

## **SEND Information Report**

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability**

This information should be read in conjunction with the London Borough of Lewisham's local offer.

For further details on please follow this link:

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/my services/education/special-educational-needs/Pages/Local-offer.aspx>

### **Inclusive Practice at Chelwood:**

#### **Our approach to supporting children with SEN**

##### **Our commitment**

At Chelwood Nursery School we are committed to providing high quality and inclusive early years education enabling all children to learn through first hand experiences and play. We welcome children into our school community, recognising and celebrating each and every child's strengths and unique approaches to learning. We start by developing our understanding of each child – their interests, how they like to play and their needs - to plan exciting, motivating and challenging learning experiences for *all*.

Through personalising the curriculum in this way we aim to meet the diverse needs of individual children and remove potential barriers to learning that they might otherwise experience.

At the same time we take great care to identify additional needs and difficulties, including Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) at an early stage and work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that every child achieves the best possible outcomes, with carefully devised interventions and strategies and targeted support for children with SEND, which are integrated into whole school provision.

Our approach to supporting children with special educational needs is underpinned by the concept of entitlement and equality of opportunity in that all children have the right to equal access to the curriculum on offer and to develop to their full potential.

This approach enables us to meet our statutory duties, which include:

- making sure that children with SEN get the support they need with a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN at the earliest point
- ensuring that children with SEN engage in the activities of our school alongside children who do not have SEN.
- informing parents when we are making special educational provision for their children.

## Meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010

Chelwood Nursery School welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010, promoting equality of opportunity for disabled children and ensuring that we make reasonable adjustments (including the provision of auxiliary aids and services) to prevent them being put under substantial disadvantage.

We recognise that this duty is anticipatory and that we must make sure to consider in advance what adjustments might need to be made to support them and prevent that disadvantage.

We work hard to ensure through our inclusive practice that we remove barriers to learning. Our response to applications for children with SEN and disability is always to start with finding out as much as we can from parents, carers and professionals about each child's needs and then planning provision together *how* we will meet these needs.

## Recent changes in the SEN Code of Practice (2014)

Key changes include:

- The Code of Practice (2014) covers the **0-25 age range** and includes guidance relating to disabled children and young people as well as those with SEND
- A clearer focus on the participation of **children** and young people and **parents** in decision-making at individual and strategic levels
- A stronger focus on **high aspirations** and on **improving outcomes** for children and young people
- An emphasis on **joint planning** and commissioning of services to ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care
- The publishing of a **Local Offer of support** for children and young people with SEN or disabilities
- A **graduated approach** to identifying and supporting pupils and students with SEN, with **SEN Support** replacing Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus
- A co-ordinated assessment process and the new 0-25 **Education, Health and Care plan** (EHC plan) replace statements for children and young people with more complex needs
- There is a greater focus on support that enables those with SEN to succeed in their education and make a successful transition to adulthood

## **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for **special educational provision** to be made.

Children of compulsory school age may be described as having a **learning difficulty** or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

Children under compulsory school age have special educational needs if they are likely to fall within the above definition when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 children and Families Act 2014)

## **Definition of Special Educational Provision:**

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools or by relevant early years providers.

For children under two years of age, it is educational provision of any kind.

## **How we identifying a child's needs**

We understand how important it is to be able to respond as early as possible to children's SEND, particularly given that the majority of them will be with us for just 3 terms. Early identification of their SEN is therefore crucial.

Chelwood Nursery School has a rigorous observation-based assessment process (using the EYFS 'Development Matters'), which enables us to monitor and review children's progress and development, and to identify any areas of difficulty and potential SEN.

Our assessment process is also supported with a number of information gathering opportunities before children start:

- Pre-admission meetings with parents to gather family history
- Come and Discover sessions pre-admission
- Home visits
- Key person conversations
- Professional reports / information from previous settings
- Pre-admission TAC meetings (these support planning as well as assessment)

- Welcome Day
- Welcome Group supported by staff

We understand that children may experience a delay in their learning or development but may not have SEN. It is important to use all the information available to us – from within school, from parents and from outside specialists – to ‘unpick’ children’s needs and to support the identification of learning difficulties or disabilities that require special educational provision.

