



Ashbridge

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL & NURSERIES

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

Approved by: SLT

Approved date: OCTOBER 2023

Review date: August 2024

Accessibility: Available to parents/guardians on the website and as a paper copy on request

Scope: Ashbridge Independent School and Nursery,
Ashbridge on-Ribble Nursery, Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm,
The Fledglings Nursery

Introduction

At Ashbridge School and Nursery we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences, and to develop and learn alongside their peers. We provide a high quality, positive and welcoming environment where children are supported and educated according to their individual needs.

We recognise that some children may have additional needs that may require particular support or intervention. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in the child's life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. We will work alongside a child's parents/guardians and with any relevant professionals to identify any needs, to share information, and to also help the child and their family to access the support they need.

As a childcare provider and school, we have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to ensure children with special educational needs and disabilities can access our provision under the Equality Act of 2010.

Access refers to 'the means or opportunity to enter the provision or space where education is to take place', or 'the means or opportunity to engage with the Early Years Foundation Stage'.

In school and nursery, we will consider a child's needs and will assess whether we can meet them with reasonable adjustments before offering a place. When children are already attending Ashbridge, we work with families to make reasonable adjustments or if we cannot meet a child's needs, support families to find a more suitable provider.

Reasonable adjustments include taking positive actions to ensure that children can access the curriculum and participate and enjoy all the benefits and services offered by us.

If we identify that a child attending nursery may have emerging learning difficulties, SEN and/or a disability, that has not previously been recognised, we will work closely with the child's parents/guardians and any relevant professionals to support the child and the family to establish the child's needs and secure any action that may be required to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development.

At no time will children be discriminated against for any other reasons, including discrimination based on disability, age, gender identity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation providing we can meet the child's needs.

In accordance with our admissions policy, we treat all applicants for places in school and nursery in a fair way, regardless of any special educational need or disability. Prior to the consideration of an offer of enrolment being made for a nursery or school pupil, a meeting will be held between the Headteacher or/and a member of the Senior Management Team and Senior SENCO, along with parents/guardians. The aim of this meeting is to ascertain the child's individual needs, and to gather all appropriate and relevant information, including from other professionals that support the child.

If after a reasonable period of time, we decide that despite making reasonable adjustments to our provision, we are unable to adequately provide for, and meet the child's needs, we do reserve the right to withdraw a place.

Legal framework, definitions and procedures

The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:

- [Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014](#) (undated April 2020)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(September 2021\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015](#) (updated July 2022)

We use the definitions set out in the code of practice to describe SEND

- A child has SEND if they have a **learning difficulty or disability** which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for them.
- A **learning difficulty or disability** means that a child of compulsory school age has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children of the same age; and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the sort of facilities generally provided for others of the same age.
- For children aged two or more, **special educational provision** is educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.
- A **child under compulsory school age** has SEND if he or she is likely to have a learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.
- A **disability** is defined in the [Equality Act 2010](#) as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEND. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEND definition.

We have regard to the statutory guidance set out in the 'Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2014 and updated 2020)', and have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEN and disabilities. In addition, we ensure we meet all aspects of the EYFS statutory Requirements relating to SEND, and work also within Local Authority procedures.

We aim to:

- Ensure that all children are treated as individuals and are encouraged to take part in every aspect of their education according to their individual needs and abilities
- Recognise each child's individual needs through gathering information from parents/guardians and others involved with the child on admission, and through our procedures for observation and assessment
- Ensure all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and disabilities and have regard to the guidance given in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014, as well as our company SEND policy

- Support families to access any additional support for any needs not being met by universal services
- Identify any emerging concerns that might suggest a child has special educational needs and/or disabilities at the earliest opportunity
- Share any information received and assessments made by ourselves with parents/guardians and support them in seeking any help they or the child may need
- Work in partnership with parents/ guardians and other agencies in order to support an individual child's needs, including health services and the local authority, and seek advice, support and training where required
- Consistently monitor and regularly review our practice and provision and where appropriate, making adjustments
- Ensure that our physical environment is, as far as possible, safe and accessible for children and adults with disabilities
- Seek children's views, as well as listening to and encouraging all children to value and respect others
- Challenge, where identified, inappropriate attitudes and discriminatory practices evident within our team, children and customer body

Procedures and methods

In order to deliver our aims, we:

- Employ an experienced Global Company SENCO who works across the four sites of Ashbridge who is supported by the Senior Leadership team and each setting's Nursery Management team.
- Have a well-qualified team, knowledgeable in the care and education of children.
- Have two members of the company Senior Leadership team who act as Senior SENCOs.
- Provide differentiated learning opportunities to meet individual children's needs and abilities.
- Consult with parents/guardians and keep them informed at all stages of the observation, assessment, planning, provision and review of their child's care and education, holding regular discussions.
- Use a *Graduated Approach* to identifying, assessing and responding to children who have emerging needs.
- Provide parents/guardians with information on sources of advice and support.
- Maintain SEND support plans and additional records of the assessment, provision and review for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Work within local procedures and produce and publish an Early Years local offer document.
- Seek any further advice or support needed including engaging with multi-agency approaches, Early Support and where appropriate, 'Education, Health and Care' (EHC) Needs Assessment procedures.
- Liaise with the LEA Inclusion Service and other professionals involved in supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families.
- Liaise with other educational settings for transition arrangements.
- Liaise with the Children and Family Welfare service in the supporting areas for each setting with link visits with the service and then information cascaded to families regarding support and services on offer in the local areas.

Graduated approach

In line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, we take a graduated approach to working with children with emerging concerns and their families. This approach includes:

- An analysis of the child's needs to determine whether we should seek more specialist help from other agencies
- An agreement about the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on progress and a date for review
- Implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed, including assessing the child's response to the action taken
- A review of the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress by the key person, SENCO, the child's parent(s) and the views of the child, including any agreed changes to outcomes and support
- Revisiting this cycle of action in increasing detail and frequency including seeking further specialist help to secure good progress until the SENCO, key person, the child's parent(s) and any other professionals involved agree intervention is no longer needed or a decision is made to request an education, health and care needs assessment –see below, or that we are unable to continue to offer a place as a child's needs can no longer be met.

Early help assessment

If we have concerns about the child and/or a child and their family are receiving support from more than one professional or agency, we may request or carry out an Early Help assessment (EHA) or a Common Assessment Framework (CAF). This approach ensures that early help services/support are co-ordinated and therefore delivered in a cohesive and effective way.

Early Support

Where children have disabilities, we may seek additional help and resources through the Early Support Programme which co-ordinates health, education and social care support for the parents/guardians and carers of disabled children from birth to adulthood. There is more information on the Council for Disabled Children website: <http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/earllysupport> or Lancashire SEND services

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment and Plan

If the help given through the graduated approach is not sufficient to enable the child to make satisfactory progress, the parent may request, or we may request in consultation with the parents/guardians and any external agencies already involved, an assessment of the child's needs by the local authority.

This is called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. The assessment will decide whether a child needs an EHC plan. If agreed, this plan sets out in detail the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child who has SEN or a disability. The local authority will consult with parents/ guardians and the settling and all professionals involved prior to informing all of the outcome of the assessment.

The role of the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

See also SENCO job description

Whilst a child's teacher or key person is responsible for supporting them daily in their learning and development, the SENCO's role is to lead and coordinate the overall provision for children with special educational needs.

A global Company SENCO coordinates the overall support for the children and their families in the Early Years, with the School SENCO coordinating the overall support for children within school.

The particular responsibilities of our SENCOs are:

- Ensuring all teachers/practitioners understand their responsibilities to children with SEND, as well as our approach to identifying and meeting children's needs.
- Advising and supporting colleagues
- Ensuring parents/guardians are closely involved throughout, informing any action taken
- Liaising with other professionals or agencies.

Senior SENCOs who are part of the company SLT are responsible for supporting, guiding and monitoring the practice of appointed SENCOs and ensuring the implementation of our SEND policy across our company.

Ashbridge Nursery at Maxy Farm

- Global Company SENCO Lindsey Turnbull
- Senior SENCO Alice Turner (Director of Quality of Care)
- Laura Wood/Julie Fazackerley (Heads of Nursery)

Ashbridge on Ribble

- Global Company SENCO Lindsey Turnbull
- Senior SENCO Hilary Sharples (Director of Quality)
- Emma Newlove (Nursery Manager)

The Fledglings at Myerscough

- Global Company SENCO Lindsey Turnbull
- Senior SENCO Alice Turner (Director of Quality of Care)
- Charlotte Twist (Nursery Manager)

Ashbridge Nursery, Hutton

- Global Company SENCO Lindsey Turnbull
- Senior SENCO Hilary Sharples (Director of Quality)
- Chelsea Mounsey (Head of Nursery)

Ashbridge School

- SENCO Caroline Bird (Class Teacher), supported by Karen Mehta (Headteacher)