



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Equal Opportunities

Providers must have and implement a policy, and procedures, to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care, including support for children with special educational needs or disabilities.

9.2 Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Policy statement

Impact Montessori Nursery is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which every child, including children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), is supported to participate, learn, develop and reach their individual potential.

We recognise that children develop at different rates and have different strengths, interests, needs and circumstances. We aim to identify additional needs at the earliest opportunity and provide appropriate support in partnership with parents, carers and, where appropriate, the child.

We are committed to:

- promoting equality of opportunity and inclusion for all children;
- identifying children who may have SEND as early as possible;
- providing appropriate support based on each child's individual needs;
- working in partnership with parents and carers;
- listening to and valuing children's views and wishes in a way that is appropriate to their age and level of understanding;
- working collaboratively with the Local Authority and relevant external professionals;
- making reasonable adjustments to enable children with disabilities to access the nursery and participate fully;
- monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of our SEND provision; and
- ensuring staff have appropriate knowledge, understanding and training to support children with SEND.

We have regard to the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years** and the relevant **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework**.

1. Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)

Impact Montessori Nursery will designate a member of staff to act as the nursery's **Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)**.

Our SENCO is: _____

Contact details: _____

The SENCO is responsible for coordinating the nursery's approach to SEND and will work closely with:

- the nursery manager;
- the child's key person;

- other practitioners;
- parents and carers;
- the child, where appropriate;
- the Local Authority;
- health professionals;
- SEND specialists;
- other relevant agencies.

The SENCO will:

- coordinate the identification and assessment of children who may have SEND;
- support staff in meeting individual children's needs;
- coordinate SEND support plans and reviews;
- support practitioners with observations, assessment and planning;
- work with parents and carers;
- liaise with external professionals;
- help coordinate transition arrangements;
- identify relevant training needs;
- monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision; and
- ensure appropriate records are maintained.

The SENCO will work with the manager to ensure that sufficient resources, staffing and training are available to support children with SEND.

2. Inclusive practice

SEND provision is the responsibility of all staff at Impact Montessori Nursery.

We aim to provide an inclusive environment where children can participate fully in nursery life.

We will:

- provide equal access to learning and play opportunities;
- adapt activities and experiences to meet individual needs;
- make reasonable adjustments where required;
- consider the accessibility of the environment;
- use appropriate resources and equipment;
- adapt communication and teaching approaches;
- provide additional adult support where appropriate and available;
- work with parents and professionals to identify effective strategies.

Our approach recognises children's strengths as well as their areas of need.

3. Admissions

Our admissions arrangements are inclusive and do not unlawfully discriminate against children with SEND or disabilities.

Before a child starts, we will work with parents and carers to understand:

- the child's strengths and interests;

- their developmental needs;
- communication needs;
- physical or sensory needs;
- medical needs;
- personal care requirements;
- any existing support arrangements;
- relevant professional involvement;
- reasonable adjustments that may be required.

Where necessary, we will work with the Local Authority and other professionals to determine what reasonable adjustments, resources or additional support may be required.

The nursery will comply with its legal responsibilities under the **Equality Act 2010**.

4. Identification of SEND

We recognise that some children may have additional needs that are not immediately apparent.

We use our normal observation, assessment and monitoring processes to identify children who may require additional support.

This may include considering:

- communication and language;
- physical development;
- personal, social and emotional development;
- cognitive development;
- sensory needs;
- behaviour and emotional wellbeing;
- interaction and relationships;
- learning and developmental progress;
- information provided by parents or carers;
- information from previous settings;
- information from health or other professionals.

We will not assume that a child has SEND simply because they are developing differently from other children.

Where a concern arises, we will discuss this with parents and consider appropriate next steps.

5. Working in partnership with parents

Parents and carers are important partners in identifying and supporting children with SEND.

We will:

- listen to parents' concerns and observations;
- share relevant observations and assessment information;
- involve parents in decisions about support;
- agree appropriate actions and outcomes;
- provide information about relevant sources of support;
- involve parents in reviews;

- consider parents' views when evaluating provision.

We recognise that parents may have valuable information about their child's development, communication, health, interests and strengths that can help us provide effective support.

6. Children's participation

Where appropriate, we will involve children in decisions about their learning and support.

The child's views will be considered in a way that reflects:

- their age;
- their level of understanding;
- their communication needs;
- their individual circumstances.

Children may communicate their views verbally, through behaviour, play, communication aids, observation or other appropriate methods.

7. The graduated approach

Where a child is identified as having, or may have, SEND, we will use the **graduated approach** of:

Assess

We will gather information from a range of sources, which may include:

- observations;
- assessments;
- the child's key person;
- parents and carers;
- the SENCO;
- previous settings;
- health professionals;
- other relevant professionals.

We will consider the child's strengths, needs and progress.

Plan

Where additional support is required, we will work with parents and relevant staff to agree:

- the child's identified needs;
- desired outcomes;
- appropriate strategies;
- adjustments and interventions;
- responsibilities;
- timescales;
- arrangements for review.

Do

The agreed support will be implemented by the child's key person and other relevant practitioners.

The SENCO will provide guidance and monitor the implementation of the support.

Review

We will review the child's progress and the effectiveness of the support provided.

Reviews will involve parents and, where appropriate, the child and relevant professionals.

Where progress remains a concern, we will consider whether further assessment, specialist advice or additional support is required.

8. Individual support

Where appropriate, we may develop an individual SEND support plan or other appropriate record of support.

This will identify:

- the child's strengths;
- areas requiring additional support;
- outcomes we are working towards;
- strategies and adjustments;
- resources or interventions;
- responsibilities of staff and other professionals;
- the child's and parents' views;
- arrangements for review.

Support will be proportionate to the child's individual needs and will be reviewed regularly.

