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09 Childcare practice policy

Alongside associated procedures in 09.1-09.15 Childcare practice.

Aim

Children are safe, happy, and eager to participate and to learn.

Objectives

- Babies and young children need to form a secure attachment to their key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy and eager to participate and learn. It is their *entitlement* to be settled comfortably into a new environment.
- The needs of part-time children are considered.
- There is a procedure for when children do not settle and for prolonged absences.
- Introductions and induction of the parent is carried out before children start.
- *Prime times* of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and create opportunities for learning. We actively promote British values, inclusion, equality of opportunity and the valuing of diversity.
- We operate a positive behaviour management approach. Behaviour management procedures cover how staff should respond to all aspects of behaviour, including children who exhibit challenging behaviour towards other children. These procedures build on the Early Years Alliance's approach to learning based on three key statements.
 1. Learning is a lifelong process, which enables children and adults to contribute to and shape their world.
 2. We want the curriculum we provide to help children to learn to:
 - be confident and independent
 - be aware of and responsive to their feelings
 - make caring and thoughtful relationships with other people
 - become increasingly excited by, interested in, and knowledgeable and questioning about the world around them.
 3. We provide a wide range of interesting child-chosen and adult-initiated activities which:



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- give children opportunities to use all their senses
- help children of different ages and stages to play together
- help children be the directors of their own learning
- help children develop an inquiring and questioning attitude to the world around them

The *Early Years Foundation Stage* is used as a framework to provide care and learning opportunities for babies and children under two years.

Older Children (2-5 years)

- To feel securely settled and ready to learn, children from two to five years need to form attachments with adults who care for them, primarily to a key person, but with other adults and children too. In this way children feel part of a community of learners; they can contribute to that community and receive from it.

Waiting list and admissions

Our provision is accessible to children and families from all sections of the local and wider community. We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear, and open to all parents who apply for places. The availability of a place at the setting considers staff/child ratios, the age of the child and registration requirements.

- We endeavour to operate in an inclusive manner which enables all children and families to access our services.
- We also have regard for the needs of parents who are:
 - looking to take up work, remain in work or extend their hours of work
 - looking to commence training or education
- We work in partnership with the local authority and other agencies to ensure that our provision is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Services are widely advertised and information is accessible to all sections of the community.
- Where the number of children wanting places exceeds the number of places available a waiting list is operated using clear criteria for allocation of places as detailed in section 09.1 Waiting list and admissions procedure.

Funded places – free entitlement



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All 3- and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 15 hours free childcare each week for 38 weeks of the year. Some eligible 2 year olds are also entitled. Funded places are offered in accordance with national and local codes of practice and adherence to the relevant Provider Agreement/Contract with the local authority.

Legal References

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE and DHSC 2014)

Equality Act 2010

Childcare Act 2006



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09.1 Waiting list and Admissions.

We aim to ensure that all sections of the community receive accessible information, and that our admissions procedures are fair, clear and open to all parents who apply for a place.

- The setting is widely advertised in places accessible to all sections of the community.
- Information about the setting is accessible, using plain English, in written and spoken form and, where appropriate, provided in different community languages and in other formats on request.
- Children with disabilities are supported to take full part in all activities within the setting and the setting makes reasonable adjustments to ensure that this will be the case from the time the child is placed on the waiting list.
- The waiting list is arranged in birth order and in addition may take into account the following:
 - the age of the child with priority being given to children eligible for the free entitlement
 - length of time on the waiting list
 - the vicinity of the home to the setting
 - siblings already attending the setting
 - the capacity of the setting to meet the individual needs of the child
- Funded places are offered in accordance with the Early Years Entitlements: Operational Guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018) and any local conditions in place at the time,
- Where it is financially viable to do so, a place is kept vacant for an emergency admission.
- The setting and its practices are welcoming and make it clear that fathers, mothers, other relations and carers and childminders are all welcome.
- The setting and its practices operate in a way that encourages positive regard for and understanding of difference and ability, whether gender, family structure, class, background, religion, ethnicity or competence in spoken English.
- Section 05 Equality procedures is shared and widely promoted to all.



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Admissions

- Once a childcare place has been offered the relevant paperwork is completed by the setting manager or deputy before the child starts and filed on the child's personal file. Forms completed include:
 - Privacy notice - explains what personal data we collect, why we collect it, how we use it, the control parent/carers have over their personal data and the procedures we have in place to protect it.
 - Childcare registration form - contains personal information about the child and family that must be completed in full prior to the child commencing.

