

CHELSEA OPEN AIR NURSERY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

INCLUSION & SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY



Draft November 1996
Revised September 2000
Revised March 2002
Rewritten Jan 2005
Reviewed January 2009

Definition of Inclusion:

We agree with the Early Years Curriculum Group's definition (2004) as:

"A process of identifying, understanding and breaking down the barriers to participation and belonging"

Definition of Special Educational Needs:

Children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty*, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Have a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools and settings within the area of the local authority (LA).
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Statement of Principle:

Inclusion is fundamental to the ethos of our school in that we see the best possible provision for children with SEN within the best possible provision for **all** children. We are committed to providing an appropriate and high quality learning and care experience to all children attending COA. We believe that all children including those identified as having SEN have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum and quality of care which is accessible to them, and to be fully included in all aspects of COA life. This links to our mission statement and daily way of learning and working and hence we have developed our SEN Policy within our Inclusion Policy.

Why do we need inclusion?

Children, whatever their culture, ethnicity, religion, language, disability or learning difficulty have a part to play in society after COA. An early start in mainstream playgroups or nursery schools, followed by education in mainstream school and colleges, is generally the best preparation for an integrated life. Hence we do our best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any child who has SEN or other unique needs which are likely to affect the way they learn or are cared for with regard to the Special Needs Code of Practice.

Legal framework section:

Relevant laws and guidelines.

- DfES circular 10/99 Social Inclusion: Pupil Support
- DfES Action programme for SEN 1999b
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001
- The DfES SEN Code of Practice 2001
- DfES Inclusive Schooling: Children with SEN 2001
- DfES Including All Children in the Literacy Hour and Daily Maths Lesson 2002
- Every Child Matters 2004

COA policies that are also relevant

These include:

- How we work and play at COA (our behaviour policy)
- Learning , Teaching and Assessment Policy
- Partnership with Parents Policy
- Care and Respect for Children Policy
- Child Protection and Looked After Child Policy
- Bilingual Learners Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Racial Equality Policy
- Gifted and Talented Policy
- Curriculum Policies
- COA Access Plan
- Risk Management Guidelines in the Health and Safety Policy
- Manual Handling and Physical Restraint Policy
- COA Improvement Plan
- Local Authority Inclusion Policies.

COA action and aims to support inclusion:

- We plan, assess and learn with the aim of providing for each child's unique individuality, alongside the practical need to group children together for effective learning in many different ways thus catering for their learning styles, interests, aptitudes and needs.
- Thus we are positive, flexible, accommodating and interactive in our short, medium and long term planning. We evaluate on a daily, weekly and termly basis in order to adapt plans to individual needs and circumstances and include the children's desires, the garden, the season, our Information Communication Technology resources, Makaton signing, care, vocabulary, focus, expeditions and visitors as aids in the learning process.
- One-to-one staff provide individualised learning support, planned in close weekly partnership with the key worker/Leader of Learning and half termly with the SENCo when drafting and evaluating IEP's.

- Our twice weekly Ethnic Minority Traveller Achievement Grant teacher works in a similar partnership with keyworkers jointly setting and evaluating targets termly and planning activities to extend and develop children's learning whilst including and valuing their home, family and culture wherever possible.
- We aim to provide a stimulating and caring environment in which each and every child and adult is encouraged to reach their potential and is a valued member of the COA community, whilst respecting their culture, ethnicity, language, religion, age, gender and ability.
- We aim to provide all children with a broad and balanced foundation following the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum as laid down by the Education Reform Act. We recognise that each child has individual needs and rights, and at times these may need to be met by individual programmes of learning and or specialist input from other sources.
- We welcome a diverse range of children and families and aim to provide experiences, which build on children's strengths and promote a sense of self-esteem, whilst recognising and valuing the knowledge the family has about their child.
- We aim to support families and provide them with access to clear information about their child's inclusion at COA. Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children to achieve their potential and we recognise that parents hold key information, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. Hence parents will be encouraged and supported in playing an active and valued role in their child's learning and care. We sometimes include targets in IEP's to be jointly supported at home. These are often about self help and independence skills. Where we make these suggestions we will discuss with the family how these might be achieved.
- We respect and listen to children, ask them what they like to learn and show them new things to learn. They often have a unique knowledge of their own needs and what they need to help them learn effectively often via the photographs in their profile of achievement.
- We celebrate when things go well and support when things go less well using a solution focused approach.
- The education and care of young children does not separate into distinct, discrete activities and the quality of caring and learning should pervade all that we provide at whatever time of the day or year.
- We support all children as diverse, unique individuals and promote this through grouping in different ways, observation, tracking and evaluation of learning and care.

Strategies:

Therefore we will try to:

- Identify all children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or individual needs such as English as an Additional Language, those at risk or with medical needs and the Gifted and Talented.

