



Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

Created: January 2026

To be reviewed: January 2027

Introduction

At Little Learners Nursery Group, we aim to ensure that every child with additional needs receives the support and opportunities they require to reach their full potential. This policy outlines our commitment to identifying, assessing, and providing tailored interventions in a nurturing and inclusive environment. It aims to promote equality of access, celebrate individual strengths, and work collaboratively with families and professionals to support the development and well-being of all children with SEN.

We believe that every child has the right to an appropriate education that enables them to reach their full potential. Each child is important and valued. All staff are committed to fully inclusive practices, ensuring every child is encouraged to participate in all aspects of nursery life, including trips, outings, enrichment activities, and access to all areas of the nursery such as the school gym, library, and playground. All SEN observations, interventions, and assessments are carried out in accordance with the Barking and Dagenham Local Offer, details of which can be found at [\[insert link\]](#).

SEND Children

A child is identified as having SEND if they have a learning difficulty that requires special educational provision to be made for them. The designated SENDCo, along with the key person, is responsible for the initial identification and assessment of SEND and/or any learning delays or barriers that may affect the child's development.

Aims:

As an inclusive nursery, we believe that all children have the right to:

- Education and care that enable them to become full, independent, and active members of the community.
- A broad and balanced educational experience that sets high expectations and standards for all, supported by tailored activities and reasonable adjustments.
- Recognition of their personal achievements and opportunities to actively contribute to nursery life.
- Have their voices heard, with the nursery environment reflecting their interests, knowledge, and skills.
- Access to supported education, when needed, as an entitlement rather than a special addition.
- Careful monitoring and assessment of their individual needs in an appropriate context, ensuring high expectations and suitable targets.

The Nursery is committed to ensuring that:

- All staff are trained to identify and support children with special educational needs.
- Every child and their family have access to a suitably differentiated curriculum and receive the full support they are entitled to, as far as the nursery can provide.
- All children are fully included in nursery activities as much as is

reasonably possible, while ensuring the effective education and care of all children.

- Planning and assessment take into account the nature and extent of each child's individual difficulties.
- Children are encouraged to take an active role in their own learning alongside staff.
- Children's needs are identified as early as possible, with appropriate steps taken to ensure early intervention and the best possible outcomes.
- Parents and carers are informed and actively involved as key partners in their child's education.
- Strong partnerships are developed with local authority professionals and external agencies when additional support is required.
- Staff roles and responsibilities regarding SEN support are clearly defined and understood.

Partnership with Parents

We believe that effective support for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is built on strong, open partnerships with parents and carers. We recognise parents as the most important educators and experts on their child's needs, and we are committed to involving them fully in all aspects of their child's education and care. We ensure regular communication through meetings, progress updates, and sharing of assessments and plans. Parents

are encouraged to share their insights, concerns, and aspirations, helping us to tailor support that best meets their child's individual needs. Together, we work collaboratively to create a nurturing and inclusive environment that promotes the child's development and well-being.

Areas of Need

The term Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) encompasses a wide range of needs that often overlap. Children's SEN generally fall into four broad areas of need and support:

- Communication and language
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional, and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Many children have needs that span multiple areas, and their requirements may change over time. These difficulties can be mild, moderate, or severe, and may affect one or more areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role of the SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator)

The SENDCo is responsible for coordinating support for children with SEND within the nursery. Key responsibilities include:

- Identifying children who may have additional needs.

- Overseeing assessments and interventions.
- Coaching staff working directly with children to lead agreed interventions and adapt teaching and learning approaches.
- Ensuring reports and updates on each child's learning and development are shared with the nursery team.
- Ensuring appropriate support is in place to help every child reach their full potential.
- Signposting parents and carers to relevant services and activities offered by the local authority.
- Participating in Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews and organizing People Centred Reviews.
- Completing referral forms and collaborating with other professionals.

The SENDCo works closely with staff, parents, and external professionals to develop and review individual education plans and promote inclusive practices across the nursery. They also provide guidance and training on SEND issues and ensure the nursery complies with relevant legislation and the SEN Code of Practice.

Nursery Practitioners and Assistants

Responsibilities include:

- Supporting children and their families to achieve agreed targets and outcomes.
- Planning activities based on children's individual needs, interests, and next steps.
- Helping children manage their behavior using agreed strategies and techniques.
- Maintaining detailed and accurate records.
- Collaborating closely with the SENDCo to meet agreed outcomes.
- Supporting families and children in working towards set goals.
- Ensuring timely communication of key information and updates on children's development.
- Attending EHCP reviews and parent meetings as required.

Identifying SEND

Early Identification of SEN

Early identification of SEN is vital in ensuring children receive the appropriate support and interventions as early as possible. Recognising SEN early enables educators, families, and professionals to address learning difficulties or developmental delays before they become more complex or affect the child's development.

At LLNG, we follow the SEN Code of Practice and implement recommended

assessment tools. Methods include:

- Formal assessments such as the two-year progress check and end-of-year profiles
- Termly assessments to track continuous development
- Ongoing nursery observations, including written records, photographs, and key person feedback
- Parental observations and insights, which are highly valued and regularly shared
- Reports from external professionals, such as health visitors and speech therapists

When a child is not meeting expected developmental milestones, the SENDCo works with the child's key person and family to provide early support, including targeted small group interventions focusing on Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) and Communication and Language (CL). If these interventions do not achieve desired outcomes, the SENDCo will advise further support from external professionals.

We follow the Graduated Approach: **Assess – Plan – Do – Review**, in which:

- The child's key person leads the agreed intervention and tracks progress
- The effectiveness of the support is reviewed and evaluated

- Where appropriate, the SENDCo coordinates referrals to relevant outside agencies

Requesting an EHCP

If a child does not make expected progress despite targeted support, the nursery may request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. An EHCP is a legal document describing the child's special educational needs, the support required, and the outcomes they are working towards. It ensures coordinated input from education, health, and social care services.

Working with Other Agencies

LLNG recognizes that some children may require support from external agencies and professionals to provide the best possible care for those with SEND. The SENDCo acts as the key link between the nursery, the family, the child, and relevant professionals. This collaborative approach ensures children benefit from comprehensive assessments, personalized interventions, and coordinated support. We maintain open communication with these agencies and families to share information, monitor progress, and plan appropriate next steps in each child's development.