Early years practice policy

Alongside associated procedures in 09.1-09.15 Early years practice, this policy was adopted by *Scarning Pre School* on 8/4/25.

Aim

Children are safe, happy, and eager to participate and to learn.

Objectives

- Young children need to form a secure attachment to their key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy and eager to participate and learn. It is their *entitlement* to be settled comfortably into a new environment.
- The needs of part-time children are considered.
- There is a procedure for when children do not settle and for prolonged absences.
- *Prime times* of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and create opportunities for learning. We actively promote British values, inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity.
- We operate a positive behaviour management approach. Behaviour management procedures cover how staff should respond to all aspects of behaviour, including children who exhibit challenging behaviour towards other children. These procedures build on the Early Years Alliance's approach to learning based on three key statements.
    1. Learning is a lifelong process, which enables children and adults to contribute to and shape their world.
    2. We want the curriculum we provide to help children to learn to:
        - be confident and independent
        - be aware of and responsive to their feelings
        - make caring and thoughtful relationships with other people
        - become increasingly excited by, interested in, and knowledgeable and questioning about the world around them.
    3. We provide a wide range of interesting child-chosen and adult-initiated activities which:
        - give children opportunities to use all their senses
        - help children of different ages and stages to play together

- help children be the directors of their own learning
- help children develop an inquiring and questioning attitude to the world around them

The *EYFS* is used as a framework to provide care and learning for children under two years.

Older Children (2-5 years)

- To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children from two to five years need to form attachments with adults who care for them, primarily to a key person, but with other adults and children too. In this way children feel part of a community of learners; they can contribute to that community and receive from it. The three-stage model referred to in procedure 9.4 is applicable, but with some differences in the procedures for children moving up into the next group and for older children.

Waiting list and admissions

Our provision is accessible to children and families from all sections of the local and wider community. We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear, and open to all parents who apply for places. The availability of a place at the setting considers staff/child ratios, the age of the child and registration requirements.

- We operate in an inclusive manner which enables all children and families to access our services.
- We also have regard for the needs of parents/carers who are:
  - looking to take up work, remain in work or extend their hours of work
  - looking to commence training or education
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that our provision is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Services are widely advertised, and information is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Where the number of children wanting places exceeds the number of places available a waiting list is operated using clear criteria for allocation of places as detailed in section 09.1 Waiting list and admissions procedure.

Funded places – free entitlement

All 3- and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours free childcare and early education each week for 38 weeks of the year. Some eligible two-year-olds are also entitled. Funded places are offered in accordance with national and local codes of practice and adherence to the relevant Provider Agreement/Contract with the local authority.

Legal References

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE 2014)

Equality Act 2010

Childcare Act 2006

09 Early years practice procedures

09.1 Waiting list and admissions

We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information, and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear and open to all parents who apply for a place.

- The setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- Information about the setting is accessible, using plain English, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, provided in different community languages and in other formats on request.
- Children with disabilities are supported to take full part in all activities within the setting and the setting makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that this will be the case from the time the child is placed on the waiting list.
- The waiting list is arranged in birth order and in addition may take into account the following:
  - the age of the child with priority being given to children eligible for the free entitlement
  - length of time on the waiting list
  - the vicinity of the home to the setting
  - siblings already attending the setting
  - the capacity of the setting to meet the individual needs of the child
- Funded places are offered in accordance with the Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE) and any local conditions in place at the time,
- Where it is financially viable to do so, a place is kept vacant for an emergency admission.
- The setting and its practices are welcoming and make it clear that fathers, mothers, other relations and carers and childminders are all welcome.
- The setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability, whether gender, family structure, class, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- The needs and individual circumstances of children joining the setting are monitored on our registration form, to ensure that no accidental or unintentional discrimination is taking place and that reasonable

- adjustments are made as required.
- Section 05 Equality procedures is shared and widely promoted to all.

Admissions

- Once an early education and childcare place has been offered the relevant paperwork is completed and filed on the child's personal file. Forms completed include:
  - 07.1a Privacy Notice - explains what personal data we collect, why we collect it, how we use it, the control parent/carers have over their personal data and the procedures we have in place to protect it.
  - The settings tterms and ccondition's - govern the basis by which we provide early education and childcare.
  - Registration form - contains personal information about the child and family that must be completed in full prior to the child commencing.

Children with SEND

- The manager must seek to determine an accurate assessment of a child's needs at registration. If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding must be made immediately.
- Children with identified SEND must be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager must outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety at all times is paramount.
- At the time of registration, the manager must check to see if a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, if so, the manager must ask for evidence to enable them to claim the Disability Access Fund directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the setting manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.

- Preparation for admitting a child with SEND must be made in a reasonable amount of time and any

delay in the child starting is scrutinised by the setting manager to avoid discrimination and negative impact on the child and family. During a preparation period the family and relevant agencies and the local authority must be regularly updated on the progress of the preparations.

Safeguarding/child protection

If information is provided by the parents/carers that a child who is starting at the setting is currently, or was involved with social care, the designated safeguarding lead will contact the agency to seek further clarification.

Parents/carers are advised on how to access the setting's policies and procedures.

Further guidance

Early Years Entitlements: Operational guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718181/Early_years_entitlements-operational_guidance.pdf

9.1a About our childcare and early education

Welcome to Scarning Pre School and thank you for registering your child with us.

We know how important your child is and aim to deliver the highest quality of education and care to help them to achieve their best.

This document aims to provide you with an introduction to Scarning Pre School our routines, our approach to supporting your child's learning and development and how we aim to work together with you to best meet your child's individual needs.

Our setting aims to:

- provide high quality care and education for children
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop
- add to the life and well-being of the local community
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity

Parents/carers

You are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be:

- valued and respected
- kept informed
- consulted
- involved
- included at all levels

Children's development and learning

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment
- has a named key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress and is your link to our setting
- is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer helpers
- has the chance to join in with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together

- is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do
- is in a setting that sees parents/carers as partners in helping each child to learn and develop
- is in a setting in which parents/carers help to shape the service it offers

The Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision for the development and learning of children from birth to five years is guided by the Early Years Foundation Stage. Our provision reflects the four overarching principles of the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*:

- *A Unique Child*

  Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

- *Positive Relationships*

  Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

- *Enabling Environments*

  Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between educators, parents and/or carers.

- *Learning and Development*
- Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

How we provide for learning and development

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The Areas of Learning and Development comprise:

- *Prime Areas*
  - Personal, social and emotional development.
  - Physical development.
  - Communication and language.

- *Specific Areas*
  - Literacy.
  - Mathematics.
  - Understanding the world.
  - Expressive arts and design.

