Little Fishes Nursery

Part of the West Sussex Local Offer for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Reviewed: October 2024, October 2026
Next Review Date: October 2027

Introduction

All early years settings in West Sussex have a similar approach to meeting the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and are supported by outside agencies, such as the Early Years Advisory Team, to ensure that all children, regardless of their specific needs, make the best possible progress.

Little Fishes Nursery is a private setting that is attached to St Nicolas and St Mary's CE School which is part of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust (DCAT). Although the Nursery is run as a separate business, we share the same ethos and values as the school and the academy trust.

What is the Local Offer?

- Since September 2014, every Local Authority has been required to publish information about available services both in and outside West Sussex for children and young people with special needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The West Sussex Local Offer is available online at: https://westsussex.local-offer.org/
- In addition, schools and early years settings must produce their own Local Offer to clearly inform parents of what SEND provision is available to children at that setting, including support by the locality, trust, local authority and at a national level. It includes the range of provision available, how we ensure all children are included and how parents are involved and supported throughout their child's education. We have consulted parents and carers, teachers and governors when responding to the following questions and we will regularly review our answers.

What is our approach to teaching children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and what sort of SEND do we provide for?

At Little Fishes Nursery, we care greatly about providing a nurturing, safe and caring environment. We are committed to meeting every child's pastoral, social, physical and learning needs to enable them to achieve their full potential. We want children to be inspired by our vision to 'be courageous' and to live and learn through God's faith, hope and love. In order to do this, many steps are taken to support them through their journey. For some children, additional support may be required to enable them to achieve their targets. We are committed to making appropriate and effective provision for all our children – whatever their special need.

The SEND Code of Practice 2014 defines SEN as follows:
A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or

b) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

Categories of SEND:

Special Educational Needs can be categorised into one of the following broad areas:
♦ Communication and interaction – includes autistic spectrum disorders
♦ Cognition and learning – includes moderate or severe learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia
♦ Social, emotional and mental health – includes anxiety, ADHD and attachment disorder
♦ Sensory and/or physical need – includes hearing or visual impairments.

It is important to recognise for some children their needs may occur across more than one of these areas and may change over time. Little Fishes Nursery support children with a range of different needs.

How do we identify and assess pupils with SEND?

- At Little Fishes Nursery, your child's key worker is responsible for the ongoing observation and assessment of their individual learning journey. Your child's key worker will ensure they understand your child's individual needs to enable them to make good progress with their learning and well-being.
- Where a child's progress is significantly slower than that of their peers or fails to match their previous rate of progress, despite high quality targeted support, it *may* be that the child has SEND. The key worker will liaise with the INCO and information will be gathered, including seeking the views of parents and the pupil, as well as from other nursery staff and assessments. The INCO may further assess a child or seek advice from specialist services to ensure that the child's needs are met. Parents and carers are always consulted before this takes place and permission will be requested.
- Having reflected upon the child's individual needs, the INCO, nursery staff, parents and carers and any outside agencies involved will discuss any additional support that the child needs and will put this in place.

What should I do if I think my child may have Special Educational Needs?

- If you have any concerns regarding your child's development or well-being, then please do not hesitate to speak to your child's key worker as a first point of contact. The key worker can then arrange a convenient time to discuss the matter further. The key worker may choose to seek advice from the nursery teachers, INCO or to include them in this discussion.

- Mrs H. Allier is the INCO for Little Fishes Nursery. She can be contacted through the school office (01273 454470 office@stnm.org.uk). In consultation with the nursery staff, she will be able to suggest ways forward to help your child to make the best possible progress. If we are not able to offer the support needed, she will seek advice from external agencies to help your child.

How will Little Fishes support children with Special Educational Needs and Disability?

- All nursery staff will adapt activities and experiences to meet individual needs.
- The level of extra support your child receives will depend on their individual needs. Using assessment information and advice from other professionals, a personalised programme of support will often be put into place in collaboration with parents and carers. This support is set out on the Nursery's provision mapping tool.
- All children receive personalised next steps; the setting, parents and carers and the child work together to produce this plan to ensure the best possible outcome for the individual child. The plan will be reviewed by the setting regularly in consultation with parents and carers.
- The support provided will take the form of a four-part cycle (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child's needs.
- Some of the ways we support children in the setting include:
  - providing additional resources or changing the Nursery environment to ensure your child can access the learning.
  -targeted support from a key worker who may, for example, be modelling good turn taking or speech and language.

-creating a Pupil Passport which captures all the important information about your child on a single page.

The support provided, and its impact, will be monitored closely and shared regularly with the child and with their parents or carers.

How will both you and I know how my child is doing?

