

OAKLANDS SCHOOL
LEARNERS WITH DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES
AND SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (LLD/SEN) POLICY

(EARLY YEARS)

The purpose of our Learners with Difficulties and/or Disabilities and Special Educational Needs (LDD/SEN) Policy is to improve the learning opportunities and progress of pupils with SEN within the overall aims and philosophy of the school. We fully support the general principles as detailed in the code of practice (2001) and Disability Rights Code of Practice for Schools.

Special Educational Needs (LDD/SEN)

Children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them. Children have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) 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
- c) Are “gifted and talented” either in an academic subject, or in sports, music or art and can access the curriculum far more easily than the majority of children at the same age.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Special educational provision means:

- a) For children of two or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools in the area.
- b) For children under two, educational provision of any kind.

Section 312, Education Act 1996

A child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from a mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed.

Section 17(11), Children Act 1989

A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Section 1(1), Disability Discrimination

Act 1995

SEN Code of Practice 2001

Definitions

Impairment: any loss of normal functions, however small.

Disability: factors which cause an individual to be unable to carry out certain ordinary activities in a given family or social context.

Handicap: impairing factors that not only prevent an individual leading a normal life but also lead to disadvantage.

Aims:

1. Promote equal opportunities for all children whatever their gender, background, race or abilities.
2. Put in place programmes of differentiated work (for classes, groups or individuals) that enables all children to make progress.

3. Operate a system of record keeping and regular monitoring of each child's progress.
4. Inform and consult parents if their child needs LDD/SEN provision.
5. Support parents who have children with LDD/SEN by regular meetings and reviews.
6. Allocate resources that can be used flexibly to support all children's individual needs.
7. Ensure that wherever possible all children are taught in their own class group, and that withdrawal is kept to the minimum.
8. Provide a staffing structure with clear lines of responsibility for LDD/SEN and to make sure that staff training is provided.

Objectives of this Policy

1. Early identification, assessment and provision to meet the needs of pupils experiencing difficulties in their learning.
2. Observe, record and report on progress of pupils with LDD/SEN.
3. Help staff to effectively meet the needs of pupils with LDD/SEN.
4. Promote access to the Early Years Foundation Stage.
5. Ensure parents are consulted and involved in supporting their child's education.
6. Develop links with external agencies as required.

This Early Years policy details how Oaklands School will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has LDD/SEN and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them. The school will use its best endeavours to ensure that early years staff in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have LDD/SEN to allow pupils with LDD/SEN join in the activities of the setting, together with those who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving special educational provision and the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated.

The school will have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with LDD/SEN and ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that LDD/SEN provision is being made for their child.

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children with LDD/SEN to achieve their potential. Oaklands School 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 LDD/SEN will be treated as partners and supported to play an active and valued role in their children's education.

Identification, Assessment and Provision

The Government's Early Learning Goals set out what most children will have achieved by the end of the foundation stage/reception year. Children will progress at different rates during the foundation stage. By the end of this stage, some children may still be working towards the goal. Such children will need differentiated learning opportunities to help them progress.

Graduated Response

Monitoring of individual children's progress throughout the foundation stage is essential. Where a child appears not to be making progress then it may be necessary to use alternative approaches to learning. Ongoing difficulties may indicate the need for help above that which is normally available.

The key test for action is evidence that the child's current rate of progress is inadequate.

Adequate Progress

Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways:

- Closes the attainment gap between the child and the child's peers;
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider;

- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers;
- Matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress;
- Ensures access to the full curriculum;
- Demonstrate improvements in self-help, social or personal skills;
- Demonstrates improvements in pupil's behaviour.

Once a child has been identified as having LDD/SEN, the setting will intervene through **Early Years Action**. If this intervention does not enable the child to make satisfactory progress the SENCO may need to seek advice and support from external agencies. This form of intervention is referred to as **Early Years Action Plus**. Informing parents to contribute their knowledge and understanding of their child and raise any concerns they may have about their child's needs and the provision that is being made for them, is an essential step.

Early Years SENCO

At Oaklands School the *Early Years SENCO* is Ms Lynne Ratnage. The *Early Years SENCO* will :

- take a leading role in the identification and planning of provision for children in the Early Years with LDD/SEN;
- devise and oversee the Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for children in the Early Years in consultation with the School SENCO and specialist services if necessary;
- advise and support other staff in the setting;
- keep parents informed regarding IEPs and children's progress with the key worker;
- ensure that relevant background information about individual children with LDD/SEN is collected, recorded and updated;
- monitor and review the action taken in consultation with the School SENCO;
- plan future support for the child in discussion with colleagues and the School SENCO;
- liaise with the School SENCO regarding children with LDD/SEN needs in the Early Years;
- liaise with the Gifted and Talented co-ordinator regarding identification and provision for Gifted and Talented children in the Early Years;
- liaise with the Deputy Head and keep her informed regarding children with LDD/SEN needs in the Early Years.

