

Marsh Hill Nursery School

Our Information Report and Policy for Children with
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We believe that the early identification of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) is crucial if children are to be given an appropriate curriculum to meet their needs and the support they need to develop their self-esteem and realise their potential.

The knowledge, views and experiences of you, the parents, as your child's first educators, are vital in the identification, assessment and support process. Parents are our partners in the education process, and this partnership is essential if the children are to make progress.

The Special Needs Coordinator (SENCo) has responsibility for co-ordinating the provision for children with special or additional needs in the nursery.

Since September 2014, all schools have been expected to publish information about their provision for special educational needs and disabilities, which includes the 'Local Offer' from the Local authority, this can help parents and carers to understand what services they and their families can expect from a range of local agencies.

Birmingham's Local offer can be found at <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/> (click to take you to the webpage)

What kind of needs could a child have that would need additional support?

Children and young people with SEND may need extra help because of a range of needs. The 0-25 SEND Code of Practice (Sep 2014) sets out 4 areas of need:

Communication and Interaction: Children may find it difficult to interact with people and the world around them. They may find it hard to talk to adults and other children in a group, to talk about a given topic or need support to say how they are feeling or what they are thinking. They may have difficulties dealing with changes in routine, with noises, smells or other things around them, and understanding what other people mean when they are talking.

Cognition and learning: Children may find learning, thinking and understanding harder than most other children. They may take longer to learn important skills, find it difficult to remember things such as words and to understand new concepts and they may need more time to think about their answers.

Social, emotional and mental health needs: Children may find it difficult to manage their emotions and behaviour. They may find it difficult to follow rules, sit still and listen, follow instructions, understand how others are feeling and find it hard to take responsibility for the things they do in a way that does not cause harm to themselves or others.

Sensory and/or physical needs: Children may have additional needs that may make it difficult for them to manage their everyday life without support. They may have hearing or visual difficulties, physical difficulties or other medical needs. They may find it difficult hearing what others are saying or in seeing pictures, text and illustrations in books without the print size being adjusted. They may need a walking aid or wheelchair or need changes to the environment. They may need support to use pencils, scissors, knives and forks. Some children will need support from an adult to take medication.

Who is the school's SENCo and what do they do?

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) at Marsh Hill Nursery School is Mrs Claire Twigg.

You can contact her by calling the school office on 0121 464 3090, or by emailing enquiry@marshiln.bham.sch.uk.

The SENDCo is responsible for co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for pupils with SEND.

Mrs Twigg and other senior leaders in school will work with all staff to agree, implement and review the SEN policy. Dawn Edwards is our SEN Representative on the Governing Body.

The SENDCo will co-ordinate meetings between parents and key workers related to children's special needs, as well as liaising with any other professional agencies working with children in school. All children have a key worker at nursery and we encourage you to speak to them regularly about your child's progress and development and any concerns that you have. We are able to support with any issues you may be experiencing at home, such as bedtime routines, toilet training or managing behaviour.

How will the nursery identify whether a child has any special or additional needs?

At Marsh Hill Nursery School, we use a variety of different ways to assess whether a child has special educational needs and requires additional support.

If you tell us that your child has a particular need when you register for a nursery place, we will discuss your child's needs and agree on what we can both do to help your child in nursery.

We observe all the children while they are at nursery to see how they are learning and developing. We monitor their progress against the Early Years Foundation Stage age related expectations regularly. If we have a concern about your child's progress, we will discuss it with you.

We will want to find out if your child's behaviour and understanding are the same at school and at home. We will work with you and discuss strategies to support your child so that we are working together to help your child make progress. Where appropriate we will invite you to a meeting to discuss and review the provision that has been put in place to support your child.

Specialised assessments may be carried out by support services such as speech and language therapists and other professionals. This will only happen after a discussion with the Parents and when consent is given. We hold discussions with adults who work with your child in the setting or from other agencies. If your child has attended another setting before coming to Marsh Hill Nursery School, the setting will usually share any information they have so that we can support your child in the most appropriate way.