Children with SEND

- The manager must seek to determine an accurate assessment of a child's needs at registration. If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core budget, then an application for SEN inclusion funding must be made immediately.
- Children with identified SEND must be offered a place when one becomes available as with any other child. However, the start date for children with more complex SEND will be determined by the preparations made to ensure the child's safety, well-being and accessibility in the setting. If a child's needs determine that adjustments need to be made, the manager must outline a realistic timeframe for completion, detailing the nature of adjustments e.g. risk assessment, staff training, health care plan and all other adjustments required. The child's safety at all times is paramount.
- At the time of registration, the manager must check to see if a child's family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance, if so, the manager must ask for evidence to enable them to claim the Disability Access Fund directly from the local authority. If the family is eligible but not in receipt of the allowance, the setting manager will support the family in their application. More information can be found at www.gov.uk/disability-living-allowance-children/how-to-claim.
- Preparation for admitting a child with SEND must be made in a reasonable amount of time and any delay in the child starting is scrutinised by the setting manager to avoid discrimination and negative impact on the child and family. During a preparation period the family and relevant agencies and the local authority must be regularly updated on the progress of the preparations.

Safeguarding/child protection

If information is provided by the parents that a child who is starting at the setting is currently, or has had



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involvement with social care, the designated person will contact the agency to seek further clarification.

Parents are advised on how to access the setting's policies and procedures.

Further guidance

Early Years Entitlements: Operational guidance for local authorities and providers (DfE 2018)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/718181/

[Early_years_entitlements-operational_guidance.pdf](#)



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09.2 Absence

We take steps to ensure that children are kept safe, that their wellbeing is promoted, and they do not miss out on their entitlements and opportunities. At the very least, good attendance promotes good outcomes for children. In a small minority of cases, good attendance may also lead to early identification of more serious concerns for a child or family.

There are several reasons why a child may be absent from a setting. In most cases it is reasonable to expect that parents/carers alert the setting as soon as possible, or in the case of appointments and holidays give adequate notice. Parents are advised that they should contact the setting within one hour of the time the child would have been expected to advise of their absence. Designated persons must also adhere to Local Safeguarding Partners (LSP) requirements, procedures and contact protocols for children who are absent or missing from childcare.

- If a child who normally attends fails to arrive on 2 consecutive days and no contact has been received from their parents, the designated person, takes immediate action to contact them to seek an explanation for the absence and be assured that the child is safe and well.
- If no contact is made with the parents and there is no means to verify the reason for the child's absence i.e. through a named contact on the child's registration form, this is recorded as an unexplained absence on the child's personal file and is followed up by the manager each day until contact is made.
- If contact has not been made within three working days, children's services will be contacted for advice about making a referral. Other relevant services maybe contacted as per LSP procedures.
- All unauthorised absences are recorded on the child's personal file once contact has been made.
- Absence records are retained for at least three years, or until the next Ofsted inspection following a cohort of children moving on to school.

If at any time further information comes to light that gives cause for concern, procedure 06.1 Responding to safeguarding or child protection concerns is immediately followed.

Safeguarding vulnerable children

- The designated person or key person attempts to contact the parents to establish why the child is absent. If contact is made and a valid reason given, then a note is made in the child's file.



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- Any relevant professionals involved with the child are informed, e.g. social worker/family support worker.
- If contact is made and the designated person is concerned that the child is at risk, the relevant professionals are contacted immediately. The events, conversation and follow-up actions are recorded. If contact cannot be made, the designated person contacts the relevant professionals and informs them of the situation.
- If the child has current involvement with social care, the social worker is notified on the day of the unexplained absence.
- If at any time information comes to light that gives cause for concern, 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures are followed immediately.

Safeguarding

- If a child misses three consecutive sessions and it has not been possible to make contact, the designated person calls Social Care and makes a referral if advised.
- If there is any cause for concern i.e. the child has a child protection plan in place or there have been previous safeguarding and welfare concerns, the designated person attempts to contact the child's parent/carer immediately. If no contact is made, the child's absence is logged on the Safeguarding incident reporting form, and Social Care are contacted immediately, and safeguarding procedures are followed.

Poor/irregular attendance

Whilst attendance at an early years setting is not mandatory, regular poor attendance may be indicative of safeguarding and welfare concerns that should be followed up.

- In the first instance the setting manager should discuss a child's attendance with their parents to ascertain any potential barriers i.e. transport, working patterns etc and should work with the parent/s to offer support where possible.
- If poor attendance continues and strategies to support are not having an impact, the setting manager must review the situation and decide if a referral to a multi-agency team is appropriate.



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- Where there are already safeguarding and welfare concerns about a child or a child protection plan is in place, poor/irregular attendance at the setting is reported to the Social Care worker without delay.

In the case of funded children the local authority may use their discretion, where absence is recurring or for extended periods, taking into account the reason for the absence and impact on the setting. The setting manager is aware of the local authority policy on reclaiming refunds when a child is absent from a setting.



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09.3 Prime times – The role of the key person

'Each child must be assigned a key person' (EYFS 2023)

Young children need to form a secure attachment to key person when they join the setting to feel safe, happy, and eager to participate and learn.

