



## **OUR LOCAL OFFER**

### **What is the Local Offer?**

From September 2014, every Local Authority is required to publish information about available services for children who have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (sometimes known as SEND). This is known as the 'Local Offer'. The information below sets out what is normally available in schools and early years settings (e.g. playgroups and day nurseries) to support children with additional needs. It is not simply a list of services, but provides useful information on how to access services, any eligibility criteria, how decisions are made and who makes them.

Click

[http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/learning/special\\_educational\\_needs/local\\_offer\\_coming\\_soon/what\\_is\\_the\\_local\\_offer.aspx](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/learning/special_educational_needs/local_offer_coming_soon/what_is_the_local_offer.aspx) to access the West Sussex Local Offer. On the Chichester Nursery School and Children Centre website, you will find information about our own offer for children with additional needs.

### **Other changes the government has made to support children and young people who are disabled or who have Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

- The Children and Families Bill (2013) extends the Special Educational Needs (SEN) system from birth to 25, giving children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly identified and met.
- New statutory guidance in the form of the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years* must be followed from September 2014.
- Statements of Special Educational Need are being replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), extending rights and protections to young people in further education and training, and offering families personal budgets so that they have more control over the support they need.
- Under an EHCP local authorities and health authorities are required to work together, improving coordination and cooperation between all the services that support children and their families.

### **What differences are families likely to notice?**

- As the new Code of Practice comes into use, you may notice that some of the language used in education settings in relation to additional needs changes. For example, the terms Early Years/School Action and Early Years/School Action Plus will no longer be used, as these stages of intervention are being replaced by a single stage of Early Years/School Support, comprising a cycle of four actions (Assess – Plan – Do – Review).

- If your child has additional needs, you should notice that there is increased emphasis on the child's own views, and, where possible, on their role in decision making.
- Where relevant, you should notice closer co-operation between education, health services and social care. This should hopefully mean fewer meetings and not having to explain your child's needs again and again to different professionals.
- If your child undergoes Statutory Assessment to assess the level of their needs, you will be assigned a Planning Coordinator who will meet with you to discuss your child and his or her needs in detail. This information will then be used in the assessment process and any subsequent Education, Health and Care Plan.

### What does 'additional needs' mean?

- This term refers to needs that are likely to require a higher level of support than those of most children of the same age. Some children will have additional needs for a short period of time, while others may have ongoing additional needs.
- The term encompasses the needs of those children identified as having 'Special Educational Needs' under the *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years* (Department for Education / Department of Health, 2014), but is not limited to this group of children. Sometimes, children may need additional support for a short period of time, for example, after experiencing a traumatic event or after the arrival of a new baby in the family.
- Additional needs may be related to:
  - Speech, language and communication
  - Difficulties playing and interacting with others
  - Sensory impairment (hearing or vision impairment)
  - A physical disability or medical condition
  - A condition such as autism or Down's syndrome
  - Behaviour
  - Emotional difficulties
  - Learning difficulties
  - A specific event or set of circumstances that the child is currently experiencing.
- We recognise that all children have individual needs and aim to meet every child's needs through carefully planned responsive provision. However, if you prefer to use the term 'Special Needs' in relation to your child, then please let us know and we will of course respect your choice.

### How do the staff at Chichester Nursery know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

- We are a fully inclusive Nursery and we will work with parents endeavouring to provide children with the support they need to make the best possible progress.
- We take a positive approach to including children with additional needs believing that inclusion is beneficial for all; encouraging consideration, thoughtfulness and understanding in all children and increasing our own

knowledge of different conditions and how to work together with parents for the best possible outcome.

- If you think your child has any additional need you can raise this when you first come to look around Nursery with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, when it would be appropriate to ask what provision the school will make for the additional needs of your child.
- When starting in our setting, we allow children to settle and to begin building a relationship with their key-worker. At the same time we make some initial observations which will become part of the child's assessment record. This quickly builds a picture of the child's strengths and needs and allows us to see where additional support might be needed. Key-workers develop an in-depth knowledge of children in their group, and will also discuss them with the rest of the staff team. Based on their observations and knowledge of the children, staff may decide that some children would benefit from extra support in order to help them access all areas of the **Early Years Foundation Stage**. More details of the EYFS can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/improving-the-quality-and-range-of-education-and-childcare-from-birth-to-5-years/supporting-pages/early-years-foundation-stage>.
- Our approach has always been to speak to parents first, to ask them if they have any concerns and would like any support or advice. Generally such a conversation would take place between parent and key-worker, as they tend to be in daily contact, passing on information about their child regularly and building a close mutually informative relationship.
- If you think that your child has additional needs that staff are unaware of, it's best to talk to your child's key-worker first, though you are welcome to talk to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher too.
- If we think that your child would benefit from support which is additional or different from that given to most other children at Nursery, we would of course discuss this with you. We would ask for your agreement to offer additional support and ask you to help us write a Play Plan for your child (a Play Plan details ways in which we will work with you to support your child and is what is known as an Individual Education Plan or Support Plan in some settings).

