

# Balham Nursery School and Children's Centre

## Special Educational Needs and/or Disability

### (SEND) Information Report

As a nursery school we work within the Wandsworth Guidance on Provision for Children with SEND in Mainstream Schools which explains the ways children with different additional needs are provided for within the school. We also follow our 'Equality and Disability' policy and have an 'Accessibility' plan.

At Balham Nursery School and Children's Centres all children, regardless of their particular needs, are offered inclusive teaching which will enable them to make the best possible progress in school and feel that they are a valued member of the wider school community. We may offer the following range of provision to support children with communication and interaction, cognition and learning difficulties, social, mental and health problems or sensory or physical needs.

At Balham Nursery School and Children's Centres, our Special Education Needs and/or Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) is Camilla Alton.

She can be contacted on: 020 8673 4055  
and her email is: [senco@balham-nursery.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:senco@balham-nursery.wandsworth.sch.uk)

You can also find more information regarding Wandsworth's local SEND offer at:

[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localoffer)

#### **What can I expect when my child starts attending Balham Nursery School & Children's Centres?**

We aim to help realise the potential social, intellectual, physical and emotional development of each child irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or disability and to be a centre of excellence in early childhood education. In everything that we do, we are driven by the best interests of the child.

We strive:

1. To create a listening, reflective and caring atmosphere in which children, their families, carers, staff and governors feel happy, secure and valued.
2. To recognise each child as an individual with his or her own voice, rights and needs, and to develop in each child an awareness of the rights and needs of others.
3. To develop a partnership with parents, carers and agencies to share in the education and well-being of each child.
4. To provide an early years curriculum in a rich and stimulating environment which supports young children's learning through exploration, interaction and purposeful play.
5. To provide continuity between the nursery and primary phase of education.
6. To maintain strong links with our community and to share best practice and innovation with the community.

By achieving the above, we hope to be a centre of excellence and innovation in early childhood education.

#### **What should I do if I am concerned about my child's progress or special educational needs and/or disability?**

It is important that you approach your child's key worker with your concerns as soon as possible. Parents and carers know their children best and we want to take into account your views and experiences to increase the effectiveness of any provision put in place for your child. After an initial meeting with your key worker/class teacher your concerns may be passed onto the school's SENDCo if we feel that further follow up and support is needed. You may then be invited to a TAC meeting (Team around the Child) to discuss how we can all work together to ensure that the appropriate support is given to your child. Parents and carers will always be consulted at every step and kept fully informed about the help their child is given and the results of that help.

#### **How does the school decide whether a child has special educational needs and what extra help they need?**

### **Children who already have identified needs**

Children who come to the school with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place, or are already undergoing assessment, will often have received Portage and/or identification and support offered by the Early Years Centre or a speech and language therapist. Links between services, including the parent partnership service, means that there has been considerable discussion between the SENDCo, parents and other agencies long before the child actually starts. In such a case, existing documentation is used to put suitable provision in place and importantly, workers from other agencies with an existing knowledge of the child, visit the school and discuss the child's needs with the SENDCo and other key staff members. Sometimes the SENDCo and key staff members may have visited the child, either at home or in a familiar setting. Once the child starts at the school, discussion with parents continues to be of paramount significance.

The parents, professionals from other agencies, including the Educational Psychologist who is linked to the school, would then work together to meet the short term outcomes outlined in the EHCP.

### **Children who do not already have identified needs**

Children who do not come to the school with an identified educational need are supported through a range of procedures that are followed in school when children start. This is typically in September but occasionally later in the academic year. The procedures apply to all children in the school and are part of our assessment system. They provide the means for raising any concerns as well as identifying the strengths a child has and will refer to the 4 categories as defined in the SEND Code of Practice (communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health issues and/or physical needs)

Alongside induction for parents into the ethos of open communication in the school, parents/carers are asked to complete an All About My Child form in the first few days. When children have had a little time to settle in school, staff observe all children closely and conduct an Entry Profile. This is collated by the Deputy Headteacher/SENDCo to form a database of needs of all children in the school. This includes a wide range including health, hearing, social skills, language etc. and in many cases the teaching team will want to monitor a child's progress in certain areas. The norm is very broad at nursery age and some children will need a little extra support simply because they are very young in the year. As the first term of the year moves on, the progress each child makes is assessed through ongoing observations, followed by appropriate teaching input and target setting with parents at the Autumn Term Parent/Teacher conference.

