



Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Policy

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1. Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Inclusion Policy:

This policy describes the way we meet the needs of children who experience barriers to their learning which may relate to sensory or physical differences, communication or interaction differences, divergent pathways of development, emotional or social development needs or may relate to factors in their lives or environment – including the learning environment they experience in our nursery. We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all children and their families whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, support need, attainment and background.

Our aim is to ensure that all children are viewed in ways that positively embrace their whole identity, and the different ways that children make sense of their world, ensuring they are recognised as valued members of the nursery community. We acknowledge that all of us learn in different ways and all have a right to learn in the way that best suits us. Each developmental pathway is unique and the provision we offer children may be individualised to reflect this. Some children may experience higher levels of dysregulation within our typical provision, therefore we aim to make adjustments to their day which are both supportive and developmentally challenging. We recognise that development is not linear and regularly reflect upon this, making changes to provision and support to reflect this.

We follow responsibilities outlined in The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014) [1] which defines Special Educational Needs and/or Disability as:

- having a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age,
- having a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream-post 16 institutions.

2. Ethos:

At Redcliffe Nursery School we believe that all children are entitled to nursery provision that reflects and enables their unique characteristics, preferences and enthusiasms to be celebrated. We identify all children's strengths and interests, learning and developmental needs, so that we can provide inclusive play and

learning opportunities for all and create an environment in which children can develop. We welcome diversity, and plan learning opportunities to meet each child's individual needs. We strive to maintain high expectations for all children by questioning ***“what does each child need in order to thrive?”***

We recognise that all young children learn in their own unique way. There are many factors that can impact achievement and development, that may or may not be fixed or permanent characteristics, therefore additional support maybe needed in the long or short term. We continually reflect on children's individual progress and needs and adapt our provision accordingly; one child's nursery experience may look different from another's. We know how crucial these early years are and our fundamental aim is to enable each child to be happy and view themselves and their place in the world as important, valid and understood. We view children and their families from a strengths-based lens and use strengths to guide our support and discourse about each situation. This can be challenging as we are also often in a place of early identification and assessment, sometimes leading onto diagnostic pathways. We have a duty to promote children's strengths and challenge stigma around neurodiversity, disability and difference. We want all children to feel safe, understood, supported and a sense of belonging in our nursery.

We share a commitment to building our understanding of neurodiversity (all brains are different) and disability and strive to develop neurodivergent (the idea that some brains develop differently from typical) affirming and inclusive practice across the whole nursery community. We will undertake reasonable adjustments to our provision and teaching to ensure all children are included in all aspects of nursery life, feel valued, safe and free from prejudice and discrimination. Where nursery experiences are not developmentally meaningful or appropriate for a child we discuss this with parents/carers and will provide alternative experiences at the time or across their nursery journey. We always prioritise children's well-being within the nursery context and prioritise this over and above additional experiences outside of nursery. We consider children's current developmental levels, the time they will have with us, and acknowledge what may be most valuable for them at points in time. For example, joining forest visits may not be appropriate for a child who is still building trusting relationships within the nursery; we identify through knowing the child and discussion with parents/carers and staff when forest visits or other additional experiences such as swimming are appropriate and safe for the child. Teaching strategies for neurodivergent and disabled children are informed by our Behaviour Policy, including reference to 'trauma-informed practice', Teaching and Learning Policy and Communication, Language and Literacy Policy. We liaise with the Local Authority and Hope Virtual School when supporting a child in the care of the Local Authority. Our practice and provision are informed by lived neurodivergent experiences and research around specific neurotypes or disabilities, and knowledge and research around general child development; we listen to and work with professionals from other backgrounds.

3. Objectives/Aims:

- 3.1. To ensure the SEND Code of Practice [1] and Equality Acts [2] and guidance are implemented effectively across the nursery.
- 3.2. To ensure equality of opportunity for and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against children identified with SEND.
- 3.3. To publish our 'SEND Core Offer' outlining the ways in which we support and work with children with additional needs/disabilities. As well as signposting parents to Bristol's Local Offer and the services available on the Local Offer Website [3].
- 3.4. To continually monitor the progress of all children to identify specific and individual needs as they arise and to provide support as proactively as possible.
- 3.5. To provide full access to the curriculum through differentiated planning by room leaders and teachers, key people, the SENDCo team and support staff (as appropriate).
- 3.6. To provide specific input/experiences/resources, matched to individual needs, in addition to/differentiated from the general nursery provision as appropriate, for those children identified as having an additional need.
- 3.7. A strong commitment and openness to opportunities to learn about, disability, neurodiversity, and differing medical needs.
- 3.8. Recognition that individuals have differences in their abilities and how they interact with the world around them; we acknowledge that these differences are not deficits and value them and the contributions that all individuals make to our community.
- 3.9. To involve parents/carers at every stage in plans to meet their child's additional needs.
- 3.10. To support parents/carers to learn with us about their child's needs and the services/processes that can support them; to empower them as advocates for their children.
- 3.11. We amplify children's preferences, strengths, abilities and needs to inform planning and decision making that affects them. This will look different for different children and might include use of video clips, photos, All About Me documents, observations of children, direct quotes, learning diaries, displays.
- 3.12. We aim to reflect parents/carers views and opinions through involving them in meetings with other professionals, co-creating documents such as