For each area, the level of progress that children are expected to have attained by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage is defined by the Early Learning Goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know, and be able to do, by the end of the reception year of their education.

We refer to non-statutory curriculum guidance to support our professional judgment as we assess each child's progress and level of development as they progress towards the Early Learning Goals. We have regard to these when we assess children and plan for their learning by creating a curriculum that is ambitious and meets every child's needs. Our educational programmes support children to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for:

Personal, social and emotional development

- self-regulation
- managing self
- building relationships

Physical development

- gross motor skills
- fine motor skills

Communication and language

- listening, attention and understanding
- speaking

Literacy

- comprehension
- word reading
- writing

Mathematics

- number
- numerical patterns

Understanding the world

- past and present
- people, culture and communities
- the natural world

Expressive arts and design

- creating with materials
- being imaginative and expressive

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Being active and playing supports young children's learning and development through doing and talking. This is how children learn to think about and understand the world around them. We use the EYFS education programmes to plan and provide opportunities which will help children to make progress in all areas of learning. This programme is made up of a mixture of activities that children plan and organise for themselves, and activities planned and led by educators.

Characteristics of effective learning

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

- playing and exploring - engagement
- active learning - motivation
- creating and thinking critically - thinking

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child engages with learning and being clear about what we can do and provide to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them. We use information that we gain from observations of the children, to understand their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best, and we will ask you to contribute to assessment by

sharing information about what your child likes to do at home and how you, as parents/carers, are supporting development.

We may make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our on-going observations. These help us to build a picture of a child's progress during their time with us and form part of children's records of achievement/learning journeys. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals, as well as at times of transition, such as when a child moves into a different group or when they go on to school.

The progress check at age two

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short-written summary of their child's development in the three prime areas of learning and development - personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language - when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. Your child's key person is responsible for completing the check using information from on-going observations carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals.

Records of achievement/learning journeys

We keep a record of achievement/learning journey for each child. Your child's record of achievement/learning journey helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Your child's key person will work in partnership with you to keep this record. To do this you and they will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's progress. Together, we will then decide on how to further support your child's learning and development.

Working together for your children

We maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set by the Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements. We may also have volunteer parent/carer helpers, where possible, to complement these ratios. This helps us to:

- give time and attention to each child
- talk with the children about their interests and activities
- help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide
- allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety

The staff who work at our setting are:

How parents/carers take part in the setting

Our setting recognises parents/carers as the first and most important educators of their children. All our staff see themselves as partners with parents/carers in providing care and education for their children. There are many ways in which parents/carers take part in making our setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents/carers, such as:

- exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with our staff
- contributing to the progress check at age two
- helping at sessions of the setting
- sharing their own special interests with the children
- helping to provide and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities
- being part of the management of the setting, where appropriate
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting
- joining in community activities, in which the setting takes part
- building friendships with other parents/carers in the setting

Joining in

Our setting has a rota which parents/carers can join if they would like to help at a particular session or sessions of the setting. Helping at the session enables parents/carers to see what the day-to-day life of our setting is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities.

Parents/carers can also offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. We welcome parents/carers to drop into the setting to see it at work or to speak with the manager.

Key person and your child

Our setting uses a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that the childcare and early education that we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, they will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, they will help your child to benefit from our activities.

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining relevant qualifications, our staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to date with thinking about early years care and education. We also keep up to date with best practice, as a member of the Early Years Alliance, through *Under 5* magazine, Alliance training on EYA Central and other

publications produced by the Alliance. The current copy of *Under 5* is available for you to read. Occasionally, we hold learning events for parents/carers.

The setting's timetable and routines

Our setting believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in our setting are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the setting
- ensure the safety of each child
- help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning

The session*

We organise our sessions so that the children can choose from, and work at, a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities, which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. Outdoor activities contribute to all areas of learning and development, including their health and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided indoors.

Snacks and meals

We make snacks and meals a social time at which children and adults eat together. Parents provide a fresh fruit or vegetable snacks. Parents can choose to order a school hot dinner or supply a home packed lunch. Please tell us about your child's dietary needs, particularly any known allergies or food intolerance and we will plan accordingly.

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities. We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

Policies

Our staff can explain our policies and procedures to you. Copies of which are available on our website.

Our policies help us to make sure that the service we provide is of high quality and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

Our staff and committee work together to adopt the policies, and they all can take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling our setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Information we hold about you and your child

We have procedures in place for the recording and sharing of information [data] about you and your child that is compliant with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) as follows:

The data is we collect is:

1. processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject [you and your family]
2. collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes
3. adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed
4. accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date
5. kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects [you and your family] for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed
6. processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures

When you register your child with us, we will provide you with a privacy notice that gives you further details of how we fulfil our obligations regarding your data.

Safeguarding children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure that people looking after children are suitable to fulfil the requirements of their role and help to protect children against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents/carers ensures that we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies, when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

Special educational needs

To make sure that our provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special educational needs a child may have. We work to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Emma Dawson

The management of our setting

Our setting is a charity and as such is managed by a volunteer management committee - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend our setting. The elections take place at our Annual General Meeting. The committee make up the registered person with Ofsted and are responsible for:

- managing our finances
- employing and managing our staff
- making sure that we have, and work to, policies that help us to provide a high-quality service
- making sure that we work in partnership with parents

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all the children who attend our setting. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan.

Fees

Our Pre School fees will be as follows from 23rd April 2025:

Age of child	3-hour session	6-hour session
Under 2 years old	£20.00	£40
2 years old	£18.50	£37
3 – 4 years old	£15.50	£31

payable half-termly/termly. Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a brief period. If your child must be absent over an extended period, talk to the manager/Deputy.

For your child to keep her/his place at our setting, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for two-, three- and four-year-olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply.

Starting at our setting

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, our staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the setting. Our policy on the role of the key person and Settling-in is enclosed with this document or is available from our office.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. Our staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or to respond to any questions.

9 Early years practice procedures

9.2 Attendance and absence

We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

There are several reasons why a child may be absent from a setting. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice. Parents/carers are advised that they should contact the setting within one hour of the time the child would have been expected to advise of their absence. Designated safeguarding leads must also adhere to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from the provision.