The key worker usually responsible for the child will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised programme.

Procedure and Record Keeping

1. Initial concerns about a child with possible LDD/SEN are registered on a LDD/SEN Identification Form by the key worker and passed to the EY SENCO.
2. The EY SENCO discusses the pupil with the key worker. The decision is made as to whether the child will be able to access the curriculum with differentiated work and a review date set.
3. Parents will be told of the additional help their child is receiving.
4. At the review date, the key worker and the EY SENCO establish whether adequate progress has been made. Following discussion,
 - a) if progress has been made, the child will resume regular activities with differentiated work if necessary;
 - b) if adequate progress has not been made, the child will be onto Early Years Action.
5. All forms will be filed by class, in the Support Room, where they can be read but not removed.

Early Years Action

When a child is identified as having LDD/SEN, interventions should be devised that are in addition to those provided as part of the 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 children of a similar age in certain areas
- Presents persistent emotional and / or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- 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.

If the key worker and the Early Years SENCO, in consultation with parents, conclude that *Early Years Action* is appropriate, then the following procedures apply:

- The Early Years SENCO and colleagues will collect all known information about the child and seek additional information from the parents
- Strategies employed to enable the child to progress will be recorded within an *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*. This should include information about:
 - the short-term targets set for the child;
 - the teaching strategies;
 - the provision to be put into place;
 - when the plan is to be reviewed;
 - the outcome of the action taken.

The *IEP* will only record that which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum in place as part of normal provision. The *IEP* will focus on 2 – 3 SMART targets.

- The *IEP* will be discussed with the parents and a review date set.
- All relevant staff, including lunchtime staff, will be informed by the key worker.
- All *IEP* and review forms must be shown to the Headmistress before being filed in the support room. Files can be read by the appropriate staff in the support room, but may not be removed.
- At the review date it will be decided whether the child has made adequate progress to enable him/her to be removed from *Early Years Action*, remain at *Early Years Action* or move to *Early Years Action Plus*. The meeting will be recorded on the review form and, if necessary, a further review date set.

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, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas;
- continues working at an early years curriculum substantially below that expected of children of a similar age;
- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the group, despite having an individualized behaviour management programme;
- 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 impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

When the School seeks the help of external support services, those services will need to see the pupil's records in order to establish which strategies have already been employed and which targets have been set and achieved.

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 pupil will

set out new strategies for supporting the pupil's progress. Delivery of the IEP will remain the responsibility of the key worker, supported by the Early Years SENCO.

Procedures at Early Years Action Plus follow those of Early Years Action.

Requests for Statutory Assessment

For a very few children the help given 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 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 an LEA, the pupil will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the setting will provide evidence to the LEA detailing:

- The School's action through *Early Years School Action* and *Early Years School Action Plus*;
- Individual education plans for the pupil;
- Records of regular reviews and their outcomes;
- The pupil's health including the pupil's 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 pupil;
- Involvement of other professionals;
- Any involvement by the social services or education welfare service.

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 be reasonably provided within the resources normally available to the setting, the LEA will consider the case for a statutory assessment of the child's special education needs. The LEA may decide that the degree of the pupil's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's special education 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 pupil's name;
- Details of all of the pupils special needs;
- Identify the special educational provision necessary to meet the pupil's special education needs;
- Identify the type and name of the school where the provision is to be made;
- Include relevant non-educational needs of the child;
- Include information on non-educational provision.

All children with statement of special education needs will have short-term targets set for them that have been established after consultation with parents, child and include targets identified in the statement of education need. These targets will be set out in an IEP and be implemented, at least in part and as far as possible, in the normal early years setting. The delivery of the interventions recorded in the IEP will continue to be the responsibility of the child's key worker supported by the Early Years SENCO.

Annual Review

All early years statements will be reviewed at six monthly with all involved invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil'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 difficulties that need to be resolved. The School SENCO will be invited to attend the final review in the early years setting, to allow them to prepare an appropriate IEP to start at the beginning of the new school year and enable the pupil and the parents to be reassured that an effective and supportive transfer will occur.

Parents in Partnership

We recognise the importance of effective dialogue between staff and parents. Parents are consulted and kept informed of their child's progress at every stage.

Should any parent be dissatisfied with the Nursery Departments (Lower Kindergarten and Garden Room), efforts on behalf of their child, they will be referred to the Early Years SENCO, Foundation Stage Co-ordinator or Headmistress so that the situation can be investigated and if necessary, improved.

Child Health Services in the Early Years

"Health Authorities and NHS Trusts must inform parents of the appropriate LEA when they form the opinion that a child under compulsory school age may have SEN. They must also inform parents if they believe that a particular voluntary organisation is likely to be able to give the parents advice or assistance in connection with any SEN that the child may have".

[Section 332, Education Act 1996]