Beechoak Farm Montessori Pre-school

Equality of Opportunity

4.4 Identification, assessment and supporting children with special educational needs

Policy statement

At Beechoak Farm we support all children to reach their full potential including those with special educational needs (SEN). We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE & DoH 2015) and have in place a clear approach for identifying, responding to, and meeting children's needs. We will work in mutual support with the parents and any outside agencies involved with that child to ensure they reach their full potential through a range of activities and strategies.

The term SEND support defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for. Children's SEND generally falls within the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Procedures

- We have a designated member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). Our SENCo is Hayley Majeika.
- Our SENCo attends courses regularly to keep up to date with relevant legislation and thinking regarding SEN. She cascades this information to other staff members through monthly meetings.
- All staff receive regular CPD regarding how best to support children with SEND.
- It is the responsibility of all members of Beechoak Farm to ensure equal access to the provision for children with SEND. Our SENCo oversees this practice.
- We provide parents with information on local sources of support and advice.
- We ensure that all our staff are aware of our Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs Policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for children with SEND.
- We liaise with professionals involved with children with SEND and their families, including during transition to school or other pre-school settings.
- We provide a complaints procedure.
- We monitor and review our policy annually.

Graduated Approach

- For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop
- We are dedicated to early identification and intervention. Concerns regarding a child's development will be highlighted quickly, monitored and acted upon.
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires specific adjustments, then the key person will raise a concern with the setting's SENCo and the child's parents.
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.
- We believe in partnership with parents and will work closely with them to ensure a positive and successful partnership. Parents are involved at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review of their children's education including all decision-making processes

Planning intervention

- Everyone involved with the child should be given an opportunity to share their views. Parents should be encouraged to share their thoughts on the child's difficulties and be involved in the decision as to what will happen next.
- A first intervention option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If the child's needs are more complex, then the decision maybe to go straight ahead and create a one plan. If external agencies are already involved, then they will also be invited to help decide on what appropriate interventions are needed to help meet outcomes for the child.
- A one plan ensures that children that are identified or suspected of having a SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.
- The SEND Code of Practice supports the rights of children to be involved in decisions about their education. We aim to seek the child's views through observation of their likes and interests.

One Plan

- A one plan will detail what support is required to help achieve outcomes for the child and detail the frequency of these interventions and who will apply them and with what resources.

- A review date will be agreed with the parents so that the child's progress can be reviewed against expected outcomes and next steps agreed.
- A copy of the plan is stored in the child's file so that any other member of staff or an inspector looking at the file will see how the child is progressing and what interventions have been or are being applied. One is also displayed on the SEND board in the staff room.
- If a child requires specific medical interventions during their time at Beechoak Farm a Health care plan form will also be completed.
- The action plan will provide a summary of the child's needs (highlighting areas in which the child is progressing well and areas in which some additional support might be needed), which will be used if further assessment is required including a statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) Assessment, and development of an EHC plan.

Seeking additional funding/enhanced/top up

- If the child's needs cannot be met from our usual high-quality practice, then it will be at this point that the evidence collated will be used to apply for funding from the local authority's SEN Inclusion Funding (SENIF).

Statutory education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan

- If a child has not made progress and parents agree that further support is required., then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- An application will be made in partnership with parents to the local authority for an EHC needs assessment.
- When a child's needs appear to be sufficiently complex, or the evidence suggests specialist intervention then the local authority is likely to conclude that an EHC plan is necessary
- The local authority should fully involve the parent and must seek advice from the setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC assessment and preparing an EHC plan.
- The local authority must inform the child's parents of their decision within six weeks of receiving a request for an assessment and give its reasons for their decision. If the local authority decides to conduct an assessment, it must ensure the child's parents are fully included right from the beginning and are invited to contribute their views. If the local authority subsequently decides not to conduct an assessment it must then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.
- If the local authority decides that a statutory EHC plan is not necessary, it must notify the parents and inform the provider, giving the reasons for the decision. This

notification must take place within 16 weeks of the initial request or of the child having otherwise been brought to the local authority's attention.

- If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult with the parents in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child's preferences are taken into account and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date.
- Plans are evidenced based and focus on short term outcomes and long-term aspirations for the child including family and community support. Parents have the right to request a particular provision/ school for their child to be named within their EHC plan.
- If an early years setting is named, the local authority must fund this provision. They cannot force a setting to take a child and can only name the provision in the EHC if the setting agrees.

- Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under age five at least every three to six months. Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child's parents must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

This policy was adopted by staff at Beechoak Farm Montessori preschool.
Held on 2nd December 2025
Date to be reviewed December 2026
Signed on behalf of Beechoak Farm Montessori by

Charlotte Muggleton & Hayley Majeika
Proprietor Manager