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Castle Vale Nursery School

Special Education Needs, Disability and Inclusion Policy

It is the aim of the Governing Body of Castle Vale Nursery School and Children's Centre to support the implementation of policies and procedures which support the vision of:

Making a difference. All of our children, all of the time

Introduction: Relevant legislation

This policy is written in line with the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (SEND CoP 2014)** which became statutory in September, 2014 and was last updated in September 2024. It is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

It also seeks guidance from Children and Families Act 2014, Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Equality Act 2010 (including disability equality duty under s149) and associated regulations. The regulations associated with the Children and Family Act 2014 are:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Order setting out transitional arrangements

Aims:

At Castle Vale we are committed to providing inclusive Nursery education and believe that all children are entitled to have their individual needs appropriately supported and met in order to achieve the highest possible standards and develop in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. This encourages independence, self-discipline and community responsibility in a caring, supportive and secure learning environment and we value each child's contribution to nursery life. Adaptations are sometimes necessary to accommodate a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (but we believe in a "can do" approach where positive solutions are sought to ensure children with SEND are treated equally and can learn alongside their peers.) Parental involvement is considered of paramount importance so regular contact and meetings are prioritised for all parents.

The SEND Code of Practice states that "Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them" 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 of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools 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.

SEN CoP 1:3

At Castle Vale Nursery School, we are committed to inclusive practice because we believe that all children are entitled to have their individual needs appropriately supported in order to participate fully in our nursery, which we feel is Every Child's Right...

Right 29 - Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full

Article 23 - You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

The Code of Practice specifies that children will have needs and requirements which are likely to fall into at least one or more of the following **Four Areas of Need**:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition & Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs

At Castle Vale, the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) and SEND support Team, in consultation with keyworkers, parents, professionals and a secure knowledge of the child will make a comprehensive plan to meet each child's needs and ensure they are able to make progress towards their individual targets.

We recognise that all these factors must be taken into account when teaching and caring for all the children in our setting. We believe it is crucial that the right help is given at the earliest stage possible in a child's life. We work together as a staff team and aim to build positive partnerships with parents and outside agencies in order to meet each child's needs.

At Castle Vale we work with a range of services:

- Educational Psychology (EP)
- Communication and Autism Team (CAT)
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Language, Learning and Strategic Support (LLaSS)
- Community Speech and Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Sensory Support Service – Physical Disabilities, Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment
- Physical Support Team (PST)
- SENAR



Also, Health Services such as Health Visitors, Community Pediatricians, NDP and Physiotherapists.
Social Care
Early Years Inclusion Service
Practitioners from other schools

The SENDco at Castle Vale is Helen Brennan. She is responsible in the setting for coordinating the day to day provision of education for pupils with SEND. This is done in partnership with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and all key workers. Kirstie McElroy-Stringer is our SEND representative on the Governing Body.

Deputy Head Teacher Izzie Darby works with Helen as our SEND team.

The Key Responsibilities of the SENDCo

- Liaise with parents, offering advice and support and ensuring they are closely involved in any actions in connection with their child with SEND.
- Liaise with other professionals and agencies- making referrals as and when necessary.
- Is a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Advise and support other practitioners in the setting, ensuring they fully understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and that the appropriate provision is put in place.
- Ensure that the Graduated Approach with four stages (assess, plan, do and review) is adopted.
- Ensure that background information is collected recorded and updated.
- Take the lead in further assessment of the child's strengths and areas of need to guide future planning to meet the child's needs.
- Take the lead in monitoring and reviewing any action taken to support the child.
- To apply for and secure any relevant funding.
- Leads on the My SEN Support Plans, SEND Support Provision Plans or Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).
- Ensure that transition to another setting is planned and that children with SEND and their families are fully prepared.
- Contributes to Early Help, CASS referrals.
- Work with the Head teacher and Governing Body to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

Partnership with Parents

We acknowledge the importance of the role of parents/carers and the contribution they make as their child's first educators. We are uniquely placed to build on informal opportunities for contact and to ensure regular communication to support the needs of the child. This will be achieved by developing relationships with parents/carers that will:

- recognise and fulfil their responsibilities as parents and play an active and valued role in their children's education.
- make their views known about how their child is educated.
- have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making processes about special educational provision (SEND Code of Practice)

To ensure a successful partnership we endeavour to ensure that information is shared verbally and through written records. There are regular meetings; all information is treated with confidentiality. Parents are also made aware of Parent Partnership Services which offers direct support and additional information and advice on all aspects of Special Educational Needs and Disability that help parents and carers access services, work together and resolve any disagreements.

Admission Arrangements:

As a setting, which aims to be inclusive and non-discriminatory, children are welcomed and admitted according to the Nursery School Admission Policy, irrespective of any disabilities or previously identified special needs. We are committed to include all children in all aspects of Castle Vale's life and the local community regardless of their individual needs.

A home visit, prior to a child starting nursery, is offered to all parents/ carers as part of the admissions process at Castle Vale. Parents, carers and children are made welcome and encouraged to visit the nursery prior to admission if they wish to do so.

When additional resources (whether human or physical,) are necessary to support individual needs, these will be provided or requested as appropriate. We adopt a flexible approach through consultation with parents prior to admission, agree settling in procedures in order to ensure both the setting and staff are ready to successfully include the individual child.