- If a child who normally attends fails to arrive and no contact has been received from their parents/carers, the designated safeguarding lead, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- Attempts to contact the child's parents/carers or other named carers continue throughout the day on the first day of absence.
- If no contact is made with the parents/carers and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal file and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.
- If contact has not been made within three working days, children's services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services may be contacted as per LSP procedures.
- All absences are recorded on the child's personal file with the reason given for the absence, the expected duration and any follow up action taken or required with timescales.
- Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

If at any time further information becomes known that gives cause for concern, procedure 06.1 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns is immediately followed.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- The designated safeguarding lead or key person attempts to contact the parents/carers to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, the information is recorded in the child's file.
- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated safeguarding lead is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
- If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- If at any time information becomes known that gives cause for concern, 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

Safeguarding

- If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised.
- If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on 06.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Poor/irregular attendance

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

- In the first instance the setting manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents/carers to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parents/carers to offer support where possible.
- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the setting manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.
- Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

In the case of funded children, the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, considering the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The setting manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.

9 Early years practice procedures

9.3 Prime times – The role of the key person

'Each child must be assigned a key person' (EYFS 2024)

Young children need to form a secure attachment to key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy, and eager to participate and learn.

The key person role

- A key person builds an on-going relationship with the child and their parents/carers and is committed to that child's well-being while in the setting.
- Every child that attends is allocated a key person before they begin settling in - it is not the responsibility of the child to choose their own key person.
- Where possible a 'back up' key person is also identified for each child so that they can fulfil the role in the absence of the main key person, for example, during annual leave or sickness.
- The key person conducts the progress check at age two for their key children.
- The key person role is fully explained to parents/carers on the settling in sessions and the name of the child's key person (Each parent is given a key person sheet, informing them of their key person and their role) and this is recorded on the child list on the register.
- The key person is central to settling a child into the setting. The setting manager and key person explain the need for a settling in process and agree a plan with the parents.
- Shift patterns and staff absence can affect a child who is just settling in; where possible, settling in should be matched to when the key person is on duty.
- The number of children for each key person considers the individual needs of children and the capacity of the key person to manage their cohort; it is also influenced by part-time places and part time staff. The setting manager should aim for consistency i.e. matching part-time staff to part-time children; full-time children should not be divided between key persons during the week.
- The key person spends time daily with her key group to ensure their well-being.

Parents/carers

- Key persons are the first point of contact for parents regarding matters concerning their child and any concerns parents/carers may have been addressed with the key person in the first instance.
- Key persons support parents/carers in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.

- The key person is responsible for the child's developmental records, completing the progress check at age two, and for sharing information about progress with the child's parents/carers.

Learning and development

- The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each individual child's learning and development.
- If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SENCO and the child's parents/carers.

Prime times

The key person role is explained further in the prime-time procedures (09.4/6/7/8/10/14); the key person also maintains other responsibilities for key children including administering medication and signing accident records.

Back-up key person

- The role of the back-up key person is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
- The back-up key person is identified when the child starts but is not introduced to the child until an attachment is beginning to form with the key person.
- The back-up key person gradually forms a relationship with the child until the child is happy to be cared for by this person.
- The back-up key person shares information with parents/carers in the key person's absence and makes notes in the child's records where appropriate.
- The back-up key person ensures information is shared with the key person.

Safeguarding children

- The key person has a responsibility towards their key children to report any concern about their development, welfare, or child protection matter to the setting manager and to follow the procedures in this respect.
- Regular supervision with the setting manager provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.
- The back-up key person has a duty likewise.

Further guidance

Being a Key Person in an Early Years Setting (Alliance Publication)

Policies & Procedures for the EYFS 2024/25 (Early Years Alliance 2024)

9.4 Prime times – Settling in

To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children need to form attachments with the adults who care for them, primarily a key person, but others too. In this way they feel part of a community; they can contribute to that community and receive from it. Very young children, especially two- to three-year-olds, approach separation from their parent with anxieties, older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and can approach new experiences with confidence; but also need time to adjust and feel secure. It is the entitlement of all children to be settled comfortably into a new environment.

Settling-in for children and those with SEND

- Where possible start times for children are staggered to allow sufficient one to one time with each child and parent/carer.
- Where possible key persons will greet their key children, to bring them into the setting, until they are settled and happy.
- If children are struggling to settle, the manager or room leader will discuss with the parent/carer about possibly reducing session times.
- If a child has been identified as having SEND then the key person/SENCO and parents/carers will need to identify and address potential barriers to settling in e.g. timings of medication and invasive procedures, specific routines and levels of support.

When a parent is unable or refuses to take part in settling in

- Information about the 'settling in' plan is given at the first visit and the reasons are explained.
- If the parent/carer feels that this will be difficult – perhaps another close relative can come in instead.
- Genuine difficulties need to be handled sensitively, but generally speaking this is not an issue where the parent/carer has a choice not to attend with their child. A parent/carer who refuses to take part in settling in may have the offer of the place withdrawn.

For children whose first language is not English

- If the parent/carer does not speak English, efforts are made to source an interpreter for induction; it will be helpful for them to see around the setting and be clear about their role in interpreting in the play area.
- The settling-in programme is explained to the parent/carer, and it is emphasised how important it is that they stay with the child and talk to him/her in the home language to be able to explain things.

- Through the interpreter, the key person will try to gauge the child's level of skills in their home language; this will give the key person an idea of the child's interests and levels of understanding.
- The need for the parent/carer to converse in the child's home language is important.
- The key person makes the parent/carer feel welcome using smiles and gestures.
- With the parent/carer, make a list of key words in the child's home language; sometimes it is useful to write the word as you would pronounce it. These words will be used with the child and parents/carers will be addressed with 'hello' and 'goodbye' in their language.
- The key person prepares for the child's visits by having a favourite toy or activity ready for the child to provide a means to interact with the child.
- Children will be spoken to as per any other child, using gestures and facial expressions to help.
- When the child feels happy to spend time with the key person (secure base), the parent/carer should spend time outside of the room.
- Progress with settling in will be done as with any other child; it just takes a little longer to reach dependency/independence.

9.5 Establishing children's starting points

When children start at the setting they arrive at different levels of learning and development. To help them to settle and make rapid progress it is important that they are provided with care and learning opportunities that are suited to their needs, interests and abilities. This means establishing and understanding their starting points and whether there are any obstacles to their learning, so that teaching can be tailored to the 'unique child'.

- The aim of establishing a child's starting points is to ensure that the most appropriate care and learning is provided from the outset.
- Starting points are established by gathering information from the first contact with the child's parents/carers at settling in sessions and during the 'settling in' period. Staff do not 'wait and see' how the child is settling before they begin to gather information.
- The key person is responsible for establishing their key children's starting points by gathering information in the following ways:
  - observation of the child during settling in visits
  - discussion with the child's parents/carers
  - building on information that has been gathered during registration by referring to the registration form

The information gathered is recorded within two weeks of the child's official start date and sooner where possible.

- The key person must make a 'best fit' judgment about the age band the child is working in, referring to Development Matters or Birth to Five Matters.
- The key person should complete details by indicating where they have gathered their evidence from, using more than one source where possible i.e. parent/carer comment and observation during settling in.