The key person role

- A key person builds an on-going relationship with the child and his/her parents and is committed to that child's well-being while in the setting.
- Every child that attends has a Key person, the children are observed to see who they build a bond with and form strong attachments to.
- Where possible a 'back up' key person is also identified for each child so that they can fulfil the role in the absence of the main key person, for example, during annual leave or sickness.
- The key person conducts the progress check at age two for their key children.
- The role is fully explained to parents on induction and the name of the child's key person and 'back up' key person is recorded on the child's registration form.
- The key person is central to settling a child into the setting. The setting manager and key person explain the need for a settling in process and agree a plan with the parents.
- Shift patterns and staff absence can affect a child who is just settling in; where possible, settling in should be matched to when the key person is on duty.
- The number of children for each key person takes into account the individual needs of children and the capacity of the key person to manage their cohort; it is also influenced by part-time places and part time staff. The setting manager should aim for consistency i.e. matching part-time staff to part-time children; full-time children should not be divided between key persons during the week.
- The key person spends time daily with his or her key group to ensure their well-being.

Parents

- Key persons are the first point of contact for parents with regard to matters concerning their child and any concerns parents may have are addressed with the key person in the first instance.
- Key persons support parents in their role as the child's first and most enduring educators.



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- The key person is responsible for the child's developmental records, completing the progress check at age two, and for sharing information about progress with the child's parents.

Learning and development

- The key person helps to ensure that every child's learning and care is tailored to meet their individual needs. This is achieved through regular observation and assessment of children, using information gathered about their achievements, interests and learning styles to plan for each individual child's learning and development.
- If a child's progress in any of the prime areas gives cause for concern, the key person must discuss this with the setting manager or SendCO and the child's parents.

Prime times

The key person role is explained further in the prime time procedures (09.4/6/7/8/10/14); the key person also maintains other responsibilities for key children including administering medication and signing accident records.

Back-up key person

- The role of the back-up key person is to step in when the main key person is absent or unavailable to provide a stable and consistent care relationship for the child.
- The back-up key person is identified when the child starts but is not introduced to the child until an attachment is beginning to form with the key person.
- The back-up key person gradually forms a relationship with the child until the child is happy to be cared for by this person.
- The back-up key person shares information with parents in the key person's absence and makes notes in the child's records where appropriate.
- The back-up key person ensures information is shared with the key person.

Safeguarding children

- The key person has a responsibility towards their key children to report any concern about their development, welfare or child protection matter to the setting manager and to follow the procedures in this respect.
- Regular supervision with the setting manager provides further opportunities to discuss the progress and welfare of key children.



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- The back-up key person has a duty likewise.



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09.4 Intimate care and nappy changing

Prime times of the day make the very best of routine opportunities to promote 'tuning-in' to the child emotionally and to create opportunities for learning. Nappy changing times are key times in the day for being close and promoting security as well as for communication, exploration and learning.

Nappy changing records.

- Very soft, watery stools are signs of diarrhoea; strict hygiene needs to be carried out in cleaning the changing area to prevent spread of infection. After 2 episodes of soft stools in close succession or those that are very watery and in association with a child appearing unwell the parent should be called immediately to collect their child, and not return until the child has been clear of the last episode for **48 hours**.
- If the child does not pass a stool, or if he/she strains to do so, or is passing hard or shiny stools, the parents will be informed as the child may be constipated.
- A stool that is an unusual colour can usually be related to the food that was eaten, so it is important that this is noted and relayed to parents. However, a stool that is black, green or very white indicates a problem, and the child should be taken to the doctor.
- Sometimes a child may have a sore bottom. If this happens, the adult must tell a senior staff member so it can be relayed discreetly to the parent.

Young children, intimate care and toileting

- Wherever possible, key persons undertake changing young children in their key groups.
- Changing areas are warm, appropriately sited and there are safe areas to lay young children if they need to have their bottoms cleaned.
- If children refuse to lie down for nappy change, they can be changed whilst standing up, providing it is still possible to clean them effectively.
- There are nappy sacks., wipes and PPE available in the storage box in the nappy changing area.



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- Key persons ensure that nappy changing is relaxed and a time to promote independence in young children.
- Young children are encouraged to take an interest in using the toilet; they may just want to sit on it and talk to a friend who is also using the toilet.
- They are encouraged to wash their hands and have soap and paper towels to hand. They should be allowed time for some play as they explore the water and the soap.
- Anti-bacterial hand wash liquid or soap should not be used by young children, as they are no more effective than ordinary soap and water.
- Key persons are gentle when changing and avoid pulling faces and making negative comment about the nappy contents.
- Wipes or cotton wool and water are used to clean the child, these along with nappies are to be supplied by parents/carers. Where cultural practices involve children being washed and dried with towels, staff aim to make reasonable adjustments to achieve the desired results in consultation with the child's parents. Where this is not possible it is explained to parents the reasons why. The use of wipes or cotton wool and water achieves the same outcome whilst reducing the risk of cross infection from items such as towels that are not 'single use' or disposable.
- Staff do not make inappropriate comments about young children's genitals when changing their nappies.
- Older children use the toilet when needed and are encouraged to be independent.
- Members of staffs do not wipe older children's bottoms unless there is a need, or unless the child has asked. This is in preparation for school readiness.
- Key persons are responsible for changing where possible. However, if a different staff member is required to take over in the key person's absence, they must be briefed as to their responsibilities towards designated children, so that no child is inadvertently overlooked and that all children's needs continue to be met.



