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Special Educational Needs and Disability

This policy is about our approach to the inclusion of:

- Children with special educational needs
- Children with disabilities
- Children with medical needs
- Children with any other need which could affect their access to the curriculum, their development and progress, or their enjoyment.

This policy is written in line with the SEND Code of Practice document January 2015

This policy describes the way we meet the need of children who experience barriers to their learning, which may relate to sensory or physical impairment, learning difficulties or emotional or social development. They may also encounter difficulties relating to their environment, including the learning environment they experience at St Thomas' preschool.

Please see Glossary for explanation of abbreviations (SEN, SEND, SENCO, EHCP, SEN Support Plan)

Our Approach

Aims and objectives of the policy:

- To ensure that the SEN code of Practice (2015) and the Equalities Act (2010) are implemented effectively across the preschool. To ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination against children with SEN and disabilities.
- To see the 'whole child', not just the need. We want all children to be valued just as they are, and we recognise that every child makes a special and unique contribution to life at St Thomas' preschool.

- To ensure children with SEN and/ or disabilities are viewed in a positive way by all members of the school community and that inclusive provision is positively valued by staff, parents and carers.
- To have high aspirations for children with SEND to achieve their full potential
- To enable each child to enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum at St Thomas' Preschool through differentiated planning. To offer all children opportunities for rich first-hand experiences, for making choices, and for play.
- To involve parents and carers at every stage in plans to meet their child's additional needs. To provide flexible support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families on roll in the preschool and in the local community.
- To consult with and involve children in planning for their education as far as is appropriate given their age and stage of development. We aim to always consider children's interests and preferences and offer them choices.
- To help all children to learn about diversity, special needs and disabilities, in a positive and supportive atmosphere.
- To support staff in learning about the different needs and disabilities of children on roll, and being confident and able to engage with all children.
- To have systems to review the effectiveness of our work from the perspectives of a range of people, including parents and professionals leading to changes and improvements.

We will respond to each child in ways which take account of her or his special needs and varied life experiences.

We recognise that children learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and development. Many pupils, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term.

At St Thomas' Preschool, we aim to identify these needs as soon as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve to his or her full potential. However we are aware that many difficulties are resolved through the maturation process and that children develop at different rates resulting in some children only needing extra support for a limited period.

We recognise that every year, in the cohort of children starting at St Thomas' Preschool there is the possibility of children who have:

- Speech and language delay
- Challenging behaviour
- Difficulties in focusing attention
- Delayed physical development
- Developmental co-ordination disorders

Our main response to this is through working positively with children and families, building on their strengths, resilience and deep understanding of their child. The close partnership with parents, the high quality of care offered to the children through our key person system, and the careful control of the preschool environment (indoors and out) help many children to settle and thrive in the preschool.

Additional Funding to support children with SEND

We are able to bid each term for some additional funding to support children with SEN . This is used to offer extra support to children with SEN Support Plans to work on an identified area of difficulty through some one-to-one adult support or in a small specialist group.

Monitoring Provision

Monitoring is carried out by the Area SENCO who reviews the work supporting individual children. Professional support and feedback is sought via work with the Educational Psychologist, and close partnership with the Child Development Team.

The SEND Co-ordinator or 'SENCO' is Lynda Patching. The responsibility of monitoring SEN provision offered offered via the outreach team is Preschool leader and Manager - Claudine Noury

Staff Training in SEND

The Preschool leader and SENCO are responsible for co-ordinating training for staff that supports their work with children with SEND. Training is offered in a range of ways as follows;

- The SENCO offers guidance and support to staff directly via discussion and joint observation of children
- Staff learn new information and strategies through professional discussions at IEP review meetings
- Professionals who support children with SEND may visit the preschool and offer advice individually to practitioners or to groups of staff via staff meetings or training.
- The SENCO attends termly cluster meetings, giving advice and guidance to SENCO's.
- Staff may attend CPD courses offered by the local authority
- Staff may attend accredited courses
- Staff may visit and learn from other early years settings

Arrangements for coordinating SEN provision

In line with the SEN Code of Practice 2015 (SEND Code 2015), we offer a 'graduated' response to teaching and learning for children with SEND. The graduated response includes a cycle of assess, plan, do and review and for children with special needs the response becomes increasingly individualised as we build up a detailed picture of the child's strengths and difficulties.

