

## NURSERY SEND POLICY

### Our vision for Special Educational Needs and Disability Support and Provision at The Villa Nursery

At The Villa, we are committed to enabling each and every child to access our full curriculum and to thrive in our nursery environment. We believe that all children have a right to experience and develop alongside their peers no matter what their individual needs, through a well-balanced early learning environment that supports all children to flourish and achieve their full potential.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents, and providing relationships that are trusting, empathetic, supportive and non-judgemental. We support families, and encourage children to be leaders in their own journey, through a fair, supportive, and collaborative approach to early care and education.

#### **We aim to, as far as we are able:**

- recognise any additional support needs a child may have and ensure all staff are aware of the DfE code of practice, on identification and assessment of special educational needs or disability;
- assess each child's specific support needs and adapt our facilities where appropriate;
- work in partnership with parents/carers at all stages;
- liaise with other agencies including the health and education authorities and seek advice, support and training where required;
- develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional support needs;
- ensure that all children are treated with equality and equity and are encouraged to take part in every aspect of the day;
- promote positive images of those with additional support needs and/or disability as well as ensure a strength based neuroaffirming narrative, is embedded throughout the Nursery;
- understand that each child's needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate

- ensure we are providing a safe, nurturing and supportive environment that meets the differing emotional, sensory and support needs of all our children

## Legislation

The Villa is committed to a policy of inclusion and equal opportunity and will, as far as we are obliged to follow statutory guidelines on special education needs, such as:

- SEND (0 – 25 years) Code of Practice 2014 and the Children and Families Act (2014).
- The Special Education Needs and Disability code of practice (DFE 2015)
- Equality Act 2010
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)
- Early Years Foundation Stage

All children have a right to be able to access and gain fully from the curriculum. In certain cases, for this to be possible, children may need a greater degree of differentiation and support to achieve their potential.

The individual needs of all children cover a wide spectrum; disabilities and specific learning difficulties exist across the ability range. The Villa sees the provision for special educational needs and disabilities as a whole Nursery responsibility.

We welcome children from all ethnic groups and backgrounds and do not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, religion, or belief. If a child has additional support needs, we will firstly gather all of the information on the presentation of their need and/or disability, provide accommodations and adaptations where we are able, and consider how they are able to access our full curriculum. If on these grounds we feel we are not able to accommodate the child's needs that will enable them to thrive at our Nursery, we will have a full and transparent conversation with parents/carers to determine the next steps, which may include a discussion on an alternative provision.

At the time of registration, if known, we require parents to share the details of any disability or additional support needs and keep the Nursery updated thereafter. Also, if known, to share any referrals made to other professional bodies e.g. (Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists).

This information will allow us to assess how we can accommodate the child's needs and make any reasonable adjustments required to enable them to thrive in our Nursery. If any additional need or disability becomes apparent after admission, we will consult with the child's parents and will work in partnership with them throughout this time. Please refer to the Admissions Policy for further information. We reserve the right to require payment from parents of any additional resource and/or support identified in relation to any child attending The Villa.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The Special Needs Coordinators for the Nursery are Kasia Janda, Catherine Garbutt and Agnes Staruch**

### **Role of the SENCo**

- To ensure that parents are closely involved throughout, and their views and opinions considered, inform action taken by the Nursery.
- To liaise with other professionals in respect of children with SEND prior to their transition to The Villa School, during their time at the Nursery and at times of transition to other settings.
- To adhere to legislation and remain up to date with training and professional development.
- To advise and support teachers and other staff within the setting and ensure that they understand their responsibilities to children with SEND.
- To ensure that appropriate individual plans are in place, that the provision is supporting the child effectively and relevant information is collected and kept up to date.

### **Role of the key worker**

- To monitor progress against agreed targets for the child.

- To ensure all support needs are met with reference to the provision of support outlined in each child's Support Plan.
- To be prepared to meet with the SENCo in order to formally review Support Plans/provision.
- To inform parents when their child is receiving extra support and ensure that they are kept informed of progress.
- To ensure the environment meets the accessibility, sensory and cognitive needs of all children.
- To plan and deliver a flexible and supportive curriculum, that provides required and effective adaptations and accommodations, to ensure all children can thrive.

### **Role of all staff**

- To be aware of children's Support Plans/provision and take their needs into account when planning, teaching and marking work.
- To be prepared to meet with the SENCo and to take part in the review of Support Plans/provision when appropriate.
- To work in effective collaboration with everyone at The Villa, to ensure all children are able to access our full curriculum and provision offer.