What will happen next?

Once a child has been identified as having a special educational need a graduated approach is taken, which was outlined in the 2014 Code of Practice.

It is a four-part cycle (assess, plan, do, review) that enables us to put actions or interventions in place to support children's learning and then to review their progress. The process includes initial assessment of needs, followed by planning what actions will be taken in meeting those needs and by whom. Then we will carry out those actions, which form the 'doing' part of the cycle, and lastly we will review the effectiveness of the actions that we put in place so that we can refine the provision for each child and continue to meet the changing needs.

We expect that parents and families will be closely involved in each stage of the process. The class teacher will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Sometimes the interventions may involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class, but the teacher will still retain responsibility for the child's progress. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved. All children in our nursery school have support through quality first teaching that is appropriate and effective for all the children attending.

We provide a broad, balanced and rich curriculum. Learning experiences are planned to meet the different needs of all children and come from the children's interests. Delivering the plans may take the form of small group work or individual teaching depending on the children's needs. Practitioners plan activities and learning opportunities, which are developmentally appropriate, differentiated and flexible enough to meet the needs of all children including those with a range of special needs.

The learning environment in the nursery school is planned to ensure that there is equipment provided to enhance learning for all children. The environment in nursery schools, both indoors and outside is planned to support different interests and stages of development. Because of the way we work most children with additional needs can be supported effectively in the nursery with the addition of some increased attention and support and specific targets for their learning which enable them to make good progress.

We also believe that children learn best alongside their peers and with access to the full range of opportunities we provide. In this situation the assess, plan, do, review cycle will be documented through a one-page profile, which will inform all staff working with those children of their needs and how best to support them. If more targeted support is needed we will write an early support plan, which may be used to collect evidence if there is a chance that further assessment may be necessary by other professionals from outside of school. Through each stage of the cycle we will continue to work with each child, meeting their needs and observing their progress, as well as sharing information with parents.

What other professionals might be involved?

If a child has been receiving targeted support and we have started to write an early support plan together, we may feel that it is necessary to involve other professionals from outside school, you will always be asked for permission when we make referrals and informed when professionals visit school to see your child.

This could typically include:

- An Educational Psychologist - who will observe children and support us in setting appropriate targets for learning. The EP has in-depth knowledge and understanding of how to support children with a variety of needs, some of which may be complex.
- The Communication and Autism Team - a CAT worker has specialist knowledge of supporting children and their families who have a diagnosis of autism, or who are experiencing difficulties in communicating. They will observe children in the nursery setting and support staff in setting appropriate targets.
- Pupil and School Support - Pupil and School Support work to help children with cognition and learning difficulties and other vulnerable groups progress and achieve to the best of their abilities.
- Speech and Language Therapists – Children may be referred for SaLT for a variety of reasons and by different professionals, such as your doctor, health visitor or teacher. You will usually be asked to attend the clinic, when a trained and experienced speech therapist will carry out an assessment and set targets for you to work on at home and with your permission they will send us a report so that we can continue to support children in the same way at school. Sometimes speech therapists will visit children at nursery; usually you will be invited to a meeting at school to discuss their observations.

We also have access to other agencies such as: • The Occupational Health Support Team • The Sensory Support Team • The Physical Difficulties Support Team • The Physiotherapy Support Team.

We can also refer children to a Child Development Centre, where medical and other professionals will carry out a multidisciplinary assessment of your child. When multi agencies are involved in supporting a child's needs it is important that we are able to communicate with each other, which will usually take the form of a "Team Around the Child" meeting (TAC).