  If the initial assessment raises any concerns that extra support may be required procedure 09.13 Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND is followed.

9.6 Prime times – arrivals and departures

Prime times of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and to create opportunities for learning. Arrivals and departures are key times in the day when children need support from their carer to make the transition smooth and happy; these times of day also pose a certain level of risk as parents and carers come and go. All staff are aware of the potential risks and take measures to minimise them.

Arrivals

- Whenever possible the key person or back up key person always greets young children. This ensures that young children are received into the setting by a familiar and trusted adult.
- The Manager or senior staff greet the parent/carer and marks their presence and who is collecting on the register.
- If a child who is expected fails to arrive, this is recorded on the child's personal file and the setting manager is immediately notified so that they can contact the child's parents/carers to find out why the child is absent following procedure 09.2 Absence.
- The key person greets the parents/carers and takes time to hear information the parents/carers need to share.
- The key person receives the child physically and tunes in to how he or she is feeling and prepares to meet his/her needs.
- Always ensure that the parents/carers say goodbye to their child and say when they are coming back, such as 'after tea', rather than just 'later'.
- If the member of staff receiving the child is not the key person, the member of staff will hand over the information shared by the parents/carers to the key person when they arrive.

Injuries noted on arrival

- If a child is noted to have visible injuries when they arrive at the setting, the parent is asked to complete an accident on arrivals form.

Changing shifts and handing over information

- When the key person leaves or goes on a break, they handover the care of the child to a 'back-up' key person.
- If someone other than the key person receives the child, he/she will share any information from the parent/carer and write a note for the key person. Confidential information should be shared with the setting manager to pass on.
- The key person shares information with the back-up key person, in this way they ensure that all information is passed on to the parent/carer in the key person's absence.

Departures

- Children are prepared for home, with clean faces, hands and clothes if required.
- The key person always aims to greet parents/carers when they arrive, ensuring that the person who has arrived to collect the child is named on the signing in/out form. They hand over the child personally and enter the time of departure in the register.
- Only persons aged over 16 years should normally collect children. If a parent has no alternative, then this is agreed with the setting manager and a risk assessment completed and signed by the parent/carer. In all cases the setting manager will ask the parents/carers to ensure that in future alternative arrangements are made. If the parent/carer is under 16 years of age a risk assessment will be completed. No child will be collected by anyone who has not reached 14 years of age. The risk assessment should take account of factors such as age/vulnerability of child, journey travelled, arrangements upon leaving the setting to go home/elsewhere.
- Educators verbally exchange information with parents/carers.
- If someone other than the key person is with the child at the end of the day, the key person should pass general information to the other staff or write a note for the parents/carers. Confidential information should be shared with the setting manager to pass on.

Maintaining children's safety and security

Arrivals and departures pose a particular threat to the safety and security of the children, particularly when parents arrive at the same time or when in shared premises. To minimise the risk of a child leaving the building unnoticed, the setting manager conducts a risk assessment that identifies potential risks and the measures put in place to minimise them, such as staff busy talking to individual parents/carers or doors left ajar. The risk assessment is shared with their line manager and is updated as and when required.

09.7 Prime times – Toddler mealtimes

Mealtimes are key times in the day for being close and to promote security, as well as for exploration and learning. We understand the importance of a healthy balanced diet for young children.

Toddler mealtimes

- For the most part, toddlers who are feeding themselves have their meals in their space, with their key group and key person.
- Whilst eating, children are always within sight and hearing of a member of staff.
- There is a Paediatric First Aider present at meal and snack times.
- Staff who are eating with the children must role-model hygiene, healthy eating and best practice at all times, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Staff arrange the table before toddlers sit down; there should be no waiting time.
- Hands are wiped/washed clean before their meal.
- Children are not discouraged from eating with their fingers; this exploration of their food with their hands is the beginning of self-feeding. When they have finished, they may wish to 'play' further with any remaining food. It is fine for them to get a bit messy; they, and their table can be cleaned afterwards.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction of children with their group and the adults who care for them. It is a time of sensory learning and learning skills, as well as for the fundamental satisfaction of being fed.
- To protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
- Information for parents is displayed on the parent's notice board, including:
  - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf
  - Daily menus including identification of any foods containing allergens

09.8 Prime times – Snack-times and mealtimes (older children)

Children are supervised during mealtimes and always remain within sight and hearing of staff.

Snack times

- Children may also take turns to help set the table. Small, lidded plastic jugs are provided with choice of milk or water.
- Children wash their hands before and after snack-time.
- Parents are asked to provide fruit or raw vegetables, such as carrot or tomato, are offered in batons. Bananas and other foods are not cut as rounds but are sliced to minimise a choking hazard.
- Portion sizes are gauged as appropriate to the age of the child.
- Children arrive as they want refreshment and leave when they have had enough. Children are not made to leave their play if they do not want to have a snack.
- Staff join in conversation and encourage children's independence by allowing them to pour drinks, open and close snack pots.

Mealtimes

- Tables are never overcrowded during mealtimes.
- Children are always within sight and hearing of staff at mealtimes
- There is a Paediatric First Aider present at children's meal and snack times.
- Children help staff set tables.
- Children wash their hands and sit down as food is ready to be served.
- Staff have their lunch with children and do not eat different food in front of children. Staff who are always eating with the children role-model healthy eating and best practice, for example not drinking cans of fizzy drinks in front of the children.
- Children are given time to eat at their own pace and are not hurried to fit in with adults' tasks and breaks. They are not made to eat what they do not like and are encouraged to try new foods slowly.
- To protect children with food allergies or specific dietary requirements, children are discouraged from sharing and swopping their food with one another.
- If children do not eat their main course, they are not denied pudding. Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- Mealtimes are relaxed opportunities for social interaction between children and adults.

- After lunch children are encouraged to scrape their plates and help wipe the table and sweep the floor.
- Children go to the bathroom and wash their hands. Cleaning teeth no sooner than 1 hour after lunch is recommended where hygiene procedures pose no risk (see procedure 04.6 Oral health)
- Information for parents/carers is displayed on the parent/carers notice board, including:
  - Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf
  - Daily menus including identification of any foods containing allergens

9.10 Prime times – Sleep and rest time

Sleep and rest times are key times in the day for being close and promoting security. Younger children will need to sleep but older children do not usually need to. No child is made to sleep.