- Your child's key worker will be making ongoing observations of your child and these are all recorded in Individual Learning Journals which are available to view.
- Regular Pupil Progress Meetings that involve nursery staff and the INCO take place to enable us to monitor *all* our children closely, analysing their progress and attainment in key areas of learning.
- The INCO and nursery staff will record and monitor the support your child receives on the provision mapping tool which is reviewed regularly.
- Every child will have personalised 'next steps' that will be monitored and reviewed every 4-6 weeks, as appropriate. We will always ask for your input when devising these plans and we will also provide you with copies of the next steps to work with at home.
- Parent Consultation Meetings are held three times a year when all parents are invited to discuss their child's progress. Parents with children who have additional needs may require additional meetings to discuss how their child is doing and ways forward.
- Nursery staff are available at the beginning and end of the day if you wish to raise a concern and appointments can always be made to speak to nursery staff or the INCO by contacting the school office.
- Key workers will always contact parents and carers if they are at all concerned about your child.
- We send out a home interest sheet termly for home to share any information or learning that has taken place outside of the setting.

How will you help me to support my child's learning?

- At Parent Consultation Meetings, you will be informed of your child's next steps and will be given practical advice on how best to support your child's learning at home.
- If your child has a Pupil Passport, this will also detail suggested strategies and/or activities that will help you to support your child.
- As well as having informal conversations at the beginning and end of sessions with nursery staff, additional meetings can also be made with the INCO or other members of staff to discuss how best to support your child.
- If outside agencies have also been involved with supporting your child, the strategies and ideas suggested will also be shared with you.

How do we adapt our curriculum and learning environment for pupils with SEND?

- We are very proud of the creative and engaging learning experiences we offer and these will always be adapted so that they meet the individual needs of your child.
- When planning learning experiences, nursery staff use their knowledge and understanding of the children's individual needs as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework to ensure all children are able to make progress.
- Whenever necessary, the setting will provide specialist equipment, such as easy-to-use scissors and wobble cushions, to help children in their learning.
- Our staff have a wealth of knowledge and experience in supporting children with SEND. They will use, for example, clear and concise language, visual aids and barrier games to support a child that has Speech, Language and Communication Needs.

How are the school's resources allocated and matched to the children's special educational needs?

- For children who are in receipt of additional funding, such as inclusion funding, or those with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), we carefully budget to ensure all their needs are met as specified on their Plan and beyond.
- The child, parents and carers, INCO and Nursery staff are all involved in deciding how to allocate support to best meet the needs of an individual child. We are very careful to reflect on individual need and match this carefully to the available resources.

How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

- The amount and type of support offered to your child will be reviewed regularly with in collaboration with parents and sometimes other professionals. The frequency of these reviews depends on the nature of support being provided and the individual need of your child.
- Children with an Education Health and Care Plan will also have statutory reviews every 6 months which is another opportunity to review how your child is being supported.
- Nursery staff and the INCO are always keen to hear the views of parents and carers about the support in place so we can work together to put in place the best possible programme of learning for your child.

How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

- We work hard to ensure that all school trips and extra-curricular activities are accessible to all pupils whenever possible. Nursery staff will often involve parents and carers in the planning of these trips.
- We do a Risk Assessment before all trips to ensure that all children will be safe and able to access the learning. Some children may require adaptations, such as different transport arrangements or an additional staff member to support them, which we consider on a case by case basis.

What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

- At Little Fishes Nursery, we care greatly about providing a nurturing, safe and caring environment. Our strong Christian ethos underpins all that we do and creates a place where children are able to flourish in all areas of their development.
- Parents and carers complete a Child Information Form with the Nursery teacher during the home visit to help practitioners get to know and meet the individual needs of the child.
- Little Fishes Nursery work hard to support children to develop their personal, social and emotional skills. Circle Time and small group times are timetabled during the sessions to support this.
- Toileting Plans are written when needed and we will work in partnership with parents to enable the toilet training process.

How do you support children with specific medical needs?

- If your child has a particular medical need then a detailed Health Care Plan is produced in consultation with parents and carers and any relevant medical professionals. The Plan is then shared with all members of staff who will be working with your child.
- The school nurse regularly delivers Epipen training to ensure all staff are up to date and they will often provide other training, such as asthma training, if necessary. Staff also access all statutory medical training eg for allergies.
- There are occasions when, in agreement with parents and carers and members of staff, medicines are administered in school. In these cases, a medicine consent form must be signed.

What Specialist Services and expertise are available at or accessed by the Nursery?

We work closely with outside agencies to meet the needs of our children, including:

- Early Childhood Service (West Sussex County Council). This may include access to other agencies, such as Speech and Language, Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists or Physiotherapists.
- Portage
- Children and Family Centres

- Additional support when needed from other Inclusion Co-ordinators in the locality.
- Early Help
- Integrated Services and Social Services
- Child Development Centre
- The EYFS Transition Team
- Parent Partnership
- St Nicolas and St Mary's Home School Link Workers

If you felt that your child would benefit from the support of one of these services, your first point of contact should be your child's key worker.