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- Parents are encouraged to provide enough changes of clothes for 'accidents when children are potty training.
- If young children are left in wet or soiled nappies/pull-ups in the setting, this may constitute neglect and will be a disciplinary matter.

Nappy changing is always done in an appropriate/designated area. Children are not changed in play areas or next to snack tables.

Sensitive conversations

From time to time it will be necessary to discuss with a parent their child's toileting, when this happens the following procedure will be followed.

- A member of staff will ask to speak to the parent and offer a quiet space to do so away from other parents.
- Language that is used will be factual and sensitive.
- All staff will avoid commenting on the child's toileting negatively in front of the child.
- If a private conversation is required without the child present, then this should be arranged.
- At hand over time, **any** toileting messages should be relayed discretely and with sensitivity.



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09.5 Promoting positive behaviour

Positive behaviour is located within the context of the development of children's personal, social and emotional skills and well-being. A key person who understands children's needs, their levels of development, personal characteristics, and specific circumstances, supports this development. This ensures children's individual needs are understood and supported.

Settling into a new environment is an emotional transition for young children especially as they learn to develop and master complex skills needed to communicate, negotiate and socialise with their peers. Skills such as turn taking and sharing often instigate minor conflicts between children as they struggle to deal with powerful emotions and feelings.

During minor disputes, key persons help children to reflect and regulate their actions and, in most instances, children learn how to resolve minor disputes themselves. However, some incidents are influenced by factors, requiring a strategic approach especially if the behaviour causes harm or distress to the child or others. These situations are managed by the Sendco/key person using a stepped approach which aims to resolve the issue and/or avoid the behaviour escalating and causing further harm.

This is an unsettling time for young children. Practitioners are alert to the emotional well-being of children who may be affected by the disruption to their normal routine. Where a child's behaviour gives cause for concern, practitioners take into consideration the many factors that may be affecting them. This is done in partnership with the child's parents/carers and the principles of this procedure are adhered to

The setting manager/SENCO will:

- ensure that all new staff attend training on behaviour management available via Noodle Now free to all staff.
- help staff to implement procedure Promoting positive behaviour in their everyday practice
- advise staff on how to address behaviour issues and how to access expert advice if needed

Rewards and sanctions

Children need consistent messages, clear boundaries and guidance to intrinsically manage their behaviour through self-reflection and control.

Rewards such as excessive praise and stickers are not used at West Hill Pre-School.

Children are never labelled, criticised, humiliated, punished, shouted at or isolated by removing them from the group to be left in 'time out' or on a 'naughty chair'. If a child is distressed or causing harm to others, it may help to remove them from the immediate environment where the incident occurred. They should be



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taken to a quiet area by their key person for up to 5 minutes to help them calm down. If appropriate, the key person can use this time to help the child reflect on what has happened.

Physical punishment of any kind is never used or threatened which could adversely affect a child's well-being. If staff become aware that another person has given corporal punishment to a child, they follow 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' procedures.

Physical intervention to safeguard a child/children must be carried out as per the guidance in this procedure.

Step 1

- The setting manager, SENCo and other relevant staff members are knowledgeable with, and apply the procedure Promoting positive behaviour.
- Unwanted behaviours are addressed using an agreed and consistently applied approach to deescalate situations
- Behaviours that result in concern for the child and/or others must be discussed by the key person, SENCo/setting manager. During the meeting the key person must use their all-round knowledge of the child and family to share any known influencing factors such as a new baby in the family, child and/or parental illness, underlying additional needs to help place the child's behaviour into context.
- Appropriate adjustments to practice must be agreed within the setting. If relevant, a risk assessment should be carried out.
- If the adjustments are successful and the unwanted behaviour does not reoccur or cause concern then normal monitoring can resume.

Step 2

- If the behaviour remains a concern, then the key person and SENCo must liaise with the parents to try to discover possible reasons for the behaviour and to agree next steps. If relevant and appropriate the views of the child must be sought and considered to help identify a cause.
- If a cause for the behaviour is not known or only occurs whilst in the setting, then the setting manager/SENCo must suggest using a focused intervention approach to identifying a trigger



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for the behaviour such as the ABC approach, i.e. Antecedents – what happened before; Behaviour – what was the behaviour observed; Consequences – what happened after the event.

- If a trigger is identified, then the SENCo and key person must meet with the parents to plan support for the child through a graduated approach via SEN support.
- Aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a staff member intervening immediately to stop the behaviour and prevent escalation using the agreed initial intervention approach. If the behaviour has been significant or may have a detrimental effect on the child, the parents of the victim of the behaviour and the parents of the perpetrator must be informed. If the setting has applied a physical intervention, they must follow the guidance as set out below. The designated person completes Safeguarding incident reporting form and contact Ofsted if appropriate. A record of discussions is recorded and parents are asked to sign.
- Parents must also be asked to sign risk assessments where the risk assessment relates to managing the behaviour of a specific child.
- If relevant, actions for dealing with the behaviour at home are agreed with parents and incorporated into the action plan. Other staff are informed of the agreed interventions and help implement the actions. The plan must be monitored and reviewed regularly by the key person/SENCo until improvement is noticed.
- Incidents and intervention relating to unwanted/challenging behaviour by children must be clearly and appropriately logged on SEN Support - Action plan.

