



EYFS Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn alongside their peers. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs.

We 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 the child's life or may require longer term 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 families to access the support they need. We are committed to providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) according to their individual circumstances and the School's ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care.

All children will be given a settling in process when joining the EYFS according to their individual needs. Where we believe a child may have learning difficulties and/or a disability that has not previously been acknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish the child's needs and to secure any action that may be required. We recognise that children with disabilities may not have SEND but may need the School to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to make full use of our facilities. 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 parents
- observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly
- liaising with any other relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family
- seeking any specialist help or support
- attending any assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals

Definitions to Describe SEND and Disabilities

- A child has SEND 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 provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age.
- A child under compulsory school age has SEND if she or he is 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 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". This 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 SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEND. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEND definition.

Aims

The Mount School has regard to the statutory guidance set out in the SEND Code 2015 and the Statutory Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017). We have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEND and disabilities. We aim to:

- 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
- Ensure that in addition to the two specific points in the EYFS for formal assessment, there will be monitoring and review of progress throughout the early years
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and disabilities and have regard to the guidance given in the SEND Code 2015
- Include all children and their families in our provision, making reasonable adjustments where needed
- Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- 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
- Share any information received and assessments made by the School with parents and support parents in seeking any help they or the child may need
- Seek any additional help needed including requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the School's own actions are not helping the child to make progress
- 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
- Monitor and review our practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments and seek specialist equipment and services if needed

Methods

We will:

- Provide staff with specific training to help them make any special educational provision needed and meet the requirements of the SEND Code 2015 and the Statutory Requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Individual training needs will be identified through the supervision and performance management process.
- Identify members of staff to be our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and share their name(s) with parents.
- Ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of staff in the EYFS.
- Ensure that our inclusive admissions practice includes equality of access and opportunity.
- Ensure that our physical environment is, as far as possible, suitable for children and adults with disabilities.
- Work closely with parents to create and maintain a positive partnership and ensure that parents are fully informed and involved with how their children are progressing.
- Provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities to give a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Ensure that parents are consulted with and kept informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education, including seeking any specialist advice.
- Use a graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) to identifying, assessing and responding to children who have emerging difficulties, suggesting they may have special educational needs or a disability that requires a different approach.
- When planning interventions and support, agree the outcomes and the expected impact on progress and a date for review.
- Hold review meetings with parents at the agreed times and agree any changes or adjustments to support.

- Seek any further advice or support needed including multi-agency approaches, Early Support and requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment where the School's own actions are not helping the child make progress.
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- Keep records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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:

- Planning for the four areas of need, communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social emotional and mental health, sensory and /or physical needs
- 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 for review
- Implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed, including assessing the child's response to the action taken
- 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(s) 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(s) and any other professionals involved, agree intervention is no longer needed or decide to request an education, health and care needs assessment (see below)

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

If the help given through the School'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 SEND 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 difficult domestic circumstances, we may request or participate in an inter-agency assessment to get early help for the family. This early help assessment aims to ensure that early help services are co-ordinated and not delivered in a disjointed way.

EYFS SENCO – Elizabeth Kendall, Pre-School Manager