

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Date: September 2026

Review Date: September 2027

Dear Parents/Carers,

Introduction

This policy is about keeping in line with the nursery aims, its teaching and practice, other learning policies and our Diversity and Equality Policy. The nursery is committed to a policy of inclusion; one in which the development, learning achievements, attitudes and well being of all children are important.

At Newton Westpark Nursery we believe that all children, regardless of gender, race, class or disability are valued equally. We believe that children with a special educational or additional need are not viewed as a separate entity but are part of the whole nursery approach. All our children's needs and abilities are planned for within the nursery.

Aims of the Policy

The aims of our Special Educational Needs and Disability policy is to ensure that our provision provides all children with every opportunity to achieve to their full potential, and that they are happy and are making progress at their own pace. Full regard will be given to the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disability (2015).

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of children within the setting in partnership with parents and other relevant parties in line with the Children's and Families Act 2014 section 64.

For further reference please see:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2015.
- The Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010 – All providers have a duty under the act and one being must NOT discriminate and must make reasonable adjustments.

Definition of Special Education Needs

Children have special education needs if they have a *learning difficulty* or a *disability* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.

Children have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- A. Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- B. Have a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities (i.e. curriculum) of a kind provided for children of the same age in school nurseries within the area of the local education authority
- C. Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at A or B above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

The Role of the SENCO

At Newton Westpark Nursery the designated person who has responsibility for the co-ordination of Special Education Needs (SENCO) is Gemma Hardbarker who will liaise with the inclusion team.

The SENCO has responsibility for:

- Ensuring liaison with parents and other professionals in respect of children with additional or special educational needs.

- Advising and supporting other practitioners in the Nursery.
- Ensuring that appropriate SEND Support Plans or Behaviour Plans are in place and reflect the principles of EYFS 2024.
- Ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with special educational needs is collected, recorded and updated.

Identification of Need

Our aim is to identify any additional needs early so that we can support each child as quickly as possible. When a child first starts nursery, a baseline assessment will be made working in partnerships with parents/ carers. Throughout their time in the setting, staff and in particular a child's Key Person, contactable on 01942 60684 (opt 1) will observe and monitor progress and development using the EYFS guidance.

At Newton Westpark Nursery we use an assessment tool, Wellcomm. This assesses children's communication skills and understanding. The outcome of these assessments may raise the need for a referral to Speech and Language Therapy (SALT). When necessary, staff will discuss any concerns about development and learning with the SENCO. This information will be discussed with parents, and a plan will be formed to support the child's learning as needed as well as making any necessary professional referrals to services such as the Health Visiting Team, Speech & Language (SALT), Occupational Therapy (OT) and the Early Years Health & Development Team.

The Graduated Approach:

The four stages are:

- **Assess-** carry out a clear analysis of pupil's needs
- **Plan-** put in place support and appropriate interventions with a clear date for review and progress measures
- **Do-** the class teacher should remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis, even where interventions involve small group or 1:1 teaching
- **Review-** evaluate the quality of support and the impact of interventions considering both the views of pupils and parents

Identified need: Arrange a meeting to discuss concerns about a child regarding their learning and development. This is to be held by SENCO, with parents, key person and manager (if appropriate) present. Aim to gain consent from parents to make a referral and so get help at the earliest opportunity.

Plan of Action: Develop a plan of action regarding processes and interventions to meet the needs of the children identified. Create a support plan to put into place at nursery, whilst always working in partnership with parents.

Review Action Plan: Discuss any progression made and the effectiveness of interventions. Next steps would be to continue with support action plans or to take to the next level. We will make referrals to professionals if needed.

Request for the involvement of the Early Years Team (EYT) who may come in to observe the child. A discussion would also be held with parents to gain further information. The EYT can then help with advice on new support plans and targets, provide more specialist assessments, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and may provide support for particular activities. We will continually update parents and other professionals involved on progress made to decide on next steps. Dependant on the level of support needed, we may complete an application for Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF) to further support your child.

