Durham University
Day Nursery

DURHAM UNIVERSITY DAY NURSERY
MEETING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS:
SEND POLICY

1. Aims

1.1 Durham University Day Nursery aims to provide all children with a broad and balanced learning environment that is committed to the inclusion of children with special educational needs. Our philosophy is that all children with or without special educational needs should have the opportunity to develop individually to their full potential within a safe, secure and stimulating environment.

1.2 As part of the Nursery's funding agreement with the government, we are required to follow guidelines set down in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (0-25years: DfE January 2015).

1.3 The SEND code of practice compliments and supports government legislation- specifically the Equality Act 2010, which promotes equality of opportunity and anti-discrimination, requiring nurseries to make reasonable adjustments to include those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It is also written in line with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2026.

1.4 We have a statutory duty to complete a progress check for two-year-olds. This is always shared with parents/carers/health visitor and a report is completed on Tapestry. The progress check will be carried out by the Key Person. If there are any areas where progress is less than expected, in partnership with parents/carers and health visitors we would agree further action.

2. Definition of SEND

2.1 A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them or has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers.

"For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind."

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (0-25years: DfE January 2015).

2.2 Within the code of practice there are four broad areas of need:

- Communication and interaction.
- Cognition and Learning.
- Social, emotional and mental health.
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

2.3 The SEND code of practice promotes:

- Inclusion in experiences + activities alongside peers.
- Early identification of children's needs and meeting these needs as quickly as possible.
- Importance of children - parents/carers being central to decision making.

2.4 The SEN policy must be reviewed and evaluated annually. This provides an opportunity to check whether the policy is working well or whether it needs be revised or changed in any way.

- Systems for identifying and assessing children with special educational needs.
- The provision made to meet children's special educational needs.
- The allocation of resources for children with special educational needs.
- As a team, we work effectively with other agencies who are working with the child to ensure we are meeting their needs.

3. Admissions

3.1 Our nursery welcomes the opportunity for both parents/carers and children to visit prior to starting nursery. This will give parents/carers and children time to meet the staff and discuss their child's individual needs. As the nursery operates a key person system, each child will be allocated his/her own key person who works alongside each family and this also provides the opportunity to meet the SENCO on site.

3.2 Comprehensive information about child's ethnicity, first language, religion, physical needs, diet etc is discussed with the child's key person and included on the child's registration form. Steps are taken to ensure the nursery admissions process is fair and equitable to all children.

3.3 The nursery will not discriminate against a disabled child in the arrangements it makes for determining admission. The nursery will take all reasonable and practicable steps possible to enable a child with disabilities and/or special educational needs to be admitted to nursery.

4. Environment

4.1 Our nursery offers excellent facilities such as easy access for wheelchairs, ramps to the outdoor play area which is partly soft safety surface. We also have an easily accessible toilet. Displays in the nursery reflect positive images and all children are given the opportunity to contribute to displays throughout the nursery and their contributions are valued.

4.2 We will make reasonable adjustments to provisions and practice to meet the needs of individual children with SEND in line with the SEND code of practice and the Equality Act (2010). For example; as a nursery we would take steps to access a standing frame for a child with cerebral palsy or a raised board for a child with a vision impairment.

5. Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs

5.1 The nursery is committed to the early identification and intervention of children who may have SEND. Identifying needs early and being able to provide the right support at the right time enables us to improve the outcomes. More detailed observations are made in variety of contexts as well as careful monitoring of the child's overall development in line with Early Years Foundation Stage development matters materials.

5.2 A child's key person will follow the graduated approach of assess, plan, do, review to ensure that any emerging needs are being supported. They will liaise with the nursery SENCO and other professionals where deemed appropriate.

Following a period of assessment, information will be shared with parents/carers and next steps agreed and recorded in a support plan.

5.3 We obtain information from parents/carers and any records from previous settings children have attended, following the GDPR guidelines and parents'/carers' wishes. Relevant documents are given to parents/carers to pass information to schools or other nursery settings.

6. Supporting a Child with Special Educational Needs

6.1 All staff have a responsibility to support children with SEND.

6.2 A child's key person will liaise with the child's family and other professionals to gather the information about the child's specific needs and any strategies, equipment or materials that are important for holistic development.

6.3 Through the graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review, the child's progress will be monitored and strategies will be changed accordingly depending on their needs. All information will be shared and next steps agreed with the family.

6.4 With parental/carers agreement support, advice or a referral to other professionals will be made in line with the child's emerging needs.

6.5 The Manager and Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) are also available to discuss any queries. The key person will discuss with parents/carers and take advice from colleagues and the SENCO.

7. Co-ordination of SEND Provision

7.1 The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators) for the nursery are: Amy Collingwood, Jen Bolland, Adele Warner and Hayley Staff.

7.2 The SENCO's will:

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy.
- Co-ordinate provision for children with SEND alongside the child's key person.
- Ensure there is liaison with staff, parents/carers and other professionals in respect of children with SEND.
- We work closely with partner agencies including those in education, health and social care. We work in partnership with parents/carers to make referrals where necessary. This may include contributing and initiating early help.
- Advise and support other staff.
- Ensure support plans are in place and that relevant background information about children with SEN is collated, recorded and updated.
- Attend training in relation to the role.
- Attend local authority SENCO business meetings half termly and cascade information to the team.
- The room lead will set up a confidential file for each child and ensure all records; assessment reports are filed and kept securely in line with the Data Protection Act (2018).