What training have the staff had or are having?

All of our staff are aware of the systems in place to identify and support SEND pupils and they routinely use a range of strategies, approaches and resources to support children with different needs. We encourage our staff to continually update their skills and knowledge by attending in-house training as well as training courses run within the county.

Many of our staff have been on training courses to enable them to better support our children with additional needs, including sessions on:

- Attachment Theory
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Phonics and Early Literacy
- Speech, Language and Communication Support
- Positive Handling and Behaviour Management
- Supporting Vulnerable Pupils
- Meeting sensory needs
- First Aid Training
- Executive Function Skills

How accessible is the school?

- Our nursery is all on one level with an allocated disabled toilet. All entrances have ramps so are wheelchair accessible. Stairs and ramps are painted yellow and we are mindful of ensuring the site is high contrast to cater for children with visual impairments.
- Although dogs are not allowed in the school, Guide Dogs are welcome.
- Accommodating children with special needs is carefully considered.
- We have sought advice from a 'Rehabilitation and Mobility Officer' to ensure that our site is accessible when catering for specific needs.
- As a setting, we are happy to discuss individual access requirements and our Accessibility Policy is available on our website.

How are parents involved in the Nursery? How can I be involved?

- We understand that parents know their child better than anyone and we are keen to involve you in decision making processes. This could be, for example, through meeting regularly with staff or working together with other agencies.
- Parents and carers have the opportunity to speak with the nursery staff on a daily basis and Home Contact books are provided to share information between home and Nursery.
- The information supplied by parents about their child's interests when they start at the Nursery help us to plan activities.
- Parents and carers are at the heart of our Nursery community and are invited to many events throughout the year, such as Harvest Festival, Summer and Easter celebrations, sharing a book with children as part of Book Week, staying and playing in the setting or joining the PTA.
- You will find a weekly plan of activities in the window of our Nursery so you always know what your child will be learning that week.

- If you have any ideas about ways you would like to get more involved with the Nursery, we are always very pleased to hear from parents and carers.

How do we ensure that children with SEND have a voice in the Nursery?

- We recognise the importance of children participating as fully as possible in decisions that relate to their provision and support. By following a person centred approach, creating one page pupil profiles for specific children and listening carefully to their thoughts and aspirations, we ensure that the support provided is appropriate and therefore more likely to be successful.
- If a child finds it difficult to voice their feelings, then the Nursery will allocate a member of staff they have a positive relationship with to ensure their voice is heard.

How will the early years setting prepare and support my child to join the early years setting or transfer to a new setting/school?

Little Fishes Nursery recognise the importance of taking time to support transition so that it is successful.

To Little Fishes Nursery:

- 2 'settling in' sessions are carried out before your child starts.
- Home visit forms are completed.

To school:

- In the Summer Term, prior to the new academic year, staff from feeder schools will visit the setting to introduce themselves and get to know the children. The INCO and key worker will make sure that all relevant information is passed on to the school.
- At times, transition meetings are helpful which include parents and carers, Nursery staff, school staff and other professionals from outside agencies.
- Transition books are sometimes required.
- Informal visits to the school are sometimes planned in.
- Referrals to the EYFS Transition Team are made when necessary.

How does Little Fishes treat complaints from parents of children with SEND?

- If you have a worry or concern about your child, then we would always encourage it to be shared at the earliest opportunity and the first point of contact should be your child's key worker. The Nursery teachers, INCO, School SENCO or Headteacher would also be available to listen to any concerns you may have.
- The setting will provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be discussed and would always aim to resolve it in a fair and honest way through open dialogue.
- There is also a formal complaints policy which is available on the website and from the school office.

Who can I contact for more information?

- Your first point of contact would be your child's key worker. You can catch your child's key worker at the end of the day to make an appointment at a mutually convenient time or make contact through the school office.
- If you are a parent who is interested in sending your child to the setting and wish to discuss your child's additional needs and find out more about what we offer, please make an appointment with Mrs H. Allier, the INCO, through the school office: 01273 454470 office@stnm.org.uk
- *The West Sussex Parent Carer Forum* (http://www.westsussexparentsforum.co.uk/) and *The West Sussex Parent Partnership Service* (https://westsussex.local-offer.org/services/7-parent-partnership-service) are just two websites that parents and carers of children who have special educational needs or disabilities may find useful.

Glossary of terms:

CAHMS; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
EHCP; Education, Health and Care Plan
EP; Educational Psychiatrist

EYPARM; Early Years Planning and Review Meeting
ILP; Individual Learning Plan
OT; Occupational Therapist
SALT; Speech and Language Therapist
SEN; Special Educational Needs
SEND; Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
INCO; Inclusion Co-ordinator