9. Working with external professionals

Where appropriate, we will work with relevant professionals and services, which may include:

- Local Authority SEND services;
- Area SENCO services;
- health visitors;
- speech and language therapists;
- occupational therapists;
- physiotherapists;
- educational psychologists;
- paediatric services;
- specialist teachers;
- children's social care;
- early help services;
- other relevant health, education or support services.

We will work collaboratively to support children's development and wellbeing.

Information will only be shared in accordance with our **Privacy Notice**, **Information Sharing Policy**, **Confidentiality and Client Access to Records Policy** and applicable data protection and safeguarding requirements.

10. Local Offer and sources of support

We will provide parents with information about relevant sources of SEND support.

This may include the Local Authority's **Local Offer**, which provides information about services and support available to children and young people with SEND and their families.

We will also signpost parents to appropriate:

- SEND information and advice services;
 - health services;
 - voluntary organisations;
 - parent support organisations;
 - early help services;
 - specialist services.
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11. Education, Health and Care needs assessments

Where a child's needs may require support beyond that ordinarily available within the nursery, we may work with parents and the Local Authority to consider whether an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment** is appropriate.

We will contribute relevant information to an assessment where requested and where there is a lawful basis for doing so.

This may include information about:

- the child's development;
 - strengths and needs;
 - progress;
 - support already provided;
 - the effectiveness of interventions;
 - the child's views, where appropriate;
 - parents' views;
 - recommendations from relevant professionals.
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12. Reasonable adjustments

Impact Montessori Nursery will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with children who do not have a disability.

Adjustments may include:

- adapting activities;
- adapting the environment;
- providing additional resources;
- changing communication methods;
- adjusting routines;
- providing additional adult support where reasonably practicable;
- using specialist equipment or advice;
- making changes to how information is provided.

The nature of reasonable adjustments will depend on the individual child's needs and the circumstances of the nursery.

13. Resources and staffing

We will use available resources appropriately to support children with SEND.

This may include:

- staff time;
- training;
- specialist advice;
- learning resources;
- communication resources;
- sensory resources;
- adapted equipment;
- environmental adaptations.

Where additional funding or specialist support may be available, we will work with parents and the Local Authority to explore appropriate options.

14. Staff training and development

All staff have a responsibility for supporting children with SEND.

We will ensure that staff receive appropriate information, guidance and training to help them:

- recognise possible additional needs;
- understand inclusive practice;
- adapt activities and environments;
- support children's communication;
- implement agreed strategies;
- understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- work effectively with parents and professionals.

The SENCO will identify relevant training and development needs in consultation with the manager.

15. Record keeping

We maintain appropriate records relating to SEND support.

These may include:

- observations and assessments;
- support plans;
- review records;
- information provided by parents;
- reports from external professionals;
- records of meetings;
- referrals;
- relevant correspondence;
- information relating to an EHC needs assessment or plan.

SEND records will be stored securely and handled in accordance with our **Children's Records Policy, Privacy Notice** and data protection requirements.

16. Confidentiality and information sharing

Information about a child's SEND is confidential and will only be shared where there is a lawful and appropriate reason.

Where consent is the appropriate lawful basis, we will seek informed consent.

Information may be shared without consent where another lawful basis applies, including where sharing is necessary to safeguard a child or comply with a legal requirement.

Further information is provided in our **Information Sharing Policy**.

17. Transition

We recognise that transitions can be particularly important for children with SEND.

We will work with parents, the child's key person, the SENCO, the receiving setting or school and relevant professionals to support a successful transition.

Where appropriate, transition planning may include:

- sharing relevant information;
- visits to the new setting;
- meetings with receiving staff;
- sharing support strategies;
- discussing communication needs;
- identifying reasonable adjustments;
- sharing relevant professional advice;
- involving the child in an age-appropriate way.

Information will be transferred in accordance with our **Transfer of Records Policy** and applicable data protection requirements.

18. Safeguarding

Children with SEND may have additional vulnerabilities and all staff remain alert to safeguarding concerns.

SEND must never be treated as an explanation for behaviour or circumstances that may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Any safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with our **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Where necessary, information will be shared with safeguarding professionals in accordance with the law and our information-sharing procedures.

19. Monitoring and reviewing SEND provision

The manager and SENCO will monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision.

We will consider information from:

- children's progress;
- support-plan reviews;
- observations;

- parents' views;
- children's views where appropriate;
- staff feedback;
- external professionals;
- Local Authority advice;
- complaints and compliments;
- inspections and quality-assurance processes.

Where provision is not achieving the intended outcomes, we will review and adapt our approach.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or nursery practice.

20. Complaints

Parents and carers are encouraged to raise concerns about SEND provision with the nursery manager or SENCO in the first instance.

We will listen to concerns and seek to resolve them promptly and fairly.

Parents have access to our **Complaints Policy and Procedure**.

Where appropriate, parents may also seek advice and support from the Local Authority's SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) or other relevant independent organisations.

Legal and statutory framework

This policy is informed by:

- **Children and Families Act 2014;**
 - **Equality Act 2010;**
 - **Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014;**
 - **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;**
 - **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework;**
 - **Data Protection Act 2018;**
 - **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);**
 - **Children Act 1989;**
 - **Children Act 2004;**
 - relevant safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance.
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Further guidance

- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.**
 - Current **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework.**
 - Local Authority **SEND Local Offer.**
 - Local Authority **SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).**
 - Relevant Local Authority Area SENCO guidance.
 - Current safeguarding statutory guidance.
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Policy review and approval

This policy was adopted by: Impact Montessori Nursery

Date adopted: _____

Date of last review: _____

Date to be reviewed: _____

Signed on behalf of the provider: _____

Name of signatory: _____

Role of signatory: _____