- Recognise and celebrate the specific needs of each child by monitoring their individual progress. Where a child appears not to be making progress then it may be necessary to use alternative approaches to learning using a graduated response.
- Decide on a course of action to meet these needs.
- Support the access to education for children whose needs mean they are at risk, are looked after or who have medical needs.
- Communicate frequently and effectively with parents/carers about achievements, concerns, progress, actions via meetings and reviews in enabling partnership.
- Monitor and improve attendance and punctuality.
- Consult and share expertise with appropriate professionals with parental permission to help in meeting these needs.
- Establish and maintain good communications within COA, with other early year's settings and with the child's future primary school.
- Establish and develop an accessible bank of ideas, equipment and experiences to help to meet the child's needs.
- Develop and share the child's experiences e.g. home-school book, video, games.
- Build upon a child's achievements, knowledge, interests and aptitudes
- Have high expectations for *all* children.
- Develop confident learners who develop skills relevant to their lives and see diversity as valuable.
- Monitor access for different groups, e.g. by gender, ethnicity, age.

Systems and Structures:

1. Responsibility for the arrangement for co-ordinating educational provision on a day to day basis for children with special educational needs has been given to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) Kathryn Solly, by the Governors.
2. The governing body keeps the interest of the child paramount and will accept a child if it feels that COA can meet the needs of a child by offering a safe and suitable curriculum/environment without causing problems to the safety or learning of others within the nursery. Issues such as bullying are taken seriously.
3. Provision at COA includes the skills of the SENCo who has a postgraduate certificate in SEN. The SENCo is responsible for.
 - Ensuring liaison with parents and other professionals in respect of children with special educational needs
 - Advising and supporting other practitioners in the nursery
 - Ensuring that appropriate Individual Education and Behaviour Plans are in place
 - Ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with special educational needs is collected, recorded and updated
 - Take a lead in further assessment of a child's particular strengths and weaknesses in order to monitor progress and plan future learning and care whilst the key worker remains responsible for

working with the child on a daily basis and planning and delivering the individual programme on a daily basis in partnership with relevant staff.

- The SENCo in close partnership with the keyworker, will take the lead in further assessment for the child in discussion with colleagues; and in monitoring and subsequently reviewing the action taken for the children at Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus and those with statements. The keyworker is responsible for the child on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualised programme. All staff have expertise and skills in working with children with SEN. SEN training for staff takes place at various levels:-
 - By classroom involvement with the SENCo and other professionals
 - By individual keyworker discussion with the SENCo and other professionals
 - With whole staff inset on general and specific SEN matters
 - Attendance at courses, conferences and background reading.
3. Inclusion and SEN are given high priority within COA. A proportion of the nursery school budget is set aside for all staff training and equipment as appropriate to the numbers and needs of children in the school and in accordance with the COA Improvement Plan. Children requiring equipment due to an individual need will be assessed via liaison with the LA in order to gain the support they require e.g. CENMAC for specialist ICT support, sensory or mobility needs.
 4. Assessment and intervention must enhance the child's life, learning and development, thus according to individual circumstances we have a graduated response, which develops strategies and seeks advice where necessary with regard to the revised Code of Practice, (School Action and School Action Plus), where evidence shows that the child's rate of progress is inadequate. Where children join us having received Portage Home Visiting we build on this sound foundation.
 5. With parental permission, COA can request the advice of other professionals. These include Speech and Language Therapist, Education Psychologist, teachers supporting those with sensory impairments, Education Welfare officers, social workers, Pupil Support Services/Early Intervention Team, Physio and Occupational Therapists and Community Paediatrician.
 6. Individual needs will be identified by key workers using the RBK&C Foundation Stage Audit, in close consultation with parents, SENCo and where necessary outside professionals. All staff review the progress and concerns of all children at half termly Achievement and Concerns meetings. Targets are reviewed and published in the front of profiles so families are aware what children are concentrating on.
 7. Specific concerns are addressed using Individual Education and Behaviour Plans where simple targets are set to help children progress; these are shared with each family. Key workers and Learning Partners

develop IEP's by knowing the child and how they learn best and providing choices about activities where to play and with whom, and explain what they need to learn next and how to do it. We try to listen to children's voices, emotions and actions to provide insights into their next steps in learning.

8. We always aim to do our best for each child however, complaints as to the provision for children with SEN and procedures for special educational needs within the school will be dealt with through the COA complaints procedure as with all children.
9. We also have an Inclusion/SEN Governor to the Governing Body – Sandra Disteli, who takes responsibility for monitoring arrangement for Inclusion and SEN within the school on behalf of the Governors. There is a brief report by Sandra and the Headteacher about Inclusion and SEN at every full Governors Meeting and a full audit at the end of the academic year. Inspectors also have an overview of the success of the policy and practice, which is reported in the Governors Annual Report to Parents.