- Children sleep on rest mats and will have clean bedding.
- Nappies are changed and heavier clothing removed.
- Hair accessories that may come lose or detach are removed before sleep/rest time.
- A separate area is made quiet, perhaps with soft music playing.
- Where possible children are settled by their key person and comforted to sleep. Key persons may gently stroke or pat children.
- If children fall asleep in-situ it may be necessary to move or wake them to make sure they are comfortable, they are not left to sleep in a buggy or bouncy chair.
- Sleeping children are regularly checked at least every ten minutes and are within sight and/or hearing of staff. This is recorded on sleep forms and parents informed on collection of the child.

Further guidance

Safer Sleep for Babies (Lullaby Trust) www.lullabytrust.org.uk/safer-sleep-advice

9 Early years practice procedures

9.11 Managing separation anxiety in children

Separation anxiety occurs when toddlers do not feel securely attached to their key person. Taking steps to reduce anxiety and promote attachment is a priority task for the key person in partnership with the parents/carers.

- Separation anxiety can be identified when signals are clearly understood by members of staff.
- Distress in children produces high levels of corticosteroids (neurochemicals) which hinder brain functioning. It is detrimental for babies to experience prolonged distress. Signals include:
  - crying inconsolably for extended periods; causing coughing or difficulty to breath or vomiting
  - holding breath
  - head banging or rocking
  - ambivalent feelings towards the key person, i.e. wanting to be picked up then struggling free
  - frantic movement or lashing out with arms and legs
  - biting, tantrums and snatching from others.
  - jealousy shown towards other children in the key group
  - refusing food or drink or showing signs of digestive problems
  - temporary interest in toys or others, then crying again.
  - prolonged periods of sleep
  - switching off, staring blankly
  - anxiousness about who is coming in and out of a room, standing by the door for long periods
  - being held, but not responding or smiling
  - crying when the parent collects or cheering up and eager when parent collects
- A picture of evidence builds up which may suggest that the baby/toddler is experiencing separation anxiety. This needs to be discussed with the parent/carer and a plan made to help the child settle.
- The parent and key person discuss the reasons that the separation anxiety has developed or been made worse. It could be due to:

- hurried settling-in due to pressures on parents/carers
- inadequate settling in due to the key person being absent or the child not being brought in each day to complete the settling-in plan
- the key person's absence during settling in period
- changes of staff
- change of key person in the setting
- changes at home – stress events in the family
- illness
- family having been away on holiday
- previous distressing experiences with another setting

- The goal of any plan is to ensure the child is secure through forming an attachment with the key person.
- The settling in process is reviewed; if any aspect has been missed, this needs to be re-planned. This may include the need for the parent/carer to stay or find a close relative or friend whom the child feels safe with if the parent/carer cannot be there.

9.12 Promoting positive behaviour

Positive behaviour is located within the context of the development of children's personal, social, and emotional skills and well-being. A key person who understands children's needs, their levels of development, personal characteristics, and specific circumstances, supports this development. This ensures children's individual needs are understood and supported. Settling into a new environment is an emotional transition for young children especially as they learn to develop and master complex skills needed to communicate, negotiate and socialise with their peers.

Skills such as turn taking and sharing often instigate minor conflicts between children as they struggle to deal with powerful emotions and feelings. During minor disputes, key persons help children to reflect and regulate their actions and, in most instances, children learn how to resolve minor disputes themselves. However, some incidents are influenced by factors, requiring a strategic approach especially if the behaviour causes harm or distress to the child or others. These situations are managed by the SENCO/key person using a stepped approach which aims to resolve the issue and/or avoid the behaviour escalating and causing further harm.

This is an unsettling time for young children. Educators are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption to their normal routine. Where a child's behaviour gives cause for concern, educators take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with the child's parents/carers and the principles of this procedure are adhered to

The setting manager/SENCO will:

- ensure that all new staff attend training on behaviour management.
- help staff to implement procedure 09.12 Promoting positive behaviour in their everyday practice
- advise staff on how to address behaviour issues and how to access expert advice if needed

Rewards and sanctions

Children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.

Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers may provide immediate results for the adult but do not teach a child how to act when a 'prize' is not being given or provide the skills to manage situations and emotions themselves. Instead, a child is taught to be 'compliant' and respond to meet adult expectations to obtain a reward (or for fear of a sanction). If used the type of rewards and their functions must be carefully considered.

Children are never labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group to be left in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. If a child is distressed or causing harm to others,

may help to remove them from the immediate environment where the incident occurred. They should be taken to a quiet area by their key person for up to 5 minutes to help them calm down. If appropriate, the key person can use this time to help the child reflect on what has happened. Physical punishment of any kind is never used or threatened which could adversely affect a child's well-being. If staff become aware that another person has given corporal punishment to a child, they follow 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' procedures. Physical intervention to safeguard a child/children must be carried out as per the guidance in this procedure.

Step 1

- The setting manager, SENCo and other relevant staff members are knowledgeable with, and apply the procedure 09.12 Promoting positive behaviour.
- Unwanted behaviours are addressed using an agreed and consistently applied approach to deescalate situations
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others must be discussed by the key person, SENCo/setting manager. During the meeting the key person must use their all-round knowledge of the child and family to share any known influencing factors such as a new baby in the family, child and/or parental illness, underlying additional needs to help place the child's behaviour into context.
- Appropriate adjustments to practice must be agreed within the setting. If relevant, a risk assessment should be carried out.
- If the adjustments are successful and the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur, or cause concern then normal monitoring can resume.

Step 2

- If the behaviour remains a concern, then the key person and SENCo must liaise with the parents to try to discover possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If relevant and appropriate the views of the child must be sought and considered to help identify a cause.
- If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting, then the setting manager/SENCo must suggest using a focused intervention approach to identifying a trigger for the behaviour such as the ABC approach, i.e. Antecedents – what happened before; Behaviour – what was the behaviour observed; Consequences – what happened after the event.
- If a trigger is identified, then the SENCo and key person must meet with the parents to plan support for the child through a graduated approach via SEN support.

- Aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to stop the behaviour and prevent escalation using the agreed initial intervention approach. If the behaviour has been significant or may have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents/carers of the victim of the behaviour and the parents/carers of the perpetrator must be informed. If the setting has applied a physical intervention, they must follow the guidance as set out below. The designated safeguarding lead completes 6.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form and contact Ofsted if appropriate. A record of discussions is recorded, and parents/carers are asked to sign.
- Parents/carers must also be asked to sign risk assessments where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.
- If relevant, actions for dealing with the behaviour at home are agreed with parents and incorporated into the action plan. Other staff are informed of the agreed interventions and help implement the actions. The plan must be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person/SENCo until improvement is noticed.
- Incidents and intervention relating to unwanted/challenging behaviour by children must be clearly and appropriately logged on 09.13b SEN Support - Action plan.

