



## **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 impairment; communication or interaction difficulties; developmental or cognitive delay; emotional or social development; or may relate to factors in their 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 raise their sense of self and view of themselves across the nursery community. Acknowledging that all of us learn in different ways and we all have a right to learn in the way that best suits us.

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 aim to identify all children's strengths and interests, learning and developmental needs early on, 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 and at different speeds. There are many factors that can impact achievement and development, that may or may not be a 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. Our mission is to 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, assessment and sometimes diagnosis. We have a duty to promote the strengths and challenge stigma around neurodiversity and a hope that all our children feel safe, understood and supported 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. 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. We would also liaise with the Local Authority and Hope Virtual School when supporting a child in the care of the Local Authority.

### 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 persons, the SENDCo team and support staff (as appropriate).
- 3.6. To provide specific input/experiences/resources, matched to individual needs, in addition to the general nursery provision, for those children identified as having an additional need.
- 3.7. A strong commitment to, and welcome 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 empower them as advocates for their children.
- 3.11. Where possible, we will involve the children themselves in planning and in any decision making that affects them.
- 3.12. To enable children and families to move on from us well equipped for the transition process to their next setting, by liaising and sharing information with key staff in the next setting to help ensure that support, plans and staffing is in place for their start.
- 3.13. We strive to actively listen and engage with those experiencing our professional practice, as highlighted in the Children's and Families Act (2014) [4].

#### 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 observation and getting to know children well. We think creatively about the practical ways in which we support children to share their thoughts, feelings, and make decisions, such as:

- 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 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 and parent's and their 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.
- 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 will be a number of 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 can encourage Parents to seek additional support through the 'Sendias: Send and You' network [5] or FLORA (Bristol's Local SEND offer) [6].
- 5.9. We will find ways to support communication with families when there may be barriers for example by organising interpreters to support conversations.
- 5.10. 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. Support Plans or Education, Health and Care Plans 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. The key person will complete learning diaries and specific support documents e.g. All About Me plans, risk assessments in collaboration with support workers and the SENDCo.
- 6.13. 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.

## 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 not be progressing or whom require additional consideration or where staffing is inadequate to meet needs.
- 7.2. In line with Bristol City Council's Local SEND Offer, we have ongoing discussions with our link Early Years Inclusion lead, to 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 when we provide professional development- so that we are constantly providing positive images and understanding of all children that access our nursery.
- 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 an Audit of Need which provides an ongoing record of children being monitored (3x's year).
- 7.8. Coordinating role and duties of our speech therapist.
- 7.9. Checking on wellbeing of supporting adults, providing space for supervision of supporting adults.
- 7.10. Monitoring equity and opportunities across key groups.
- 7.11. Identifying 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 coordinating 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, complying with statutory timescales and requesting an assessment of the child's needs through a statutory Education Health and Care Plan ( EHCP ) where appropriate.
- 7.20. Identifying bespoke training needs related to current cohort of children. Staff both to extend their own professional development and to ensure 'tailor made' training which is need specific is available when appropriate.
- 7.21. Ensuring that relevant background information about individual children with SEND is collected, recorded and updated.



- 7.22. Ensuring that appropriate individual provision maps, teaching strategies and learning priorities (with regard to specialist advice) are in place.
- 7.23. Celebrating successes and inclusive practice across the team to raise staff wellbeing.
- 7.24. Offer additional support to parents/carers during transitions to schools and other settings, including Primary School Applications. Supporting school deferrals with parents if appropriate.
- 7.25. Coordinating enhanced 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.
- 7.26. 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. An overview of the structure we follow to support a child is detailed below (Figure 2)

### • Assess

Key person, parent /carer, SENCo 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 informed by 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**

Children who require additional support, beyond what the school can provide, 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 a BUDS application form, risk assessment and an individual provision plan. This paperwork will be submitted to the Early Years SEND panel to apply for additional funding, enabling us to support the child's needs by increasing the adult to child ratio. Panel meets monthly and all paperwork has to be submitted at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

### **Education Health Care Plan (statutory)**

For a child who is not making progress, despite SEN support, may request the LA to make an assessment of the child's needs through a statutory Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). If a child and family think that a specialist provision place would be better to meet their child's needs, then an EHCP will be needed. The SENDCo will work closely with the family to apply for this and gather all documentation for a child to strengthen this process.

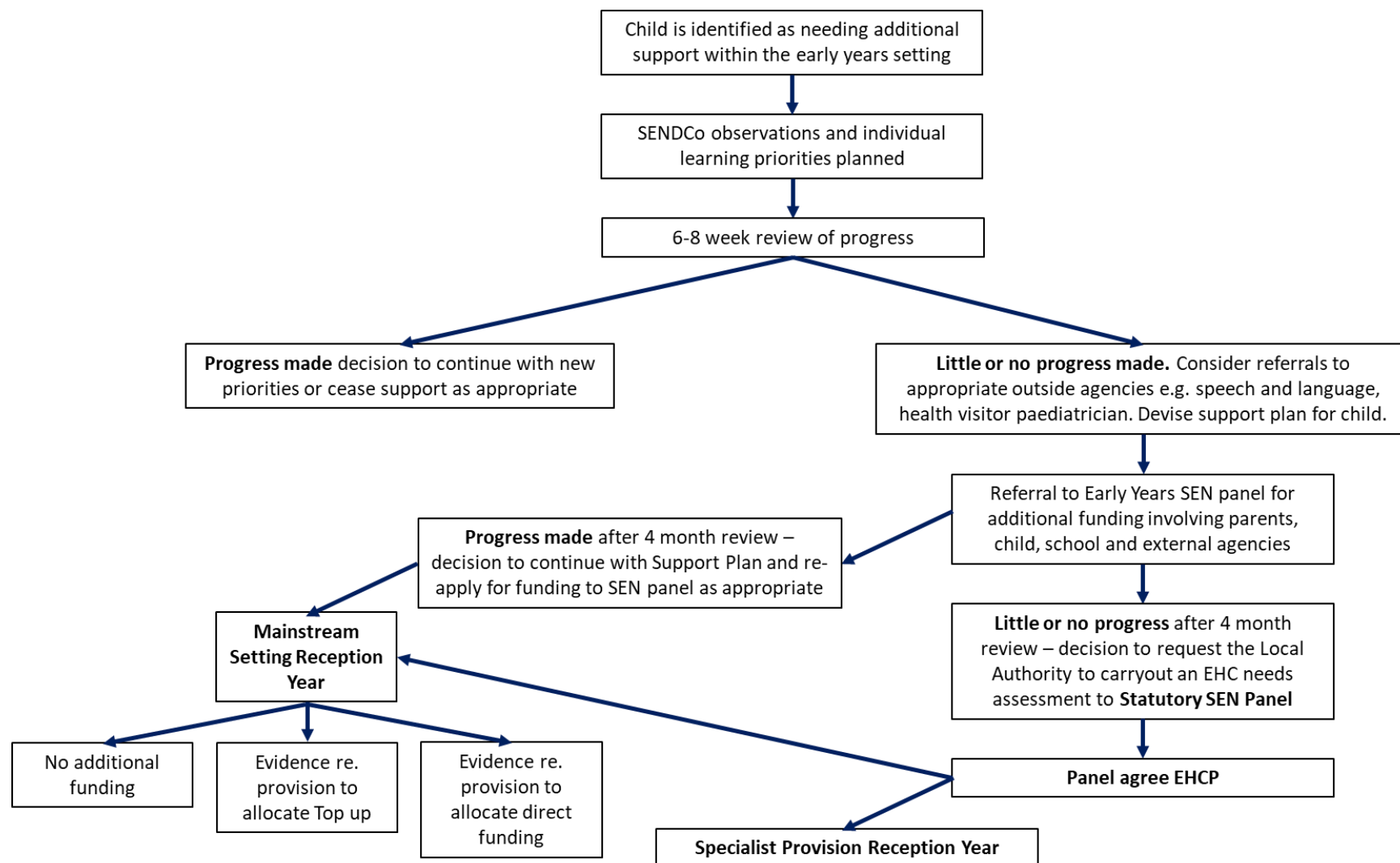


Figure 2.

## 9. Transitions

We recognise that 'moving on' can be difficult for a child with SEND and this may cause anxieties for families and we take steps to make the transition as smooth as possible. We are informed by our Transition Policy. 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. A transition meeting with the SENCo from the receiving school, relevant outside agencies, nursery staff and parents /carers will be arranged to make a transition plan and pass on all relevant documentation. The child's Support Plan, learning diary and other documentation is shared with the parents/carers and new setting.

## 10. Developing our understanding of Autism at Redcliffe Nursey School.

Autism is a valid lived identity for a child or person and should be recognised and celebrated. There are characteristic strengths to autism and being mindful of stereotypes individual ways that autism brings positive attributes to each person and 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 understand that not all approaches and efforts will work for all children and this is why we are constantly in a state of co-learning with our children and starting from each of their strengths is most often, a great place to begin.

**"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 autism and to celebrate the strengths and individuality autism brings to our community. We have attended a variety of practical and theoretical professional development courses; Emma completed the NASEN SENCo Award, Lou, Emma and Josefa have attended a course about Good Autism Practice. Emma has attended a course of sensory regulation for autism and various staff have attended courses about autism with girls, Workstation, More Than Words and sensory courses. We continue to seek out other inspiration to develop ourselves and hope to learn directly from our wonderful autistic community present and past about what they want and need.

**Our paramount first step with any child and especially autistic child, 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 Snug to support our autistic 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.

Josefa is currently developing a role as Autism Champion for the nursery and hoping to help us reflect and challenge ourselves and our practice more in light of autistic rights. This is led by the Bristol Autism Team, who also support us by visiting our autistic children. We also host coffee mornings where possible in areas that feature within or alongside autism to give support to our parents.

## Attention autism

Attention Autism is a programme that we run at nursery for many of our children, particularly those that would benefit from; speech and language support, building up their listening and attention and those that might be or who are autistic. The idea of the programme is to build up attention levels and encouraging the children to be able to focus on activities not of their choice. The sessions move on to turn taking and carrying out tasks independently. Gina Davies created the programme and she has a Facebook page 'Gina Davies Autism Centre' which posts ideas on what can be done. She also includes activities that can be carried out in the home environment. Emma and Lou (our SENCO's) completed the Attention autism training in 2022. The Attention Autism programme begins with stage 1. Use a bucket, bin or bag and place some wind up toys, musical toys and light up toys in there. Basically anything that is simple, motivating and appealing that will capture the child's attention. The main aim at this stage is to teach the child to independently focus on the adult-led agenda and to take the risk of trying something new. Bang the bin whilst singing 'I've got something in my bin, in my bin, in my bin. I've got something in my bin I wonder what it is'. Remove item and play with it for a one minute. Repeat song and remove another item. Of course, things may go wrong. The child may get up and walk off etc. This is okay! We need to accept that the child may take a while to focus. Aim for one minute the first day (finish the session after one toy has been got out) and move on from there.

Rules 1. It's my bucket, it's my toys'.

It may seem mean but only the leading adult is allowed to touch the toys. Many children have single channelled attention so if they are playing with the toys, they are not focusing on you. Keep your distance so little hands don't feel tempted to pick up the toys.

2. Add words gradually

We may instinctively want to start adding in language, but it is important to stay quiet and allow for thinking time. Then gradually increase the language. 'Ooh it's a dog'. 'The dog just flipped'. 'Again'. 'flip'. 'The dog flipped'.

3. Avoid using other reinforcers When carrying out Attention Autism sessions it is important to avoid using other reinforcers in the room at the same time. This is because we want the child to be focusing on the adult led activity and not on their reinforcer. The child can then be given a reinforcer or reward at the end of the session.

4. Repeat and grow the sessions

Aim to carry out the session 4/5 times a week, start at 1 minute and build up slowly. When your child can attend for 5 minutes, you're ready for Stage 2 and remember "if it's fun, they'll come!"



Developing our practice to support the individual or to link learning with what is happening around us. We have found through our developing practice, that Attention Autism can be really effective at supporting children with areas of their wider development, for instance we held a session about tooth brushing to support a child with anxieties around brushing teeth, this really supported her to build confidence and the familiar structure of the session made the idea of tooth brushing feel safe. We have also developed sessions about starting school, to support children who may feel confused or unsure about school to be gradually and supportively introduced to the idea. This is especially helpful for children who are very familiar with the process and who are able to maintain attention for up to stage 3. It can also be used to introduce children to new threads that might be introduced to their key groups and setting the scene for larger group discussion or experiences within a familiar and smaller context to begin with.

## 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.

## Workstation

This is a structured intervention, which often supports a child on individually, it enables children to access learning that they may usually find more challenging to access in the nursery spaces and can offer an opportunity to provide a new experience through a familiar structured process. 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.

### **Special interests planning**

Some of our autistic children have special interests during their time at nursery, rather than viewing this as inappropriate, it can be considered as an opportunity for further connection and learning with that child. We may instead, plan opportunities to extend the special interests and show we value this in the child hoping to encourage positive self-image for the child.

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 the with 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 e hope irregular, can be powerful learning moments as they teach us more about the child and what they do not need.



## 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@bristol-schools.uk](mailto:head.redcliffe.n@bristol-schools.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. Parent's are also able to raise concerns about the SEND provision of the nursery, with the Send and You Team (link 5 below).

## 12. References:

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