

5.1 Supporting children with special education needs and disability policy

Policy statement

This policy has been created regarding:

- The SEND Code of Practice 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Statutory Framework for the EYFS

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) code of practice.

The pre-school, has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice to identify, assess, and make provision for children's special educational needs.

At Perins Pre-school, we use the SEND Code of Practice (2015) definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability: A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

Statement of intent

At Perins Pre-school, we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children are cared for and educated to develop to their full potential alongside their peers through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn from each other. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs, and we work hard to ensure no children are discriminated against or put at a disadvantage because of their needs. Each child's needs are unique, and we do not attempt to categorise children.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents to meet their child's individual needs and develop to their full potential. We are committed to working with any child who has a special educational need and/or disability and making reasonable adjustments to enable every child to make full use of the setting's facilities. All children have a right to a broad and well-balanced early learning environment.

Where we believe a child may have additional needs that have previously been unacknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish if any additional action is required.

We undertake a progress check of all children at age two in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Statutory Framework for the EYFS to support early identification of needs.

We will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals if we identify any areas where a child's progress is less than expected to establish if any additional action is required. This may include

- Liaising with any professional agencies.
- Reading any reports that have been prepared.
- Attending any review meetings with the local authority/professionals.
- Observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly.

All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the pre-school according to their individual needs. We will:

- Recognise each child's individual needs and ensure all staff are aware of, and have regard for, the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

- Ensure that all children are treated as individuals/equals and are supported to take part in every aspect of the day according to their individual needs and abilities.
- Include all children and their families in our provision.
- Identify the specific needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and meet those needs through a range of strategies.
- Ensure that children who learn at an accelerated pace e.g. 'more able' are also supported.
- Encourage children to value and respect others.
- Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs and identify a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) who is experienced in the care and assessment of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training relating to SEND and the SEND Code of Practice
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, adjust, and seek specialist equipment and services where required
- Challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices.
- Promote positive images and role models during play experiences of those with additional needs wherever possible.
- Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning.
- Work in partnership with parents and other agencies to meet individual children's needs, including the education, health, and care authorities, and seek advice, support and training where required.
- Share any statutory and other assessments made by the pre-school with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need.

Our pre-school Special Education Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinators (SENCO) are Michelle Osman (level 3 SEND award) and Jemma Warwick.

The role of the Senco

The role of the SENCO In our setting includes:

- 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 insights inform action taken by the setting.
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.
- taking the lead in implementing the graduated approach and supporting colleagues through each stage of the process.

We will:

- Designate a named member of staff to be the SENCO and share their name with parents.
- Have high aspirations for all children and support them to achieve to their full potential.
- Develop respectful partnerships with parents and families.
- Ensure parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education and where possible include the thoughts and feelings voiced by the child.
- Signpost parents and families to our Local Offer to access local support and services.
- Undertake formal Progress Checks and Assessments of all children in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice
- Provide a statement showing how we provide for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and share this with staff, parents, and other professionals.
- Ensure that the provision for children with SEN and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the pre-school through training and professional discussions.
- Make reasonable adjustments to our physical environment to ensure it is, as far as possible suitable for children and adults with disabilities using the facilities.
- Provide a broad, balanced, aspirational early learning environment for all children with SEN and/or disabilities and differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities.
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families, including transition arrangements to other settings and schools. (See our transitions policy).
- Use the graduated response system to assess, plan, do and review to ensure early identification of any SEND.

- Ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their parents are consulted at all stages of the graduated response, considering their levels of ability.
- Review children's progress and support plans every 8 weeks and work with parents to agree on further support plans.
- Provide privacy of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities when intimate care is being provided.
- Raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. Makaton trained staff.
- Ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. additional support reviews, Education and Healthcare (EHC) plans, staff and management meetings, parental and external agencies' views, inspections, and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated, and reviewed annually.
- Provide a complaints procedure and make available to all parents in a format that meets their needs e.g. Braille, audio, large print, additional languages.
- Monitor and review our policy and procedures annually.

Early Identification and Intervention

Early Identification means identifying and providing effective early support to children who are at risk of poor outcomes. Early intervention has the strongest impact when it is offered during the first few years of life. Early Intervention approaches focus on supporting four aspects of a child's development:

- Physical Development
- Cognitive Development
- Behavioural Development
- Social and Emotional Development

At Perins Pre-School, we have a range of different ways to support early identification:

- All about me sheets
- Starting points
- Practitioner observation and knowledge of the child
- Parent observations
- Threshold charts
- Two-year-old progress check
- Termly summaries of development
- Plan learning experiences and next steps.
- Health Visitor two-year-old progress check
- Parent discussion

The Hampshire Early Help Intervention Pathway helps professionals to identify the correct level of support for families with needs.