Step 3

If despite applying initial intervention to deescalate situations and focused interventions to identify triggers the child's behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, the SENCo and key person invite the parents/carers to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child. It may be agreed that the setting request support from the Early Help team and/or other specialist services such as the Area SENCo. This will help address most developmental or welfare concerns. If the behaviour is part of other welfare concerns that include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, safeguarding procedures 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' procedures must be followed immediately.

- Advice provided by external agencies is incorporated in 09.13b SEN Support: Action Plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.
- If a review determines a statutory assessment may be needed then all relevant documentation must be collected in preparation for an Education Health and Care Assessment which may lead onto an Education, Health, and Care Plan.

Use of physical intervention

Staff will already use different elements of physical contact with a child as part of their interaction in the setting especially when they are comforting a child or giving first aid. However, physical intervention to keep a child or other children safe is different and should only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

The EYFS states that physical intervention from a staff member towards a child may be used for the purposes of "averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if it is absolutely necessary."

Staff must do all they can to avoid using a physical intervention because this is not the preferred way of addressing children's behaviour.

To offer protection to children a range of appropriate graded interventions may be needed before physical intervention is applied. Most single incidents such as a child throwing a book on the floor or kicking a chair usually only require a verbal intervention from a member of staff. In other situations, an intervention can be applied through mechanical and environmental means such as locking doors and stair gates. This usually stops a situation escalating. However, there will be some situations where a child places themselves or others in danger which requires an immediate need for the use of both verbal and physical intervention. If a single or persistent incident requires a physical intervention such as physical handling from a staff member towards a child, then this is used intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will. In most cases this can be applied using the adult's body gently and safely blocking the child from access to danger or to prevent danger.

To physically intervene, an educator may use "reasonable force" to protect a child from injuring themselves or others. Legally an educator may also use reasonable force to prevent a child from damaging property. However, we would expect that in instances of damaging physical property a child would only experience a physical intervention if the broken property presented a risk or is high value.

If a situation arises which requires urgent physical hands-on intervention this is best applied by the staff who knows the child well such as their key person who is more able to calm them or use other known methods for defusing situations without physical intervention.

Physical handling

We use the principle of applying reasonable minimal force and handling in proportion to the situation. Staff use as little force as necessary to maintain safety. This intervention should only be used for as short a period as possible to keep the child safe and maintain well-being by aiming for:

- keeping the child's safety and well-being paramount
- a calm, gentle but firm approach and application of the intervention
- never restricting the child's ability to breathe
- side-by-side contact with the child
- no gap between theirs or the child's body

- keeping the adults back as straight as possible
- avoiding close head-to-head positioning to avoid injury to the child and themselves (head butting)
- only holding the child by their 'long' bones to avoid grasping at the child's joints where pain and damage are most likely to occur
- avoiding lifting the child unless necessary
- reassuring the child and talking about what has happened
- only applying a physical intervention on a disabled child if training or preferred method is provided from a reputable external source e.g. British Institute of Learning Disabilities www.bild.org.uk/

Risks

There are risks associated with any physical intervention and handling of a child. The younger and more vulnerable a child may be, the greater risk to the child of using physical intervention towards them. However, there are also risks to children associated with not intervening physically; for instance, if an educator did not take hold of a child by the wrist, they may have run into the path of a fast-moving car.

Before intervening physically to protect a child from immediate harm an educator needs to decision make in a split second, considering the following factors. This is described as dynamic risk assessment.

- What is the immediate risk to this child if I do not intervene now?
- What might the risks be if I do intervene? If this were my child, what would I want someone looking after them to do in this situation?
- What is the minimum level of intervention that will be effective here? How can I do this as gently as possible for as short a time as possible and how am I going to manage myself to stay calm?

Recording

Any instance of physical intervention is fully recorded immediately and reported to the designated person as soon as possible on 6.1b Safeguarding incident reporting form, ensuring that it is clearly stated when and how parents were informed. Parents/carers are asked to sign a copy of the form which is then kept on the child's file. The designated person decides who will notify the parent/carer and when, ensuring that the parent/carer signs to say they have been notified. An individual risk assessment should be completed after any physical intervention with a child which considers the risks and likelihood of such behaviour re-occurring and how this will be managed. The risk assessment should be agreed and signed by parents.

Policies & Procedures for the EYFS 2024/25 (Early Years Alliance 2024)

Temporary suspension (fixed term)

Any decision to temporarily suspend a child must be carefully considered lawful, reasonable, and fair. If despite following the stepped approach for behaviour it is necessary to temporarily suspend a child, for no more than five days, on the grounds of health and safety, the following steps are followed.

- The setting manager provides a written request to suspend a child to their line manager; the request must detail the reason the child must be suspended and the length of time of the proposed suspension.
- If the line manager approves, the parents/carers must be invited to a meeting to discuss next steps. Parents/carers are invited to bring a representative along. Notes must be taken at the meeting and shared later with the parents. The meeting aims for a positive outcome for the child and not to suspend.
- If no acceptable alternative to suspension is found then the setting manager must give both verbal and written notice of time related suspension to the parent, meanwhile the setting manager must ensure that continued resolution is sought, and suitable adjustments are in place for the child's return.

Suspension of a disabled child

We have a statutory duty not to discriminate against a child based on a protected characteristic. This includes suspending a child based on a disability. Ignorance of the law or claiming it was unknown that a child was disabled is no defence. However, if the child's behaviour places themselves or others at risk then the setting must take actions to avoid further harm. Time limited suspension may be applied to keep the child and/or others safe whilst finding a solution. Suspension is only used if reasonable steps and planned adjustments are first used to help resolve the situation. Without this action, suspension of a child with SEND may constitute disability discrimination (Equality Act 2010). A decision to suspend a disabled child must be clearly evidenced, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and targeted. Plans and intervention must be recorded on the child's file and 9.12b SEN Support - Action plan. If little or no progress is made during the suspension period, the following steps are taken.

- The setting manager sends a written/electronic invite to the parents/carers, a local authority representative and any relevant external agencies to attend a review meeting. Each attendee must be made aware that the meeting is to avoid the situation escalating further and to find a positive solution.
- After the meeting, the setting manager continues to maintain weekly contact with the parents/carers and local authority to seek a solution.
- Suitable arrangements offer the parent/carer continued support and advice during the suspension. The setting manager reviews the situation fortnightly and provides their line manager with a monthly update.

Expulsion

In some exceptional circumstances a child may be expelled due to:

- a termination of their childcare and early education agreement as explained in terms and conditions
- if despite applying a range of interventions (including reasonable adjustments), the setting has been unable to adequately meet the child's needs or cannot protect the health, safety and well-being of the child and/or others.

Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting

We do not tolerate behaviour demonstrating dislike, prejudice, discriminatory attitudes, or action towards any individual/group. This includes those living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to behaviour towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises. Where a parent/carer makes discriminatory or prejudice remarks to staff at any time, or other persons while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting manager. The procedure is explained, and the parent/carer is asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent/carer requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in discriminatory or prejudice ways; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.

Further guidance

Behaviour Matters (Alliance Publications)

9.13 Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND

We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (DfE and DoH 2015) which states that local authorities must ensure that all early years providers that they fund in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors are aware of the requirement on them to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. When securing funded early education for two, three- and four-year-olds local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN; this includes removing barriers that prevent access to early education and working with parents/carers to give each child support to fulfil their potential.

The term SEN support defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for. Children's SEND generally falls within the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Graduated approach

Initial identification and support (identifying special educational needs)

Ongoing formative assessment forms part of a continuous process for observing, assessing, planning and reviewing children's progress.

- Children identified as having difficulty with one or more area of development should be given support by applying some simple strategies and resources.
- For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop, 9.12a SEN Support: Initial record of concern form can be used for this purpose.
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, then the key person should raise a concern with the setting's SENCo/setting manager and the child's parents.

Observation and assessment of children's SEN

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern, educators should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting.

- Information can be collated from formal checks such as the progress check at age two, observations from parents/carers and observation and assessment by the setting of the child's progress.
- When specialist advice has been sought externally, this is used to help determine whether a child has a special educational need (SEN).
- The child's key person and SENCo/Manager use this information to decide if the child has a special educational need.
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents/carers have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

Planning intervention

- Everyone involved with the child should be given an opportunity to share their views. Parents/carers should be encouraged to share their thoughts on the child's difficulties and be involved in the decision as to what will happen next.
- A first intervention option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If the child's needs are more complex, then the decision maybe to go straight ahead and prepare 09.13b SEN support: Action plan with detailed evidence-based interventions being applied straight away and simultaneously external referrals made.
- If relevant, then the child should be appropriately included in development of the action plan but only at a level which reflects their stage of comprehension.
- 09.13b SEN support: Action plan described below, ensures that children that are identified, or suspected of having a SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.

Involving the child

- The SEND Code of Practice supports the rights of children to be involved in decisions about their education.
- Inclusion of children with SEND helps build self-confidence and trust in others.
- Ascertaining children's views may not be easy, a range of strategies will be needed.
- Accurate assessment helps identify children's strengths and possible barriers to learning.

- The key person and setting manager/SENCo work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to involve the child wherever appropriate.
- Children are involved at appropriate stages of the assessment and to their level of ability.
- Establishing effective communication is essential for the child's involvement.

Record keeping

If a child has or is suspected of having a SEN, a dated record should be kept of:

- the initial cause for concern and the source of this information, (the progress check at age two and/or outcomes of previous interventions). 09.13a SEN support: Initial record of concern form can also be used for this purpose drawing information from other sources
- the initial discussion with parents/carers raising the possibility of the child's SEN
- the views of the parents/carers and other relevant persons including, wherever possible, the child's views
- the procedures followed regarding the Code of Practice to meet the child's SEND e.g. SEN referrals to external agencies and for statutory assessment
- evidence of the child's progress and any identified barriers to learning
- advice from other relevant professionals; and all subsequent meetings with parents and other persons and any subsequent referrals

  Records may include

  - observation and monitoring sheets
  - expressions of concern
  - risk assessments
  - access audits (01.1b)
  - health care plans (including guidelines for administering medication)
  - meetings with parents/carers and other agencies
  - additional information from and to outside agencies
  - agreements with parents/carers
  - guidelines for the use of children's individual equipment; Early help CAF referrals

- referral to the local authority identifying a child's special educational needs and request for statutory Education, Health, Care (EHC) needs assessment; and a copy of an EHC plan

Seeking additional funding/enhanced/top up

If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core funding, then it will be at this point that the evidence collated will be used to apply for top up/enhanced funding from the local authority's inclusion fund. If a new or existing child is disabled, then the setting should check if the family is in receipt or have applied for Disability Living Allowance. If so, the setting will be able to apply to their local authority for the local Disability Access Fund.

Statutory education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan

Statutory assessment

- If a child has not made progress, then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- If a child is under compulsory school age, the local authority will conduct an EHC needs assessment if they consider that the child's needs cannot be met within the resources normally available to the early years setting.
- Children aged under age two are eligible where an assessment has indicated that the child is likely to have SEN which requires an EHC plan when they reach compulsory school age.
- When a child's needs appear to be sufficiently complex, or the evidence suggest specialist intervention then the local authority is likely to conclude that an EHC plan is necessary
- The local authority should fully involve the parent and must seek advice from the setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC assessment and preparing an EHC plan.
- Settings should prepare by collating information about the child's SEND including:
  - documentation on the child's progress in the setting
  - interventions and support provided to date
  - evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations
  - parent/carer views and wishes (and where appropriate those of the child)

  The information will then be submitted to the local authority to allow them to accurately assess the child in the context of the support already given.
- The local authority must inform the child's parents of their decision within six weeks of receiving a request for an assessment and give its reasons for their decision. If the local authority decides to conduct an assessment, it must ensure the child's parents are fully included right from the beginning and are invited to contribute their views. If the local authority subsequently decides not to conduct an

assessment it must then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.

- If the local authority decides that a statutory EHC plan is not necessary, it must notify the parents/carers and inform the provider, giving the reasons for the decision. This notification must take place within 16 weeks of the initial request or of the child having otherwise been brought to the local authority's attention.
- If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult collaboratively with the parents/carers in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child's preferences are considered and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date.
- Plans are evidenced based and focus on short term outcomes and long-term aspirations for the child including family and community support. Parents/carers have the right to request a particular provision for their child to be named within their EHC plan.
- If an early years setting is named, the local authority must fund this provision. They cannot force a setting to take a child and can only name the provision in the EHC if the setting agrees.
- Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under age five at least every three to six months. Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child's parents/carers must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

External intervention and support

Where external agency intervention has been identified to help support a child with SEND then this intervention should be recommended in writing by a suitably reliable source such as a speech and language therapist, paediatrician or educational psychologist.

Further guidance

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and DoH 2015)

Ready, Steady, SENCO (Alliance Publication)

9 Early years practice procedures

9.13 Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND

We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (DfE and DoH 2015) which states that local authorities must ensure that all early years providers that they fund in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors are aware of the requirement on them to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. When securing funded early education for two, three- and four-year-olds local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN; this includes removing barriers that prevent access to early education and working with parents/carers to give each child support to fulfil their potential.