### **Partnership with Parents**

Partnership with parents plays a key role in promoting a culture of effective support and collaboration. Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their child's education. This is important to enable children to thrive and meet their potential. Parents have unique knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of their child's needs and the best way of supporting them.

It is therefore essential that we actively seek to work with parents and value the contribution that they can make. The work of professionals can be more effective when parents are involved, and account is taken of their wishes, feelings and perspectives in their child's development.

Sometimes we may need to have difficult conversations with parents about their child and this may include the decision that the Nursery can no longer offer a place to the child. During all communication with us, we expect parents to treat our staff with respect and dignity.

## Adjustments for Special Educational Needs and Disability

The Nursery is committed to improving access for pupils with additional support needs and will strive to make all reasonable adjustments where required. The Accessibility Plan is available from the office.

Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the Nursery will provide and implement effective education and care which fulfils its requirements in liaison with the Local Authority (LA) where possible. The Nursery recognises the importance of early identification and intervention of special educational needs and disabilities.

We believe it is vital to involve parents at every stage for consultation, discussion and sharing of their child's current challenges and their successes. We liaise and consult with external support agencies where necessary to provide further professional support for children with special needs.

There may be occasions where we are unable to provide the adjustments or required support for a child. In some circumstances, parents may be required to cover the cost of any additional support and/or adjustments required. Alternatively, it may be the case that as a result of the adjustments required and our inability to meet them that we decide that we can no longer continue to offer the child a place at The Villa Nursery. Any decision to remove a child from The Villa Nursery will be undertaken with sensitivity to the child's needs and with careful consideration.

## Identification

In order to identify children who may need extra support, the following may be taken into account:

- Information from a child's previous nursery/other provision
- Evidence from teacher observation and assessment
- Outcomes from a range of screening and assessment tools
- Reports from outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists or Speech and Language Therapists
- Observations
- Parents' views.

### **Assessment**

The Nursery will undertake a Progress Check of all children at age two. This is completed the first term after they turn two; for example, if a child turns two in March, they will have the two-year-old-check completed in the Summer Term Cycle.

### **Medical Conditions**

The Villa endeavours to give every support possible to pupils with serious, ongoing medical conditions and keeps its facilities and provision under review. Regular planning and review meetings are scheduled with parents, the key worker and SEN team . Any additional advice or support from external professionals is sought where required.

### **Emotional Wellbeing**

The Nursery provides a caring environment where emotional wellbeing is of the highest importance. Any issues which may affect this, such as bullying and discrimination, are not tolerated.

All members of staff will do their utmost to, as far as they are able, identify concerns and provide appropriate support to children with emotional health needs. The SENCo will put in place any reasonable advice given by the relevant medical consultant or therapist to support the children in the nursery.

### **Children with English as an additional language**

Children who are deemed to have English as a second or additional language, will be offered support provided by the staff as appropriate. Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. Parents/carers will also be provided with support and alternative forms of communication that ensure understanding and clarity of any information.

## **PROCEDURES**

In light of Government guidelines within the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (SEND Code 2014), the Nursery procedures reflect the graduated approach to the identification of, and provision for, children who may need extra support for learning, identified in the following cycle:

### **Assess, Plan, Do, Review**

#### **Graduated Approach**

We follow the SEND Code of Practice (2015) recommendation that, in addition to the formal checks above, nurseries should adopt a graduated approach to assessment and planning, led and coordinated by a SENCo. Good practice of working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of individual progress, will help identify any child with special educational needs or disability. This graduated approach will be led and coordinated by the SENCo and appropriate records will be kept according to the Code of Practice.

#### **Assess**

In identifying a child as needing SEN support, the key person, working with the SENCo and the child's parents, will carry out an analysis of the child's needs.

This initial assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to the need. If required, more specialist assessment may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, social services, or other agencies beyond the Nursery. Where professionals are not already working with the Nursery, the SENCo will contact them, with the parents' agreement.

#### **Plan**

Where it is decided to provide SEN support, and having formally notified the parents, the key person, and the SENCo, in consultation with the parent, will agree the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be

put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review. Plans will take into account the needs of the child and level of development.

The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related team member's development needs should be identified and addressed. Parents will be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

### **Do**

The child's key person and other team members will be responsible for working with the child. With support from the SENCo, they will oversee the implementation of the intervention agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCo will support the key person in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

### **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support will be evaluated by the key person and the SENCo in full consultation with the child's parents, taking into account the child's needs. Information will be shared with parents about the impact of the support provided.

