

## **SANDCASTLE PLAYGROUP**

“Keeping the PLAY in Playgroup”

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) POLICY**

It is our intention to provide a safe and stimulating environment for the development needs of each child in our care. We aim to offer an appropriate learning environment to provide a well balanced Foundation Stage curriculum for children aged 2 to 5 years and will deliver a range of differentiated activities to meet individual needs.

We will aim to identify any child’s difficulties as early as possible through our observations, assessment and record keeping.

We will work in partnership with parents if we feel a child is having any kind of difficulty

We will liaise with other agencies and professionals, with parent’s permission, so we can support any child we have identified as having difficulties to fulfil their potential

The SENCO at Sandcastles is Janette Godfrey. Bonnie Holmes also holds a SENCO qualification. However, all staff act as a team and work closely together to support the children and parents as well as updating all relevant policies and procedures.

The SENCO role is to:

- Ensure children with SEND can access day to day provision
- Ensure that staff understand, are familiar with and follow the SEND Code of Practice (2014) as stated in our policy to ensure the individual needs of children experiencing difficulties are met
- Promote and encourage staff development in relation to SEND.
- Co-ordinate the record keeping and information for SEND children. If appropriate, arrange meetings with parents, other staff members and outside professionals to set targets for IEP’s and to review IEP’s.
- Review the SEND policy regularly with other interested parties
- Monitor the effectiveness of the SEND policy and set dates for evaluation and review.
- Attend assessments at the C.D.C. with parents if requested, to support parents and offer relevant advice/information.

The SENCO has attended various training courses; these include:-

- Foundation Stage Special Educational Needs Workshon

- Special Educational Needs Support Meetings
- An Introduction to Autism and Autistic Spectrum Disorders – Terry Gilligan
- In-house Training on Aspergers/Autism from our Advisory Teacher for SEN.
- Autism Awareness – Suffolk Autism
- Disability Discrimination Workshop
- Senco Training Modules 1, 3, 5, and 7
- Working towards 'Working with Parents' City & Guilds Award

Admission arrangements for children with SEN are:

- We welcome children from all backgrounds and abilities
- Ensure that parents/carers complete relevant section in the application form and All About Me book so that we have accurate and up to date information about the child.
- Encourage visit to playgroup prior to child starting
- Support parent/carer during settling in period.
- Collect information/contact other outside agencies already involved, as early as possible. This information will be used to assess what alterations to staffing arrangements and resources might be needed.
- The register will be organised according to the needs of all the children, their families and shared placements to ensure we offer a fully inclusive practice

Outside agencies are welcome to observe the children in playgroup session with parental permission. Sharing of information is seen as an essential part of a whole picture of the child's development.

We have regular contact with SCC Advisory Teacher for SEN, Support teacher for SEN and close links with NHS Health Link: Joan Nevin, Customer First. Hillside Special School, Speech Therapist, The Child Development Centre, other local early years providers and all local primary schools.

We have regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part III, this states that we will take reasonable steps or make reasonable adjustments in order to ensure the service we provide is accessible to disabled children, young people and adults.

Enabling Environment

At Sandcastles we have an area in an Upper School which is all on one level and easily accessible with a ramp, a wide entrance door with security lock and high and low handles, two low level nursery toilets cubicles and a disabled toilet. Areas are set out giving all the children the opportunity to independently select resources and play with them at different levels. If necessary, furniture and equipment would be moved to ensure they are safely accessible.

We have an office partition with high level windows and integrated Venetian Blinds, ideal for staff and parents observing SEN children without their knowledge and somewhere to speak in private.

The main room has two attached rooms. All the rooms are bright, colourful and stimulating with lots of natural light. The rooms are all one level to provide easy access for all.

One attached room is a green house developed to promote independence, imaginative and social development with an access door to the outside play area and the other is a part brick part glass room developed as a messy room to promote sensory and creative development. There is a door with access ramp to an outside play area.

Outside we have an area of astro-turf and paving to enable access all year round. We have a water butt with plants and goldfish, which the children are encouraged to care for. There are planters for children to plant flowers and vegetables, an enclosure for the tortoise to occupy, a large tractor tyre and two playhouses. The area is set out each day to promote, physical, quiet, imaginative, reflective and problem solving play. The children are actively encouraged to choose and help set out the activities in these areas.

We have a range of resources to develop skills and abilities over the six areas of learning in the EYFS including some specialist tools, e.g. Sprung, left handed, four holed scissors. However, the group will research the possibility of purchasing/borrowing specialist equipment/toys in order to meet a child's particular need

#### Planning for the foundation stage

When staff members plan for the children they take into account all the ages and stages of development and SEN. The activities planned will benefit all children during their sessions here at Sandcastles.