### **How will Nursery staff support my child? And how will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?**

- We deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum through our two-weekly planning cycle, which highlights certain strands of learning that we would like to focus on during that period. At the same time we place a strong emphasis on following and developing children's interests, often planning something the following day which links to an emerging interest from the day before. We know that children learn and progress at different rates and in different ways, and we seek to allow them the freedom to discover joy in learning with the support of knowledgeable adults to encourage their curiosity. Through our key-worker system we gain knowledge of each child's needs and, coupled with our tracking and assessment records, we are able to see where a child might need additional support, enabling us to adapt our practice to encourage learning and progression for each individual.
- If parents, the key-worker and the SENCo feel a child's needs will be best supported by a more targeted approach they will meet to discuss where each feels the needs arise; this is an important discussion as it gives us the chance to see what matters to the parents and opens a window into the child's home

life; what and who is important to him or her. From this they will together devise a plan for identifying one or more short term targets which the SENCo will collate into a one page profile leading to a 'Play Plan'. This details the agreed targets and how adults will support the child to achieve them. The 'Play Plan' will run for a term before review when, together, we will assess our progress; sometimes targets will be carried over to continue for a bit longer. Frequently they will be changed to take account of the child's progress. This is an additional process which runs alongside the continuing assessment the key-workers make for each child in the setting.

- The system of 'Play Plans', Individual Education Plans and One Page Profiles is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of the users and remains succinct and targeted.
- Sometimes we recognise that a child's needs will be best served by working with a particular member of staff in a small group or on a one-to-one basis for short periods of time, usually at group-time.
- We use a variety of strategies and resources to meet the needs of individual children, including the use of Makaton signing and other visual support materials, such as visual timetables and communication books.
- A sensory room is being constructed on site and when not in use by Nursery and Centre staff will be, bookable in 30 minute slots, by other members of the community at no cost.
- Your child's progress will be reviewed regularly, and if staff are concerned that she or he is not making as much progress as expected, with your permission, they may seek further advice and or involvement of outside professionals such as a Speech and Language Therapist or Physiotherapist.

### **How will the Early Years Foundation Stage be matched to my child's needs?**

- All staff in our Up to 3's Nursery and Nursery School are likely to work with your child at some point. However, your child's key-worker, in consultation with the SENCo, has particular responsibility for planning any additional support or activities for your child. Activities are adapted to meet the child's individual needs.
- Meeting the individual needs of all children lies at the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Staff at our setting deliver personalised play and learning, planning for each child's individual care and learning, and taking into account any additional needs.
- This means that all planned activities are carefully differentiated so that your child can access them at an appropriate level. In the case of child-led activities, staff will sensitively support and extend your child's learning, taking into account their particular needs and the current targets.

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

- We know that children learn from all they see and experience and parents are of paramount importance in their child's learning and development. We will work with you to support your child's learning by letting you know what areas we are working on in Nursery so you can do similar or complementary activities at home if you choose to. If you would like particular ideas for activities to do at

home, or if you are unsure how best to support your child, then please speak to your child's key-worker who will be happy to offer advice.

- As a Nursery school we schedule at least two parent consultation evenings over the academic year, this gives parents an opportunity to talk through their child's progress and look at their portfolio. More regular and less formal contact is maintained between keyworker and parents or carers on a day to day basis. However key-workers are happy to arrange a mutually beneficial time if a more lengthy discussion is needed.
- We know that for working parents an informal chat about what their child has been doing is not always possible, so we have started using e-mails to keep in touch, sending photos or messages in order to keep parents up to date. We hope this will become a more regular feature of parent/key-worker contact as we explore new programs and systems.
- Using the Play Plans as a basis for discovering what a child's specific needs are, we will support parents to work with their child to achieve identified targets. This might mean attending some Makaton training or making a book for the child to read that supports the child's understanding or behaviour.
- We offer a range of courses through the Children's Centre that can help parents support, encourage and play with their children, from the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Support Group to an ESOL (English as a Second Language) group. Also available are Understanding Your Child's Behaviour course and Makaton training.
- We run a toy library that includes a large selection of sensory toys particularly suitable for children with additional needs. Staff will be happy to advise on suitable toys and games to support your child's learning.
- The Children's Centre Outreach Team takes referrals for families in the locality and will work alongside parents to support their child's development. The Centre also runs courses for parents to improve their skills in readiness for work.
- If you have special needs yourself, we will do our best to meet your needs, making reasonable adjustments as required. For example, if you have literacy difficulties, we will be happy to go through written information with you, making sure that you have understood it.

