**Little Acorns Pre-School Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy (SEND)**

**Little Acorns Pre School is dedicated to provide a high quality of learning it is our priority, enabling every child to achieve their full potential.**

**Little Acorns is an inclusive, accepting and caring Pre School that welcomes all children into their setting.**

**We are committed to enabling all children to participate fully in all aspects of their time with Little Acorns.**

**Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for children with SEN Special educational needs and disability code of practice:
(0 to 25 years Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities)**

* **5.1  All children are entitled to an education that enables them to: achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education**
* **5.2  Providers of early years education, that is all early years providers in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors that a local authority funds, are required to have regard to this Code including the principles set out in Chapter 1.**
* **5.3  The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework for children aged 0 to 5 years. All early years providers must follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS and the learning and development requirements, unless an exemption from these has been granted.**

**At Little Acorns we take a whole inclusive approach to children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND), recognising that all children should have equal access to a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.   We aim to achieve this through:**

* **Providing a learning environment that is happy, Safe, stimulating and successful;**
* **Forging close links between parents/carers and the school**
* **Setting appropriate learning challenges**
* **Identifying and overcoming potential barriers to learning and participation in school life as early as possible**
* **Developing and maintaining high levels of self-esteem for all children**
* **Supporting children to work independently and be resilient as learners**
* **Communicating children’s needs appropriately throughout the school**
* **Making effective use of all the support services available to us**

**What is a Special Educational Need?**

**At Little Acorns, we recognise that when a child has a Special Educational Need (SEN) they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. As defined in the ‘Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: O – 25’ (June 2014), the school accepts that a child has 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 others of the same age.**

**At Little Acorns, we make provision in accordance with the Code of Practice, which relates to Part 3 of ‘The Children and Families Act’ (2014).  Special educational needs and provision can be considered as falling under four broad areas:**

* **Communication and interaction**
* **Cognition and learning**
* **Social, mental and emotional health**
* **Sensory and/or physical**

**How does Little Acorns Pre-School know if children need extra help or may have special educational needs or disabilities?**

**At Little Acorns Pre-School we treat every child as an individual.  Each child will be allocated a key person who will be responsible for your child’s development.  Through the use of observations and planning for their next steps we are able to identify any concerns which we will share with families, and with consent we will contact other professionals if required.**

**If you have any concerns about your child you should speak with your child’s key person who will be able to advise you further.**

**How will Early Year's staff support the child**

**A child’s key person will work with both the child and their family.  This relationship will ensure that we share knowledge concerning the child and their development.  This knowledge begins with the ‘Welcome Pack’ and ‘All about Me’ section, which will be discussed at a home visit. The learning Journey continues with regular meetings relating to their next steps.  Through continual observations we can plan for the child assessing additional support from other professionals as appropriate.**

**With permission, we will contact the right outside agency if required either for advice or to make a referral with any concerns. We will apply strategies and advice offered as appropriate.**

**What support will there be for the child’s overall well being**

**At Little Acorns we start with a home visit, we like to have a informal discussion in the families home where everyone feels comfortable in their own surroundings. We ask families to talk though any concerns or worries they may have. This helps practitioners to gain knowledge before a child has started with us. Settling in sessions for the first two weeks when a child starts helps to familiarise them with the Pre-School environment.**

**How will the curriculum be matched to the child’s needs?**

**Every child is viewed as ‘unique’ therefore at Little Acorns we plan for your child’s development based on observations of your child and evidence gained for their Learning Journal.  The environment children play in, will be appropriate for their needs and additional support or resources will be supplied as appropriate.**

**A person Centered Approach (One Planning)**

**When a child is identified with Special Educational Needs action should be taken to remove barriers to learning and put effective provisions in place through One Planning. The process is based on The graduated Approach. This is a plan that is written between the child, the child’s family, SENCO, practitioners and other agencies (if needed) to formulate the plan. The Graduated Approach is four sections of:**

* **Assess**
* **Plan**
* **Do and**
* **Review**

**Clear information for Parents and families is a MUST throughout the whole process. The Pre-School is committed to working in partnership with the child, parents, carers and outside agencies to identify needs.**

**Key principles**

**The principles underlying the SEND Code of Practice are to:**

* **Identify children’s needs and involve children and parents in decision making;**
* **Give greater choice and control to families on the support they receive;**
* **Improve collaboration between education, health and social care in provision;**
* **Develop services to improve outcomes for children with SEN and prepare them for transition into adulthood.**

**The main duties will be for:**

* **Local authorities and local health services to plan and commission education, health and social care services jointly across the age range (0 to 25);**
* **Local authorities to publish in one place a clear and easy-to-read ‘local offer’ of education, health and social care services for children with SEN and their families both within and outside their local area;**
* **What is the Local Offer?**
	+ **4.1  Local authorities must publish a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they ‘expect to be available’, local authorities should include provision, which they believe will actually be available.**
* **A revised system for identifying, supporting and assessing children’s needs;**
* **Integrating education, health and care services and improved co-operation and partnership working between local authorities and a wide range of partners, including early years settings;**
* **Local authorities to ensure that parents and children are involved in discussion and decisions relating to every aspect of the child’s SEN including reviewing special educational health and social care provision;**
* **Provision of local impartial advice and support and mediation services;**
* **A new Education, Health and Care Plan to replace Special Educational Statements;**
* **Local authorities to give parents with a child (and young people) with an Education, Health and Care Plan the right to a personal budget**

**At Little Acorns we may not able to diagnose specific conditions, but we will try to assist with further support for our children and their families.**