support plans and EHCPs, and advocating for them with other professionals/services as needed.

To support children and families to make a positive transition to their next setting through liaising with and sharing information with key staff in the next setting and facilitating meetings between families, settings and nursery. We share children's and parents/carers voice in a variety (See above).

4. Attuning to children's communication:

We believe that it is vital that a child's voice is sought and 'listened to' about matters that are of importance to them. At this young age, and sometimes due to the needs of the child, we advocate for them by interpreting what we believe they are trying to communicate through their play, responses and behaviour. We use information from parents/carers about their children, and our experience, to try to understand children and identify possible communication support strategies. We reflect as a team and with parents/carers, about whether these are working or need adapting. This is an ongoing process as we get to know children, they build relationships with us and build their skills within nursery.

We use their strengths and motivations as a starting point for positive interactions. Some of the ways we work with children include:

- 4.1. using language at their level of understanding
- 4.2. using visual aids i.e., cue cards, photographs, puppets,
- 4.3. recognising and responding when children may be communicating anxiety related behaviours, adapting our practice in response.
- 4.4. using children's play patterns, special interests and fascinations as opportunities to enter the children's world view and as potential springboards to plan for further learning, showing we value and understand the child.
- 4.5. Acknowledging the importance of children's emotional and sensory regulation by providing spaces for children to access that are less or more stimulating

5. Working with Parents/Carers:

We know that parents/carers are paramount in all children's educational experience and they hold the most knowledge about their child.

Parents/carers views are intrinsic to the entire SEND process.

Parents/carers will be involved at all stages of the education planning process.

- 5.1. Across the nursery we see and value parents/carers as the most knowledgeable people about their child, we strive to access their valuable insights and information to inform our understanding.
- 5.2. Staff endeavour to empower parents/carers to share their knowledge of their child in a way that is meaningful to them i.e. verbally, in writing, video, photographs.
- 5.3. We recognise that the journey of identifying a child with SEND, navigating through the system and seeking the appropriate support can be incredibly emotive and overwhelming for parents/carers. We will do our very best to support them emotionally, help them to learn about their child's needs and the SEND support system and signpost them to relevant support agencies and professionals.
- 5.4. We will work together to support children identified as having support needs.
- 5.5. We may invite parents to join us for experiences with their child such as forest experience or trips or a part of the nursery day that a child is finding challenging, seeing this as an opportunity to work together to support their child.
- 5.6. We recognise that there may be disabled or neurodiverse parents/carers of children attending the nursery. We will ask them about their individual rights (i.e. access requirements, adapting how we share information) and make reasonable adjustments to our physical environment and practices to ensure they are able to engage in ways that are appropriate for them.
- 5.7. We signpost to a variety of SEND related organisations and where possible invite professionals with key skills and backgrounds to share with parents in a supportive group or coffee morning.
- 5.8. We aim to find ways to support communication with families when there may be barriers for example by organising interpreters to support conversations or translating documents into first languages.
- 5.9. We encourage Parents to seek additional support through the 'Sendias : Send and You' network or FLORA (Bristol's Local SEND offer)
<https://www.sendandyou.org.uk/>
<https://www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk/2021/05/24/flora-bristols-send-local-offer/>

6. The role of the Key Person:

- 6.1. A child's Key Person is "**responsible for working with the child on a day to-day basis**" (Code of Practice, 2015). Together with the other staff working closely with the child, they will build a relationship with the child which enables them to build a holistic picture of their strengths and needs.