The SENCO has responsibility for overseeing and leading the process of 'Assess, plan, do, review' and for ensuring that communication with children, families and outside agencies is as smooth as possible.

Stage 1 Identification of a special educational need or disability.

Identification of a child's special need or disability happens in a range of ways;

- Some children enter the setting with information and possibly previous assessment of their SEND. The child and family may already have a professional team working with them such as the 'Child Development Team'. In these cases some preparatory work can be done before the child starts Preschool to ensure they have a positive and safe start. This is particularly true for children with identified medical needs when a Health Care Plan (see glossary) is created before the child is left in the setting without his or her parents.
- Parents or carers may raise a concern about a child's development at any time during a child's time in the nursery.
- Preschool staff or other professionals may raise a concern about a child's development, either through observation and interaction with the child, via the assessment system when tracking

a child's progress or via information shared with them by the child's family. Staff are encouraged to share any concerns immediately with the SENCO.

- We use the Early Years Foundation Stage developmental outcomes or 'progress matters' to help us assess if a child's progress is within the expected range of development in a particular area or if it is behind or ahead.
- We also offer the Early Years Foundation Stage 'Two Year Progress Check' for all children on roll in the nursery between their second and third movement and we are currently piloting the new 'Integrated Two Year Check' with health professionals. The two year checks offer us a standardised way to assess children's progress against expected levels.

Initial response to a concern or identified need

- The SENCO will initially explore any concerns raised or identified needs via discussion with staff or examining any additional information such as reports from outside agencies. If the concern has been brought from a staff member the SENCO may ask them to seek further information either via observation of the child or discussion with the child's parents. The SENCO will also observe children to clarify concerns or gather information.
- As soon as a concern is clearly raised or identified the SENCO will lead the process to fully discuss the child's needs with their parents. From this discussion several courses of action or a combination of courses are possible.

Response to an identified special need or disability

Via discussion with the child's parents, the Key Person, SENCO and any other professionals already supporting the family we respond in a range of ways, including a combination of ways. The SENCO leads other staff in this process. We offer different levels of support depending on the child's level of need. All levels of support in the preschool are termed 'SEN support'. We always consider how to work in partnership with outside agencies. We may plan;

- To continue monitoring the child's progress in line with the assessment policy for all children via our tracking system and regular termly reviews with families. We may choose for example particular termly targets that are linked to a child's particular need.
- To make an SEN Support Plan for a child focusing on the areas that have been identified. This might include increased access to an aspect of provision such as

Developmental Movement Play (DMP) or small language groups. See below for further detail on how we write SEN Support Plans.

- To make a health care plan for a child with the input of at least one health professional with knowledge or access to knowledge of the child's medical needs.
- To refer the child for further support to a professional agency, for example the Art Therapy Service, Speech and Language Therapy Service or Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS). We may also seek advice or support from a specialist service to inform our planning, for example the Area SENCO with responsibility for Autism.

At any point in a child's time in the preschool their plans could be reviewed and we may choose to respond differently or to increase, decrease or end our level of extra support for a child. The key to planning is that it is flexible and responsive to new information or changes in the child or the child's family circumstance.