If a child continues to need extra or different support from his/her peers he/she will be moved to what is called **SEND Support**. Support is offered through subtle input during play, or with developing self help skills. Sometimes it can involve small group activity in a quiet area of the nursery. On such occasions groups are mixed and a target child may well have chosen the other peers he/she would like to be with.

The school has developed a rich resource of activities and also the Educational Psychologist's advice will often be sought at this stage, through a Signs of Wellbeing/Signs of Safety assessment, for particular strategies and activities that might help a child. Out of this meeting, the SENDCo would generate an Individual Education Plan alongside the class teacher. Specific targets will be identified and these will be reviewed at Parent/Teacher conferences. As the year moves on some children make adequate progress and no longer need to be at SEND Support. If, however, adequate progress is not made as a result of the support given at SEND Support, the Educational Psychologist will be consulted, as will the advice of other professionals, e.g. speech and language or occupational therapist. Any professional involvement is always requested after discussion and agreement with a child's parents.

### **How will I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?**

At Balham Nursery School and Children's Centre we believe that clear communication is vital between home and school. Parents have many opportunities to talk to their child's key

worker/class teacher during the school day both informally e.g. at the end of the school day and formally e.g. parent/teacher conferences, or through reports. If you have any particular concerns about how to support your child please feel free to make an appointment with the class teacher. If further advice or support is needed, the SENDCo is available three days a week for an informal discussion.

### **How will my child be involved and consulted?**

At Balham Nursery School and Children's Centre we ensure that a child's perspective is taken into account in consultation with parent's and carers. All targets set for the children are set with parents, ensuring the child is at the heart of everything we do and every decision we make.

### **How do you assess and review my child's progress?**

All staff contribute to observations and each class teacher and team leader, with the support of nursery nurses, maintains a record of development and learning and makes a major contribution to review of targets set within individual education plans for pupils with SEND. The SENDCo oversees all records for pupils with SEND supported by the Headteacher.

EHCPs for our children are reviewed every six months because they are under five. The review involves parents, SENDCo, class teacher/key person and all other professionals involved with the child. The individual needs of any child at SEND Support and with an EHCP are considered termly at Parent/Teacher conferences and in ongoing review between the SENDCo, parent and class teacher. Whilst this latter is friendly and informal, it is a vital and integral part of the process. Often small matters are identified during this process and the input and approach of other staff members, particularly learning support assistants, can be adapted as a result. This ensures that there is a constant fine tuning of the way the school works with a child to suit his/her particular need and current level of development. At each stage parents are engaged with the school, contributing their insights to assessment and planning. Intended outcomes will be shared with parents and reviewed with them, along with action taken by the school, at agreed times.

Progress check at age two:

When a child is aged between two and three, staff must review progress and provide parents with a short written summary of their child's development, focusing in particular on communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. This progress check must identify the child's strengths and any areas where the child's progress is not as expected. If there are significant emerging concerns (or identified SEN or disability) practitioners will develop a targeted plan to support the child, involving other professionals such as, for example, the setting's SENDCo and child's key worker.

### **How is teaching and the curriculum adapted to my child's needs?**

At Balham Nursery School and Children's Centres, the arrangements for providing access by children with special educational needs to a balanced and broadly based curriculum are as follows;

- the Foundation stage curriculum is planned and differentiated to meet the range of individual needs of all pupils;
- the Foundation stage curriculum is further modified on a short term planning basis to meet specific individual's SEND;
- extra support is available to enable access;
- a careful choice of resources is made to facilitate access.

Children need constant observation in order that both their strengths and needs are identified and responded to. Sometimes it can be straightforwardly placing a block so that the height of a particular piece of equipment is made accessible to a very short child. Sometimes it may require particular skills e.g. with the help of an occupational therapist, finding the best way to help a child establish the sequence of movements required to climb into the sandpit, since without this, he/she can't play in the sand. Staff will share their expertise and observations with each other in order to anticipate and/or respond effectively. The school ethos is one that

values what children can do and as such staff do not lower their expectations of any children.