- 6.2. The key person is essential for building democratic and supportive relationships with parents who are the most knowledgeable experts of their own children.
- 6.3. The Key Person will use their knowledge of their individual key children to differentiate provision and make any necessary adaptations.
- 6.4. The key person will work with colleagues e.g. the SENDCo, and other professionals such as our nursery speech therapist (with parental permission) to plan, trial and review differentiated strategies
- 6.5. The key person will share strengths, progress and challenges with parents, the SENDCo and any professionals who might be involved with a child
- 6.6. They will work with the family throughout any journeys within the SEND process.
- 6.7. They have a responsibility to share with the SENDCo when they have concerns about a child and to develop a plan of action for how they will support a child, in liaison with the child's parents.
- 6.8. The key person will share relevant information around a child's safety, medical needs or strategies and interventions with colleagues. This might be in the morning briefing or in more specific staff meetings or training sessions.
- 6.9. The key person will contribute towards assessment documentation and the completion of any specific paperwork, e.g. 2-Year Checks, Support Plans or Education, Health and Care Plans and Universal Transfer Records for individual children.
- 6.10. The key person will liaise with any professionals involved with children.
- 6.11. The key person will oversee and communicate with support workers working with individual children from their key group, on a day-to-day basis.
- 6.12. Some children may need a highly differentiated provision and may find it difficult to settle into nursery, access key group times, lunches and trips/visits with their key person and key group, or find drop-off and pick-up times highly dysregulating. In this instance key people will liaise with the SENDCo, parents, support staff (and other senior leaders as appropriate) to establish what routine is appropriate for the child.
- 6.13. Key people and SENDCos, together with parents/carers will review any differentiated provision regularly to identify strengths, challenges and appropriate progression pathways. Some children will work towards spending more time with their key groups; some children may need a differentiated timetable/experience throughout their time at Redcliffe Nursery School.
- 6.14. The key person will complete learning diaries and specific support documents e.g. All About Me plans, risk assessments, specific assessment documents in collaboration with
- 6.15. support workers and the SENDCo.
- 6.16. The key person will assess safety and access needs when planning for visits or additional experiences within nursery, making them as accessible

as possible for all children or discussing alternative plans and experiences. A risk assessment is carried out for the visit/site itself in line with our Forest Policy and Educational Visits Policy; some children will have individual risk assessments which will highlight specific access or safety needs and these will be taken into account when planning trips.

7. Role of the SENDCo Team:

Our Nursery SENDCo/SENDCo's are identified on the website.

Our SEND Governor is identified on the website.

- 7.1. Reporting to the Senior Leadership Team regarding any challenges faced by individual children who may benefit from more accommodations and support, who require additional consideration, differentiated provision e.g. access to the Rainbow Room, differentiated timetable (including a reduced timetable) or where staffing is inadequate to meet needs.
- 7.2. In line with Bristol City Council's Local SEND Offer, we have access to the Early Years Inclusion Team with whom we can discuss our cohort, professional development needs and inclusive provision.
- 7.3. Identifying professional development of staff both to extend their own professional development and to ensure 'tailor made' professional development which is need specific and available when appropriate.
- 7.4. Overseeing that all children are reflected in displays and on nursery publicity e.g. website and when we provide professional development - so that we are constantly providing positive images and understanding of all children that access our nursery. Parent/Carer permission is taken into account for all image sharing/displaying.
- 7.5. To challenge people who may discriminate or use language that reinforces stereotypes, ableism or deficit models of attainment.
- 7.6. To write and update the access audit every two years or when major building works are happening, as well as having an ongoing perspective of how children and adults with SEND are accessing the Nursery environment.
- 7.7. Having an overview of all the children and keeping a record of children on our Graduated Response through team and parent conversations, observations, 2-year checks, speech and language assessments. Specific meetings with between key people and the Sendco in the autumn/winter term and spring terms (and incorporating 2-year checks for the under 3's)