7.3 The SENCO is responsible for supporting a number of meetings such as the Settling In Review (SIR), Team Around The Family (TAF), Early Intervention, SEN Support Plan (SSP) Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and Transition Plan (TP) with parents/carers, key person and other outside agencies/professionals where appropriate. They will support staff to organise meetings to review the Support Plan (SP) every six to eight weeks.

Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0 – 25 Years (2015 pages: 78 – 90)

8. Inclusion

All staff endeavour to provide an inclusive environment for all our children by:

- Making sure our planning for all children takes into account any specific outcomes from a child's support plan.
- Differentiating our activities so they are achievable by all children. Monitor and review impact.
- All children should have access to an appropriate education that allows them to achieve their personal potential.
- Adapting our materials and teaching styles to deliver our learning activities to children with individual needs.
- Incorporating the use of equipment and resources made available to us by appropriate professionals, i.e. Portage, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy Teams.
- Ensure steps are taken to make reasonable adjustments fulfilling our duty for SEN children.

We strive to create a sense of community and belonging for all our children. We have an inclusive ethos with high expectations and suitable targets, a broad and balanced curriculum for all children and systems in place for early identification of barriers to learning and participation.

9. Partnership with Parents/Carers

- Parents/carers are notified early if we have any concerns and there is always a willingness to listen to issues brought forward for discussion.
- We share information with parents/carers in informal conversations and individual meetings.
- Parents/carers are invited to review meetings to discuss progress and to be involved in setting targets with appropriate interventions strategies to help the child in nursery and at home.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to use the Durham SEND IASS (previously Parent Partnership Service) for support and advice or to bring an appropriate relative/friend to any meeting should they wish to do so. More information about this service can be obtained from the SENCO or the Nursery Manager.

- We promote a culture of co-operation between parents/carers, nursery, LSO and other professionals. This is important in enabling anyone with SEND to achieve their full potential.
- We respect the differing perspectives of all parties involved and working with children with SEND and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints.
- We respect the differing needs of parents/carers such as a disability or communication and linguistic barriers.
- We speak to parents/carers about the Local Offer and what support is available in the local area.

10. Children's Participation

Children, who are capable of forming views, have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. The voice views of the child are always taken into account.

11. Transitional Arrangements

When a child is due to leave the nursery to attend school, all relevant documentation will be passed to parents/carers who will pass the information on to schools should they want to.

Staff from other schools are welcome to visit and meet with the key person, SENCO parent/carer and child. In some circumstances it may be necessary for children with SEND to have extra visits to new school with the room lead /their key person to help with the transition from nursery to school. This can be arranged by discussing the child's needs with nursery and the school.

12. Behaviour

"Providers are responsible for supporting, understanding and managing the children's behaviour in an appropriate way."

"Providers must keep a record of any occasion where physical intervention is used. And parents and/or carers must be informed on the same day, or as soon as reasonably practicable."

Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2026.

We will encourage and support the children;

- To become confident, independent and self-assured.
- To respect themselves, others and the environment.

- To express their thoughts and feelings in an appropriate way.
- Please refer to our Behaviour Policy.

13. Training

We see the value of working closely together with other professionals to meet children's specific needs and are committed to developing this further.

Staff regularly attend SEND training which has been arranged by Durham Local Authority and the Early Years Inclusion Team or in house training with all staff. Any information to be shared is done at staff meetings.

Within the setting we have staff who have particular skills that would enable the setting to meet particular needs. Such as: -

- British Sign Language (BSL) – Kate Sanderson
- Autistic Spectrum disorder Level 2
- Safeguarding disabled Children Level 3
- Level 2 Makaton and Babies Makaton – George Ranson and Jen Bolland
- Level 3 Supporting Speech, Language and Communication (SLC) in Early Years – George Ranson and Jen Bolland

14. Concerns and Compliments

At Durham University Day Nursery we recognise the sensitive and emotive nature of special educational needs. We have therefore implemented arrangements for dealing with complaints or concerns about SEND provision that are over and above the setting's general complaints procedure.

If any parent/carers should have cause for complaint or any compliments, they should in the first instant talk to the SENCo officer/Nursery Manager/Deputies or:

Robin Donald - Director of HR Services, Systems and Reward
Contact: robin.donald@durham.ac.uk

They will respond by meeting with the parent or carer to discuss the situation. If this does not resolve the issue, the complaint will then pass to the first level of the general complaints procedure.

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

0300 123 1231

15. Confidentiality

To meet the needs of all our children in our care it may be necessary at times to share information with parents/carers and with staff in order to support the children's development. We may also need to seek help and advice from outside professionals. All information will be on a need-to-know basis, and the contracting parent's/carers permission will be requested. All aspects of the Data Protection Act will be adhered to.

16. Related documents

Nursery Staff, Students and Volunteers will adhere to Durham University Procedures held on the University website.

17. Version Control

Current Status Version: Final
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Version	Date	Changes	Changed by
Revised	16/01/2023	Changes made to sections 1.4 and 7.1	Jordan McAnaney Nursery Administrator and Amy Collingwood Room Lead
Final Version 6.0	16/01/2023	Approved	Kim Roberts, Nursery Manager
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Final Version 9.0	26th October 2026	Approved	Kim Roberts, Nursery Manger