Staff Training and Development

1. Staff have ongoing opportunities to be involved in professional development to support those with SEN and individual needs. Our learning partners who support children with statements of SEN one to one have been involved in professional development relevant to the child they support where possible, as well as the provision of support to those children with additional needs.
2. Staff attend a range of meetings, conferences and courses which are of interest and relevance to the particular children they are supporting plus general area of concern e.g. diversity.
3. We have a good staff library of resources which reflect a range of SEN, individual and medical needs. We also subscribe to several periodicals for up to date information.
4. Staff are also given regular opportunities to develop their confidence and skills in working with all children. Opportunities to learn Makaton which is used for signing and singing plus symbols are also optimised.
5. We have a policy of trying to appoint staff to reflect the diversity of our children and monitor this intake via RBK&C systems. Ultimately we choose the best person for the job. Adults with disabilities are also invited to work at COA, as we believe that it is important to have different role-models.
6. We try to establish strong relationships with settings who feed children to us and with the primary schools our children move on to, by making joint planning arrangements as well as sharing expertise and documentation at transition and other times.
7. We also link to local schools and settings in order to pool expertise and share understanding; such visits often provide valuable learning.

Action to Include Children's Views

1. We try to include children's ideas and views as actively as we can by involving them in decision making in regard to any action which has a direct impact upon them e.g. choosing activities linked to IEP's, circle time, snack and meal time.
2. We use a buddying system of peer support of older children role modelling positive behaviour for younger or less able children to develop their emotional awareness and understanding and to promote social inclusion and equality.
3. We teach children strategies of self assertiveness, fully described in "How We Work and Play at COA".
4. We provide a range of opportunities within the curriculum to consult with children e.g. discussing their profile, leavers self assessment.
5. We encourage their independence and understanding of their own learning.

Admissions and Access to the Environment

1. Children with additional needs are considered for admission to COA alongside all other children but they are given priority if we are able to meet their individual needs. This is so we ensure a balanced intake with quality provision and opportunity for all children. Admission is always gradual to cater for individual needs.
2. We aim to provide a broad balanced early years foundation stage curriculum both indoors and out, which is enabled by children's full use of the classrooms, garden and community outside COA.
3. Our unique, very mature building has its own special qualities which with reasonable forward planning can be adapted to a variety of needs. Our Access Plan and Internal Building Re-development project aims to address any deficits in the longer term, including provision of a lift, plasma screens and a further interactive whiteboard downstairs etc.
4. We also recognise that there will be a number of parents/ carers with disabilities and we work hard to try to ensure they are fully included in the everyday life and special events at COA. We can send our newsletter home in a larger format or as an audio tape and arrange meetings downstairs etc.
5. All children are welcome to use our extended day facilities but we do insist that if they have one-to-one support normally in the school day that they have the equivalent in extended hours. We work with families to apply to fund this provision.

Access to Information

1. We use computers and a range of other ICT resources e.g. switches, remote control toys, tape recorders, CD players, to increase access to learning. The use of these devices are differentiated according to need and circumstances e.g. a switch to enable a child who has limited speech to participate in story time, to a group using the metal detectors to find "treasure" in the sandpit.

Confidentiality

1. Our work with children and families sometimes brings us into contact with confidential information. To ensure confidentiality we stress that parents will have ready access to the files and records of their own children but will not have access to the information stored about any other child.
2. Staff will not discuss children, other than for the purpose of curriculum planning/group management, with people other than the parents/carers of that child. However, child protection/safeguarding issues will be dealt with according to our Child Protection Policy and borough guidelines.

Adequate Progress

Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways. It might, for instance, be progress that:-

- Closes the attainment gap between the child and the child's peers.
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment starting point, but less than that of the majority of peers
- Matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress
- Ensures access to the full curriculum
- Demonstrates improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- Demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour

Once we have identified that a child has special educational needs, we will intervene through Early Years Action. If this intervention does not enable the child to make satisfactory progress the SENCo may need to seek advice and support from the external agencies with parental permission. This form of intervention is referred to as Early Years Action Plus. Informing and encouraging parents/carers to contribute their knowledge and understanding of their child and raise any concerns they may have about their child's needs and the provision that is being made for them, is the next essential step.

Early Years Action

When a child is identified as having a special educational need, interventions should be devised that are additional to those provided as part of our usual curriculum (Early Years Action). The triggers for intervention through Early Years Action could be concern about a child who despite receiving appropriate early education experiences:

- Makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified area of learning weakness
- Continues learning at levels significantly below those expected for children of similar age in certain areas
- Presents persistent emotional and /or behavioural difficulties, which are not solved by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in COA.

- Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

If we in consultation with parents conclude that a child may need further support to help them progress the SENCo and colleagues will collect all known information about the child and seek additional information from the parents and outside professionals.

Nature of intervention

The SENCo and the child's keyworker, in consultation with parents, will decide on the *Action* needed to help the child to progress in the light of their earlier assessment. This *Action* will comprise of individualised arrangements for learning and teaching.

These arrangements may include:-

- Extra adult time in devising the nature of the planned intervention and monitoring it's effectiveness
- The provision of different learning materials or special equipment
- Some individual, group support or staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies
- Access to LA support services for one-off or occasional advice on strategies or equipment
- Staff training to provide effective intervention without the need for regular or ongoing input from external agencies

Individual Education Plans

Strategies employed to enable the child to progress will be recorded within an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This should include information about

- The short-term targets set for the child
- The learning and teaching strategies
- The provision to be put in place
- When the plan is to be reviewed
- The outcome of the action taken

The IEP will record only that which is additional to, or different from the differentiated curriculum in place as part of normal provision. The IEP will focus on two or three key targets and will be discussed with parents and the child. The IEPs will be continually kept "under review" but are formally reviewed three times a year. Parents will be consulted as part of the review process.

Early Years Action Plus

Early Years Action Plus is characterised by the involvement of external support services that can provide more specialist assessments, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials and in some cases provide support for particular activities.

The triggers for referral for seeking help from outside agencies could be that, despite receiving an individualised programme and/or concentrated support the child:

- Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas
- Continues working at an early years curriculum substantially below that expected for children of a similar age
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- Has sensory or physical needs and requires additional equipment or regular visits for direct intervention or advice by staff from a specialist service
- Has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning

When schools seeks the help of external support services, e.g. Early Years Intervention Team, Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy etc, those services will need to see the child's records in order to establish which strategies have already been employed and which targets have been set and achieved.

The external specialist may act in an advisory capacity, provide additional specialist assessment or be involved in teaching the child directly. The resulting IEP for the pupil will set out new strategies for supporting the child's progress. Delivery of the IEP will remain the responsibility of COA.

Requests for statutory assessment

For a very few children the help given by COA through Early Years Action Plus will not be sufficiently effective to enable the child to progress satisfactorily. It will then be necessary for the setting, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved considering whether a statutory multi-disciplinary assessment may be appropriate. Where a request for a statutory assessment is made to the LA, the child will have demonstrated significant cause for concern and the school will provide evidence to the LA detailing:

- The school's action through Early Years School Action and Early Years School Action Plus
- Individual education plans for the child
- Records of regular reviews and their outcomes
- The child's health including the child's medical history where relevant
- Educational and other assessments, for example from an advisory specialist support teacher or an educational psychologist
- Views of the parents and of the child
- Involvement of other professionals
- Any involvement by the social services or education welfare service

When the Head of Access and Inclusion in the LA receives a request for a statutory assessment he/she will decide within six weeks whether to carry out

such an assessment. Statutory assessment involves consideration by the LA, working co-operatively with parents, the child's educational setting and as appropriate, other agencies as to whether a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs is necessary. Where the evidence presented to the LA suggests that the child's learning difficulties may call for special educational provision which cannot reasonably be provided within the resources normally available to the setting, the LA will consider the case for a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs. The LA may decide that the degree of the child's learning difficulty and the nature of the provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs is such as to require the LA to determine the child's special educational provision through a **statement of Special Educational Need**. This will detail:

- The child's name, address and date of birth
- Details of all the child's special needs
- Identify the special educational provision necessary to meet the child's special educational needs
- Identify the type and name of the school where the provision is to be made
- Include relevant non-educational needs of the child
- Include information on non-educational provision

All children with statements of SEN will have short-term targets set for them that have been established after consultation with parents, child and include targets identified in the statement of educational need. These targets will be set out in an IEP and be implemented, at least in part and as far as possible in COA. The delivery of the interventions recorded in the IEP will continue to be the responsibility of COA.

Annual Review

All early years statements will be reviewed annually with all involved invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the child's needs or to the special education provision specified in the statement. The review will focus on what the child has achieved as well as on difficulties that need to be resolved. The SENCO of the receiving primary school if known will be invited to attend the final review in the school, to allow them to plan an appropriate IEP to start at the beginning of the next term and enable the child and the parents to be reassured that an effective and supportive transfer will occur.

Concerns / Complaints / Further Advice

- Any concerns regarding the Inclusion/SEN policy or the provision made for children should be addressed in the first instance to the keyworker. If parents/carers need further advice they are welcome to arrange a meeting with the SENCo/Head teacher.
- The Disability Rights Commission (08457 622 633) provides a range of information and guidance on the Disability Discrimination Act. IPSEA Independent Panel for Special Educational Needs can advise on individual concerns and issues in relation to a disabled child (01394 382 814).