



Hingham Playgroup



Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

Introduction

We at Hingham Playgroup are committed to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Needs.

Information regarding the role of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO); Early Years Action; Early Years Action Plus and Statutory Assessment is given in a separate leaflet *"Putting the Policy into Practice"*

Equal Opportunities

Hingham Playgroup is open to all children and their families. We aim to provide care and learning opportunities for all children, catering for each child's individual needs. We believe that children with special needs should be included in all aspects of the pre-school and learn alongside their peers.

Identification of Special Needs

A child has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- Has 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 schools within the area of the local education authority

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or medium of the home is different from the language in which he or she is, or will be, taught.

Special educational provision means:

- For a child over two, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the child's age in maintained schools, other than special schools, in the area
- For a child under two, educational provision of any kind.

Children might be described as having SEN for many different reasons – a physical disability, a language or communication difficulty, behaviour or emotional difficulty, or delayed development. For some children this may be a temporary difficulty. The aim of early identification of SEN is to alleviate individual difficulties so children no longer have such significant needs. SEN is a pragmatic term used to define the steps we are adopting, rather than being used to 'label' a child.

Playgroup's Policy

Hingham Playgroup aims to

- Ensure that all children, including those with Special Educational Needs, have access to a broad, balanced and purposeful early year's curriculum.
- Educate children with Special Needs alongside their peers.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Develop collaboration with other agencies and professionals, including transfer to the child's next provider of education.
- Follow the guidelines and principles of the DfES Code of Practice 2001.
- Keep up to date with training and appoint at least one Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).
- Regularly review and up date our policy and provision.
- Treat seriously and give careful consideration to any complaints that are brought to our attention with regard to our SEN provision.

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Procedure for admission of children with identified needs

- Children with identified special needs will be admitted after consultation between parents and staff to ensure the child's individual needs are catered for and our provision adapted where necessary.
- Our insurance company will be notified that we have minimised any risks to the child.
- Parents must give the playgroup full written details and instructions regarding the treatment of any health care needs, including the administration of medication.
- Outside agencies will be called upon for advice and support and the staff team will undertake specific training if appropriate.
- With the parent's permission, the Playgroup's Senco and appointed Key person may visit the child at home to establish a relationship built on familiarity and trust.
- The child's parents or regular carer will stay with their child for the first few sessions to ensure that the child's individual needs are being catered for.

Procedure for assessing the needs of children already attending the setting

- Identification and intervention must be addressed as early as possible.
- Key person will use their observations of children to record each child's progress and raise any concerns about children's development with the SENCO.
- The SENCO will make their own observations of the child and discuss their findings with the child's key person and Leading Practitioner to draw up an Individual Education Plan.
- The child's parents will be consulted and their views taken into consideration.
- If with additional support the child still does not appear to progress, the involvement of external support services will be considered, in consultation with the child's parents.

- o For some children we may be necessary to further consider statutory assessment.

The pre-school *SENCO* is currently Paula Willmott. All staff is encouraged to attend training courses and workshops relating to Special Needs and Equal Opportunities arranged by the Norfolk Early Years Partnership. Training through other agencies may be undertaken as appropriate.

Regular staff meetings will be held to discuss individual children's progress and needs.

Links with outside agencies

In Norfolk we have the support of a variety of professionals to give us support and advice.

These include the Norfolk Early Years Partnership Area Senco, the Pre-school Panel, Health Visitors, the Pre-school Learning Alliance and others. Their contact details are recorded in the Special Educational Needs file. We have close links with our local school Hingham County Primary. Children's information records are shared with the Early Years Co-ordinator/Reception Teacher when children transfer to mainstream school.

Partnership with Parents

We aim to hold regular meetings with parents to discuss all aspects of their child's development and progress at the playgroup. Parent's contribution to their child's records is welcomed and encouraged. We will take into careful consideration the parents feelings and wishes when discussing any concerns regarding their child's special needs. Where necessary help will be sought to share information with parents using a community or sign language.

Where possible the views and wishes of the child will be taken into account.

A resource folder will be available to parents giving information of support services and the playgroup resource books will be regularly reviewed to ensure special needs issues are available for use by both staff and parents.

Confidentiality

Information held in relation to any child, including those with special needs, will be confidential unless the parent(s) release their permission.

Named in house SEN: Yasmin Jones

Signed :.....(Chairperson)

Date Reviewed: August 2008.

Review: August 2009