Step 3

If despite applying initial intervention to deescalate situations and focused interventions to identify triggers the child's behaviour continues to occur and/or is of significant concern, the SENCo and key person invite the parents to a meeting to discuss external referral and next steps for supporting the child. It may be agreed that the setting request support from the Early Help team and/or other specialist services such as the Area SENCo. This will help address most developmental or welfare concerns. If the behaviour is part of other welfare concerns that include a concern that the child may be suffering or likely to suffer significant



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harm, safeguarding procedures 06 Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures must be followed immediately.

- Advice provided by external agencies is incorporated in SEN Support: Action Plan and regular multi-disciplinary meetings held to review the child's progress.
- If a review determines a statutory assessment may be needed then all relevant documentation must be collected in preparation for an Education Health and Care Assessment which may lead onto an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Use of physical intervention

Staff will already use different elements of physical contact with a child as part of their interaction in the setting especially when they are comforting a child or giving first aid. However, physical intervention to keep a child or other children safe is different and should only be applied in exceptional circumstances.

The EYFS states that physical intervention from a staff member towards a child may be used for the purposes of "averting immediate danger of personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if it is absolutely necessary".

Staff must do all they can to avoid using a physical intervention because this is not the preferred way of addressing children's behaviour.

To offer protection to children a range of appropriate graded interventions may be needed before physical intervention is applied. Most single incidents such as a child throwing a book on the floor or kicking a chair usually only require a verbal intervention from a member of staff. In other situations, an intervention can be applied through mechanical and environmental means such as locking doors and stair gates. This usually stops a situation escalating.

However, there will be some situations where a child places themselves or others in danger which requires an immediate need for the use of both verbal and physical intervention. If a single or persistent incident requires a physical intervention such as physical handling from a staff member towards a child, then this is used intentionally to restrict a child's movement against their will. In most cases this can be applied through the use of the adult's body gently and safely blocking the child from access to danger or to prevent danger.

To physically intervene, a practitioner may use "reasonable force" to protect a child from injuring themselves or others. Legally a practitioner may also use reasonable force to prevent a child from damaging property. However, we would expect that in instances of damaging physical property a child would only experience a physical intervention if the broken property presented a risk or is high value.



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If a situation arises which requires urgent physical hands-on intervention this is best applied by the staff who knows the child well such as their key person who is more able to calm them or use other known methods for defusing situations without physical intervention.

Physical handling

We use the principle of applying reasonable minimal force and handling in proportion to the situation. Staff use as little force as necessary to maintain safety. This intervention should only be used for as short a period as possible to keep the child safe and maintain well-being by aiming for:

- keeping the child's safety and well-being paramount
- a calm, gentle but firm approach and application of the intervention
- never restricting the child's ability to breathe
- side-by-side contact with the child
- no gap between theirs or the child's body
- keeping the adults back as straight as possible
- avoiding close head-to-head positioning to avoid injury to the child and themselves (head butting)
- only holding the child by their 'long' bones to avoid grasping at the child's joints where pain and damage are most likely to occur
- avoiding lifting the child unless necessary
- reassuring the child and talking about what has happened
- only applying a physical intervention on a disabled child if training or preferred method is provided from a reputable external source e.g. British Institute of Learning Disabilities www.bild.org.uk/

Risks

There are risks associated with any physical intervention and handling of a child. The younger and more vulnerable a child may be, the greater risk to the child of using physical intervention towards them. However, there are also risks to children associated with not intervening physically; for instance, if a practitioner did not take hold of a child by the wrist, they may have run into the path of a fast-moving car.



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Before intervening physically to protect a child from immediate harm a practitioner needs to decision make in a split second, considering the following factors. This is described as dynamic risk assessment.

- What is the immediate risk to this child if I do not intervene now?
- What might the risks be if I do intervene? If this was my child, what would I want someone looking after them to do in this situation?
- What is the minimum level of intervention that will be effective here? How can I do this as gently as possible for as short a time as possible and how am I going to manage myself to stay calm?

Recording

Any instance of physical intervention is fully recorded immediately and reported to the designated person as soon as possible on the Safeguarding incident reporting form, ensuring that it is clearly stated when and how parents were informed. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the form which is then kept on the child's file. The designated person decides who will notify the parent and when, ensuring that the parent signs to say they have been notified. An individual risk assessment should be completed after any physical intervention with a child which considers the risks and likelihood of such behaviour re-occurring and how this will be managed. The risk assessment should be agreed and signed by parents.

Temporary suspension (fixed term)

Any decision to temporarily suspend a child must be carefully considered lawful, reasonable and fair. If despite following the stepped approach for behaviour it is necessary to temporarily suspend a child, for no more than five days, on the grounds of health and safety, the following steps are followed.