Often at this stage we will be considering whether your child may need an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), to make clear plans for meeting their special educational needs in the future. If we decide to progress to this next stage we will make an application to Birmingham's Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review (SENAR) service, who will review our evidence and decide if your child meets the criteria for an EHCP. Your child and you are at the centre of the process and you will be involved and informed every step of the way. If you feel you need further support you can access help and support at: <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/> (click to take you to the webpage)

How can staff at nursery support my child's needs?

At Marsh Hill Nursery School, we are committed to providing staff with ongoing professional training in supporting children with a range of needs. Our staff are trained in a variety of approaches which means we are able to make adaptations for and support a range of needs, for example: – Autistic Spectrum Condition; speech, language and communication needs; medical needs, behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.

When a child has been identified as having a particular need we are able to access specific training for both teachers and support staff in relation to the use of resources and strategies to support children e.g. Makaton signing, Down's Syndrome, ASC, behaviour management, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, visual or hearing impairment etc. therefore responding immediately to the needs of the children in our nursery each year.

What if my child needs specialist equipment or resources?

Our nursery is well resourced with equipment designed to support children's learning across all areas of the curriculum, we aim that our resources should not create any additional barriers to children's access to the curriculum. When necessary we will make every effort to ensure that specific resources needed to support individual needs can be provided in the setting. We will make reasonable adjustments to resources, human and physical, necessary to allow for physical access to the learning environment, and will regularly assess accessibility needs. We have disabled toilet facilities for both adults and children.

How will my child be supported in their transition to nursery and then on to primary school?

We have an established programme of induction for all children starting nursery. We offer open sessions for families and children to stay and play in the nursery and meet staff before the children's first day, so that they can become familiar with the setting. This supports all children not only those with special educational needs or disabilities.

We have a settling in period for all children and this varies in length depending on each child's needs. Transition to Reception is very important and as soon as we know which schools our children are transferring to we start organising a transition programme. We invite Reception teachers to come and visit the children in nursery and to talk to the child's key worker. In 2020 and 2021 these meetings took place via Teams meetings due to Covid restrictions.

We make sure that all relevant information is passed to the new school and liaise with the SENDCo so that they are ready to meet your child's needs. They will also support you in arranging visits and making photo books.

We work with the educational psychology service, pupil and school support and communication and autism team to support children and families through the process.

The terminology explained.

SENAR: Special Educational Assessment and Review Service:

- A group of experienced people who work together to evaluate all of the assessments and reports sent to them by you and all professionals working with your child during the statutory assessment process.
- The panel will make a decision about the best way forward in supporting your child.
- SENAR is a service provided by Birmingham City Council. Statutory Assessment:
- If SENAR decides that there is a need to provide support for your child, they will carry out a detailed investigation to discover exactly what your child's special needs are and what specialist help or resources will be needed to meet those needs.
- All people who work with your child will provide a report to help SENAR understand how to best meet his or her needs.

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP):

- A legal document produced as a result of the statutory assessment process. It states how your child will be supported and what must be provided in order to do this. Special School: There are a variety of special schools in Birmingham offering a range of specialist provision for children with different needs e.g. physical needs, autism, moderate learning difficulties, profound and multiple difficulties. In order to access this type of provision your child will need an EHCP.

SEND Support Provision Plans (SSPP):

- A document used to demonstrate the provision in place for children and young people where the needs are complex and require multi-agency involvement, but where the provision does not require an EHCP in order to support delivery within a mainstream setting. The SSPPs are designed to build up a picture of need and provision over time.
- SEND Support Provision Plans are also used by the Local Authority as the mechanism by which mainstream settings can apply for additional 'top up' funding for pupils who DO NOT have an EHCP. The funding allocated is based upon the number of Support Units deemed necessary to support the school or setting in implementing the provision written in the plan.

A Resource Base:

- Some primary schools have a resource base attached to them. It offers specialist support in a mainstream setting where children who experience difficulties can be taught in the resource base or in the mainstream classroom, with the main aim of integration into mainstream.
- You can find out about Birmingham's special schools and resource bases at <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk/> (click to take you to the webpage)