### **Effective assessment of the need for early help**

Local agencies should work together to put processes in place for the effective assessment of the needs of individual children who may benefit from early help services. Children and families may need support from a wide range of local agencies. Where a child and family would benefit from coordinated support from more than one agency (e.g. education, health, housing, police) there should be an inter-agency assessment. These early help assessments, such as the Common Assessment Framework, should identify what help the child and family require to prevent needs escalating to a point



where intervention would be needed via a statutory assessment under the Children Act 1989.

The early help assessment should be undertaken by a lead professional who should provide support to the child and family, act as an advocate on their behalf and coordinate the delivery of support services. The lead professional role could be undertaken by a General Practitioner (GP), family support worker, teacher, health visitor and/or special educational needs coordinator. Decisions on who the lead professional should be, will be taken on a case by-case basis and should be informed to the Nursery by the child and their family

For an early help assessment to be effective:

- The assessment should be undertaken with the agreement of the child and their parents or carers. It should involve the child and family as well as all the professionals who are working with them.
- A teacher, GP, health visitor, early years' worker or other professional should be able to discuss concerns they may have about a child and family with a social worker in the local authority. Local authority children's social care should set out the process for how this will happen; and
- If parents and/or the child do not consent to an early help assessment, then the lead professional should make a judgement as to whether, without help, the needs of the child will escalate. If so, a referral into local authority children's social care may be necessary.

If at any time it is considered that the child may be a child in need as defined in the Children Act 1989, or that the child has suffered significant harm, or is likely to do so, a referral should be made immediately to local authority children's social care. This referral can be made by any professional (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018).

### **Referral process**

Challenges faced that impact a child's progress, or any specific needs of an individual child, can be raised by parents and teachers and discussed informally with the teacher, SENCo or Nursery Manager at any time. If a child

continues to face challenges with high quality, differentiated teaching already in place within the classroom, staff will liaise with the SENCo, looking at the most appropriate support going forward (see Wave 1, 2 and 3 above).

If we still feel the child requires more targeted or specialist support, we may seek advice from other professionals, with parents' consent, using Southwark's Early Help Form. The SENCo and parents will carry out analysis of the child's needs using this form.

The aim of Early Help is to help to identify the needs of the child and promote a coordinated service provision. This is sent to Southwark who will decide which professionals may then be involved.

When other professional and outside agencies are involved a Team Around Child will be formed (TAC) to consolidate and coordinate the delivery of support to the child by all practitioners and professionals involved. As a result, the family and practitioners have a clear assessment and record of needs, strengths and actions that are shared, built on, reviewed and recorded in a Delivery Plan. The SENCo will be responsible for co-ordination of the service delivery.

With support from the SENCo all teachers are responsible for implementation of plans and programmes agreed as part of SEN support. The support should be reviewed regularly in line with the agreed date with parents and other professionals involved. We are aware that many families may wish to pursue assessments privately from professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and Paediatricians.

### **Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

The majority of children with SEN will have their needs met within the Nursery. Some children who have more complex needs and continue to face challenges in any area of their development, may require co-ordinated assessment of their needs in the form of an Education, Health and Care Plan.

An EHCP is a legal document describing the needs of children within education, health and care, the provision to meet those needs and the suitable education placement. Where a child has an EHCP, the local authority must review the plan every twelve months without exception.

### **Local Offer**

Local Offer consolidates information, services and provision available for children and young people with SEN and Disability in the local area. You can view the local offer at <http://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk>

### **Transition**

The school will support the transition of children with SEND on admission, moving on to the next class or key stage and in preparation for a new school or setting. To support the transition, we share the information about the child with the receiving setting or school and we organise transition meetings or/and home/school visits. Specific records such as support plans, reports will be shared with the next school via the parents. The Villa keeps a record of any SEN records in accordance with our data retention schedule.

### **Concerns and Complaints**

It is hoped that any difficulty can be sensitively and efficiently handled at an early stage. However, if parents do not believe that their concerns have been dealt with to their satisfaction, the Complaints Procedure, which is available via the school office, explains how to pursue the matter further.

There may be occasions where, despite our teams best efforts, we are unable to provide the support that a child needs or the child's continued attendance at The Villa Nursery affects the wellbeing of other children and/or staff. In these circumstances, we may decide that we can no longer continue to offer the child a place at The Villa Nursery. Any decision to remove a child from The Villa Nursery will be undertaken with sensitivity to the child's needs and with careful consideration. We appreciate that children with additional needs can be especially vulnerable to changes in environment and a decision to remove a child will only be made balancing the best interests of the child and our staff and other children.