Chelwood Nursery School
Chelwood Walk
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Inclusion Policy

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Policy Schedule	
Reviewed and edited	February 2026
Agreed by Governors	March 2026
Chair's signature	
Next review date	Spring 2028

Special Educational Needs Policy

Introduction

This policy document has been written to inform all those who have contact with Chelwood Nursery School, e.g. parents, staff, governors, representatives of the Local Authority (LA), visitors, members of the local community. It sets out the school's approach to identifying and supporting all children with special educational needs (SEN) and disability and has been written in response to changes in legislation and with regard to updated regulations and guidance:

Primary legislation

- Children and families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Equalities Act 2010

Regulations

- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, July 2014

This SEN policy document was developed in the context of whole school policy reviews involving the whole staff team. It has been supported by the work done by all staff to draw together our school 'local offer' which outlines the provision we make for children with SEN or disabilities, and in developing our new Behaviour Policy, in light of our duties under the new regulations and the new Code of Practice. As with all school policies, it remains open to regular review in the light of changing circumstances, practice and research.

Inclusion at Chelwood: Our approach to supporting children with SEN

At Chelwood nursery school we are committed to providing high quality and inclusive early years education enabling all children to learn through first hand experiences and play. We welcome children into our school community, recognising and celebrating each and every child's strengths and unique approaches to learning.

We develop our understanding of each individual child to plan exciting, motivating and challenging learning experiences for all. By personalising the curriculum in this way we aim to meet the diverse needs of individual children and remove potential barriers to learning that they might otherwise experience.

At the same time we take great care to identify special educational needs (SEN) at an early stage and work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that every child achieves the best possible outcomes, with carefully devised interventions and strategies and targeted support for children with SEND, which are integrated into whole school provision.

Our approach to supporting children with special educational needs is underpinned by the concept of entitlement and equality of opportunity in that all children have the right to equal access to the curriculum on offer and to develop to their full potential.

This approach enables us to meet our statutory duties, which include:

- making sure that children with SEN get the support they need with a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN at the earliest point
- ensuring that children with SEN engage in the activities of our school alongside children who do not have SEN.
- informing parents when we are making special educational provision for their children.

Equality Act 2010

Chelwood Nursery School welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010, promoting equality of opportunity for disabled children and ensuring that we make reasonable adjustments (including the provision of auxiliary aids and services) to prevent them being put under substantial disadvantage.

We recognise that this duty is anticipatory and that we must make sure to consider in advance what adjustments might need to be made to support them and prevent that disadvantage.

We work hard to ensure through our inclusive practice that we remove barriers to learning. Our response to applications for children with SEN and disability is always to start with finding out as much as we can from parents, carers and professionals about each child's needs and then planning provision together how we will meet these needs.

Changes from the SEN Code of Practice (2001)

Key changes include:

- The Code of Practice (2014) covers the 0-25 age range and includes guidance relating to disabled children and young people as well as those with SEN
- A clearer focus on the participation of children and young people and parents in decision-making at individual and strategic levels
- A stronger focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for children and young people
- An emphasis on joint planning and commissioning of services to ensure close cooperation between education, health and social care
- The publishing of a Local Offer of support for children and young people with SEN or disabilities (SEND)
- A graduated approach to identifying and supporting pupils and students with SEN, with SEN Support replacing Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus
- A co-ordinated assessment process and the new 0-25 Education, Health and
- Care plan (EHC plan) replace statements for children and young people with more complex needs
- There is a greater focus on support that enables those with SEN to succeed in their education and make a successful transition to adulthood.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made.

Children of compulsory school age may be described as having a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others 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 mainstream schools.

Children under compulsory school age have special educational needs if they are likely to fall within the above definition when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 children and Families Act 2014).

Definition of Special Educational Provision:

For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools or by relevant early years providers. For children under two, it is educational provision of any kind.

Identifying needs

We understand how important it is to be able to respond as early as possible to children's SEN, particularly given that the majority of them will be with us for just 3 terms. Early identification of their SEN is therefore crucial. Chelwood Nursery School has a rigorous observation-based assessment process (using the Birth to 5 Matters, non statutory guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage EYFS), which enables us to monitor and review children's progress and development, and to identify any areas of difficulty and potential SEN.

Our assessment process is also supported with a number of information gathering opportunities before children start:

- Pre-admission meetings with parents to gather family history
- Come and Discover sessions pre-admission
- Home visits
- Key person conversations
- Professional reports / information from previous settings
- Pre-admission TAC meetings (these support planning as well as assessment)
- Welcome Day
- Welcome Group supported by staff

We understand that children may experience a delay in their learning or development but may not have SEN. It is important to use all the information available to us – from within school, from parents and from outside specialists – to 'unpick' children's needs and to support the identification of learning difficulties or disabilities that require special educational provision.

We understand similarly that challenging or withdrawn behaviour does not necessarily mean that a child has SEN. We will always seek to identify underlying causes for the behaviour we see. For some children, family circumstances such as housing or a difficult domestic situation can be at the root. Chelwood has a well-established Team Around the Child approach for addressing and supporting children and families in such situations. Behaviour may also indicate other needs such as a communication difficulty and therefore require further assessment. (See School Behaviour Policy, 2026) Children who are experiencing difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language, do not have SEN. For these children it is important to assess all areas of their learning and development to establish whether their language delay is related to learning English as an additional language or whether it arises from SEN or disability.

The Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need and support:

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

These areas give an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for. We know that individual children may have needs which cut across all these areas e.g. children with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder/Condition (ASD/ASC). We know also that children's needs are not fixed but may change over time. The special educational provision we make for individual children is based on understanding their individual strengths and needs rather than on a simple fit into one of these broad 4 areas.

SEN support: A graduated approach

SEN support is provided as part of a graduated approach with 4 stages of action: assess, plan, do, review, a fluid and cyclical process which is continuously revisited.

What does this look like in Chelwood Nursery School?

Some children will join our school with already identified SEN and / or disabilities. In these cases we will endeavour to gather as much information in advance of their start to enable us to plan for a successful transition into nursery school. This may include organising a Team Around the Child meeting, which brings together all professionals and parents with us to make plans for supporting children in the transition process including making any adjustments that may be required in advance. This process will be organised by our SENCO. Where children are in other early years settings, the SENCO will arrange to visit as part of the assessment / planning process and to support transition.

Chelwood plans many opportunities (as noted above) to gather information as part of our admissions process, which will support our understanding of individual children and their needs. Some of these involve our staff in making observations e.g. during 'Come and Discover' sessions or home visits. We recognise that parents may not always share their children's SEN at this early stage when they are only just beginning to get to know us.

Additionally, they may not be aware of their children's SEN. Nevertheless, we see parents as crucial in supporting our understanding of their children and seek to involve them from the outset through sensitive relationships and our key person approach. When parents do share their children's needs with us, we ask them to sign consent for information sharing between other professionals and specialists and ourselves.

Teachers use their detailed observation-based assessments to monitor and review individual children's learning and development on an ongoing basis. When there is cause for concern arising from this process; from observations of how children are interacting or behaving; from parental concerns that have been shared, teachers will seek to identify needs and plan interventions and strategies to address these. They will be supported through a process of collaborative problem solving and planning by the SENCO, and an SEN support plan will be drawn up with parents.

Assess, Plan, Do, Review: SEN Support Plans

Parental involvement is an essential element in our SEN support planning, together with ensuring that the child is at the centre of all planning and decision-making.

Our **'This is My Plan'** planning sheets provide a scaffold for the graduated approach and its 4 stages. They share the same child-centred approach of the "My World" section of the Education, Health Care plans (EHCP).

Plans are drawn up with parents and may involve the SENCO as well as teacher in a collaborative process, which takes participants through the process – assess, plan, do and review.

The process aims to capture the voice of the child and to express what is important to them. This child-centred approach includes taking account of the child's own aspirations and the way they express their needs as well as detailing what we need to do to meet them.

As part of the **assessment** process class teachers, parents and SENCO build a detailed picture together of what the child needs from us in order to learn and be included. Once we have reached a detailed understanding of a child's needs, short-term outcomes are agreed and **plans** made to reach these with interventions and support. A **review** date is set, at which the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress is reviewed. The child's class teacher, SENCO and parents are then able to evaluate the support strategies and their impact and in response to this they will set new outcomes for the child and try additional or new approaches, strategies or interventions.

This **cycle of action** is revisited in increasing detail half-termly in a graduated approach which is coordinated by the SENCO.

Specialist advice

When a child's progress continues to cause concern despite support, which has been planned for them, the SENCO will seek specialist advice from other professionals e.g. from speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, ASD outreach team, which can be used to plan effective support.

When professionals are engaged prior to starting Chelwood or where we have made referrals already given our identification of children's needs, their advice will be informing our SEN plans, strategies and provision.

Requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment

We will consider making a request for an EHC needs assessment if, despite having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet their special educational needs, the child has still not made expected progress. This process begins with a TAC meeting coordinated by the SENCO and involving parents and all professionals already engaged with the child.

Record Keeping

In addition to the detailed individual records maintained by class teachers and informed by the observations made by all staff, which enable ongoing assessment of children's progress, regular reviews take place each term to share progress with parents. For children with SEN/D these reviews take place half-termly (as described above) 'This is My Plan' SEN support planning sheets are kept in children's files with copies filed electronically.

As part of the whole school provision mapping process class teachers will draw together their knowledge and understanding of all the children in their classes including their learning styles and schematic patterns in their play as well as any identified SEND which they then use in planning for all children.

The whole school provision map reflects high quality personalised planning for all and a broad overview of the support provided for SEN children, which is additional to and different from that provided for all children. Detailed information is found in each child's paperwork.

SENCO role

In line with the SEN code of practice Chelwood Nursery School has a SENCO who is a qualified teacher and is working towards a SENCO national professional qualification (NPQ).

The key responsibilities of our SENCO include:

- overseeing day-to-day operation of SEN policy and coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- Liaising with our Designated Teacher where a *looked after child* has SEN
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN
- Organising transition meetings for children joining our school
- Liaising with other schools and settings, outside professionals and specialists and acting a key point of contact with external agencies.
- Liaising with receiving schools to plan for transition including organising meetings and visits
- Working with the Head teacher and school governors to ensure that we meet our responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regards to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all children with SEN up to date.

Complaints

Any complaints should be dealt with in line with the school Complaints Procedure. At Chelwood we place great importance on creating and maintaining positive relationships with our parents and carers and ensuring that they feel welcome and comfortable to share concerns with us.
Our SEN policy and practice places children and parents at the centre of provision planning and involves parents from the outset. It is therefore hoped that any parental concerns can be addressed as they arise, thus avoiding a situation in which they may end up as a complaint.

Alexandra Bourne
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