- The setting manager provides a written request to suspend a child to the Committee; the request must detail the reason why the child must be suspended and the length of time of the proposed suspension.
- If the Committee approves, the parents must be invited to a meeting to discuss next steps. Parents are invited to bring a representative along. Notes must be taken at the meeting and shared later with the parents. The meeting must aim for a positive outcome for the child and not to suspend.
- If no acceptable alternative to suspension is found then the setting manager must give both verbal and written notice of time related suspension to the parent, meanwhile the setting manager must ensure that continued resolution is sought and suitable adjustments are in place for the child's return.

Suspension of a disabled child



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We have a statutory duty not to discriminate against a child on the basis of a protected characteristic. This includes suspending a child based on a disability. Ignorance of the law or claiming it was unknown that a child was disabled is no defence. However, if the child's behaviour places themselves or others at risk then the setting must take actions to avoid further harm. Time limited suspension may be applied to keep the child and/or others safe whilst finding a solution. Suspension is only used if reasonable steps and planned adjustments are first used to help resolve the situation. Without this action, suspension of a child with SEND may constitute disability discrimination (Equality Act 2010). A decision to suspend a disabled child must be clearly evidenced, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and targeted.

Plans and intervention must be recorded on the child's file and 9.12b SEN Support - Action plan. If little or no progress is made during the suspension period, the following steps are taken.

- The setting manager sends a written/electronic invite to the parents, a local authority representative and any relevant external agencies to attend a review meeting. Each attendee must be made aware that the meeting is to avoid the situation escalating further and to find a positive solution.
- After the meeting the setting manager continues to maintain weekly contact with the parents and local authority to seek a solution.
- Suitable arrangements offer the parent continued support and advice during the suspension. The setting manager reviews the situation fortnightly and provides The Committee with a monthly update.

Expulsion

In some exceptional circumstances a child may be expelled due to:

- if despite applying a range of interventions (including reasonable adjustments), the setting has been unable to adequately meet the child's needs or cannot protect the health, safety and well-being of the child and/or others.

Challenging unwanted behaviour from adults in the setting

We do not tolerate behaviour demonstrating dislike, prejudice, discriminatory attitudes or action towards any individual/group. This includes those living outside the UK (xenophobia). This also applies to behaviour towards specific groups of people and individuals who are British Citizens residing in the UK.

Allegations of discriminatory remarks or behaviour made in the setting by any adult will be taken seriously. The perpetrator will be asked to stop the behaviour and failure to do so may result in the adult being asked to leave the premises. Where a parent makes discriminatory or prejudice remarks to staff at any time, or other persons while on the premises, this is recorded on the child's file and is reported to the setting



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manager. The procedure is explained, and the parent is asked to comply while on the premises. An 'escalatory' approach will be taken with those who continue to exhibit this behaviour. The second stage comprises a letter to the parent requesting them to sign a written agreement not to make discriminatory remarks or behave in discriminatory or prejudice ways; the third stage may be considering withdrawing the child's place.



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09.6 Identification, assessment and support for children with SEND

We have regard for the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) which state that local authorities must ensure that all early years providers that they fund in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors are aware of the requirement on them to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities. When securing funded early education for two, three- and four-year-olds local authorities should promote equality and inclusion for children with disabilities or SEN; this includes removing barriers that prevent access to early education and working with parents to give each child support to fulfil their potential. During the Covid outbreak we will review and update children's SEN support plans more frequently to ensure their progress and well-being.

The term SEN support defines arrangements for identifying and supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We are required to offer appropriate support and intervention and to promote equality of opportunity for children that we care for. Children's SEND generally falls within the following four broad areas of need and support:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Graduated approach

Initial identification and support (identifying special educational needs)

- Ongoing formative assessment forms part of a continuous process for observing, assessing, planning and reviewing children's progress.
- Children identified as having difficulty with one or more area of development should be given support by applying some simple strategies and resources.
- For most children application of some simple differentiation approaches will be enough to build confidence and help the child develop, SEN Support: Initial record of concern form can be used for this purpose.
- If despite applying differentiated strategies a child continues to struggle and is showing significantly more difficulty with learning than their peers or has a disability which requires



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specific adjustments, then the key person should raise a concern with the setting's SENCo/setting manager and the child's parents.

Observation and assessment of children's SEN

Where a child appears to be behind expected levels, or their progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should consider all the information about the child's learning and development from within and beyond the setting.

- Information can be collated from formal checks such as the progress check at age two, observations from parents and observation and assessment by the setting of the child's progress.
- When specialist advice has been sought externally, this is used to help determine whether or not a child has a special educational need (SEN).
- The child's key person and SENCo/Manager use this information to decide if the child has a special educational need.
- If the decision is that the child does have a SEN and the parents are not already aware of a concern, then the information is shared with them. Once parents have been informed, they should be fully engaged in the process, contributing their insights to all future actions for their child.

Planning intervention

- Everyone involved with the child should be given an opportunity to share their views. Parents should be encouraged to share their thoughts on the child's difficulties and be involved in the decision as to what will happen next.
- A first intervention option may be to carry on with applying differentiated support and to review the child's progress at an agreed date. If the child's needs are more complex, then the decision maybe to go straight ahead and prepare SEN support: Action plan with detailed evidence-based interventions being applied straight away and simultaneously external referrals made.
- If relevant, then the child should be appropriately included in development of the action plan but only at a level which reflects their stage of comprehension.