We understand similarly that challenging or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. We will always seek to identify underlying causes for the behaviour we see. For some children, family circumstances such as housing or a difficult domestic situation can be at the root. Chelwood has a well-established Team Around the Child approach for addressing and supporting children and families in such situations. Behaviour may also indicate other needs such as a communication difficulty and therefore require further assessment. (See School Behaviour Policy, 2015)

Children who are experiencing difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language, do not have SEN. For these children it is important to assess all areas of their learning and development to establish whether their language delay is related to learning English as an additional language or whether it arises from SEN or disability.

#### **The Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need and support:**

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

These areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for. We know that individual children may have needs which cut across all these areas e.g. children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder/Condition (ASD/ASC).

We know also that children’s needs are not fixed but may change over time. The special educational provision we make for individual children is based on understanding their individual strengths and needs rather than on a simple fit into one of these broad 4 areas.

#### **SEN support: A graduated approach**

Special Educational Provision is no longer split into distinct phases (Early Years Action, Early years Action Plus) Instead SEN support is provided as part of a **graduated approach** with 4 stages of action: **assess, plan, do, review**, a fluid and cyclical process which is continuously revisited.

## **What does this look like in Chelwood Nursery School?**

Some children will join our school with already identified SEN and / or disabilities. In these cases we will endeavour to gather as much information in advance of their start to enable us to plan for a successful transition into nursery school. This may include organising a Team Around the Child meeting, which brings together all professionals and parents with us to make plans for supporting children in the transition process including making any adjustments that may be required in advance. This process will be organised by our SENCO. Where children are in other early years settings, the SENCO will arrange to visit as part of the assessment / planning process and to support transition.

Chelwood plans many opportunities (as noted above) to gather information as part of our admissions process, which will support our understanding of individual children and their needs. Some of these involve our staff in making observations e.g. during Come and Discover sessions or home visits. We recognise that parents may not always share their children's SEN at this early stage when they are only just beginning to get to know us. Additionally they may not be aware of their children's SEN. Nevertheless, we see parents as crucial in supporting our understanding of their children and seek to involve them from the outset through sensitive relationships and our key person approach. When parents do share their children's needs with us we ask them to sign consent for information sharing between other professionals and specialists and ourselves.

Teachers use their detailed observation-based assessments to monitor and review individual children's learning and development on an ongoing basis. When there is cause for concern arising from this process; from observations of how children are interacting or behaving; from parental concerns that have been shared, teachers will seek to identify needs and plan interventions and strategies to address these. They will be supported through a process of collaborative problem solving and planning by the SENCO, and an SEN support plan will be drawn up.

## **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**

Chelwood has introduced SEN Support Plans to replace Individual Education Plans for children with identified SEN. These reflect the changing emphasis of the new legislation with its focus on parental involvement and ensuring that the child is at the centre of all planning and decision-making.

Our '**This is Me**' planning sheets provide a scaffold for the graduated approach and its 4 stages (see appendix 1). They share the same child-centred approach of the "My World" section of the new Education, Health Care plans (EHCP). (see appendix 2)

They are drawn up with parents and may involve the SENCO as well as teacher in a collaborative process, which takes participants through the process – assess, plan, do and review - under these key headings:

1. Here are my views
2. What do people admire about me?
3. What is important to me? Now and in the future
4. What is important for me?
5. Let's think about outcomes
6. What outcomes do we want to see next? How will we reach these outcomes?
7. This plan was completed by...
8. We will review my plan on...
9. Let's review my plan

The process aims to capture the voice of the child and begins with positive sharing of the child's strengths. This child-centred approach includes taking account of the child's own aspirations and the way they express their needs.

As part of the assessment process class teachers, parents and SENCO build a detailed picture together of what the child needs from us in order to learn and be included.

Once we have reached a detailed understanding of a child's needs, short-term outcomes are agreed and plans made to reach these with interventions and support.

A review date is set, at which the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress is reviewed. The child's class teacher, SENCO and parents are then able to evaluate the support strategies and their impact and in response to this they will set new outcomes for the child and try additional or new approaches, strategies or interventions.

This cycle of action is revisited in increasing detail and at least every 6 weeks in a graduated approach, which is coordinated by the SENCO.