The term SEN support defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for. Children's SEND generally falls within the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Graduated approach

Initial identification and support (identifying special educational needs)

- Ongoing formative assessment forms part of a continuous process for observing, assessing, planning and reviewing children's progress.
- Children identified as having difficulty with one or more area of development should be given support by applying some simple strategies and resources.
- For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop, 9.12a SEN Support: Initial record of concern form can be used for this purpose.
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, then the key person should raise a concern with the setting's SENCo/setting manager and the child's parents.

Observation and assessment of children's SEN

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern, educators should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting.

- Information can be collated from formal checks such as the progress check at age two, observations from parents/carers and observation and assessment by the setting of the child's progress.
- When specialist advice has been sought externally, this is used to help determine whether a child has a special educational need (SEN).
- The child's key person and SENCo/Manager use this information to decide if the child has a special educational need.
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents/carers have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

Planning intervention

- Everyone involved with the child should be given an opportunity to share their views. Parents/carers should be encouraged to share their thoughts on the child's difficulties and be involved in the decision as to what will happen next.
- A first intervention option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If the child's needs are more complex, then the decision maybe to go straight ahead and prepare 09.13b SEN support: Action plan with detailed evidence-based interventions being applied straight away and simultaneously external referrals made.
- If relevant, then the child should be appropriately included in development of the action plan but only at a level which reflects their stage of comprehension.
- 09.13b SEN support: Action plan described below, ensures that children that are identified, or suspected of having a SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.

Involving the child

- The SEND Code of Practice supports the rights of children to be involved in decisions about their education.
- Inclusion of children with SEND helps build self-confidence and trust in others.
- Ascertaining children's views may not be easy, a range of strategies will be needed.
- Accurate assessment helps identify children's strengths and possible barriers to learning.

Policies & Procedures for the EYFS 2024/25 (Early Years Alliance 2024)

- The key person and setting manager/SENCo work in partnership with parents/carers and other agencies to involve the child wherever appropriate.
- Children are involved at appropriate stages of the assessment and to their level of ability.
- Establishing effective communication is essential for the child's involvement.

Record keeping

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- the procedures followed regarding the Code of Practice to meet the child's SEND e.g. SEN referrals to external agencies and for statutory assessment
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  - evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations
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assessment it must then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.

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- If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult collaboratively with the parents/carers in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child's preferences are considered and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date.
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Further guidance

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE and DoH 2015)

Ready, Steady, SENCO (Alliance Publication)

09.13a SEN Support: Initial record of concern form

Name of child: **DOB:**

Name and role of person recording concern: **Date:**

Nature of concern:	
Observation notes (detail evidence here):	

Parents informed of concern and their views are known? Yes ☐ No ☐

Notes:	

Curriculum differentiation applied? Yes ☐ No ☐

Notes (detail when and how)	

Other adjustments made? Yes ☐ No ☐

Notes (detail when and how)	
Next steps	

9.14 Prime times – Transition to school

Moving on to school is a major transition in a child's life involving separation from familiar adults and children. Older children have a more secure understanding of 'people permanence' and can approach new experiences with confidence. However, they need preparation if they are to approach transition to school with confidence and an awareness of what to expect.

Partnership with schools

- Details of the school that a child will be attending are recorded in the child's file along with the name of the reception class teacher.
- Every effort is made to forge and maintain strong links with all schools that children may attend. The setting manager will approach schools to open lines of communication where these have not previously existed.
- Details of the school's transition or settling in procedures are kept by the setting and are referred to so that members of staff are familiar with them and can develop a consistent approach to transition with teachers, parents/carers and children.
- Teachers are welcomed into the setting and sufficient time is made for them to spend time with the child, their parents/carers and with the key person, to discuss and share information that will support the child's transition to school.
- A child's learning journey record is forwarded to the school along with other information that will aid transition and settling in. Parents/carers receive a copy of this.
- Any action plans relating to a child's additional needs are also shared, where this is in place.
- Other formal documentation such as safeguarding information is prepared in line with procedure 07.6 Transfer of records.

Partnership with parents

- Key persons discuss transition to school with parents and set aside time to discuss learning and development summaries. Parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to summaries.
- Key persons will discuss with parents/carers how they are preparing their child for school and will share information about how the setting is working in partnership with the school to aid transition.
- Key persons will make clear to parents the information that will be shared with the school, for example, information regarding child protection and work that has taken place to ensure the child's welfare.

Increasing familiarity for children

- Where the setting is on, or adjacent to a school site, there will be opportunities for children to become familiar with staff and school premises, for example shared use of outdoor and indoor spaces, activities and resources.
- Where possible, the key person will take the child to visit the new school, if this is the school's transition policy.
- If there are several schools in a catchment area, or the setting is not within a reasonable distance of the school, other means of familiarisation will be explored. This could be through videos, photographs or other information about the school that can be shown within the setting. Staff may borrow resources from the schools and will use these with the children.

Preparing children for leaving

- Children and parents/carers form bonds with adults and children in the setting and will need preparation for separating from the relationships they have formed.
- The child's last day should be prepared for in advance and marked with a special celebration or party that acknowledges that the child is moving on.
- Parents/carers should not be discouraged from bringing the child for the occasional brief visit, as separations often take time to complete. Sometimes children need the reassurance that their pre-school is still there and that they are remembered.

9 Early years practice procedures

9.15 Progress check at age two.

- The key person is central to the progress check and must be the person completing it.
- Settings should take guidance from their local authority as to when the progress check at age two is completed; if no such guidance is provided, the progress check is completed when the child is between 26 and 30 months old. The child should be attending the setting for at least 1 term before the check is completed.
- Once the timing of the child's progress check is confirmed, parents/carers are invited to discuss their child's progress at a mutually convenient time either in person or a telephone call.
- The setting must seek to engage both parents/carers and make allowance for parents/carers who do not live with their child to be involved.

Completing the progress check at age two

- On-going observational assessment informs the progress check and must be referred to.
- Children's contributions are included in the report. Staff must be 'tuned in' to the ways in which very young children, or those with speech or other developmental delay or disability, communicate
- Where any concerns about a child's learning and development are raised these are discussed with the parents/carers, the SENCo and the setting manager.
- If concerns arise about a child's welfare, they must be addressed through 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures.
- The key person must be clear about the aims of the progress check as follows:
  - to review a child's development in the three prime areas of the EYFS
  - to ensure that parents have a clear picture of their child's development
  - to enable educators to understand the child's needs and, with support from educators, enhance development at home
  - note areas where a child is progressing well and identify any areas where progress is less than expected
  - describe actions the provider intends to take to address any developmental concerns (working with other professionals as appropriate)

Chairperson Signature: Date: 23/04/25.

Manager Signature: Date:8/4/25

Date of review:8/4/26