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- SEN support: Action plan described below, ensures that children that are identified, or suspected of having a SEN will receive the right level of support and encouragement with their learning and development as early as possible.

Involving the child

- The SEND Code of Practice supports the rights of children to be involved in decisions about their education.
- Inclusion of children with SEND helps build self-confidence and trust in others.
- Ascertaining children's views may not be easy, a range of strategies will be needed.
- Accurate assessment helps identify children's strengths and possible barriers to learning.
- The key person and setting manager/SENCo work in partnership with parents and other agencies to involve the child wherever appropriate.
- Children are involved at appropriate stages of the assessment and to their level of ability.
- Establishing effective communication is essential for the child's involvement.

SEN action plan

- SEN support: Action plan, should show what support is required to help achieve outcomes for the child and detail the frequency of these interventions and who will apply them and with what resources.
- A review date (at least termly) should be agreed with the parents so that the child's progress can be reviewed against expected outcomes and next steps agreed.
- A copy of the plan is stored in the child's file so that any other member of staff or an inspector looking at the file will see how the child is progressing and what interventions have been or are being applied.
- If a child requires specific medical interventions during their time in the setting Health care plan form should also be completed and integrated into the general plans to ensure the child's medical needs are known and safely met.
- The action plan should provide an accessible summary of the child's needs, which can be used if further assessment is required including a statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) Assessment, and development of an EHC plan.

Drawing up a SEN action plan



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- If external agencies are already involved at this stage, then they should also be invited to help decide on what appropriate interventions are needed to help meet outcomes for the child. The SENCo/setting manager should take the lead in coordinating further actions including preparation of the action plan and setting short-term targets.
- Where there are significant emerging concerns (or an identified special educational need or disability) targeted action plans are formulated that relate to a clear set of expected outcomes and stretching targets.
- SEN support: Action plan, highlights areas in which a child is progressing well; areas in which some additional support might be needed and any areas where there is a concern that a child may have a developmental delay (which may indicate a special educational need or disability). It describes the activities and strategies the provider intends to adopt to address any issues or concerns.
- Planned intervention should be based on the best possible evidence and have the required impact on progress with longer-term goals covering all aspects of learning and development and shorter-term targets meeting goals.
- The plan should focus on the needs of the child, the true characteristics, preferences, and aspirations of the child and involvement of the parents with a clear set of targets and expected outcomes for the child. Effective planning at this stage should help parents and children express their needs, wishes, and goals:
 - focus on the child as an individual and not their SEN label
 - be easy for children to understand and use clear ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon
 - highlight the child strengths and capacities
 - enable the child, and those who know them best, to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in the future
 - tailor support to the needs of the individual
 - organise assessments to minimise demands on families
 - bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach
- If the child fails to make progress and multi-agency support is sought, then it is at this point that Early Help/CAF assessment should be considered.



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Record keeping

If a child has or is suspected of having a SEN, a dated record should be kept of:

- the initial cause for concern and the source of this information, (the progress check at age two and/or outcomes of previous interventions). SEN support: Initial record of concern form can also be used for this purpose drawing information from other sources
- the initial discussion with parents raising the possibility of the child's SEN
- the views of the parents and other relevant persons including, wherever possible, the child's views;
- the procedures followed with regard to the Code of Practice to meet the child's SEND e.g. SEN action plan, referrals to external agencies and for statutory assessment
- evidence of the child's progress and any identified barriers to learning
- advice from other relevant professionals; and all subsequent meetings with parents and other persons and any subsequent referrals

Records may include

- observation and monitoring sheets
- expressions of concern
- risk assessments
- access audits
- health care plans (including guidelines for administering medication)
- SEN action plans
- meetings with parents and other agencies
- additional information from and to outside agencies
- agreements with parents
- guidelines for the use of children's individual equipment; Early help CAF referrals
- referral to the local authority identifying a child's special educational needs and request for statutory Education, Health, Care (EHC) needs assessment; and a copy of an EHC plan

Seeking additional funding



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If the child's needs cannot be met from within the setting's core funding, then it will be at this point that the evidence collated will be used to apply for enhanced funding from the local authority's inclusion fund. If a new or existing child is disabled, then the setting should check if the family is in receipt or have applied for Disability Living Allowance. If so, the setting will be able to apply to their local authority for the local Disability Access Fund.

