

## Our Local Offer for Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)

### 1. How does the early years setting know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)?

Every child has a Key Person who takes a special interest in their welfare and development. We all carry out many types of observations, which tell us about children's development across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). We routinely track children's progress, including a formal check with parents at around 2 years of age and this would identify any areas where children's progress is not as expected, requiring extra support. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) then discusses any concerns with the parents and may suggest support strategies such as an EHCP\*, Speech and Language drop in or IPEH\*\* and MASH\*\*\*.

A parent who has concerns about their child's development can talk to their child's Key Person or the SENCO. The SENCO works alongside parents and outside agencies to support children with SEND. We treat every child as an individual taking into account their strengths, needs, learning styles and current interests. Our practitioners are qualified or working towards a minimum level 3 recognised childcare qualification. Our trained SENCO can write an EHCP, reports for the Early Years Planning and Review Meetings (EYPARM) and transition reports to school, and also liaise with other professionals.

Upon entry we ask parents to share information about their child's needs during their visit and/or initial interview(s). If there are any other agencies, e.g. speech and language, involved with your child, it is essential that parents share any reports or strategies suggested with us so that we can work together to support the child's needs.

### 2. How will the nursery staff support my child?

Your child's Key Person and the SENCO will support your child and make sure all their individual needs are met and supported. Your child's Key Person will regularly provide feedback and work with you to ensure all your child's needs are being met and supported.

Your child's Key Person will plan your child's next steps ensuring they are developmentally appropriate. Children's individual progress is monitored routinely. Some children's progress is monitored more often, as smaller stepping stones can be more significant. We use tools such as ECAT (Every Child A Talker) to monitor children's speech. The SENCO will support your child's Key Person in writing an EHCP which offers further support strategies if your child's needs are not being met by our universal provision. Our EHCPs are reviewed to ensure they are successfully meeting the needs of the child.

### 3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

Every child attending our settings is treated as an individual with a unique set of needs, strengths, learning styles and interests. Your child's Key Person will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage to help them understand and support your child's development. Our assessment arrangements are that we observe, assess and plan across Prime and Specific areas of learning of the EYFS. Key Persons create individual learning plans showing the child's next steps of

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learning and how children will be supported in achieving them. These are shared with parents so they can comment on how the children are learning at home, current interests etc. We are then able to use the next steps to inform our planning of what activities, resources and adult support is provided in addition to our continuous provision. Every child has a learning record with observations, photographs and samples of work recorded throughout their time at nursery.

All children's progress is routinely monitored against the EYFS and any concerns are raised with parents and nursery SENCO if a child's progress is not as expected for their age. A more formal developmental check is carried out at around 2 years of age in partnership with parents to highlight any possible areas of further support required.

Where developmental delay is a concern due to a SEND, this would be shared with parents and extra support would be put in place, such as an EHCP, referral to partner professionals such as SALT (Speech & Language Therapy) drop in, or the IPEH referred Professionals. Parental permission will be sought before any information is shared.

#### **4. How will both you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?**

Parents can discuss at any time how their child is doing, this could be with the Key Person or nursery SENCO. We provide access to a unique online personal Learning Journal for each child through the 'My Montessori Child' system. This includes photographs and comments of observations made across the EYFS curriculum. It also has an interactive element where the parents can collaborate with us online on their child's development. We use this information to plan further activities which promote further possible lines of development.

Within our nursery every child also has a 2 year old developmental progress check, this check highlights how your child is doing and picks up early any areas for concern. At this time a meeting is held in the nursery with the parent/s and strategies put in place if further support is needed.

Our setting is very welcoming and we have strong relationships with our children and their families. We share examples of our focussed activities with parents and this highlights how learning can be further supported at home.

#### **5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?**

Each child has a Key Person who will take a special interest in their wellbeing. Our routines are flexible, our environments, resources and activities selected to meet individual needs. We use other supportive strategies such as visual aids to ensure that children can fully access the learning environment. Depending on the individual child's needs we would complete a separate additional risk assessment to ensure your child is safe with us. We follow practices and policies in accordance with the EYFS to safeguard all children, including a rigorous recruitment programme, enhanced criminal records check and routine supervision to ensure the suitability of

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the staff. At Horsham Montessori the Director is the Child Protection Lead and the Manager is the Designated Person for Child Protection (DPCP) for Horsham Montessori.

