



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

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St Francis Nursery is committed to providing a truly inclusive environment where every child is supported to reach their full potential. This policy outlines our commitment and procedures for identifying, assessing, and providing appropriate provision for children with SEND, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework and the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years (2015).

## 1. Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all children with SEND at St Francis receive the support they need to make progress and achieve positive outcomes. We believe that early identification and intervention are crucial, and that effective provision requires strong partnerships with parents/carers and collaboration with external agencies.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all children attending St Francis Nursery, all staff members involved in the care and education of children, parents/carers of children attending the nursery and external professionals involved in supporting children with SEND.

## 3. Principles of SEND Provision

Our approach to supporting children with SEND is guided by the following principles:

- **Inclusion:** Every child is unique, and we strive to remove barriers to learning and participation, ensuring all children are fully included in the nursery community.
- **Early Identification and Intervention:** We actively monitor children's development and intervene early if concerns about their progress or development arise.
- **Child-Centred Approach:** Support is tailored to the individual needs of each child, focusing on their strengths and areas for development.
- **Partnership with Parents/carers:** Parents/carers are considered experts on their child and are actively involved in all decisions and planning regarding their child's support.
- **High Expectations:** We maintain high expectations for all children, including those with SEND, and challenge them to achieve their best.
- **Effective Provision:** We provide high-quality learning opportunities, differentiated to meet individual needs.

- **Collaboration:** We work effectively with other professionals and agencies to ensure holistic support for children and families.

#### **4. Role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)**

St Francis Nursery has a designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), who holds relevant qualifications and experience. The SENCo's responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the nursery's SEND policy.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff, parents, and other agencies.
- Ensuring that accurate SEND records are maintained.
- Liaising with parents/guardians of children with SEND.
- Ensuring that parents are informed of their child's progress and are involved in decision-making.
- Working with other early years providers, schools, and local authority services (e.g., Tower Hamlets Early Years Inclusion Team, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Educational Psychology Service).
- Coordinating SEND provision within the nursery.
- Ensuring that children with SEND have access to high-quality, differentiated teaching and resources.
- Leading staff training on SEND.
- Keeping up-to-date with current SEND legislation and best practice.

#### **5. Identification and Assessment**

St Francis Nursery uses a continuous process of observation, assessment, and planning to identify children who may have SEND.

1. **Ongoing Monitoring:** All staff continuously observe and assess children's development against the EYFS prime and specific areas of learning.
2. **Parental Concerns:** Any concerns raised by parents/carers about their child's development will be taken seriously and discussed promptly.
3. **Staff Concerns:** If a key person or other staff member has concerns about a child's progress they will discuss these with the SENCo.

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4. **Initial Assessment:** The SENCo, key person, and parents/carers will gather information to understand the child's needs.
5. **Graduated Approach (Assess-Plan-Do-Review Cycle):** Once a potential SEND is identified, the nursery will implement a graduated approach to support, as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

## 6. The Graduated Approach: Assess - Plan - Do - Review

This is a continuous cycle of support for children with SEND.

### 6.1. Assess

- The key person and SENCo, in partnership with parents, will carry out a clear analysis of the child's needs. This will draw on:
  - The staff's knowledge and expertise of the child.
  - Parents/carers concerns and knowledge of their child.
  - The child's development against EYFS age-related expectations.
  - Information from previous settings or other professionals.
- This assessment aims to understand the child's strengths, needs, and any barriers to their learning and development.

### 6.2. Plan

- Based on the assessment, the SENCo and key person will plan specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) outcomes for the child.
- An **Individual Provision Map (IPM)** or similar individual plan will be created, detailing:
  - The child's specific needs and desired outcomes.
  - The additional support and interventions to be put in place (e.g., small group work, individual adult support, specific resources).
  - The strategies to be used by all staff working with the child.
  - The resources required.
  - The roles and responsibilities of staff, parents, and any external professionals.
  - The date for review.
- Parents will be fully involved in the planning process and will receive a copy of the IPM.

### **6.3. Do**

- The planned interventions and support will be implemented consistently by the key person and all other staff working with the child.
- The SENCo will oversee the implementation and provide guidance and support to staff.
- The child's progress will be continuously monitored through observations and daily interactions.
- Differentiation of activities and resources will be a standard practice to ensure the child can access the curriculum.

### **6.4. Review**

- The progress towards the planned outcomes will be reviewed regularly, typically every 6-8 weeks, or as specified in the IPM.
- The review meeting will involve the key person, SENCo, and parents/carers. The child's views will be sought where appropriate.
- During the review, the effectiveness of the interventions will be evaluated, and next steps will be determined:
  - Continue with existing support if effective.
  - Adjust or modify interventions if needed.
  - Set new outcomes if previous ones have been met.
  - Consider seeking advice from external professionals if the child is not making expected progress despite targeted support.

## **7. Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers**

We recognise that parents/carers play a vital role in their child's development and are key partners in supporting children with SEND. We commit to:

- Maintaining open, honest, and regular communication with parents.
- Listening to parents/carers' concerns and valuing their unique insights into their child.
- Involving parents/carers in all stages of the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle.
- Providing parents with information about the support their child is receiving and their progress.
- Supporting parents/carers in accessing information and support from external agencies.

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- Ensuring parents/carers have opportunities to discuss their child's needs with the SENCo and key person.

## **8. Links with External Agencies**

St Francis Nursery works closely with external agencies to provide comprehensive support for children with SEND and their families. This includes accessing services outlined in the Tower Hamlets Local Offer for SEND.

With parental consent, the nursery may refer to or seek advice from:

- Tower Hamlets Early Years Inclusion Team: For specialist advice and support on inclusive practice and specific SEND.
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) Service: For assessment and intervention for communication difficulties.
- Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physiotherapy (PT) Services: For support with physical development and motor skills.
- Educational Psychology Service: For in-depth assessment and strategies for learning and behavioural needs.
- Health Visitors and GPs: For general health and developmental concerns.
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS): For social, emotional, and mental health support.
- Specialist schools or resource bases: For advice on specific learning difficulties or disabilities.

## **9. Training and Professional Development**

The Nursery Manager and SENCo will ensure that all staff receive appropriate training and professional development related to SEND. This includes:

- Awareness training for all staff on various SEND and inclusive practice.
- Specific training for key persons and the SENCo on identification, assessment, planning, and specific interventions.
- Keeping up-to-date with changes in SEND legislation and best practice.
- Training on the use of specialised equipment or resources if required.

## 10. Transition

We understand that transitions can be challenging for children with SEND. We will ensure smooth transitions:

- **Entry to Nursery:** Working closely with parents to gather information about the child's needs and previous support.
- **Within Nursery:** Ensuring consistent communication between key persons and staff as children move between rooms or groups.
- **To School:** Collaborating with receiving schools (SENCOs, class teachers) to share information about the child's needs, strengths, and effective strategies. This may involve transition meetings, visits to the new school, and sharing of Individual Provision Maps.

## 11. Inclusion and Accessibility

St Francis Nursery is committed to ensuring that all children, including those with SEND, have equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of nursery life. We will:

- Adapt activities and resources to meet individual needs.
- Ensure the physical environment is as accessible as possible.
- Provide appropriate adult support and supervision.
- Promote an inclusive ethos among children and staff.