- enable us to proactively identify and plan for individual children's needs. This information is recorded by the Sendco on a monitoring document. In addition, actions towards a Graduated Response are recorded on our central recording system (CPOMs). Information is shared regularly with the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body through Send Meetings and reports to Governors throughout the year.
- 7.8. Coordinating role and duties of our speech therapist.
 - 7.9. Checking on wellbeing of key people and supporting adults, providing space for 'check-ins' with supporting adults, completing probation and appraisals as required and ensuring supporting adults are accessing supervision in line with the Redcliffe Nursery School Supervision Policy.
 - 7.10. Monitoring equity and opportunities across Blackbirds and Seagulls, and across key groups. ***Opportunities for some children will reflect our Graduated Response to their strengths and needs. For example some children who may access the Rainbow room at their preference may have tailored experiences such as trips to Supersense and resources specifically ordered through SEND funds such as Disability Access Fund.***
 - 7.11. Identifying resource needs with colleagues and ordering resources that may support groups/individuals.
 - 7.12. Leading/co-designing intervention groups as adult's without key group responsibilities.
 - 7.13. Enhancing ratios when needed and possible.
 - 7.14. Leading on and co-ordinating transition arrangements for children benefitting from enhanced transitions - enabling the voices of people who know the child best.
 - 7.15. Providing up to date and relevant information with regards to the codes of practice.
 - 7.16. Advising and supporting all staff in identifying children with Special Educational Needs and Disability.
 - 7.17. Supporting staff with meeting these children's needs.
 - 7.18. Liaising with parents and other professionals in respect of children with special educational needs and disability. Signposting to other support agencies and making parents aware of entitlements such as Disability Living Allowance if appropriate.
 - 7.19. Following a graduated response, securing funding, referring children to appropriate professionals e.g. Speech Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Family Services as appropriate and with parent/carer permission; complying with statutory timescales and requesting an assessment of the child's needs through a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where appropriate and with parent/carer permission.
 - 7.20. **Line management for support staff, modelling practice, discussing children's support needs and developing an open minded, child led ethos to ensuring children's needs are met and children are feeling**

seen, understood and supported at the nursery. Holding support meetings to discuss forest experience support, risk assessing trips, events and more heightened times of the day such as drop off and pick up. The SENDCo will work with support staff to identify their training needs and interests, encourage their voice in meetings and seek to share the expertise they inevitably develop through such delicate and sensitive work with smaller numbers of children. Some support staff may support in key groups and in main room and some staff may plan, set up and hold interactions in our rainbow room using more specific communication tools or more intentional interactions - for supporting trauma, attachment or more clearly defined boundaries for children who may need this input.

- 7.21. Identifying staff professional development needs – general as well as bespoke training needs related to the current cohort or individual children.
- 7.22. Ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with SEND is collected, recorded and updated.
- 7.23. Ensuring that appropriate individual provision maps, teaching strategies and learning priorities (with regard to specialist advice) are in place.
- 7.24. Celebrating successes and inclusive practice across the team to raise staff wellbeing.
- 7.25. Offer additional support to parents/carers during transitions to schools and other settings, including Primary School Applications. Supporting school deferral requests with parents if appropriate.
- 7.26. Coordinating enhanced setting/school transitions with new class teacher, SENDCo and parents to meet, discuss the child and meet and seek the voice of the child to inform the individualised school transition process. Sharing Universal Transfer Records and supporting documents with next setting/school.
- 7.27. Supporting staff to work towards outcomes outlined in children's EHCP's.

8. Graduated Response (Process of identifying and supporting additional needs):

The SEN Code of Practice (2014) states that:

“a graduated approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a child or young person is experiencing”

The four-step action cycle Assess - Plan - Do - Review is followed to inform the provision, teaching strategies and additional support to be implemented. We use

ordinarily available skills and resources to support children in the first instance (<https://www.bristolearlyyears.org.uk/ordinarily-available-provision/>) and then reflect on what additional steps or support a child may need. An overview of the structure we follow to support a child is detailed below (Figure 2)

- **Assess**

Key person, parent /carer, SENDCo and relevant specialist professionals will meet to share observations of a child's progress, their strengths and areas of difficulties.

- **Plan**

Individual provision map documenting teaching strategies and additional support completed by key person and teacher. Individual learning priorities to work towards at nursery and home are set. These are informed by our professional experience and knowledge and will incorporate recommendations from relevant professionals and parents' views.

- **Do**

Key person, teachers and support staff work closely to deliver support identified, monitor its' effectiveness and record progress towards identified learning priorities.

- **Review**

Progress towards learning priorities and effectiveness of teaching strategies is reviewed regularly with all relevant staff, specialist professionals and parent/carers. New individual learning priorities will be set to maintain progress and offer appropriate challenge.

Additional funding

With parental permission, children who require additional support, beyond what the school can provide through ordinarily available provision, will have a Support Plan (non-statutory) which is compiled by the SENCO, parents/carers, teacher, key person, support staff and any outside agencies. This will be completed along with an application form, risk assessment and an individual provision plan. This paperwork will be submitted to the Bristol Early Years SEND panel to apply for additional funding, enabling us to support the child's needs by increasing the adult to child ratios within the nursery. Panel meets monthly and all paperwork has to be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Allocated funding will be reviewed by the SENDCo or key person using the Early Years SEN Panel's 'Summary of Funding Impact' (SoFI) online form at the point requested by the Panel and a Final Summary of Impact Form (online) ahead of the child leaving the setting for Primary School or when additional support is no longer needed.

