staff are level 2 or NVQ level 3 qualified or above and complete safeguarding and paediatric first aid training every 3 years. The Deputy Manager is level 6 and holds an Early Years Degree. Our SENCO's have received relevant Level 3 SENCO training.

Depending on the training need and children in our care, individual staff have received training in Makaton, Autism and Communication. The nursery also conducts monthly training sessions which keep the team up to date and equipped with relevant knowledge and skills to support individual children.