### [What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?](#)

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is a prime (key) area of the EYFS, and is given a high level of attention at Chichester Nursery. We believe children learn and make progress best when they feel contented, secure and listened to; we acknowledge the importance of supporting children to learn to get on with others and to make friends, to understand and talk about their own feelings and those of others, to develop an understanding of 'right' and 'wrong' and the importance of making good choices, and to develop personal independence.
- At some points in their lives children may need additional support to ensure their personal, social and emotional wellbeing, this is routinely provided at key times, for example when settling into our setting or on the arrival of a new baby. Sometimes a child's additional needs might have a negative impact on their wellbeing and require us to plan carefully, and if appropriate include targets relating to PSED in a child's Play Plan.
- Because our staff are a well trained and experienced team we are able to support children's Personal, Social and Emotional Development ensuring they

are able to explore and learn confidently, and ultimately, feel good about themselves.

- To support and promote communication we use Makaton throughout the setting with regular 'refresher' meetings from our resident Makaton trainer.
- To ensure the safety of children in our setting the staff access regular training and carry out formal risk assessments, as well as everyday checks to ensure the activities and equipment on offer to children are as safe as possible. However it is not possible, or desirable, that all risk is removed from the setting. We believe that children should be able to challenge themselves and we encourage them to understand and manage risk, helping them know their own capabilities and allowing them to develop their skills at a pace that is right for them.
- In terms of their physical health, all staff are made aware of any physical or medical conditions that may impact on your child. Administration of medicines takes place only after parents have completed a form describing how, when and what dosage their child needs. We will ensure that medicines that need to be taken during setting hours are kept safely and properly administered. This arrangement takes place between key-worker and parent or carer, with each dose being recorded and counter-signed.
- Personal care needs, such as nappy changing, are carried out sensitively, ensuring that the child's dignity and privacy are respected. If your child uses special equipment, such as a feeding tube, then staff will be properly trained in its use and maintenance, and you will be informed immediately if there are any difficulties.

### What training are the staff, supporting children with SEND, had or are having?

- All staff receive training to help them meet the needs of disabled children or those with additional needs. For example, after training from Speech and Language Therapists, we have worked on reducing the number and complexity of questions we ask children, giving them time and space to process information and to formulate their responses. This works well for all children, but particularly those with SEND, building their confidence and encouraging their engagement with peers.
- Additional training is available to those members of staff with particular responsibility for working with a child with a disability or additional needs. This is tailored to the child's particular needs.
- All staff in the setting have attended Stage 2 Makaton signing training and we try to use it automatically in our interactions with all children. Refresher training takes place on a regular basis. We have recently had Inset training to learn more about Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and have also had some training from the Speech & Language Therapy service on how to support children who stammer. The Senior Paediatric Occupational Therapist has also delivered staff training, giving us a useful insight into children's physical development and how to enhance it. We make use of our close links to the Child Development Centre and visit them to see how they work, sometimes with individual children, sometimes for more general information.
- When children with specific needs attend Nursery, we welcome all professionals involved in their support to our setting; sometimes this will be Physiotherapists teaching us exercises for a child or how to use equipment, or Speech Therapists assessing children's speech in a social situation. We find the support, strategies and information other professionals offer is invaluable to

us in support children's individual needs. We will ask you for permission before we arrange for health professionals and others to visit your child in Nursery.

### How will my child be included in activities outside the setting?

- Any planned activities or trips outside of the setting are always open to all children, regardless of any disability or additional need.
- Where necessary, reasonable adjustments would be made, such as the use of wheelchair accessible transport or provision of an additional member of staff to support an individual child.
- We seek the advice of parents when planning visits to ensure that we are aware of any special provision that may be needed to support their child's specific needs. A detailed risk assessment is undertaken before any trip takes place, to ensure that all children are kept as safe as possible, including those with disabilities and additional needs.
- Because of the size of our Nursery it is not possible for us to take trips as a whole setting, instead we use our mini-bus to take short trips, such as visiting a local garden centre to choose a Christmas tree. We endeavour to plan trips so that each child has the opportunity of an external visit during their time with us, regardless of need. Our trips are arranged with a ratio of staff that exceeds legal requirements supported by parents and our mini-bus driver.

