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| **The policy** |
| Little Birch Preschool is committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes alongside each other through positive experiences, to enable them to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn together. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs.  Little Birch Preschool recognises that some children may have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular child’s life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. At all times we will work alongside each child’s parents/ carers and any relevant professionals to share information, ideas, needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.  Little Birch Preschool believes that all children have a right to experience and develop alongside peers no matter what their individual needs. Each child’s needs are unique, therefore any attempt to categorise children is inappropriate.  We are committed to providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities according to their individual circumstances, and the settings ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care. All children will be given a settling in period prior to joining the setting according to their individual needs.  Where we have emerging concerns about a child and/or where a child has identified additional needs or a disability, we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and support the child and family if need be to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:   * Liaising with the child’s parents/carers * Observing each child’s development and monitoring such observations regularly * Liaising with any other relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family * Seeking any specialist help or support * Researching relevant publications/sources of help * Reading any reports that have been prepared * Attending and assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals * Attending relevant training   **Legal framework and definitions**  The relevant legislation underpinning this policy includes:   * Special Educational Needs and disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years * The Children and Families Act 2014 * The Equality Act 2010 * Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 * Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage * Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013   We use the definitions set out in the law to describe SEN and disabilities.  A child has SEN 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 resources generally provided for others of the same age.  A child under compulsory school age has SEN if he/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 is long-term and has 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 minor, minor or trivial’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight, hearing and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEN. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEN definition.  **Our Aim**  Little Birch Preschool has regards to the statutory guidance set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2014). We have clear arrangements in place to support children with SEN and disabilities. We aim to:   * Recognise each child’s individual needs through gathering information from parents 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 SEN and disabilities and have regular guidance. * Plan, provide or help parents to obtain any additional help or support for any needs not being met. * Include all children and their families in our provision * Provide well informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities * Identify any emerging concerns that might suggest a child has special educational needs and/or disability at the earliest opportunity and plan for those need. * Share any information received and assessments made by the setting with parents and support parents seeking any help they or their child may need. * Seek any additional help needed where the settings own actions are not helping the child to progress. * Work in partnership with parents and other agencies in order to meet the individual child’s needs. * Monitor and review practice and provision, if necessary, make adjustments and seek special equipment and services if needed. * Ensure that all children are treated as individuals/ equals and are encouraged to take part in every part of the pre-schools day according to their individual needs and abilities. * Encourage children to value and respect others * Promote positive images and role models during play experiences of those with additional needs where possible. * Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning.   **Our pre-school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**  The SENCO works closely with all practitioners to make sure there are systems in place to provide, implement, monitor, review and evaluate the special educational needs policy of the setting, always making sure plans and records are shared with parents/carers.  It is the responsibility of the manager to read, understand and adhere to all policies and procedures and act in accordance with current legislation and good practice. The manager must support team members to do the same and ensure all policies and procedures are followed. |

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| **Procedures** |
| **Little Birch Preschool will:**   * Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in the care of children with additional needs. Staff will be provided with specific training to help them make any special educational provisions needed and meet requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice. * Designate a colleague to be Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) This will be **Kerry Kennett.** * Ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the responsibility of practitioners in the setting. * Ensure that our inclusive admissions practice includes equality of access and opportunity. * Ensure that our physical environment is as far as possible suitable for children with disabilities * Work closely with parents/carers to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports the child/ren. * Provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities to give a broad and balanced learning environment for all children. * Ensure that parents are consulted with and kept informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their child’s care and education. * Ensure that children’s views are sought and listened to. * Use a graduated approach to identify assessing and responding to children who have emerging difficulties, suggesting they may have special educational needs or a disability requiring a different approach. * When planning interventions and support, agree the outcomes and the expected impact on progress and date for review. * Hold review meetings with parents at the agreed times and agree any changes or adjustments. * Seek any further advice or support needed including multi-agency approaches. * Liaise with other professionals involved with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. * Provide parent/carers with information on sources of independent advice and help them to engage with any additional specialist support. * Keep records of the assessment, planning, provision and review for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. * Use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) where required. * Ensure the privacy of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when intimate care is being provided. * Provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers. * Raise awareness of any specialism the setting has to offer, e.g. British Sign Language trained practitioners. * Ensure the effectiveness of our SEN/disability provision by collecting information from a range of specialists, e.g. EHCP reviews, meetings etc. This information is collated, evaluated and reviewed annually. * Monitor and review our policy annually.   **The role of the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**  The role of the SENCO is to provide a lead for staff in relation to SEN and disabilities and make sure procedures are followed, appropriate records kept and parents involved. The child’s key person will normally remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised program.  The particular responsibilities of our SENCO are:   * Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and aware of the settings approach to identifying and meeting SEN needs * Advising and supporting colleagues * Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout * Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting   **Graduated approach**  In line with requirements of 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 including whether we should seek more specialist help from health services or other agencies * An agreement about the interventions and support needed and the expected impact on progress and a review date * Implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed, including assessing the child’s response and action taken * A review of the effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child’s progress by the key person and SENCO, the child’s parents/carers and the views of the child, including any agreed changes to outcomes and support * Revisiting the 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 parents and any other professionals involved agree intervention is no longer needed or decide to request an education, health and care needs assessment.   **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment Plan**  If the help given through the settings graduated approach is not sufficient to enable the child to make satisfactory progress, we may request, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, an assessment of the child’s needs by the local authorities. This is called an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. The assessment will decide whether a child needs an EHC assessment plan. 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 and let them know the outcome of the assessment.  **Early help assessment**  If we believe a child and their family would benefit from support from more than one agency, for example, where a child may have difficulties linked to poor housing or difficult domestic circumstances, we may request or carry out an inter-agency assessment to get early help for the family. This early help assessment aims to ensure that early help services are co-operative and not delivered in a disjointed way.  **Common Assessment Framework guidelines**  At Little Birch Pre-school, we see the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) as a national tool that aims to help practitioners assess children’s additional needs and bring together the external services they need more effectively. It aims to bring together all professional working with the child to ensure their individual needs are met.  In the eventthat a key person feels that a child will not make sufficient progress towards early learning goals without additional services, they must inform the manager. The key person/SENCO/manager will talk to the child’s parents/carers regarding our observations then follow guidelines to find out if CAF is in place for the child. If there is not a CAF in place then the SENCO/manager, only with the parents/carers permission follow guidelines to complete the CAF with the involvement of the key person.  The manager will then ensure the CAF is delivered and reviewed as appropriate.  This policy is reviewed annually. |