



Panda Playgroup, Sticky Mitts and Tiny Tots

WI Hall, Station Road, Copmanthorpe, YO23 3SX

Member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance

Registered charity number 1035584

Ofsted number 321619

Equality of opportunity

Supporting children with special educational needs

Policy statement

At Panda Playgroup our aim is to provide a caring, happy, fun and safe environment for all children. We will promote all aspects of high quality child development so each individual child has an opportunity to develop to their full potential and feel equally valued. We aim to work closely alongside parents/carers in a supportive, enabling way and utilize additional support from our partners and outside agencies (with parents/carers consent) to ensure all children's needs are met.

We regularly assess, identify and review individual needs of all children in our care. We aim to keep updated with our SEN policy and local and national guidelines. We believe supporting children with SEN involves everyone in our setting.

Definition of SEN

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice published by the Department for Education states that:

- Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational needs provision to be made for them.
- Children have a learning difficulty if they:
 - Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
 - Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority
 - Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.
- Children must not be considered 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.



www.pandaplaygroup.co.uk

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Procedures

We have regard for the DfES Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2001).

We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and give his/her name to parents. Our SENCO is **Melanie McCarthy**

Staff working with a child with SEN are supported by the SENCO who is advising and supporting them and he/she will liaise with parents, professionals and key persons in planning activities and setting targets. The SENCO will also ensure that appropriate Individual Education Plans are in place and that relevant background information about individual children with special educational needs is collected, recorded and updated.

The SENCO has additional training to enable him/her to carry out his/her responsibilities. Where there are children with special needs in their group, we seek to provide the staff with appropriate training and support.

Procedures for identification, assessment and review

Under Observation

When there are concerns from parents/carers or staff that a child is not reaching their full potential or having been identified as developing below their expected age and stage in a particular area or areas of learning, children will be observed carefully to collate as much information as possible in order to evaluate their needs. If it is felt further intervention is needed, through discussions with parents and the child's key person targets will be identified and the child will move up to Early Years Action and be placed on the SEN register.

The SEN Code of Practice suggests a 'graduated response' in order to meet children's needs. The stages are as follows:

Early Years Action

When a child is identified as having a special educational need, interventions are devised that are in addition to those provided as part of our setting's usual curriculum. The triggers for intervention through Early Years Action could be concern about a child who despite receiving appropriate early education experiences:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified area of weakness
- continues working at levels significantly below those expected for that child's age and stage of development
- presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not improved by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the setting



- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

Targets to help support the child's learning and development will then be identified by the child, parents/carers, key person and SENCO and an Individual Education Plan will be completed.

Individual Education Plans

Strategies employed to enable the child to progress will be recorded within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This will include information about:

- the short-term targets set for the child
- the teaching strategies
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- the outcome of the action taken

The IEP will record only that which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum in place as part of normal provision. The IEP will focus on a maximum of three key targets and will be developed with the child and parents/carers.

The IEP will be continually kept 'under review,' but are formally reviewed at least three times a year. The child, parents/carers and the Key person will be a key part of the review process.

Early Years Action Plus

Early Years Action Plus is characterised by the involvement of external support services who can provide more specialist assessments, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases provide support for particular activities.

The triggers for referral for seeking help from outside agencies could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support at Early Years Action, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas
- continues working below their expected age and stage of development
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly effect the



child's own learning or that of the group, despite having an intervention at Early Years Action

- has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional equipment or regular visits for direct intervention or advice by practitioners from a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that affect the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

The external specialist may act in an advisory capacity, provide additional specialist assessment or be involved in teaching the pupil directly. The resulting IEP for the child will set out new targets and strategies for supporting the child's progress.

Requests for statutory assessment

For some children the help given by the early education setting through Early Years Action Plus will not be sufficiently effective to enable the child to progress satisfactorily. It will then be necessary for the setting, in consultation with the parents/carers and any external agencies already involved, to consider whether a statutory multi-disciplinary assessment may be appropriate. Where a request for a statutory assessment is made to a Local Education Authority (LEA), the child will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the setting will provide evidence to the LEA detailing:

- the settings action through Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus
- Individual education plans for the pupil
- Records of regular reviews and their outcomes
- The child's health including their medical history where relevant
- Educational and other assessments, for example from an advisory specialist
- support teacher or an educational psychologist
- Views of the parents and of the child
- Involvement of other professionals

When the LEA receives a request for a statutory assessment, it will decide within six weeks whether to carry out such an assessment. Statutory assessment involves consideration by



the LEA, working co-operatively with parents, the child's educational setting and, as appropriate, other agencies, as to whether a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs is necessary. Where the evidence presented to the LEA suggests that the child's learning difficulties may call for special educational provision which cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available to the setting, the LEA will consider the case for a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs. The LEA may decide that the degree of the child's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs is such as to require the LEA to determine the child's special educational provision through a statement of special education need. This will detail:

- the child's name, address and date of birth
- Details of all of the child's special needs
- Identify the special educational provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs
- Identify the type and name of the setting where the provision is to be made
- Include relevant non-educational needs of the child
- Include information on non-educational provision

All children with statements of special educational needs will have short-term targets set for them that have been established after consultation with the child and parents/carers, and include targets identified in the statement of educational need. These targets will be set out in an IEP and be implemented, at least in part and as far as possible, in the early years setting.

Annual review

All early years statements will be reviewed every six months with all involved invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the child's needs or to the special educational provision specified in the statement. The review will focus on what the child has achieved as well as on areas for further development. The SENCO of the receiving primary school will be invited to attend the final review in the early years setting, to allow them to plan an appropriate IEP to start at the beginning of the new school year and enable the child and the parents/carers to be reassured that an effective and supportive transition will occur.

Resources we provide for children with SEN

We will ensure all resources are made available for all children and adapted where possible to ensure all children's needs are met. We will adapt our environment where possible to meet the needs of all our children. We will seek support and advice where appropriate to



ensure those children who have been identified as having a SEN receive any resources that could enable them to reach their full potential.

Admission arrangements

We aim to provide an application process that is inclusive for all our children and their needs. Once our setting has reached its full capacity we operate a waiting list system and children will be offered a place in turn.

Staff training – Qualifications/experience in SEN

The setting SENCO will attend an initial training course provide by City of York Council and then 3 training sessions a year to ensure they are kept up to date with relevant information and processes. The SENCO will then disseminate this information to whole staff team. If the SENCO is unable to attend the training another member of staff will attend in her/his place.

Partnerships with parents

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. This setting recognises that parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. All parents of children with special educational needs will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

Links with other Early Years settings

We work very closely with local primary schools, playgroups, nurseries and childminders to ensure we have good communication and a shared understanding of meeting the needs of all our children. We will work and communicate with those settings that children also attend to ensure a consistent joined up approach to our support and guidance.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Panda Playgroup held on:
Date to be reviewed:

Signed on behalf of the management committee:
Name and role of signatory:

Signed on behalf of the staff team:
Name and role of signatory:

