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

Mudeford Wood Playgroup aims to provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs. We are committed to the inclusion of all children. We believe all children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes alongside each other through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn together.

Mudeford Wood playgroup recognise that some children may have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in a child’s life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. At all times we will work alongside each child’s parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.

We are committed to providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities according to their individual circumstances, and the playgroup’s ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care. All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the playgroup according to their individual needs.

Where we have emerging concerns about a child and/or where a child has identified additional needs or a disability, we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and any support the child or family may need to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:

* Liaising with the child’s parent/carer.
* Observing each child’s development.
* Liaising with any relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family.
* Seeking any specialist help or support.
* Reading the child’s reports and medical information.
* Attending any assessments or review meetings with the local authority/professionals
* Attending relevant training.

**Legal Framework and definitions**

The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:

* Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years
* The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
* The Equality Act 2010
* Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
* Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (from September 2014)
* Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

We use the definitions set out in the law to describe SEN and disabilities.

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

A learning difficulty or disability means that a child of compulsory school age has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children of the same age; and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the sort of facilities generally provided for others of the same age.

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational provisions that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age. A child under compulsory school age has SEN if they are likely to have a learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as ‘a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. ‘Long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’. The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEN definition.

**Our aim**

Mudeford Wood Playgroup has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2014). We have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEN and disabilities.

* We recognise each child’s individual needs through gathering information from parents and others involved with the child on admission and through our procedures for observation and assessment.
* We ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and disabilities and have regard to the guidance given in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014.
* Plan, provide or help parents to obtain any additional help or support for any needs not being met by the universal service provided by the playgroup.
* We include all children and their families in our provision.
* We provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents/carers and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
* We provide well-informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
* We identify any emerging concerns that might suggest a child has special educational needs and/or disabilities at the earliest opportunity and plan for those needs through a range of strategies.
* We share any information received and assessments made by the playgroup with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need.
* We work together with both parents/carers and any relevant professionals to write an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs assessment when the playgroups own actions are not helping the child to make good progress.
* We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet the individual children’s needs, including health services and the local authority, and seek advice, support and training where required.
* We monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments and seek specialist equipment and service if needed.

The role of the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)

The settings current SENCo is: Danielle Kenny (Dee)

The role of the SENCo is to provide a lead for staff in relation to SEN and disabilities and to make sure procedures are followed, appropriate records kept and parents involved. The child’s key worker will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised program. The particular responsibilities of our SENCo are:

* Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting’s approach to identifying and meeting SEN.
* Advising and supporting colleagues.
* Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insight inform action taken by the setting.
* Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.
* Ensuring the transition to school is smooth and they have all relevant paperwork.

**Graduated approach**

In line with requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, we take a graduated approach to working with children with emerging concerns and their families.

This approach includes;

* An analysis of the child’s needs including whether we should seek more specialist help from health, social services or other agencies.
* An agreement about the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on progress and a date of review (support plan).
* Implementation of the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on the progress and a date for review.
* A review of the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child’s progress by the key person, SENCo, the child’s parent/carer and the views of the child, including any agreed changes to outcomes and support.
* Revisiting this cycle of action in increasing detail and frequency including seeking further specialist help to secure good progress until the SENCo, key person, the child’s parent/carer and any other professional involved agree intervention is no longer needed or decide to request an education, health and care needs assessment.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment and Plan

If the help given through the playgroup’s graduated approach is not sufficient to enable the child to make satisfactory progress, we may request, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, an assessment of the child’s needs by the local authority. This is called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. The assessment will decide whether a child needs an EHC assessment plan. This plan sets out in detail the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child who has SEN or a disability. The local authority will consult with parents and let them know the outcome of the assessment.

Early help assessment

If we believe a child and their family would benefit from support from more than one agency, for example where a child may have difficulties linked to poor housing or difficult domestic circumstances, we may request support from the child’s health visitor who would carry out an assessment to get early help for the family.

Common Assessment Framework guidelines

At Mudeford Wood Playgroup we see the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as a national tool that aims to help practitioners assess children’s additional needs and bring together the extra services they need more effectively. It aims to bring together all professionals working with the child to ensure their individual needs are met.

The CAF will ensure early intervention when practitioners in the playgroup have concerns regarding the additional needs a child may have.

The CAF is not used if a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. In these situations, practitioners must follow the Mudeford Wood Playgroup Safeguarding policy and procedures.

The manager will undertake CAF training in the local area to ensure they understand local guidelines.

In the event that a keyworker feels that a child will not make sufficient progress towards the early learning goals (which summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of reception year) without additional services, they must inform the manager. The key person will talk to the child’s parent/carer regarding our observations then follow local guidelines to find out if a CAF is in place for the child already.

If there is not a CAF in place then the keyperson and the SENCo, with the parents permission, will follow local guidelines to complete the CAF. The manager will then ensure the CAF is delivered and reviewed as appropriate.

Early Support

Where children have disabilities, we may seek additional help and resources through the Early Support Programme which co-ordinates health, education and social care support for the parents and carers of disabled children from birth to adulthood.