Through careful observation through the 7 areas of learning set out in the EYFS framework and an appreciation of each individual child, staff can ensure that children are successful in what they do;

- This can sometimes mean that a child is given extra support if the activity would otherwise be too great a challenge. The support needs to be skilled and enabling rather than limiting.
- Sometimes a child is given extra support away from the main activities in order to have speech therapy for example, or practice speech therapy targets. Usually the child is with at least one other peer and is sometimes in a small group.
- Sometimes equipment is required because a child needs a resource that is in some way specially suited to their need e.g. inset puzzles which can be more easily manipulated, cause and effect toys, a collection of materials for practising gross-motor exercises.
- High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.

### **What support is there for my child's emotional well-being?**

Children with SEND are regarded as full members of the community and the provision is fully inclusive. Pupils have full access to the environment, resources, staff and activities. Attitude, good early years practice and good communication are paramount in maintaining an inclusive environment and the school works as a whole team to carefully monitor all areas of school life, to identify and address any barriers to a child's personal, social and emotional development and well being.

### **How do you promote positive behaviour?**

The school adopts a positive approach to behaviour and uses their policy to support the children's social and moral development. We aim to help children respect their peers and staff. Most children learn only gradually to be aware of others and their needs. Many children have to be taught to take turns, share toys and an adult's attention. All members of staff explain to the children why they must wait or what could happen if children push others out of the way. As the children's understanding develops so too does their need to test the adults and all staff will ensure that they are giving the same messages to the children thus providing a consistent approach. Staff will build up their knowledge of individual children and their needs and therefore communicate the message by words/signs/gestures appropriate to the child's understanding

### **What training and specialist skills do the staff supporting children with SEND have or are having?**

The school is committed to providing and facilitating attendance at in-service training in the area of SEND. As a nursery school we induct a new 'school' each September and farewell our children in the following July. There is clearly a need to be responsive quickly to potentially different needs each year and an annual audit has to be undertaken to identify the training needs of the whole school and of individual staff. Training at INSET is recorded and falls into two categories;

Training for individuals e.g. the SENDCo, teachers/nursery nurses developing particular expertise to fulfil their role and new members of staff, in particular learning support assistants (LSA). In addition to their induction programme, it is important to find ways of offering very relevant training very quickly! This is because the post of an LSA is temporary, lasting only as long as a child attends the school. When possible, an LSA is re employed for a subsequent year if there is a child who needs support. The number of children requiring support from one year to the next is entirely unpredictable and the needs vary radically and so too, therefore, do the training needs.

Whole school training needs. Every attempt is made to offer training at INSET days when usually all staff can attend. There is regular input related to special educational needs e.g. on Makaton, Downs syndrome, Autism. Training during staff meeting time which teachers and nursery nurses attend is cascaded to other workers in creative ways during the school day.

### **How do you make the school environment and curriculum accessible for all children?**

Facilities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are developed in the spirit of inclusion. This means that the provision for children to explore and play in all areas of the nursery is resourced and staffed in such a way that **all** children can access and benefit from them whatever their need might be.

Following an accessibility audit, ramps and/or handrails were installed and rooms were decorated and soft furnishings added to enhance the use of the environment by children with a visual or hearing impairment. There is a Soundfield system in each classroom and the Family Room, which helps all children to hear and focus more easily at small and large group times and is especially beneficial for children with most kinds of hearing loss and for those who need support to concentrate. For children with profound or complex learning difficulties it can be particularly enabling.

Sometimes children with special educational needs and/or disabilities require more support with toileting, though many of our children without SEND need considerable support in their first weeks and months at nursery. For those children who need potty training or nappy changing, every effort is made to respect their privacy.

Resources are allocated to and amongst children with SEND in the most transparent way possible. Any money the school has received for SEND has always been devoted to ensure that resources are used to raise the achievement of pupils with SEND. There is a sum of money given to the school when a child has an EHCP.

