

Supporting Two Year old children as individuals, some of whom may have additional needs, in Blackbirds.

“What we believe about children, determines how we teach them” (Marilyn Fleer)

Key person

- Each child has a key person, who plans for and especially thinks about them as an individual. The key person will visit the child's home, build a relationship with the parents/carers and liaise with any outside agencies/professionals who may be involved with the child.
- The key person will keep observations of the child in the learning diary and record any areas for concern within the diary in a sensitive way and voice the views of the parents/carers.
- The key person will alert the SENCo (Emma) of any concerns they may have about a child, they would also have opportunity to talk about individual children within their mentoring and seek guidance.
- The key person may attend multi-agency meetings with a family and professionals about a child. We aim to work WITH parents, rather than to parents, so they lead the journey and inform us with the richest knowledge of their child. We strive to build open, honest relationships with families so that we can work together to support the child, and if needed, seek the support they need.
- We have found that all children learning language or with mostly non-verbal communication, benefit from sharing books with an adult. Therefore we feel it is

Other professionals

- We are able to refer children to a range of services with the permission of the parents/carers; speech therapy: children's centre based or if more concerning we can make a clinic referral; CAMHS, Educational Psychology, Play Therapy, Early Years Portage and Inclusion Team, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy. With the support of one of these professionals we are able to make referrals to a Paediatrician or higher level services.

- With the involvement of one or more of the above professionals, if we feel a child is not adequately supported within the standalone provision and through more individualised ways of working, we can apply for Top Up funding to the Early Years Panel. Again this is carried out with the parents as actively as possible. The funding can be used for a particular regular experience such as weekly swimming sessions or an adult to support the child with more targeted speech therapy work for example. Documentation needs to be kept within the diary that reflects the effect of this intervention on the child.

Provision and pedagogy in Blackbirds

- We hold high beliefs and expectations for every child, children are open to participate in all parts of nursery life and we strive to observe all children carefully and be in tune with their ways of communicating, so that children feel we are worthy of interacting with.
- We use our constant observations of children to identify their strengths and interests, using these as a platform from which to plan and inspire the individual child further. We also observe to see if there are any areas of the nursery or parts of the day that cause distress to a child, if so we hope to alter these for an individual child to reduce the anxieties; for example the key person taking the child to the parent in reception to reduce the anxiety of a particular child.
- We have an open doors to the outside provision all of the time, so that children have constant access to the garden. This is based on many beliefs, one of which that outdoors and nature is beneficial for social, emotional and mental health. All children will go out in the community, to the forest and beach, we organise this purposely in smaller groups so that we can be reactive to children on a more individualised basis. All children will go out but not all at the same time or to the same places (see Out and About Policy). We may adapt ratios for some children so that the experience for them meets their involvement levels as well as their safety- for instance we may feel that some children benefit from a 1:1 ratio when out on trips.
- Throughout the day, adults engage with children in their play when invited by the children and adults constantly think of ways to further

empower children and give them responsibility; laying lunch tables, helping with things. This is felt to raise children's self-esteem and sense of responsibility and belonging to Blackbirds.

Using the learning diaries for documenting individual children's holistic journeys

We are required to show we are addressing the challenges that children have and that we are aiming to address these, this is documented in the children's blue files, but as well as being a locked away reference we would like this information to be sensitively represented within the learning and for clarity we have decided to bullet point professional involvement in the back of the diary with dates and any interventions documented.

- Representing the areas where children require support from adults/nursery
- Making the support clear and developments made evidenced.
- Representing other professionals in the diary as part of story of the child
- Concerns about children expressed by parents noted in diary (in positive ways). Areas that require support are featured throughout diary and the opportunities to extend and support this area is reflected and progress shown overtime.

Two year Old check

- We are required to ensure that halfway through the child's year in Blackbirds that any areas of concern for a child have been sensitively addressed and support initiated, as part of a wider requirement for early intervention. This will be evidenced as mentioned, through the diary and within the monthly summary for the child, where a child's area of support is noted and ways actioned to support this are also evident. In the Easter term summaries (mid-point summative assessment) we will make children's progress clear and any areas such as speech, behaviour, physical or emotional with significant delay should be highlighted within

this summary. It should also clearly state actions being made to support this via outside agencies or smaller interventions such as more focused interactions.

- We believe that the Two Year Old Check should involve parents and we aim to have genuine and honest dialogues with parents throughout the year so that any areas of concern are shared with parents and their rich and vital perspectives from home are always sought.

Written by Emma Butcher March 2016