### How accessible is the setting environment?

- Our Nursery is a modern purpose-built setting that is wheelchair accessible. It is single story, on one level and has no steps. However, to prevent any child from opening doors at entry and exit points, some door handles are at high-level meaning that wheelchair users do require some assistance to open them.
- There is a fully accessible toilet on the premises and changing facilities. In line with our duties under the Equality Act 2010, we are committed to making reasonable adjustments for disabled children and adults. This means that an adjustment will be made in any case where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people if the adjustment was not made.
- We aim to be proactive in our practice of improving accessibility.
- For children who need additional or specialist equipment, such as bikes and standing frames, we have both inside and outside storage
- We aim to ensure that communication with parents who speak English as an additional language and who are not yet fluent in this language is as clear and effective as possible. Where necessary, translation and interpretation services may be used. Our Nursery is open plan and the children have free access to the garden, we have a climbing frame, a climbing wall a large sandpit and 'roadways'. The roadways are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs and bikes, though sometimes children with physical impairment will need adult support to reach certain features in our garden, the raised planters for example.
- Suitability for activities is determined by what parents, the key-worker, health professionals and, if applicable, the one-to-one support worker feel the child is capable of, and what is beneficial for his or her development. To ensure continuity of provision the best approach is for all staff to be familiar with the specific needs of SEND children and to be able, as far as possible, to support

them should they choose activities in their area, this supports children to develop relationships with a range of adults.

### How will the early years setting prepare and support my child to join the early years setting, transfer to a new setting/school?

- We understand that starting Nursery is a big step for most children and may be the first time that they have left their parents. We feel that a gradual transition into Nursery to begin building a relationship with their key-worker yields the best results. In the Nursery school we offer a taster session, to allow new starters and their parents to see the Nursery environment and talk to staff members. Then when children start Nursery, we suggest parents take this process gradually, perhaps with their child staying only for an hour on the first few days and then building up to staying for a full session, this may be a longer or shorter time depending on each individual child. In the Up to 3's Nursery, taster sessions are also offered before children start.
- Our aim is that, wherever possible, children should also receive a Home Visit by their key-worker before they start. This offers us an opportunity to learn about the child in the relaxed surroundings of their own home and helps them to settle when they do start in Nursery.
- For children with SEND, we like to arrange an additional meeting with parents and child prior to starting at Nursery. This gives parents a chance to talk about their child's needs before they start and gives us the opportunity to put additional provision in place too.
- When children move on to school or another setting, we provide them with a school report and, with parental permission, details of reports from health professionals or Educational Psychologists. We also encourage primary schools and settings, to which children are transferring from us, to visit the Nursery to see the child playing and working in a familiar environment.
- If there is additional information to pass on, we suggest schools attend a transition meeting that includes parents, the key-worker, SENCo and any health professionals involved. This meeting gives the school the opportunity to talk face-to-face with all concerned, finding out what strategies have been effective and how the transition could be managed smoothly. Sometimes we feel it is helpful to write a collective transitional 'Play Plan' or Individual Educational Plan to detail any extra provision such as additional visits to schools.

### . How are the setting's resources allocated and matched to children's additional needs?

- The setting's SEN budget is allocated each financial year.
- If your child has needs that require a very high level of adult support, we may seek financial assistance from the local authority, with the aim of providing additional staffing to help meet your child's needs.

### How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

- Where a child needs or would benefit from specialist equipment to meet their physical needs, such as a special chair or walking frame, advice will be sought from the relevant service such as Occupational Therapy or Physiotherapy.



- The support offered is matched to children's individual needs. For most children, support in a small group is often more appropriate than one-to-one adult support, as children develop vital social interaction skills in a group setting, as well as having other children to model the skills that are being developed.
- For some children with more complex needs, decisions regarding the support that will be offered are made at an Early Years Planning and Review Meeting (EYPARM). This is a group of health and education professionals who discuss what the next steps are for children with additional needs. They might recommend that an Educational Psychologist compile a report, but only after consulting all concerned and with parents' knowledge of paramount importance. A child can only be discussed at an EYPARM meeting with their parents'/carers' consent.
- Following discussion at an EYPARM meeting, a decision may be made to involve an Educational Psychologist who will observe and work with your child in the setting, and will also meet with you to discuss your concerns and learn more about your child. For some children, a decision may be made to initiate a Statutory Assessment, which is a multi-agency assessment where professionals who have been working with your child will contribute towards an Education, Health and Care Plan (which replaces a Statement of Special Educational Needs). This plan is a legally binding document which sets out what support your child will need, who will provide it, and how it will be provided. Education, Health and Care Plans are reviewed at least yearly (six-monthly for younger children) to ensure that the provision remains appropriate to meet your child's needs.

### Who can I contact for further information?

- Depending on the nature of your enquiry, a number of people are likely to be able to help. For children in Nursery School and our Up to 3s' Nursery, you may wish to speak to your child's keyworker initially, or the SENCo.
- For children not yet accessing our childcare, you can contact any member of the Children and Family Centre team.
- If you are unsure about who to contact, you may go to any member of staff, and if they are unable to answer your question themselves, they will be happy to direct you to someone who can.
- If, following discussion with a member of staff, you are unhappy with their response, you may ask to speak with the Heateacher. If she is available, she will try to see you immediately. If not, you can make an appointment at the front desk. Our aim is to do our best to resolve any concerns you might have and we always welcome feedback on our practice.

December 2014

To be reviewed December 2017 (or earlier in response to changes in information or statutory requirements)