Education Health Care Plan (statutory)

When a child has special educational needs and/or disabilities, a child needs more support than the nursery or setting/school they will be moving on to can typically provide or a child is not making progress despite increased support we can request (with parent/carer permission) that the Local Authority carry out an assessment of the child's needs through an Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA). Parents/carers can also make the application for an EHCNA themselves. The Local Authority Special Educational Needs Team will look for "evidence that the child or young person: may have a special educational need and may need specialist help to meet these needs through an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan)."

<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/parents-and-carers/education-health-and-care-plans/ask-for-an-ehc-needs-assessment>

If an assessment is agreed to by the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Team the process will help them decide whether "your child needs provision to be made by the issuing of an EHC Plan." <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/parents-and-carers/education-health-and-care-plans/what-happens-during-an-ehc-needs-assessment>

If they decide not to assess or that an Education Health Care Plan is not appropriate at this stage "you and your child will continue to get support from the education setting through SEND support" <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/parents-and-carers/education-health-and-care-plans/ask-for-an-ehc-needs-assessment>

If a family feels that a specialist provision place would better meet their child's needs than a mainstream primary school, then an EHCP will be needed.

The SENDCo will work closely with the family to apply for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment, completing the application forms, sharing all relevant documentation and liaising with families and professionals throughout the process.

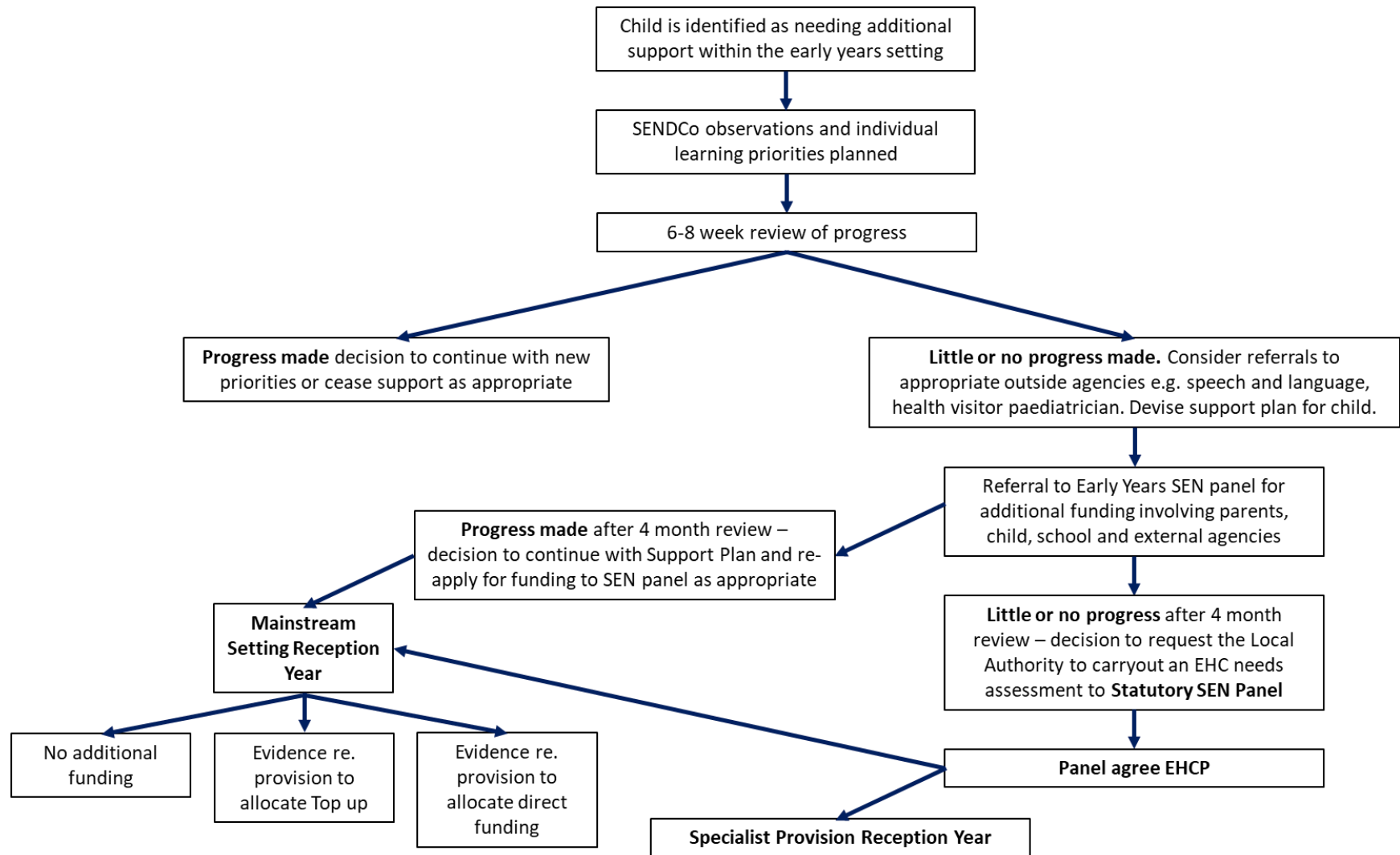


Figure 2.

Speech and Language Therapy

We use available advice and resources from the Sirona Speech and Language Therapy Team to support our understanding of children's speech and language development and to help us assess children's speech and language development. We make use of their age differentiated questionnaires and referral criteria documents to identify stages of development and share this with parents/carers when we feel advice and support is needed or when parents/carers say they have concerns. We regularly invite Sirona Speech and Language Therapists to hold Requested Advice Sessions in nursery. Parents/carers can request an appointment or we may discuss concerns with them and invite them to an appointment. All families are invited to sign a consent form to enable their children to be seen by our speech therapist, we seek further consent and input from parents for children who benefit from more targeted speech/communication support.

We recognise the capacity challenges faced by the Sirona Speech and Language Therapy Team in Bristol and so employ a private Speech and Language Therapist (Anna Chimenti, All Join In Speech and Language Therapy) to help us respond to and meet the needs of children's developing speech, language and interactions. Our Speech and Language Therapist supports us to identify speech and language needs, models strategies to staff and provides staff professional development opportunities, supports meetings with parents/carers, is available to give advice to parents/carers, and has therapeutic interactions with children. She supports us to plan and implement a Total Communication environment to create rich and diverse ways of communicating with children. She works with us on Wednesdays, usually two times a month.

9. Transitions

We recognise that 'moving on' can be difficult for a child with SEND and this may cause anxieties. We take steps to make the transition as smooth as possible. Our Transition Policy sets out how we aim to support children and families to make a positive transition to primary school or to a different early years setting. Support to find out about all types of school and make visits can be arranged and we arrange for the setting staff to visit the child at the nursery. Where possible, a transition meeting with the SENDCo from the receiving school/early years setting, relevant outside agencies, nursery staff and parents /carers will be arranged to make a transition plan and pass on all relevant documentation, including the Universal Transfer Record. This may be face to face or via an online meeting platform such as Microsoft Teams. The child's Support Plan, learning diary and other documentation is shared with the parents/carers and new setting.

10. Developing our understanding of Neurodiversity and Autism at Redcliffe Nursey School.

Autism is a valid lived (neurodiverse) identity for a child or person and should be recognised and celebrated. There are characteristic strengths to autism and autism brings positive attributes to each person in different ways. We hope to work with our autistic children and their families, to provide support and affirming adaptations to our nursery provision when and if necessary. We also recognise that neurodiversity encompasses other neurological variations such as ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourettes Syndrome. Some of these neurological variations (including Autism) may not be identified for children during their time in our nursery. We understand that not all approaches and efforts will work for all children and through continual interaction, observation and reflection we co-learn with our children; starting from each of their strengths is most often a great place to begin. We aim to work with all our children, families and colleagues in a neurodiversity-affirming way.

“The purpose of Education is to find out what you're good at.” Ken Robinson

In the past few years, we have made a concerted effort to develop our empathy and understanding of neurodiversity and autism and to celebrate the strengths and individuality autism and neurodiversity brings to our community. We have attended a variety of practical and theoretical professional development courses. We continue to access professional development opportunities, seek out other inspiration to develop ourselves and hope to learn directly from our wonderful neurodiverse and autistic community present and past about what they want and need.

Our paramount first step is building a trusting relationship and getting to know each child, building up moments of connection in sensitive ways.

In both Blackbirds and seagulls, we have developed quieter, less distracting spaces - The Rainbow room and Sensory Room - to support our autistic and other children when they are feeling overwhelmed to have a non-stimulating space to carry out some smaller group or 1:1 support and a space where they can rest and regulate if needed. We host coffee mornings where possible on topics that feature within or alongside autism to give support to our parents.

Talking tunes

This was devised by the speech therapy team and is an interactive and prop based structured singing intervention which supports children's attention, listening and speech. The structure through which it is led allows many autistic children to feel secure and confident with what is happening. It is also multisensory which is perfect for children who can find giving attention more difficult. This small group approach is used for identified children in both Blackbirds and Seagulls. It can also be delivered in a 1:1 interaction if this is more appropriate to a child at first.

Rainbow Room

Our Rainbow Room is a multi-sensory space which is staffed on a higher adult:child ratio and is open to children across the nursery. It is overseen by the Sendco and our skilled support staff who have specific training and skills relevant to the needs of the children who access the room. We aim to limit the number of children in the space to 8 at any one time to maintain the higher ratio and focused interactions which the room enables. Any child from Blackbirds and Seagulls may access the rainbow room and children who benefit from it often seek out to explore the space and know that they can join it during the day, some more than others.

The space enables us to work in a more tailored and focused way with identified children, supporting co-regulation, intensive interactions, speech, language, play, interaction and skills modelling; it also enables us to respond to emerging or changing need and provides a calmer, quieter space for children to access throughout the day. Some children who find the structured group times of Seagulls overwhelming or challenging may start and end their nursery day in the Rainbow Room. These children have full access to the nursery garden and rooms during free-play times and, where appropriate, we will support them to begin to access their key group during adult-led times. This also enables us to have more frequent, in-depth conversations with parents/carers than is often possible for key people within our ordinary provision in Seagulls and Blackbirds. Some children with higher needs for whom the ordinary nursery provision, and particularly the more structured provision and higher adult to child ratios of Seagulls, is overwhelming or too demanding may spend the majority of their day accessing the Rainbow Room. The Sendco or key person will speak with parents where we feel a child would benefit from accessing the Rainbow Room or already is choosing to access the space.

Interventions such as work-stations for individual children and small group interventions such as Talking Tunes take place within the Rainbow Room in addition to the 'free-play' times. Observations and insights about the interactions, play and emotional regulation needs of the children using the Rainbow Room are shared with their key people and enables us key people to use some of that knowledge when planning for ordinarily available provision and adult-led provision within Blackbirds and Seagulls

The Rainbow Room, how it is used and who accesses it is reviewed as an on-going process throughout the year, enabling us to be responsive to the needs of individual children where possible and to our cohort in general. For example, a child who typically accesses the Rainbow Room intermittently each day may show us through behaviour or emotional regulation changes that they require a more significant amount of time within the Rainbow Room.

Blackbirds has developed a smaller sensory room for the younger children to access each day, providing quieter opportunities for children and key people to be together, have positive interactions and focus on individual children's specific play, communication or emotional regulation needs. This room is multi-functional (sleep room, group time space, quiet parent/carer conversation space) so is not used in the same way as the rainbow Room. Some children in Blackbirds will have individual or small group support in the Sensory Room or other space within Blackbirds as we recognise that they may not be familiar or comfortable with the Rainbow Room during their first year at nursery and benefit from a familiar space with familiar adults; this also takes into account that there are more children requiring additional support and interventions across the whole nursery than the Rainbow Room has capacity to cater for each day.

Workstations

We use workstations as a structure to promote connection and regulation for children who might find self-initiating play tricky during the day and prefer having some guidance. We have adapted the traditional workstation principle to offer to children the structure of some play resources to engage with an adult and give children the sense of calm and familiarity to then engage more confidently in the nursery. Some children benefit from this at the beginning of the day, others find they need to decompress across the day or at the end. We experiment and see how children respond to inform how this evolves for each child, ideally more familiar staff do this with children and we find it regulates children to be able to thrive thereafter.

It enables children to begin to feel secure within a familiar, predictable routine and process, access learning that they may usually find more challenging to access in the free-flow of nursery spaces and can offer an opportunity to provide a new experience through a familiar structured process. We often use workstations as a



way of supporting a child to co-regulate within nursery. We would only explore this with children if they were comfortable and start slowly and build up to three tasks, always noticing and responding to how comfortable the child seems. The child is empowered to lead the process and take their time to complete the activities. With supporting adults gradually stepping back and children being self-sufficient in the process. Children's preferred play patterns, motivations and special interests are taken into account when planning workstation activities.

Play Pathways and Special interests planning

Some of our autistic children have specific play patterns and/or special interests during their time at nursery. We view this as an opportunity for further connection and learning with that child. We plan for children to have lots of opportunities to engage in their play patterns or to extend their special interests. Kerry Murphy has researched-Dr Carmel Conn's paper "'Sensory highs', 'vivid rememberings' and 'interactive stimming': children's play cultures and experiences of friendship in autistic autobiographies," (2015) which introduced the notion of play patterns. In her work with The Early Childhood Neurodiversity Affirming Collective she has developed 'Autistic Play Patterns: Developmental Insight' (2026) (Website: www.diversepathways.org) and states that *'Play should never be used as a mechanism to suggest that a child is failing, or that their play is deficient, disordered, or unskilled because it does not align with adult or pre-defined notions of what play should be. Play is infinite and serves many functions.'*

Whatever we strive to do to promote the entitlement of children in their learning, it has to be meaningful to them and they need to be agents and active in this and not passive recipients. We aim to co-decide with the children, responding when children may be trying to say no or not want to engage with something we are offering. Sometimes, when we are exploring ways to support children we make mistakes and offer something not helpful which may result in dysregulation or a loss of connection, we would try our best to reset this by doing something we know calms a child and regain our connection. These times, although we hope irregular, can be powerful learning moments as they teach us more about the child, their motivations and what they do not need.

Small Adult-led Groups

Where staffing capacity allows Blackbirds and Seagulls key people and support staff, with the support of a sendco, provide opportunities for identified children to engage in individual interventions or small group interventions. These typically take place within free-play time, either in Blackbirds, Seagulls or the garden, and in addition to the intervention groups taking place within the Rainbow Room. They enable us to provide focused opportunities to model and support language, play, social skills and co-regulation.

Communication Support

We strive to have a total communication approach within nursery. This means we aim to find out and use the right combination of communication methods for each child. This approach helps us to form connections, develop and have successful interactions and supports information exchanges and conversations with children. A combination of speech, sign (Makaton), touch, movement, gesture and visual support are used, which reinforce each other and strengthen meaning for the individual. Visual support resources include objects, photos, symbols, social stories and Core Language Boards. We are exploring print and app-based core language boards as we recognise that some children may respond more to an app than print format. Some children will need personalised visual support e.g. specific objects to support transition or core language boards to reflect their specific interests and interaction aims. We use some visual support resources such as core language boards on the advice of professionals such as Speech and Language Therapists for individual children. We are working towards having more of these available in large format e.g. large boards in the garden and smaller format (A4 sized) to support all children to communicate non-verbally when they need or want to.

Physical Interventions

The nursery strives to support children in ways that minimises needs to handle children physically, however, for safety this can, at times, be necessary in order to keep the child, other children or staff safe. Physical intervention will happen after attempts to communicate with a child and use other strategies of support first. Staff have had training on appropriate and safe physical interventions from Team Teach. Our aim is always to de-escalate dysregulated children without physically intervening.

Some children may not understand that some circumstances across the nursery day require certain actions for safety, for example fire drills requiring them to be in the garden in their key group. Fire drills enable us to see instances where children may be unable to judge their own safety and may require additional supports, and potentially physical support. All staff have Team Teach training and have actively practised ways to support children to minimise any physical harm when being manoeuvred for safety. Children who are at higher likelihood of needing physical support will have a PEEP (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan.) This will be discussed with parents and in most cases these children will be funded for extra support through the SEN panel which requires parental agreement and involvement. In the event of physical interventions used by staff this will be communicated with parents.

Please see our Behaviour Policy for more detail on how we respond to challenging behaviour, including physical intervention.

11. Complaints Procedure

If a parent/carer wishes to complain about the provision or the policy, they should, in the first instance, raise it with their key person who will try to resolve the situation. The key person may raise the issue with the SENDCo or Senior Leadership Team who can work in partnership with the parent to resolve the situation.

If the issue cannot be resolved within 10 working days, the parent can submit a formal complaint to the Headteacher in writing or email (head.redcliffe.n@bristolschools.uk). The Headteacher will reply within 10 working days.

For reference, please see our complaints policy:
<https://www.redcliffenurseryschool.co.uk/policies/>

The Office for Disability Issues (Tel: 0845 604 6610) provides information and guidance on the Disability Discrimination Act 2010. This organisation would be able to advise if the concerns relates to an issue of the possible discrimination of a disabled child, which cannot be resolved with the setting. Parents are also able to raise concerns about the SEND provision of the nursery, with the Send and You Team (link 5 below).

12. References:

1. Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care. (2014). SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years.
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2. Department for Education. (2018). Equality Act 2010: advice for schools.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>
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3. Bristol's SEND Local Offer. (2023). <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/web/bristol-local/>
<https://www.bristol.gov.uk/web/bristol-local-offer/homeoffer/home>. [accessed 22.03.2023].
4. Children and Families Act. (2014).

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5. Send and You. (2023). <https://www.sendandyou.org.uk/>. [accessed 23.03.2023].
6. Bristol Parent Carer Forum. (2023). <https://www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk/2021/05/24/flora-brisstols-send-local-offer>. [accessed 23.03.2023].