We plan long, medium and short term and record and monitor children's progress on a regular basis, we do this by observing the children whilst they

carry out activities, staff members are also allocated time to plan for each of their key children on an individual basis.

Regular meetings are carried out so that the staff are able to get together and give their comments and views.

Staff are deployed according to various activities so they can observe the children, encourage development and also evaluate activities.

At Sandcastles we operate a Key person System. The register is divided and each member of staff has a small group of children as key children. Any member of staff has the opportunity to observe any child during their session at playgroup and add it to their Learning Journey, but it is the Key person's responsibility to make sure that their child's records are monitored for progression. If they have any queries or concerns then they have to report it to the SENCO.

When children are due to leave playgroup their Learning Journey's are passed together with all relevant information so that the children's needs can be catered for.

For children with additional needs a transition meeting will be set up with the head of the provision the child is moving on to. Those in attendance will ideally be: SENCO, new teacher, school SENCO, our Advisory Teacher and the parents will also be invited to attend.

### Identification and Assessment of Children with Special Educational Needs

We have regard for the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs. Therefore, it is our aim to identify any additional need as early as possible, in order to support them with their learning

When registering a child at Sandcastles, we ask that parents/carers inform us of any Additional Needs that the child may have so that we are aware and can work with the parent and the rest of the team to ensure that the child's needs are met.

### Graduated Approach

We observe all children in our care on a regular basis. If we feel that we have concerns about a particular child then we would discuss it with the playgroup SENCO and observations would be kept. Parent/carers would be informed of the concerns by either their Keyperson or the SENCO.

### Early Years Action

After liaising with the child's parent/carer and regular observations had been taking place but we found the child making limited progress, the Keyperson and/or SENCO will work with the parents/carer to set written targets for the child (Individual Education Plans). These have to be agreed on and signed by all parties, and a review date will be made (usually 6-8 weeks after).

Observations are then recorded based on the targets that are set and kept in the child's Learning Journey.

At the review meeting we would look at the child's progress and discuss with their parent/carer the next stage of action.

### Early Years Action Plus

If progress is still limited we would then discuss with the parent/carer the option of getting in touch with our Advisory Teacher for children under 5 with SEN or any outside professional we feel could help. We will need permission from the parent/carer to do so. We would then discuss the I.E.P. and set new written targets along with a new review date, incorporating advice from professionals

### Statutory Assessment

If we still had concerns about the child and felt the progression was still limited, we would discuss with the parent/carer and the outside professional the opportunity for the child to have a formal assessment, so that we can find out if the child needs a Statement of Special Needs. We will still continue with the I.E.P. with advice from the relevant professionals, supporting parents and child in any way we could throughout the process.

We have at least 4 members of staff on duty at each session and the staff support individual children within each session as appropriate. If a child were identified as needing a lot of adult support to access the learning environment the group would explore the possibility of employing an extra member of staff to support the child.

### Complaints Procedure:

Here at Sandcastles, we take complaints very seriously and would do our very best to sort out any problem as soon as it is brought to our attention either verbally or written. However, we do have a written complaints procedure to follow should the need arise.

Sandcastle Playgroup will update the policies annually or earlier if necessary by involving staff and trustees and keeping abreast with current legislation. All parents, staff and professionals have access to all our policies

Here at Sandcastles, we feel it is important that the staff build strong, positive relationships with the parents/carers of all the children in our care (see our Ethos). This enables us to meet each child's individual needs and care for that child as best we can. All parents will be informed on how their child is progressing, and if we have any concerns then the parent/carers will be informed from the initial concern. We are aware that the child and the families may need extra support at this time and will provide as much help and guidance as we can during their time with us and beyond. We will always inform parent/carers of the Parent Partnership Services.

At Sandcastle Playgroup, we have an open door policy, which means that parents/carers are welcome to join us in any session. The Learning Journeys are available to read at any time and parents are actively encouraged to add to these their own comments and observations from home, building a bigger picture of the child's strengths and interests.

We will hold two open weeks during the year when parents will be formally invited in to share the Learning Journeys. These open weeks will be organised in an appointment system with the child's key person or a member of staff of the parent/carers choosing. However the SENCO will be available throughout. Appointment slots will be over a variety of times i.e. beginning/end of sessions, after sessions and evenings to ensure that all parents/carers have a chance to take part

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014

Signed..... (For and on behalf of Sandcastle Playgroup)

Date for review: SEPT 2015

Key:

- SEN - Special Educational Need
- SENCO - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
- CDC - Child Development Centre
- DDA - Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- IEP - Individual Education Plan
- SCC - Suffolk County Council

EEST SEN - Early Years Support Teacher Special Educational Needs (SEN Advisory Teacher)