Monitoring plans made for children

- Targets for children's learning and development are set termly by Keypersons in conversation with the child's parents. Progress is monitored via the assessment policy in 'profile books' (see Glossary) and via observation and tracking against the developmental outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (see Assessment Policy). Parents or staff may arrange more frequent meetings if they feel that is appropriate.
- Health Care Plans are routinely reviewed at termly review meetings or in the light of any new information regarding a child's health or medication. They may also be reviewed at a multi-agency SEN Support Plan review meeting.
- SEN Support Plans are either reviewed at the child's termly review or, if outside agencies are involved, on an SEN Support Plan review day held approximately six times a year. On SEN Support Plan review days the Educational Psychologist facilitates the reviews with the SENCO. The SEN Support Plan review day dates are set at the beginning of each term to give outside agencies the best chance to be able to plan ahead and attend or submit contributions to the reviews.

Ending intervention to support an SEN or disability

Some children will need extra support, but it is important to remember that, either in response to the intervention, or their access to preschool provision or simply through maturation and the support of their family that children may not need to continue to have additional support throughout their time at the nursery. When this happens, in full consultation with the child's

family we discontinue additional support.

Individual Education Plans (SEN Support Plans)

An SEN Support Plan includes several (usually 2-4) short term targets and the strategies to help children reach those targets to enable progress. It always includes the arrangement to review the plan. The targets are clear, measurable in some way and designed to be achievable by the following review. SEN Support Plans should include anything that is additional or different to the general provision offered to all children. However sometimes it is appropriate to include how a practitioner will offer extra support to allow a child increased access to an area of standard provision.

The SEN Support Plans also contain a brief record of any other issues discussed with the family and/or professionals that might impact on the child's development.

Following or during an SEN Support Plan review the SENCO will record changes on the plan and forward copies to the child's parents and other professionals supporting the child, with parental permission.

Partnerships with other Early Years Providers

Where a child is attending more than one Early Years Setting we endeavor to work in as close a partnership as possible with the other provider, with explicit parental permission. This might include sharing health care plans or holding joint SEN Support Plan reviews or generally sharing information.

Request for statutory assessment and Education Health Care Plans

For a child who is not making adequate progress, despite a period of SEN support, and in agreement with the parents/carers/carers, we may request the Local Authority to make a statutory assessment in order to determine whether it is necessary for the child to have an **Education Health Care Plan (See Glossary)**. Children have Education Health Care Plans when their needs cannot be met through the 'local offer' (See Glossary) of provision for children with SEND. All children who are transferring to a special school are likely to have an Education Health Care Plan and some children with exceptional needs in mainstream schools may also have one.

When an application is made there are different possible outcomes; the child's needs don't meet the threshold for an EHCP and continues with SEN Support; the child is given a revised co-ordinated SEN Support plan, or an assessment for an EHCP is granted. Families are supported through this process by the SENCo and Area SENCo.

If an assessment is granted then the SENCO and local authority will co-ordinate the schools and the parent's contribution to the assessment process and facilitate other professionals to gather information about the child in the setting. It is important that this is done in a timely way, particularly if a child will be making the transition to primary school. Parents are fully involved in all stages of the assessment process and the local authority will allocate a key worker from the SEN team to support families through the process. Planning, provision, monitoring and review processes continue as before while awaiting the outcome of the request.

Education Health Care Plans

Education Health Care Plans are reviewed at least annually to consider the appropriateness of the provision and to recommend to the LA whether any changes need to be made, either to the EHCP or to the funding arrangements for the child.

Some children are awarded an EHCP just before their entry to primary school. In this case the SENCO will liaise with the receiving school using the EHCP as material for the discussion in planning for the child's needs in the new setting.

Transition to Primary School (or another Early Years setting)

All children are sensitive to change and change may induce a child to regress or falter in their development. Children with difficulties in processing information, with mobility issues or any form of SEND are likely to find the transition to primary school or any new setting even more challenging than normally developing children. Families of children with SEND may also find the choices they need to make are more complex than those facing other families.

We make plans to offer extra support to all children with SEN or a disability when they are about to transfer to a new setting. These usually include a visit to the new setting with their Key person as well as a parent and use of photos of the new setting or new significant people to help the child think about the change.