### **Specialist advice and support**

When a child's progress continues to cause concern despite support, which has been planned for them, the SENCO will seek specialist advice from other professionals. This includes health and social services, Local Authority support services and voluntary organisations e.g. speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, ASD outreach team, charities with specific expertise ie. Asthma UK , which can be used to plan effective support.

We also use the advice and support of these specialist professionals and services to develop and/or access the appropriate equipment and facilities to meet the needs of the children with SEND.

Partnership working with a range of professionals is co-ordinated by the Inclusion and Diversity Leader / SENCo.

## **Requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment**

We will consider making a request for an EHC needs assessment if, despite having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet their special educational needs, the child has still not made expected progress. This process begins with a TAC meeting coordinated by the SENCO and involving parents and all professionals already engaged with the child.

## **Monitoring and Review**

In addition to the detailed individual records maintained by class teachers and informed by the observations made by all staff, which enable on-going assessment of children's progress, regular reviews take place each term to share progress with parents.

For children with SEN/D these reviews take place half-termly (as described above)

'This is Me' SEN support planning sheets are kept in children's files with copies filed centrally.

As part of the whole school provision mapping process class teachers will draw together their knowledge and understanding of *all* the children in their classes including their learning styles and schematic patterns in their play as well as any identified SEN/D which they then use in planning for all children.

The whole school provision map reflects high quality personalised planning for all *and* a broad overview of the support provided for SEN children, which is additional to and different from that provided for all children. Detailed information is found in the 'This Is Me' paperwork.

These on-going assessments and reviews are monitored and on at least a termly basis, enabling an evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision. Class teams will however be evaluating their curriculum provision on a daily basis in the team planning meetings.

## **SENCO role**

In line with the SEN code of practice Chelwood Nursery School has a SENCO who is a qualified teacher and has a National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination.

The key responsibilities of our SENCO include:

- overseeing day-to-day operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- Liaising with our Designated Teacher where a looked after child has SEN
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN
- Liaising with other schools and settings, outside professionals and specialists and acting a key point of contact with external agencies.

- Liaising with receiving schools to plan for transition including organising meetings and visits
- Working with the Head teacher and school governors to ensure that we meet our responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all children with SEN up to date

## **Complaints**

Any complaints should be dealt with in line with the school Complaints Procedure.

At Chelwood we place great importance on creating and maintaining positive relationships with our parents and carers and ensuring that they feel welcome and comfortable to share concerns with us.

Our SEN policy and practice places children and parents at the centre of provision planning and involves parents from the outset. It is therefore hoped that any parental concerns can be addressed as they arise, thus avoiding a situation in which they may end up as a complaint.

## **Chelwood SEN Local Offer**

### **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

*In line with new Government requirements, this statement identifies what the school can offer children with SEND, in terms of what is 'additional to' and 'different from' Chelwood's already inclusive provision, offered to all children.*

We start by developing our understanding of each child – their interests, how they like to play and their needs - to plan exciting, motivating and challenging learning experiences for *all*.

### **Staff expertise and training**

We have qualified Early Years specialist staff in all teams across the school, who have expertise in how young children develop and learn. This includes qualified teachers (with Qualified Teacher Status, QTS) with early year specialism. Class based support staff have Children's Workforce Qualifications Level 2 and Level 3.

Our NASCo qualified Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is a full time member of staff, and provides continuous support to staff teams. The SENCO works closely with outside professionals to ensure that we bring all available expertise into our work with children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).



We maintain our staffing levels above statutory requirement of 1 adult to every 13 children (1:13) where a qualified teacher is leading the class, and we maintain a ratio of 1:8. This enables us to be responsive to children's needs and to provide more focused small group interventions and specific individual support when required.

Our staff have a wide knowledge of how to support children with SEND through their qualifications, their experience working in early years settings and through specific training targeted at meeting specific SEND needs. For example:

- managing epilepsy,
- supporting the visually impaired and hearing impaired
- use of augmented communication systems
- supporting with social communication difficulties
- working with children with cystic fibrosis, diabetes, Autism,
- hypermobility and muscle weakness

Teaching and learning environments both inside and outside are constantly adapted and reviewed with individual children's needs in mind and specialist advice, support and training accessed through Team Around the Child working practices involving the child and family.