We act as positive and consistent role models for the children and we recognise that some difficulties a child might have in managing their emotions and behaviour may be due to a diagnosed special educational need or disability. Our experienced team will work with you and your child to improve behaviour in accordance with best early years practice.

A senior team member can administer medicine with parental written permission. We can follow a health care plan provided by other professionals. All team members have paediatric first aid training in each setting. Staff will receive appropriate training if required to support any identified SEND. We value each child's views giving all children the opportunity to be heard. Key policies are given to parents in their welcome pack, more are available on our website and the complete set of policies is available for reference in the nursery.

### **6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the setting?**

The setting has an SENCO who is experienced at working with children with SEND. They are effective in implementing supportive EHCPs which meet the needs of children with SEND. They also write reports for the termly Early Years Planning and Review Meetings which meet to provide a coordinated assessment and planning process to support young children with SEND.

Our staff are qualified, experienced, skilled and knowledgeable with the Early Years age group. Within our team we have Paediatric First Aid trained staff including the use of EPI pens. We have accessed many training courses and support materials for areas such as visual and auditory impairment, autism, language development, promoting positive behaviour, and signing. Our teams have worked with children on the autistic spectrum, with global developmental delay, with sight and hearing impairments, speech and language difficulties, physical disabilities and those with complex medical needs. We have experience in supporting children who speak English as an additional language and our environments have a variety of multi-cultural resources.

We will continue to work in partnership with you as parents and carers to best meet the needs of your child. Parental permission will always be sought for sharing information with other professionals.

### **7. What training have the staff had in supporting children with SEND?**

Our nursery teams have completed or are working towards recognised childcare qualifications with the Early Years age group. We have nominated First aiders on site and have undertaken manual handling training. We attend in-house training courses and those run by WSCC which cover core aspects of the EYFS, language, physical development, promoting positive behaviour and Montessori training. Specialist training attended include Say it and Sign it, Sensory play and the Solihull approach to understanding children's behaviour.

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Our particular strength is our wide range of Montessori apparatus, which promotes fine motor skill development, hand eye co-ordination and sensory development. We also use the 'Every Child a Talker' language monitoring tool developed by Speech and Language therapists which supports early identification of children with language delay.

Our SENCO continues to attend training and network meetings to support their role, and relay information and updates to the team. We also receive regular bulletins from WSCC.

### **8. How will my child be included in activities outside the setting including trips?**

We include all children including those with special educational needs and disabilities. Our planning of activities and experiences is based on individual children's needs, strengths, learning styles and current interests. Thoughtful planning takes into account the differing abilities, any potential risks and developmental stages of the children in the setting to ensure the inclusion of the individual child. For example, we look at different ways of doing things to include children, to encourage their independence and self-esteem. Our planning is informed by information from parents/carers, direct observation and knowledge of the individual child and shared strategies from other professionals, e.g. portage, SALT, OT (Occupational Therapy), etc.

For activities, events or trips outside the setting, we first assess the child's needs and put together a risk assessment to identify the potential hazards or areas for additional support. To do this we involve the child's Key Person and liaise with parents. The types of measures we put in place would depend on the individual child, however some examples of how we would include a child with special educational needs or disability on an outing might include:-

- 1 to 1 support for the child, if deemed appropriate whilst promoting child's independence and self-esteem.
- Staff training and knowledge of the child and their specific needs and abilities.
- Local trips around the setting and preparation for the facilities at the place of outing. e.g. disabled access
- Considering transport or walking aids such as a wheelchair, etc.
- Considering any potential dietary requirements.
- Bringing all emergency medicines/ongoing medication/consent forms

### **9. How accessible is the early years setting environment (indoors & outdoors)**

If you have a child with a Special Educational Need or Disability we would encourage you to call us in the first instance and ask to speak to the Director or the Setting Manager, via the office on 01403 270 895. We can then discuss accessibility of our setting's environment, which is equipped with wheelchair access.

If English is not your first language, we can arrange for key documents to be made available to you in different formats and invite you to bring along a friend who could translate for you. We follow best early years practice and professional advice to include children with auditory and visual impairments. For example, a number of our team members are experienced in using non-

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verbal strategies to support children's understanding of routines such as visual aids and 'say it and sign it' training. We offer a range of sensory experiences, including Montessori environments which can be supportive of children with a SEND. We would seek advice from partner professionals for specialist equipment and additional funding may be available from the Local Authority.

