



Our Local Offer

At Little Smarties we believe each and every child is unique and have different needs. We are inclusive of all children and promote equality and diversity, making adjustments throughout the year to ensure we are creating an environment where all children can learn and grow through our extensive work with SEND children and their parents/carers.

We have a SEND policy which is available for all to read.

1. How our setting knows if young children need extra help and what our parents/carers should do if they think their child may have SEND.

Little Smarties make it a priority to observe children daily. We understand that talking about your child perhaps needing extra support can be hard but truly believe that support only allows your child to grow in the best way they can.

Each child has their own key person with whom they spend time, not only to learn, but also for play and communication, creating a secure base for them to start their journey. We pride ourselves on communication both within the team and with parents and carers. We feel that this is the only way that a successful outcome can be achieved for each child.

Through these observations our practitioners are skilled in recognising possible delays in learning and/or difficulties the child may be having with certain areas of the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) curriculum.

The key person has regular conversations with the parents and carers about how they are developing and what they have achieved at the end of each day and parents and carers have the chance to book a meeting with the manager and key person if they want to go into more depth. We also offer parents regular day/evenings for discussions to take place more privately.

The setting has regular contact with the Area SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) who allows the staff to raise any concerns they may have. We also have a lead SENCo in the setting who takes time out to work with specific children or listen to any concerns members of staff/parents/carers might have. Our SENCo will also liaise with other agencies such as, Health Visitors and Speech Therapists where the need arises.

The parents are then asked if they would be happy for us to discuss their child, in a positive way and how their child could develop further.

Once this has been done, the parents/carers have a second meeting with the manager and key person about what has been discussed and how their child can move on with the right support for them.

2. How our setting supports young children with SEND.

Before your child starts at Little Smarties we like to make a visit to your home to talk about your child's interests, likes, dislikes, etc. This gives us an idea of your child before they even start. A key person is allocated to your child in order for them to have a 'go to' person from the very beginning.

We ask that you complete a 'Smart Bag' which is to do with 'One Planning' ensuring all staff at the setting have an understanding of your child before they start and even if they are not working with them directly. Our 'Smart Bags' are filled with all of the things you know that your child is interested in and their likes/dislikes. This can be comprised of pictures, objects, words, however you feel uniquely describes your child (see below).



As previously mentioned, there are many people involved in ensuring that your child is supported fully in the right way for them to benefit from the curriculum and to develop. The Area SENCo, in-house SENCo and other agencies work together to guarantee that all the right things are being done for your child in the best way possible.

For example, it came to light that one of our children was very anxious around what would be happening during the day and what they were having to eat. Through conversations with the parents, Area SENCo and their key person, a timetable was devised so that as the activities were completed, the child takes the picture off the board and can therefore visually see what is left for the day until home time. A menu was made using his favourite interest (Superhero's) to bring to nursery and take home (shown below) to alleviate some of his anxieties. This has had a positive outcome.



Where possible, the strategies we use are linked to their interests, so that the child is engaged instantly. This has been something that has worked extremely well.

3. How our setting creates learning and development opportunities for individual children with SEND.

Nursery practitioners at Little Smarties have the time to develop and share planning. Termly and weekly planning is given great thought so that all areas of the curriculum are covered, focusing on how each activity can be differentiated for individual children. Although the learning is both adult and child led, for our SEND children we create 1:1 time with their key person to concentrate on the areas that these children may need. Where applicable, resources are bought in to strengthen and deepen the learning to enhance progression.

4. How our setting works in partnership with parents/carers.

As mentioned, the key person for the individual child has many opportunities to discuss any positives or concerns with the parents or carers. The nursery also uses an online assessment tool called Tapestry which allows parents, when not at the setting, to see what their children are doing. Each child has a learning journal, another tool for parents and carers which follows the progress of their child. These are opportunities to celebrate the achievements your child is making but to also talk about ways forward in providing what your child needs for his/her well-being and to make progress.

5. How our setting supports the well-being of young children with SEND.

All children, before starting, are given the chance of pre-visits. These are arranged by the nursery manager and parent. They can have as little as 4 settling in sessions, up to however many the parent/carer believes the child may need. These normally mean that the parent/carer stays with them for the first 2-hour visit, then we slowly increase the hours and reduce contact with the parent/carer so that the child begins to feel safe and secure in the setting and with the people other than their parents/carers around them. The key person plays a significant role in this transition, ensuring the child develops a rapport with them, allowing them to grow from the very beginning, feeling safe and secure. The staff create a loving, caring environment which in turn, helps children to feel safe and helps them to familiarise themselves with Little Smarties.

