

## **Pre-school Special Education Needs and Disabilities Policy** **St Teresa's School**

### **Mission Statement**

Inspiring and achieving together, using our unique gifts given to us by God.

**Written:** May 2019

**Review date:** May 2020

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Head of EYFS and SENCo will formally review this policy by no later than one year from the date shown below or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

### **Introduction**

Children aged over three years attending St Teresa's Pre-School have access to up to 15 hours of universal funding or 30 hours extended funding provided by the local authority. This means that, in addition to the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, when supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities, the Pre-school follows the requirements outlined in the "Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years" as published by the DfE.

The principles underlying the SEND code of practice include:

- taking into account the views of children and their families
- enabling children and their parents to participate in decision-making
- collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support
- identifying the needs of children
- making high quality provision to meet the needs of children
- focusing on inclusive practices and removing barriers to learning
- helping children prepare for adulthood

The Pre-school follows the school Equal Opportunities Policy and does not discriminate against, harass or victimise any child. Arrangements are in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for all children in our care. Alongside the Statutory Framework for the EYFS, the non-statutory documents Development Matters and Early Years Outcomes are used to help practitioners identify the outcomes that the children should be working towards. SEN support, a graduated approach to supporting children with SEN or disabilities, is used to ensure that all children make progress across the seven areas of learning in the EYFS:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

## **High aspirations**

All children are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve the best possible educational, and other, outcomes and become confident young children, with a growing ability to communicate their own views and to make the transition into compulsory education.

## **SEN support in Pre-School**

The graduated approach to supporting children with SEN and disabilities ensures that there is no delay in making any necessary special educational provision. Delay can give rise to later learning difficulty and can have a negative effect on a child's self-esteem, causing frustration in learning and potential behaviour difficulties. When gaps in learning are identified early and acted on quickly, there is a positive impact on future progress and outcomes for children and this helps the child to be better prepared for adult life.

## **Identifying SEN in Pre-School**

Parents know their children best and all staff at St Teresa's Pre-School listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. When a child is about to join the Pre-School we work closely with parents, through home visits and information gathering, so that the partnership between home and school is strong from the start. We also take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions are given the support required to meet their needs. At this time, reasonable adjustments may be made to pre-school provision to prevent a child from being put at a substantial disadvantage. When possible, we listen to the children and address any concerns that they might have about their own abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

Children can join the Pre-School as 'rising threes' (from the start of the term before their third birthday.) The statutory assessment, 'The progress check at age two', must be completed between the ages of two and three years old and identifies any gaps in the three prime areas of learning. Where children have had the progress check completed at a previous setting, a copy of the report is requested and parents are invited to share findings of the report. If children have not previously attended an early years setting, the process of gathering information begins immediately so that the progress check can be completed at St Teresa's. Because children join St Teresa's as rising threes, completion of the progress check happens as soon as possible after the child has joined the setting (usually by the end of the first half term). On occasion, this may be after a child has turned three, depending on when their third birthday falls. The progress check at age two highlights where good progress is being made, where some additional support may be needed and where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate that a child has SEN.)

At the same age, health visitors check children's physical development milestones. When there are concerns about a child's development, St Teresa's staff work closely with the health visitors to:

- identify the child's progress, strengths and needs at this age in order to promote positive outcomes in health and wellbeing, learning and development
- enable appropriate intervention and support for children and their families, where progress is less than expected
- generate information which can be used to plan services and contribute to the reduction of inequalities in children's outcomes

Alongside the progress check at age two, St Teresa's Pre-School monitors and reviews progress and development for all children in their care on an ongoing basis. Where a child appears to be behind expected levels or where progress gives cause for concerns, staff will look closely at information from observations, from home and from other professionals, when deciding whether any delay in learning is caused by learning English as an additional language or whether it may be the result of SEN or disability. (Difficulties arising solely from learning English as an additional language are not SEN.) Where a child has greater difficulties in learning than their peers, or when they have difficulty in making full use of the facilities available, staff make special educational provision for that child, knowing that early intervention can significantly reduce the need for interventions at a later stage. This is recorded on an SEN Support Plan and its effectiveness is monitored through the 'Assess, plan, do, review' approach, used as part of the graduated approach to supporting children with SEN, as described in the SEND Code of Practice:

### Assess

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, pre-school staff, working with the school and EYFS SENCo and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment is 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 health, social services or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the EYFS or school SENCo should contact them, with the parents' agreement.

### Plan

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENCo should agree, in consultation with the parent, 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 should take into account the views of the child. The support and intervention provided should 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 are identified and addressed.

### Do

The early years practitioner, usually the child's key person, remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the EYFS or school SENCo, they should oversee the implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCo supports the practitioner in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

### Review

The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support should be evaluated by the practitioner and the SENCo working with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views. They should agree any changes to the outcomes and support for the child in light of the child's progress

and development. Parents should have clear information about the impact of the support provided and be involved in planning next steps.

### **Working with other professionals**

St Teresa's Pre-School accesses support from the Buckinghamshire Learning Trust (BLT) Inclusion Team. Inclusion advisers provide child specific advice and support staff by working as part of the team around the child, working with pre-school staff, parents and other professionals and providing support to ensure that the child makes progress. The school SENCo also provides support for staff and works closely with the Head of Early Years to ensure that every effort is made to meet the needs of all children. The Head of Early Years attends regular BLT SENCo Liaison group meetings to ensure that the Pre-School is up to date with local authority procedures and can access further general advice about children's learning and development.

At St Teresa's Pre-School, we endeavour to provide special educational provision (that is 'additional to and different from' that provided within the differentiated curriculum) for children who have difficulties in any of the four areas of need identified in the SEND Code of Practice:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory/physical

When a child continues to make less than expected progress, St Teresa's staff work with specialist professionals including occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, health visitors, children's centre staff (including family support workers) and the BLT Early Years Inclusion team who may be able to identify effective strategies, equipment and programmes to help the child to make progress towards the desired learning and development outcomes. This might include requesting local authority additional funding and/or and Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCP).

### **Transitions**

Supporting children with special educational needs includes planning and preparing for transition, before a child moves into another setting or school or into the main school. This can also include a review of the SEN support being provided or the EHC plan where there is one. To support the transition, information is shared by St Teresa's Pre-School with the Reception class, receiving setting or school. St Teresa's Pre-School gains permission from parents to share information as part of the transition process.

### **Local Offer**

St Teresa's School is an independent school whilst St Teresa's Pre-School offers early education places that are funded by the local authority. As a result, The SEND Code of Practice is statutory guidance for the Pre-school.

St Teresa's Pre-School co-operates with the local authority to ensure it can fulfil its duty to publish and regularly review the local offer (an authority-wide description of the special educational needs provision it expects to be available in Buckinghamshire early years' settings).