Statutory education, health and care (EHC) assessment and plan

Statutory assessment

- If a child has not made progress, then the next steps may be for the child to undergo an Education, Health and Care Assessment.
- If a child is under compulsory school age, the local authority will conduct an EHC needs assessment if they consider that the child's needs cannot be met within the resources normally available to the early years setting.
- Children aged under age two are eligible where an assessment has indicated that the child is likely to have SEN which requires an EHC plan when they reach compulsory school age.
- When a child's needs appear to be sufficiently complex, or the evidence suggest specialist intervention then the local authority is likely to conclude that an EHC plan is necessary
- The local authority should fully involve the parent and must seek advice from the setting in making decisions about undertaking an EHC assessment and preparing an EHC plan.
- Settings should prepare by collating information about the child's SEND including:
 - documentation on the child's progress in the setting
 - interventions and support provided to date
 - evidence of external agency assessment, support and recommendations
 - parental views and wishes (and where appropriate those of the child)

The information will then be submitted to the local authority to allow them to accurately assess the child in the context of the support already given.

- The local authority must inform the child's parents of their decision within six weeks of receiving a request for an assessment and give its reasons for their decision. If the local authority decides to conduct an assessment, it must ensure the child's parents are fully included right from the beginning and are invited to contribute their views. If the local authority subsequently decides not to conduct an



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assessment it must then inform the parents of their right to appeal that decision, of the requirement for them to consider mediation should they wish to appeal.

- If the local authority decides that a statutory EHC plan is not necessary, it must notify the parents and inform the provider, giving the reasons for the decision. This notification must take place within 16 weeks of the initial request or of the child having otherwise been brought to the local authority's attention.
- If the decision following an assessment is to compile an EHC plan the local authority should consult collaboratively with the parents in the preparation of the plan ensuring that their views and their child's preferences are taken into account and that plans describe positively what the child can do and has achieved to date.
- Plans are evidenced based and focus on short term outcomes and long-term aspirations for the child including family and community support. Parents have the right to request a particular provision for their child to be named within their EHC plan.
- If an early years setting is named, the local authority must fund this provision. They cannot force a setting to take a child and can only name the provision in the EHC if the setting agrees.
- Local authorities should consider reviewing an EHC plan for a child under age five at least every three to six months. Such reviews would complement the duty to carry out a review at least annually but may be streamlined and not necessarily require the attendance of the full range of professionals, depending on the needs of the child. The child's parents must be fully consulted on any proposed changes to the EHC plan and made aware of their right to appeal to the Tribunal.

External intervention and support

Where external agency intervention has been identified to help support a child with SEND then this intervention should be recommended in writing by a suitably reliable source such as a speech and language therapist, paediatrician or educational psychologist.

Further guidance

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (DfE and DoH 2015)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Ready, Steady, SENCO (Pre-school Learning Alliance 2018)



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09.7 Progress check at age two

- The key person is central to the progress check and must be the person completing it.
- Settings should take guidance from their local authority as to when the progress check at age two is completed; if no such guidance is provided, the progress check is completed when the child is between 26 and 30 months old. The child should be attending the setting for at least half a term before the check is completed.
- The setting must seek to engage both parents and make allowance for parents who do not live with their child to be involved.

Completing the progress check at age two

- On-going observational assessment informs the progress check and must be referred to.
- Children's contributions are included in the report. Staff must be 'tuned in' to the ways in which very young children, or those with speech or other developmental delay or disability, communicate/
- Where any concerns about a child's learning and development are raised these are discussed with the parents, the SENCo and the setting manager.
- If concerns arise about a child's welfare, they must be addressed through Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults procedures.
- The key person must be clear about the aims of the progress check as follows:
 - to review a child's development within the Development Matters framework.
 - to ensure that parents have a clear picture of their child's development
 - to enable practitioners to understand the child's needs and, with support from practitioners, enhance development at home
 - note areas where a child is progressing well and identify any areas where progress is less than expected
 - describe actions the provider intends to take to address any developmental concerns (working with other professionals as appropriate)



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09.8 Adverse weather policy

- The safety of our children, staff and the families who use our setting is of the utmost importance to us. We will therefore endeavour to remain open where possible during adverse weather conditions, but this will heavily be dependent on several circumstances.
- If adverse weather is forecast, we may make the decision to close the setting the following day. In this situation, an email will be sent to all parents/carers registered on our data-base to notify of the closure of the preschool and we will endeavour to also publish this on our website and social media.
- If the setting remains open during adverse weather conditions, we will aim to operate as normal for as long as possible.
- This will however depend upon;
 - how many staff members are able to safely travel to and from work.
 - the building inside and outside being accessible and safe.
 - the temperature is suitable for the children when inside.
- We cannot open and will not remain open unless the minimum and correct Adult to Child ratio can be met. If the setting is open as normal and we have adverse weather during the day, the Manager alongside the Committee Chair will have the final judgement on whether the setting remains open for the day and for how long this might be.
- In their absence, the Deputy Manager and Committee will have the final judgement. We will seek advice from Devon County Council and follow in due course with the local Schools and closures in the area. The safety of everyone accessing the setting is the most important thing, and if we feel children need to start being collected in order to get home safely, we will make contact to communicate our decision.
- Staff members will be sent home in order of distance or personal circumstances, but only as and when ratios can remain correct within the setting.
- Fees during adverse weather
- If we choose to close due to adverse weather and you usually pay for the session being closed you will not be charged, but if we are able to open and you choose not to bring your child, your fees will be charged at the normal rate.