### **How will my child be included in activities outside of the classroom?**

Children with SEND are regarded as full members of the community and all our provision is fully inclusive. Our primary expertise is the warm support and inclusion extended to children and their parents/carers regardless of their need.

### **How will the school prepare my child to join the school or transfer to a new school?**

Extensive discussion with parents about where a child might best move on to at the end of the nursery phase and precisely when this will be, is held between the Headteacher/SENDCo. Often, this is an evolving discussion during the year and as the time a child attends Balham Nursery School is so short, it can follow the settling period rather swiftly. This in itself can be stressful for parents and discussion and advice must be offered sensitively.

As the child approaches the end of their nursery phase, information is then carefully passed on to the school the child will be going to. Transitional arrangements, in terms of settling the child and information sharing, are made very carefully as this is regarded as vital in sustaining the child's progress and well being. The SENDCo ensures that she has detailed discussion with the SENDCo of the school a child is moving on to and when possible, especially with children on SEN Support or with an EHCP, the SENDCo is invited to visit Balham Nursery School to meet the child in their familiar school context as well as talk in detail with staff at the school. Every effort is made to ensure that children with SEND visit the setting they will be moving to with a key member of the staff team. All written material is well sorted and dispatched to the next school before the child starts there. This includes the child's record of development as well as SEND records.

### **What specialist services from outside does the school use to help meet children's needs and how do you work together?**

Local links are often made when particular professionals working with particular children, e.g. physiotherapists at St. Georges Hospital and these are sustained when possible. There are close links with health visitors, the community paediatrician, the Early Years Centre and the speech therapy service. The school uses information from organisations such as The Autistic

Society and The Down Syndrome Association. We currently work particularly closely with the Early Years Centre, Portage service, peripatetic service for the hearing impaired and the speech therapy service, especially speech and language therapists based at Balham Health Centre. We have a link Educational Psychologist based at Wandsworth Town Hall who makes approximately 5 visits a year.

#### **What will you do if my child has medical needs?**

When a child starts at Balham Nursery School you will be asked to complete a medical form. This information will be stored confidentially in school. If your child has specific medical needs, an initial meeting will be organised with either the SENDCo, Key Worker or Health Visitor to ensure that the correct support and training is in place for the child. A care plan and risk assessment may be produced to ensure that health and safety requirements are met.

#### **What should I do if I am unhappy with my child's support or progress?**

In addition to the school's complaints procedure, due to the sensitive and emotive nature of SEND, there are arrangements over and above the general complaints procedure in place. Concerns and complaints about SEND provision should be addressed to the Headteacher/SENDCo or Governor Responsible for SEND who will respond by meeting with the parents/carers to discuss the situation. If this does not resolve the situation then the complaint should pass to the first level of the general complaints procedure.

[http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/200288/student\\_welfare/263/how\\_to\\_make\\_a\\_complaint](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/info/200288/student_welfare/263/how_to_make_a_complaint)

#### **Where can I go for further advice and support?**

- The Wandsworth Information, Advice and Support Service (for parents/carers of children with SEN/disability) provides an impartial and confidential service to all parents of children with SEND. Visit their website at <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/pps> or telephone 020 8871 8065 or email [wiaass@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:wiaass@wandsworth.gov.uk).
- The Wandsworth Parents' Forum "Positive Parent Action" works with the Council to improve all provision for children and young people with SEN and Disabilities aged 0 to 25. If you want to get involved in influencing services visit their website at [www.positiveparentaction.org.uk](http://www.positiveparentaction.org.uk) or telephone 020 8947 5260.
- More information about the Local Offer of services and support for children and young people with special needs and disabilities in Wandsworth can be found at <http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/localoffer>. Their helpline is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday on 020 8871 7899
- CONTACT is a charity for families with disabled children. They support families with guidance and information and bring families together to support each other. [www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk) or phone their helpline free on 0808 808 3555

***The information in this report is accurate now, but we regularly review and make changes to what we offer and keep this information as up to date as possible.***

**Feedback** This offer is intended to give you clear, accurate and accessible information. If you would like to comment on the content of the offer or make suggestions to improve the information, please email Emma Williams, [admin@balham-nursery.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:admin@balham-nursery.wandsworth.sch.uk).