6. Staff training and experience in supporting young children with SEND.

The owner of Little Smarties has 15 years' experience with SEND children which provides the setting with a range of strategies and ideas in how to help support *your* 'Little Smarties'. There are also 2 members of staff who are trained as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators within the setting who take the lead on day-to-day running's of the SEND children. The Area SENCo offers advice and guidance where needed and is always on hand to help with referrals, etc.

All staff have had Safeguarding Training and have Paediatric First Aid Certificates (or First Aid, depending on the age of the children they are working with) to ensure the safety of the children at all times.

The setting is looking at completing the Autism Awareness Award. This gives all members of staff information about Autism so that they are more knowledgeable about questions and traits they need to recognise in children.

7. Specialist services and expertise accessed by our setting.

Little Smarties accesses a range of other agencies to help plan and source the most beneficial support for the individual child. These consist of the Area SENCo, Speech and Language, Early Years SEMH (Social, Emotional and Mental Health) Team and at times, Families in Focus. The use of these agencies will change depending on the child's individual need(s) and more agencies can be accessed where needed.

Currently, we are also in discussions with our local Children's Centres who can provide courses, etc, when and if needed.

8. How our setting includes young children with SEND in community-based activities and outings.

As stated before, Little Smarties is inclusive of all children and always wants everyone to take part in the experiences offered. However, to ensure the safety of our individual SEND children, and to get the best out of the activities, thorough risk assessments are completed before taking the children out. All parents are asked to sign a consent form which explains what the trip is for and what the children will be doing, and detailed plans are made to highlight any areas where our SEND children will need differentiation to enhance their experience and in a way from which they can benefit.

The nursery also hosts a Holiday Club which welcomes all children with SEND to participate and have fun!

9. Our accessible environment.

Little Smarties is situated in a rural location. This is fantastic for our SEND children who visually and kinaesthetically learn from the many outside opportunities to learn about wildlife and nature. The building is all on one level and contains a large garden area in which the children can both play and learn.

The nursery has a car park at the front so that parents and carers do not have to deal with worries of a busy road when dropping off and collecting their children.

Visual signs are being implemented around the nursery for children to recognise objects and the names for them. This is to allow them to become more independent.

10. How our setting prepares and supports young children with SEND when joining the setting and when transferring to another setting or school.

Our 'Smart Bags' and settling-in sessions are our main support for children when joining the setting. We also give parents and carers the opportunity to come and look round before deciding if Little Smarties is the right setting for their child. If the setting feels right for the parents/carers then they are asked to complete a registration form which gives us information, such as, allergies, likes, dislikes, interests, emergency contact details, etc. When a child transfers to another setting or school, we have an extensive amount of information about the child which will give the next setting a good idea of where the child is at and what needs to be implemented going forward. They are given the child's Tapestry assessment which holds all the information about what the child has done, where they started and where they are now. It comprises pictures, observations, focused activities and much more! With permission from parents/carers, their learning journals will be shared with the setting to which they are moving. Their 'Smart Bags' will be taken with them as these will have evolved throughout their journey at Little Smarties. This allows new members of staff working with these children to have a good sense of who they are, even before meeting them.

If a child attends more than one setting, then developmental records will be shared with their other setting too.

11. How our setting organises its resources to meet the needs of young children with SEND.

Little Smarties is always striving to offer the essential resources that SEND children may need. This means that resources are bought or made for the individual child as not all of the resources that we already own will be applicable for certain children. As we like to personalise for the child, means that resources need to be changed and adapted all the time.

12. How we decide on appropriate support for young children with SEND.

Deciding on appropriate support for the individual child is made with the Area SENCo who can help with any referrals that may need to be made. Before these referrals are made the child will be observed to make sure they are getting the right intervention to support them appropriately.

13. How we involve all parents/carers in our setting.

We have an open-door policy. Parents and carers can speak to staff whenever they want if they have any concerns or just want a general conversation about their child's progress.

Parents days/evenings are arranged to have set times to speak to their child's key person.

Parents are also given a questionnaire twice a year and are encouraged to come into the nursery to spend time in their children's rooms.

We invite different people into the nursery, e.g. Wild Fangs, who bring in a range of different animals and invite children who are not normally in these days to come and join in.

14. Who to contact for further information.

Melissa Pavelin is the owner and is acting SENCo but Coral Pithers and Vicky Irvine are the day-to-day SENCo's. The contact number for any of these people is 01277 841424 and the email address is coralpithers@littlesmartiesnursery.co.uk

For the Local Offer website go to <http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/>

You are very welcome to contact us to make an appointment to look round the setting during the times of 07:00-18:00.