'Settling in' arrangements for children are flexible and advice sought if a Care Plan or Management Plan needs to be completed. This is done prior to admission, for each child, in order for individual needs to be specifically met and all staff to be informed.

Identification and Assessment

The Graduated Approach

The Graduated Approach is used at Castle Vale to ensure that all children get the right teaching and learning to help them reach their full potential. The SEN Code of Practice (2015) promotes this approach for children with special educational needs so that they make progress and successfully access the curriculum.

Four Stages of SEND support are:



Assess: Your child's difficulties will be assessed so that the right support can be provided. Developmental checklists, screening tools and curriculum based assessment are used to gain additional information.

Plan: With parental involvement the nursery will agree the outcomes that the SEN support is intended to achieve – how your child will benefit from the support.

Do: the nursery will put the planned support in place. Your child's Key Person will remain responsible for working with your child but the SENCO and any specialist staff involved will work closely to track progress and effectiveness of the support

Review: The support your child receives should be reviewed at the time agreed in the plan and next steps identified.

Castle Vale has identified these strategies as beneficial for all children and has adopted them as a whole school approach.

The strategies are:

- Visual timetables
- Staff photos displayed, Symbols cards on staff lanyards
- Photos and labels on storage
- Objects of reference, photographs/symbols of routines
- Makaton Signs
- Communication Boards
- Differentiated Support – learning groups, one to one, or small groups
- Language Groups – specific to targets
- Nurture Groups – specific to targets
- One to one support
- Small group work focused on targets
- Attention Birmingham
- Curiosity Approach

Facilities

The Disability and Discrimination Act 2001 places a legal obligation on our setting to make reasonable adaptations.

Therefore, we may need to provide certain adaptations or specialist equipment to address individual needs. To ensure full access for parents/ carers, staff and children, regular audits take place to consider changes to the environment. Appropriate funding is allocated as necessary.

Staffing

To ensure that the children receive a quality learning experience in our setting our staff are all qualified. Each child's primary support will be from their key worker who will liaise with other staff including the SENDco and SEN support staff where allocated. Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for everyone in the setting. All staff require knowledge and awareness of the individual needs of the children in order to give consistency and continuity of education and care. Appropriate funding is allocated for additional support, relevant training and resources.

Children's needs are assessed and if additional support is required we seek supplementary funding to enable us to provide additional support, 1-1 if necessary.

Training

We recognise that staff need knowledge and understanding to fully include children successfully. Therefore, we have an ongoing programme of in-service training for issues relating to special needs and inclusive practice. Each year this will be targeted towards meeting the needs of children in the cohort. Training, wherever possible, will be for the whole staff but might also be on an individual or small group basis, depending on staff needs, with provision for feedback and sharing information and staff expertise to other practitioners. Regular SEND meetings, which are coordinated by the SENDco take place to ensure all staff have the relevant knowledge of the children and that the right package of care and education is provided.

We have a Speech and Language Therapist who provides staff training, advises the Nursery about individual children, provides 1 to 1 support or speech and language groups for children and works closely with parents and practitioners.

The SENDCo has completed a 6 day ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder) training course via Birmingham CAT Team (Communication & Autism Team) and all staff have completed Tier 1 of this training. All staff have received training from the Nursery SALT on Speech and Language Development. A number of staff have accessed Makaton Level 2 training. All staff have accessed Makaton training level 1. A wide range of SEN training is undertaken by staff throughout each school year in order to support the current cohort effectively.

Medical Needs

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on maintained schools and academies to make arrangements to support children with medical conditions. Where a child requires an individual health care plan then this is developed in partnership with parents and the relevant agencies or professionals responsible for the long term medical care of the child. We refer to statutory guidance supporting children in nursery/school with medical conditions (DfE, 2015 and updated in 2017).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

The Learning Environment

Resources are used flexibly and specialist equipment is borrowed through support agencies or from families when required. Additional equipment may also be purchased to meet individual needs. Resources including Makaton and Signs and Symbols via Widgit, are also used.

Regular meetings ensure that the environment and appropriate activities with any adaptations for children are planned. Furniture and equipment is laid out and available space used to support learning and promote confidence and independence. The learning areas are designed so that all children can access a wide range of resources or facilities freely, independently or supported as needed. Staff consider children's individual learning targets

when planning, and provide specific materials and equipment for children to play and learn with to enable them to achieve individualised objectives.

Risk factors are considered and checks made on a regular basis.

We have further developed our learning environment to support the needs of children with complex and significant needs by utilising a separate space for these children to access and thrive. This space is well equipped with individual resources and the children benefit from specialised teaching methods throughout.

Transition

We have good links with our local schools and have links with other specialist settings. The SENDCo contacts key staff of receiving schools prior to transition. When appropriate, the school SENDCo and a relevant member of staff from the receiving school are also invited to final review meetings. These links enable us to plan effectively in order to ensure continuity and progression for each child as they move through the education system.

Monitoring the Policy

The Special Needs and Inclusion Policy is embedded in day to day practice at Castle Vale and as such is a working policy and can change at any time through staff discussion.

The SENDCo will be responsible for leading a review of the document, keeping up to date with current legislation/guidance and managing any developments as directed by the Local Authority.

Useful links and relevant documentation

Birmingham Local Authority's Local Offer:

<https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk>

SEN Code of Practice 2015:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