(www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/early-help/professionals/intervention)

- Low or one-off support needs – There are some aspects of a child's development which the Parent/Carer would like to improve but may not have the confidence or knowledge to do so. This could be sleeping routines, toileting, or sibling arguments. Perins Pre-School may be able to offer support to the family by signposting them to the relevant services on the Family Information and Service Hub (<https://fish.hants.gov.uk/kb5/hampshire/directory/hone.page>). We can also refer for courses in the local area using the Family Support Service level 2 referral form.
- Moderate support needs – is where a family might be concerned about not being able to not set boundaries or are unable to manage the child's behaviour. We would complete an inter-agency referral form with parental consent. The case will then be discussed at the early help hub and the family may be allocated a family support worker.
- High support needs- There is a safeguarding concern and the need for protection. We will follow our safeguarding procedure and will complete an inter-agency referral form. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, then we will contact the police.

The Hampshire early help intervention pathway works alongside the Hampshire safeguarding children partnership and children's threshold chart.

1. Universal – where the setting meets the child's needs.

2. Early Help – Where there are additional needs identified within the setting that can be met within identified resources through a single agency response and partnership working. We would refer to an agency for support to meet the child's needs, for example, refer to Portage.

3. Targeted Early Help – where there are multiple needs requiring a multi-agency coordinated response. The next step would be an early help assessment.

4. Children's Social Care – where there is a high level of unmet and complex needs or needs protection. The next step would be to complete an inter-agency referral form. A child and family assessment or a child protection (s47) investigation will be done.

Effective assessment of the need for early help

We are aware of the process for early help and adhere to the the following procedures.

Local agencies should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. Children and families may need support from a wide range of local agencies. Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These early help assessments, should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. The lead professional role could be undertaken by a General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions about who should be the lead professional should be taken on a case-by-case basis and should be informed by the child and their family.

For an early help assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them.
- A teacher, GP, health visitor, early years' worker or other professional should be able to discuss concerns they may have about a child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local authority children's social care should set out the process for how this will happen; and
- If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary.

If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need as defined in the Children Act 1989, or that the child has suffered significant harm, or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to local authority children's social care. This referral can be made by any professional. *Working together to safeguard children*

Graduated Approach

We follow the SEND Code of Practice recommendation that, in addition to the formal checks above, nurseries should adopt a graduated approach to assessment and planning, led and coordinated by a SENCO. Good practice of working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of children's individual progress, will help identify any child with special educational needs or disability This graduated approach will be led and coordinated by the SENCO and appropriate records will be kept according to the Code of Practice.

Assess

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the key person, working with the SENCO and the child's parents, will carry out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need. Where there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, more specialist assessment may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, social services, or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENCO will contact them, with the parents' agreement.

Assess - The key person works with the setting SENCO and the child's parents and brings together all the information, then analyses the child's needs.

Plan

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the key person, and the SENCO, in consultation with the parent, will agree the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review. Plans will consider the views of the child.

The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed. Parents will be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

Plan - The key person and the SENCO will agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking for the child, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development and behaviour and finally a date for review. The SENCO, key person, and parents/carers will also set SMART targets for the child's IEP.

Do

The child's key person will be responsible for working with the child daily. With support from the SENCO, they will oversee the implementation of the intervention agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO will support the key person in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

Do - The child's key person implements the agreed interventions or programmes.

Review

The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support will be evaluated by the key person and the SENCO in full consultation with the child's parents and considering the child's views. Information will be shared with parents about the impact of the support provided.

Review - On the agreed date, the key person and SENCO working with the child's parents, and considering the child's views, will review the effectiveness of the support and the impact of the support on the child's progress. They will then evaluate the impact and quality of support on the child.

Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Some children and young people may require an EHCP needs assessment to decide whether it is necessary to develop an EHCP plan. The purpose of an EHCP is to adjust and offer support to meet the special educational needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health, and social care.

The local authority will conduct the EHC needs assessment and consider a wide range of evidence, including:

- evidence of the child's developmental milestones and rate of progress.
- information about the nature, extent, and context of the child's SEN.
- evidence of the action already being taken by us as the early years provider to meet the child's SEN.
- evidence that, where progress has been made, it has only been as the result of much additional intervention and support over and above that which is usually provided.
- evidence of the child's physical, emotional, and social development, and health needs, drawing on relevant evidence from clinicians and other health professionals and what has been done to meet these by other agencies.

We will then work with the local authority and other bodies to ensure that the child receives the support they need to gain the best outcomes.

This policy was adopted on

21st April 2026

Date to be reviewed

21st April 2027

Signed on behalf of the provider

Michelle Osman

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Pre-School Manager