We support parents by offering a meeting with the educational psychologist in the Autumn term specifically for parents of children with SEND around choosing schools. We also plan carefully with parents and hold a 'transition meeting' before a child is due to transfer with staff from the new setting and any other relevant professionals to ensure there is a smooth and supported flow of information. This offers a chance for the new setting to plan and allows families to communicate their knowledge, hopes and any concerns to new staff with the support of professionals that they know well.

Glossary

Equalities Act 2010

This act includes a duty on all schools to publish information each year about their plans to tackle discrimination, particularly towards with protected characteristics. Protected characteristics include having a disability.

Health Care Plan

If a child suffers from a medical condition that might endanger his or her life or cause severe illness or is subject to a programme of medication then they are required to have a Health Care Plan before they are left in the care of nursery staff. This plan must be completed by or checked by a health care professional who knows the child's needs well or has access to that information. The child's parents also fully participate in writing the plan and sign it, along with the head teacher. Examples of children who might require a health care plan are a child with a severe allergy that could engender anaphylactic shock or a child who suffers seizures or has regular medication to control an on-going and serious condition.

SEN and SEND

These terms refer to 'special educational needs' and 'special educational needs and/or disability'.

SENCO

This stands for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. The role of the SENCO is outlined clearly in the Code of Practice 2015. The SENCO is charged with liaising with outside professionals, staff and families, co-ordinating and facilitating the support for children with SEND, arranging training for staff and generally ensuring that the code of practice is fully adhered to.

Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

If a child has severe and complex SEND and their needs cannot be met by the local offer then they may be assessed as needing an Education Health Care Plan. The assessment is carried out in a co-ordinated way by professionals from health, education and other agencies as appropriate. The child's family and, as far as possible the child themselves must be fully involved in creating the plan. The plan sets out the child's needs, outcomes sought for the child, the special provision required and the child's interests and aspirations. It will also include the name of the school the child is/will attend.

The Local Offer

The local offer is provided by Islington (and all other local authorities) to give clear and up-to-date information about the support and provision for SEND in the local area. You can find Islington's local offer at:

<http://www.islington.gov.uk/services/social-care-health/disabled-people/local-offer/Pages/default.aspx>

Profile books

Each child at St Thomas preschool has their own Profile book, which contains observations of the child by their Keyperson. It is designed to share with families some of the child's experiences at nursery and to celebrate their progress as they grow and develop

Detailed electronic observations shared with parents

Each child at St Thomas preschool has their own electronic observation file carried out termly, which contains detailed observations of the child by their Keyperson. It is designed to share with families some of the child's experiences at nursery and to celebrate their progress as they grow and develop.

This policy was adopted by St Thomas' Preschool on April 2023 and will be reviewed in April 2024.

Appendices to follow

1. Provision Map
2. Example of an Individual Education Plan proforma

<p><u>Educational psychologist (EP)</u></p>	<p>Amanda Holgate</p>	<p>Support can be requested by Manager or SENCO</p>	<p>Children with SEND who have SEN SUPPORT PLANS and children where staff are requesting advice and/or support</p>	<p>Programme negotiated with EP by SENCO; staff may raise children for consideration</p>	<p>With explicit permission from their families, The EP may observe children and write reports. The EP also contributes to the process of statutory assessment.</p>
<p><u>Health visitors</u></p>	<p>Bingfield and Finsbury Health Visiting teams</p>	<p>Daily, universal service of home-visiting and centre-based support</p>	<p>HVs carry out own programmes with children and families</p>	<p>Any member of staff with medical concerns about a child can ask for SENCO to make referral to the HV team for advice/a check</p>	<p>Health visitors are involved in two year health checks and the integrated two year old check</p>