As described in the SEN code of Practice, children's needs may be identified broadly as:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Whilst these areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for we know that individual children may have needs which cut across all these areas e.g. children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We know also that children's needs are not fixed but may change over time. The special educational provision we make for individual children is based on understanding their individual strengths and needs rather than on a simple fit into one of these broad 4 areas.

The school has embraced the 'graduated response' approach to identifying children's needs swiftly and work closely together with parents and families to produce SEN support plans when we understand that SEN provision is needed - if children require additional support in a cyclical and regularly reviewed process: Assess, Plan, Do, Review. Families can expect the involvement and support of the SENCO as well as class teachers throughout this process. Our SENCO liaises with outside professionals and specialists and draws on their expertise as required into the SEN Support planning process. We currently work with the Educational Psychology service and have a link EP, the Drumbeat Outreach Team (social communication and interaction and Autism team), speech and language therapy service, Occupational therapy service and the Sensory team (for support for children with visual and hearing impairment), the Special Needs Nursing team (who can advise with continence issues). We also have links to our local Children's Centres who provide advice and support to families and have offered parenting courses.

When a child requires more support we will apply to the local authority for assessment of their Educational, Health and Care needs. Families will be supported through out this process.

## **Interventions and strategies for children will always be personalised to the individual children and may include:**

### **Communication and interaction**

- Visual timetables, prompts and routines to support understanding, independence and access.
- Regular 'Talking Tigers'(speech and language intervention) sessions.
- Total communication approach with staff trained to use Makaton signing, as well as visual symbols, prompts and cues to support understanding and communication.
- 1:1 adult supported activities including surprise bag and treasure box sessions to develop shared attention and early language skills.
- Paired play experiences supporting social skills and interaction.
- Close working with speech and language therapists including making referrals to their service and integration of advice into our interventions and support in school.

### **Cognition and learning**

- Early identification of a child's needs and difficulties through staff with child development expertise.
- Small group, paired and one-to-one sessions, take place regularly to meet individual and groups of children's specific needs.
- We buy into the Lewisham Educational Psychologist (EP) Team services and utilise this expertise to meet individual needs
- We work closely with the Drumbeat ASD Outreach Team to meet individual children's needs.
- We make referrals, as required, to the Paediatricians based at Kaleidoscope with parental consent to support a deeper understanding through assessment of individual children's development and draw on their advice and expertise.

### **Social, mental and emotional health**

- All class staff are trained in their observation of children, and make regular assessments of children's emotional well-being and involvement.
- Specific teaching of social skills and language to enable social engagement eg. turn-taking and sharing, adult-supported paired play, taught phrases "Can I have a turn?"
- 'Look what I can do!' books promote positive self esteem and involve families in celebrating children's achievements.
- At Chelwood each child and family has a named **Key Person** whose role is to develop a close and supportive relationship with the child and family.

- Role play, puppets and stories are used to target emotions issues and support expression of anxiety.
- We draw expertise from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to support children and families with emotional needs
- Curriculum which emphasises use of outdoor space and nature in promoting well-being.
- Flexible use of the school environment to meet children's social emotional needs eg. creating cosy safe places, utilising non classroom areas.
- Use of the 'empathetic approach' to support children with expressing feelings and regulating their emotions

### **Sensory and/or physical**

- Use of Sensory boxes to support sensory stimulation.
- Close working relationship with professionals including Sensory Team for those who are visually or hearing impaired, Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists, to inform planning for individual children and to advise if additional adaptations to the physical environment are needed.
- Specific planning for children's physical development inside and outside.
- Staff trained in the link between early physical experiences and brain development, which informs planning of physical learning experiences and support of families.
- Commitment to provide extensive fine manipulative, malleable and tactile sensory experiences for children eg. messy play

### **Family Partnership**

We are committed to working closely with families, utilising the role of the Key Person, and prioritising support for families in order to remove barriers to their children's learning. We have a well-established approach to drawing in professionals to provide this through the Team Around the Child (TAC).

We meet with all our families before they start nursery to gather information and draw on the expertise that parents have of their children and where there are already specialists involved we will organise TAC meetings before children start so that we can make plans and any adjustments that might be needed so that they make a smooth transition into Chelwood.

Please see our Inclusion and SEND policy and Accessibility policy for detail relating to our provision for Special Educational Needs and Disability.