Admissions Arrangements

At Newton Westpark Nursery we actively welcome all children. Admission arrangements for children with additional or special needs are the same as for all other children. (See Admissions policy):

- With parent's permission, the Nursery Manager and SENCO, will ensure any relevant transition information is sought so that procedures, specialist equipment, access or resources are in place when a child starts Nursery. Any professionals already involved will be contacted for necessary information.
- The child's Key Person will observe and monitor progress and share findings, achievements and possible concerns with parents, the SENCO and Nursery Manager. As with all children, we aim to work in close partnership with parents caring for and teaching their child.
- Relevant training will be given for staff if required.
- Planning and support will be delivered to the whole team when admitting a child with an identified need (Equality Act 2010)

Resources

- These will be appropriate to the child's needs
- Relevant specialist equipment will be purchased or loaned
- Paperwork and documents will be readily available to parents and carers
- Allocation of budgets for S.E.N. equipment will be linked to the Nursery Development Plan.
- DAF and EYPP Funding will be linked to the child's individual needs.

Access to the curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage 2024 document provides guidance for Early Years Practitioners on ensuring quality care and learning experiences for all children.

- Daily observations and assessments feed into daily planning in order that children's individual needs and interests are responded to.
- The environment (inside and outside), resources and practice is constantly evaluated to ensure access for all children.

Staff Training

Records will be kept of all training that staff have accessed. Training will be identified in various ways, appraisals, individual needs, team needs. Relevant training will be given in order to meet a child's individual needs.

Outside Agencies

Newton Westpark Nursery will work with other professionals including:

- Health Visitors
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Educational Psychologists
- Clinical Psychologists
- Inclusion Officer
- Early Years Consultant with responsibility for SEN in the locality.
- Physiotherapists
- Visually Impaired Team
- Hearing Impaired Team
- Portage Team
- Community Paediatrician
- SEN Specialist
- Early Support Team
- Family Support Workers

Partnership with Parents and Carers

Confidentiality – A child will not be discussed with any professional without seeking the parent's permission.

The role of parents/carers is vital in the identification, assessment and response to their children's additional or special needs. We value a true partnership with parents/carer and we aim to encourage them to participate fully in their child's education and care whilst at Nursery.

All staff must be aware of pressures a parent may be under because of their child's individual needs.

All information will be shared in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), policy and procedures.

We will respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints.

All councils have produced a 'Local Offer' of services for children and young people with SEND. The purpose of the Local Offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available in their area and how to access them. The Wigan Local Offer is outlined on the council's website:

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Special-Educational-Needs-and-Disability/Local-Offer/index.aspx>

Transitions to settings/schools

Before a transition takes place, support will be put into place for planning and preparing for this. This can include a review of the SEN support being provided or an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP).

EHCP Process-

An EHCP takes around 20 weeks to be finalised from the start of the assessment.

An Education Health & Care Plan Needs Assessment request form will be completed between nursery and the family. This will include all developmental information about the child and their needs.

This will then be sent to a Panel who will decide if the child's needs meet criteria to be assessed for an EHCP. Once we receive the 'Yes to Assess', the SEND Team will reach out to professionals involved with the child for further information.

An Educational Psychology Assessment will also be carried out in setting and information sought from parents to get a picture of the whole child and their needs at home as well as nursery.

Once all information has been collated, the Panel will decide whether the child meets criteria for an EHCP. If the decision is Yes, a Draft copy will be produced. This will be reviewed by parents and nursery to ensure it contains all needs and appropriate strategies to support these. This will also be an opportunity to name your preferred Primary School, whether it be Mainstream or Specialist Provision.

Once this has all been agreed, the Final Plan will be produced and shared with families and the relevant professionals.

Information will be shared by the nursery with the new setting/school of which the information to be shared will be agreed with parents/carers prior. An Early Help meeting can be arranged to discuss the child's transition with all parties involved and a transition plan arranged.

Management Signature:

Date: