



Adventure Pre-School – Special Educational Needs Policy: supporting children

All children deserve the best possible experience in their early lives and within Adventure they must have their needs met in the most appropriate way. Where children have been identified as having additional or Special Educational Needs this way is likely to be unique to the child. As detailed in our Early Identification Policy if there is a concern about a child's development this must be investigated and if needs be a plan put together for their support.

An **agreed action plan** (Individual Education Plan) should be used where:

- universal provision is not helping a child to make progress
- the level of need means that a child is not able to effectively access learning at a level expected of their age
- there are significant or specific barriers to expected developmental milestones that may not be overcome without additional support

This plan must set out:

- targets for progress
- strategies to be used
- views from home, external agencies and setting staff
- external involvement to be sought

The plan should be written to identify and support development in the four areas of need as specified in the SEN Code of Practice (2015):

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical need

Initial plans should be agreed in a meeting where setting and family are represented. The plan must consider the views of the family. Review meetings should involve the setting and family representatives and may also involve external services (in person or by report). This process models the 'plan, do, review' cycle of provision for children with additional needs.

An agreed action plan should be reviewed when the current plan has either clearly aided progress to the point that new targets are needed, has clearly not engaged the child or a period of two months has passed. It is likely that a plan should be reviewed every half term but they must be reviewed every two months.

As much as we agree that targets for children should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed (SMART) we also see that - especially for children with additional needs - these may need to be SMARTish, SMARTaspossible or even SCRUFFY (*see Penny Lacey*).



Not all progress is measurable and not all progress or development can be predicted or anticipated for children with complex additional needs. When setting targets for children with additional and Special Educational Needs we aim for **MICE** targets:

- **M**ore than they can currently do
- **I**mportant to the child and their development
- **C**arefully worded
- **E**asily tracked over a period of time

This helps to ensure targets are relevant but also practical and reflect the complex nature of child development, especially non-typical development.

An action plan is an agreement between the setting and the child's family and must be followed. Alongside this plan, an additional care plan should be agreed to outline what the child needs in terms of their basic needs including:

- Sleep arrangements
- Dietary and fluid requirements
- Personal care and handling
- Comfort and behaviour management
- Medication and emergency action

An individual risk assessment must also be completed.

External services

A child with additional or Special Educational Needs may benefit from the involvement of external services to help identify, support or provide additional resources to meet individual needs.

External agencies should be referred to if:

- the level of need meets thresholds for the agency in question
- strategies are proving ineffective or challenging to implement
- families wish for a referral to be completed

If an external referral is made copies must be kept on file and family contacts must be involved. Parental permission must be gained for almost all referrals.

Adventure is able to refer to the following services:

Area Inclusion Co-ordinator (for all children with identified Special Educational Needs or developing needs); The Portage Service; Speech and Language Therapy Service; Thomas Outreach Programme (TOP); the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (for family support); Specialist Teachers (for visual or hearing impairment); or the Andover Pre-School Advisory Group (which discusses and allocates places at local special nurseries).



Children's families can seek referral to the following services through their Health Visitor and/or GP:

Paediatrician, Physiotherapist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist.

If external agencies become involved, any advice, targets or strategies that are relevant and manageable within the ethos and policies of Adventure should be integrated into an agreed action plan.

Additional Financial Support

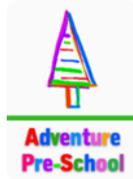
If the strategies set out in the agreed action plan are not proving effective; if additional support at this level is not helping a child to make progress; or if a child has complex needs across a number of areas of need (as defined above); the setting can apply to the Local Authority for additional funding.

This funding process requires extensive evidence of both need and provision and is applied for only if the setting believes the child will meet the threshold. This decision is based on both need and evidence and must be in agreement with children's families and under the advice of the Area Inclusion Co-ordinator. If funds are agreed these are allocated directly to the setting to put in place the agreed action plan and cannot pay for sessions. The funding is usually targeted through additional adult support within Georgie's Den but can also fund additional resources. Funding grants are reviewed usually every six months.

Families may also consider applying for Disability Living Allowance for their child if their child meets the independent criteria. This usually reflects the additional support a parent needs to give beyond that expected of a child of a similar age. It considers support overnight, with everyday tasks such as feeding and dressing as well as safety and mobility criteria. Support is given by the setting should parents wish to apply. Families in receipt of this benefit can allocate an annual payment to the pre-school in addition to current funding through the Disability Access Fund. This funding should be put towards additional support, resources and experiences.

Statutory assessment

If a child's family wish to consider a place at a Special School or feel that a place in mainstream school would need to be formally supported, then discussion around a request for statutory assessment must take place. This would potentially put in place an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) for the child. This offers legal backing for support the child needs and must receive in school. Children with complex Special Educational Needs are currently supported in mainstream schools through either SENSA funding (which the school applies for based on their evidence) or an EHCP.



A request for assessment is a significant undertaking and it is likely that for an application to be accepted by the Local Authority, a child will need to have:

- a significant delay in more than one area of need
- a number of external agency referrals and involvement already in place
- successfully demonstrated a need for additional funding to be allocated to the setting (SEN Inclusion Funding criteria)

The statutory decision-making process takes several months from submission of a request. The management team must raise timescales with families if an application may be in the child's best interest. It is a families' choice whether or when to apply but the setting must advise as to whether in their experience, an application would have appropriate evidence of need and the timings required for completion, submission and potential decision.