<p><u>Speech and Language Therapy and therapist</u></p>	<p>Speech and Language Therapist</p>	<p>Support can be arranged by SENCO/ manager</p>	<p>Children with delayed or disordered language, directly or via training for staff</p>	<p>Via observation from nursery staff and/or SENCO</p>	<p>Referrals may be made to the Chatterpillars, or Little leaps groups or to the SALT service for assessment</p>
<p><u>Chatterpillars and Little Leaps stay and play groups</u></p>	<p>Children's Centre Speech and language therapist and outreach team staff</p>	<p>Approximately Weekly</p>	<p>Children who may have delayed and/or disordered language.</p>	<p>By nursery and outreach staff through observation or via the SALT service.</p>	<p>Informal assessment from the Speech and Language Therapist and/or referred on to full SALT assessment</p>

<p><u>Social Communication Team</u></p> <p>And</p> <p><u>Early Years Development Team</u></p>	<p>Health Teams located centrally typically consisting of professionals such as Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapists, Clinical Psychologists, Dieticians and support workers.</p>	<p>Through home visiting and centre-based contact with families. Includes support with transition into nursery and into primary school. The teams work with the SENCO in the preschool in the graduated response.</p>	<p>Children aged from birth to five with special needs and disabilities.</p> <p>SC team is for children with Autistic Spectrum disorder. EYD team is for children with other forms of developmental delay.</p>	<p>Referral from Family Support Worker, health visitor, GP etc. children are allocated to a team.</p>	<p>Informal and formal assessment by team.</p>
<p><u>Early Years Advisor for children with Visual Impairment</u></p>	<p>Nicky Joseph (Early Years Advisory Team)</p>	<p>By request from the SENCO or other staff, Nicky will assess provision or provide individual information/advice</p>	<p>Children with visual impairments</p>	<p>Referrals made through SENCO after medical confirmation of impairment</p>	<p>Informal assessment by SENCO with Nicky Joseph</p>

<u>Area Senco</u>	Pauline Foster	Through advice and support provided on request	All children with SEND via the SENCO	The support is regularly provided by the LA to monitor practice and provision	Through discussion with SENCO
<u>Referral to community based support and 'local offer'</u>	SENCO and other staff in the nursery inform all parents of the Local Offer and in particular two organisations;	Families of children with SEND should be informed at the home visit or at another early stage of the local offer and these two organisations	All families with children with SEND.	All families with children with SEND offered information as they start their place and at any point they require additional support.	n/a

<p><u>Nasen SEND Gateway</u></p>	<p>NASEN (a professional association for supporting those working in SEND)</p>	<p>Via the online resource 'SEND Gateway'</p> <p>www.sendgateway.org.uk/</p>	<p>Support for SENCO and other staff in the form of shared resources and information</p>	<p>As and when needed for staff development</p>	<p>n/a</p>
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Provision ma





Appendix 2 Example of Individual Education Plan

Individual Plan for X

DOB 01/02/23

Date of plan; beginning 1st September 14 at nursery date of review; October 14 2023

Present; Parents, SENCO, Educational Psychologist, Early Years Development Team professionals (SALT/OT)

My goals	How you can help me achieve this	Who, when?	How did I do?
			
<p>Social interaction X will talk and/or play with another child at least once a day</p>	<p>Adults will play structured games (dice games, cards and other) with another child and support X in role play and other play with other children</p>	<p>SENCO and/or Key person once a day</p>	
<p>Physical development X will be able to go up 4 steps and come down 2 steps</p>	<p>Staff will support X to use the steps on the 'climbing frame' and elsewhere. Her family will encourage her at home</p>	<p>SENCO and/or Key person at least three times a week (record on target sheet</p>	
<p>Communication and cognitive X will be able to remember and match two pictures at least once</p>	<p>Adults to play picture memory games with X and encourage discussion of the pictures. (matching</p>	<p>SENCO and/or Key person at least three times a week</p>	

during a memory game. She will be able to comment on them.	games) Make games featuring X and her key group		
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Discussion

- **X's family will continue to encourage her to use the toilet over the Summer break and on-going.**