**Working with parents**

**At Little acorns, we firmly believe that parents and the Pre-School should work together in partnership and that good communication between home and School is the key to this partnership.  We actively encourage an ‘open door policy’ and we are happy to discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity. We welcome the involvement of parents and families in supporting children at home, in the School and with specific events. For children with a special educational need or disabilities (SEND), there are additional opportunities for parents to meet with their child’s key worker and the SENCO.**

**The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**

**A SENCO, or special educational needs co-ordinator, is responsible for assessing, planning and monitoring the progress of children with special needs. The SENCO will work closely with the Child Designated Officer to keep our Safeguarding Policy in line with the SEND Policy. Our SENCO will work with Parents and families offering support through out their child’s early education at Little Acorns.**

**Identification and Early Intervention**

**Progress Check At Age Two**

* **5.22 The EYFS framework includes two specific points for providing written assessments for parents and other professionals – when the child is aged two and at the end of the reception year – which are detailed below.**
* **5.23 When a child is aged between two and three, early years practitioners must review progress and provide parents with a short written summary of their child’s development, focusing in particular on communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. This progress check must identify the child’s strengths and any areas where the child’s progress is slower than expected. If there are significant emerging concerns (or identified SEN or disability) practitioners should develop a targeted plan to support the child, involving other professionals such as, for example, the setting’s SENCO or the Area SENCO, as appropriate.**

**The summary must highlight areas where:**

* + **good progress is being made**
	+ **some additional support might be needed**
	+ **there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate SEN or disability)**
	+ **5.24  It must describe the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns. If a child moves settings between the ages of two and three it is expected that the progress check will be undertaken in the setting where the child has spent most time.**
	+ **5.25  Health visitors currently check children’s physical development milestones between ages two and three as part of the universal Healthy Child Programme. From 2015, it is proposed to introduce an integrated review that will cover the development areas in the Healthy Child Programme two-year review and the EYFS two-year progress check. The integrated review will:**
	+ **identify the child’s progress, strengths and needs at this age in order to promote positive outcomes in health and wellbeing, learning and development**
	+ **enable appropriate intervention and support for children and their families, where progress is less than expected, and**
	+ **generate information which can be used to plan services and contribute to the reduction of inequalities in children’s outcomes**

**Education and Health Care Plans (EHC plan)**

**An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged 0 up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs. For children whose needs are more complex, they may have an EHC plan.  (All statements will be replaced by EHC plans by September 2017.)  An EHC plan is written by parents, the child and professionals and looks at the child or young person’s needs in education, health and care. This means EHC Plans will be personalised. EHC plans will be reviewed annually, through a ‘One Plan’ meeting and all of the key people in a child’s life can attend this meeting, for example, parents, grandparents, professionals, keyworkers etc.**

**Information about the school’s policies are available anytime for the identification, assessment and provision for children with SEN, whether or not children have EHC Plans, including how the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision for such children.**

**What about other professionals working with your child?**

**Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their child’s needs with a variety of professionals who are involved in their child’s education.  The school works closely with external agencies, for example, SENCO, Paediatricians, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychologists etc.  Social Care input is also available where needed. We also welcome contact with professionals who are working with the child outside of school.**

**On-going assessment is used to identify children who have specific needs. The progress of each child is continually monitored by the child’s keyworker through ‘next step’ marking.  In addition:**

* **All children in The Early Years Foundation Stage are assessed against the Early Learning Goals**
* **The SENCO frequently reviews with keyworkers, looking at children who are not making expected rates of progress.**

**Where barriers to learning are identified, adjustments are made in the Pre-School to ensure that each child has the right support and, where necessary and in consultation with parents, suitable interventions are put in place for individual children. For some children, social and emotional difficulties can prevent them from learning.  In these cases, we work closely with the child and their family and seek appropriate support from outside agencies.**

**The support offered to children with SEND is different for every child.  This provision is designed by the relevant staff members, working alongside the child, the child’s family and, where appropriate, outside agencies, for example a Speech and Language Therapist or an Educational Psychologist.**

**A child with SEND will have an individual plan, which sets out targets. The content of the plan is decided with the child and their family. Targets may relate to social interaction, communicating with children and adults, emotional difficulties, overcoming physical issues. The most important point is that, targets depend on the needs of the child. The effectiveness of all interventions are monitored by the area SENCO.**

**Our Pre-School is open to all members of the community. We do not discriminate against a child or their family, or refuse a child entry to our Pre-School for reasons relating to disability, race, sex, gender reassignment, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.**

**The Manager and Deputy are responsible for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and all staff are actively encouraged to attend CPD courses.**

**The SENCO attends meetings, training days and keeps up-to-date with current documentation and initiatives.  Key information is shared with staff members at meetings. If a child with a specific need comes to the school, we work closely with professionals who are already supporting the child and secure appropriate training.**

**When a child is ready to move onto Primary School this stage of transition, children with an EHC are given extra support and time to help ease this new start. We make extra trips to help the child to settle.**

 **Little Acorns Pre-School**

**Little Acorns Pre-School will work closely with your child and their family. We are there to help with every part of your child’s development and we look forward to working together. As a setting we are proud that we provide support to the child and all their family.**

**Little Acorns SENCO Workers: Lynne White, Sarah Carter and Angela Dee**

**The Local Authority’s local offer can be found on Essex county Council’s website** [**www.essex.gov.uk**](http://www.essex.gov.uk/) **or from SENCAN, Goodman House, Harlow – 01279 404502**