### **10. How will the early years setting prepare and support my child to join the early years setting, transfer to a new setting/school?**

We arrange visits and settling-in sessions prior to your child starting at the setting and this is an opportunity for you to share information about caring for your child. A Key Person will be introduced to take a special interest in your child's welfare and development. We work closely with parents to establish a positive introduction into our nursery environment. New parents can tell us and/or use an 'All about me' report to provide valuable information about their child's individual needs and effective ways to support them.

If your child has an identified special educational need or disability we would ask you to first contact the Director or Setting Manager to discuss suitability of our setting in meeting your child's needs. Prior to starting the SENCO may arrange a separate meeting between parents and outside agencies to share information and advise on any training for staff.

Transitions to other settings or to school are planned carefully to ensure continuity of care and take into account any changes to your child's individual needs. A more robust transition to school may be required where areas of continuing support and successful strategies are shared. This meeting would involve parents, nursery SENCO, the new setting and any relevant agencies.

We work closely at all times with your child, their families and any outside agencies to provide supportive transitions.

### **11. How are the setting's resources allocated and matched to children's special needs?**

Our setting is beautifully resourced both inside and outside with developmentally appropriate and stimulating materials. Montessori resources for children aged from 2 years old offer a large range of activities which support learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Initially Maria Montessori developed her materials to support children with Special Educational Needs, but in time developmental benefits were seen for all children.

To support all children's well-being in the setting we use a variety of visual aids, such as visual time lines using PECS (picture exchange communication systems) and other strategies we have developed in partnership with other professionals.

### **12. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?**

Our assessment arrangements may show that a child's progress is not as expected against the developmental bands of the EYFS, and then the SENCO in discussion with parents and the Key

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Person will identify what extra support is required. Strategies might include closer monitoring, the use of an EHCP, visual aids, Sensory library resources, referral or contact with partner professionals. An EHCP written by the SENCO in conjunction with the parents has a focus of support, building on what is going well and around the child's interests. Special meetings will ensure all staff working with your child knows their strengths, needs and strategies how to support them. The SENCO will review any plans effectiveness in improving the outcomes for the child and action with your consent any further support.

We value ongoing partnerships between ourselves, parents and other professionals in any decision making process and support. Reports from partner professionals, who are working with your child, will be used to plan support within the setting. Careful consideration will be given to prepare children with SEND for transition between rooms and onto primary school.

### **13. How are parents involved in the early years setting?**

We value our relationships with our parents/carers and there are lots of ways we involve parents in nursery life, from first visits and settling in sessions, to sharing feedback with you, joining us for coffee mornings or supporting our parties and special events.

You know your child's needs best and we can work together in caring and providing learning opportunities for your child. Your permission will be sought before involving outside agencies and after any meetings there is the opportunity to discuss feedback with you. Any nursery reports we are asked to write would always be shown to you first for your approval.

Parents can ask to see their child's Key Person or any member of the Management Team for a 'Tea and Chat' at any time by telephoning the nursery, or in person at the beginning or end of a session. You may also contact the Director or Manager by email on [info@montessori-uk.co.uk](mailto:info@montessori-uk.co.uk) or by telephoning the office on 01403 270895.

### **14. Who can I contact for further information?**

Your child's Key Person will be your main point of contact if you have a concern about your child, at the beginning or end of a session. You could also speak with a member of the Management Team or the designated SENCO in person or by telephoning the nursery direct. Other team members who work in the setting will also be involved in your child's care and education. The Director can be contacted on 01403 270895 or by email on [info@montessori-uk.co.uk](mailto:info@montessori-uk.co.uk) if you are considering whether your child should join our nursery.

The local children and family centre, Health Visitor or West Sussex CIS (Children's Information Service), IPEH and MASH might also help you and provide you with more information and advice.

More information can be found about our nursery setting and our contact details by visiting [www.montessori-uk.co.uk](http://www.montessori-uk.co.uk). The Local Authority's Local Offer can be found on the West Sussex County Council Family Information Service website: [www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk).

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Latest review: 11 Dec 2017

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