

THE MULBERRY BUSH MONTESSORI NURSERY LTD

**SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)**

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT 2014**

**LOCAL OFFER**

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires local authorities to publish, in a single place, information on services and provision across education, transport, health and social care for children and young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The purpose of this ‘Local Offer’ is to enable parents, carers and young people to get a clear view of what services are available for children and young people (0-25yrs) with SEND in their area. The process extends to registered early years’ settings and the information below forms our setting’s offer and shows how we as an inclusive provision provide for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

In defining special educational needs the Education Act (1996) states ‘*A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him/her. A child of compulsory school age or young person has a learning disability if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age’.* The definition for children below the compulsory school age has special educational needs if; *‘he/she is likely to fall in the definition above when they reach compulsory school age or would if special educational provision were not available to them’.*

The Mulberry Bush Montessori Nursery Ltd has regard for the SEND code of practice and is committed to meeting the individual needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We promote equality and inclusion and recognise that all children have a right to protection from abuse, and is committed to protect and safeguard the welfare of children. The Mulberry Bush values the abilities and achievements of individual children, and is committed to providing for each child the best possible environment for learning and development,

working in partnership with parents and other professional agencies to give each child the support and the opportunities to fulfil their potential.

**Our policy**

* The Mulberry Bush meets the requirements of and applies good practice to the SEND Code of Practice (2014) in conjunction with the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2021, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) and the Equality Act 2010.
* We ensure our provision is welcoming and inclusive to children with special educational needs and disabilities.
* We support parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities.
* We recognise and identify the specific and individual needs of children and meet those needs through a range of SEN strategies and support.
* We work in partnership with parents and other agencies in meeting individual children’s needs.
* We monitor, review and evaluate our policy, practice and provision and, if necessary, make adjustments to enhance inclusion where it is practicably and financially possible to do so.
* We have an experienced and cohesive team at The Mulberry Bush who are all committed to inclusive provision. Staff at all levels are supported and mentored by the nursery designated Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who is our Deputy Manager and 2nd safeguarding designated person (SDP). Jo Walton. Jo is also the nursery Autism lead person and behaviour management coordinator. The nursery Principal, Cheryl Knight has overall responsibility for ensuring children’s special educational needs and disabilities are known and met within the provision and plays a supportive role to the nursery SENCO as the Inclusion Development Coordinator, Equality Coordinator (ENCO) and Designated Safeguarding Person (SDP). Our second nursery deputy manager, Leander Trunks is the nursery Speech and Language coordinator and also supports children with EAL.

**Identifying children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

* From the parents/carers first visit and induction and throughout the transition process at our nursery the Principal takes time to get to know the parents/carer and share information about the strengths and needs of the child to facilitate an informed starting point and forge a positive parent partnership from the outset.
* Families will be supported for as long as it takes during the transition for their child to settle. We want all children to feel happy and safe with us and for parents/carers to feel confident in leaving their child.
* Each child has a Key person who works closely with the family, and through building positive parent partnerships and close, trusting and informed relationships with each key child they are able to identify any possible individual special educational need. The nursery Principal is the child’s second key person.
* We have a clear overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children, ongoing observations and assessments are linked to the Early Years Outcomes and Development Matters ages and stages of development, as outlined in the EYFS. Using this as a guidance tool we are able to assess the extent to which a young child is developing at expected levels for their age and effectively identify any possible SEN.
* We undertake a progress check at age two and three quarters, children do not start at The Mulberry Bush until they are two and a half years old. The two year progress summary supplies parents/carers with a short written summary of their child’s development in the prime areas of the EYFS. This will identify difficulties the child may be experiencing and by sharing this information with parents/carers we can work together to put early support strategies into place and with their consent make external referrals to the appropriate agencies for further assessment.
* Reports from parents, health care professionals and/or other settings the child has attended may have identified a child’s individual needs and we will include these in our assessments and planning for the child’s learning and development.

**Supporting children with SEND**

* Our SENCO (Jo) works with and mentors all staff, students and volunteers to ensure our SEND provision is relevant and appropriate and that we are maintaining continuity and a cohesive and positive inclusive approach. Our Montessori ethos and philosophy promotes a ‘can do’ attitude towards inclusion, rather than focusing on what we or the child ‘cannot do’.
* We have been proudly awarded the Good Beginnings: Autism Friendly Environments Silver Award 2017 in which all staff contributed and participated. We use visual support strategies, signing and smart thinking strategies to support the children across the setting.
* We use the ‘graduated approach system’ for identifying, assessing and responding to children with special educational needs. This is a four stage continuous cycle of action: Assess > Plan > Do > Review. Using a step-by-step response through the various levels of intervention which are discussion of a concern, targeted support specialist support and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
* Our nursery SENCO will support the child’s key person, SEN support key worker and mentor the whole team to ensure we can support each child’s wellbeing and their individual needs can be met by subtle differentiation and planned support using a written Individual Learning and Provision Plan (ILPP), My Support Plan, EHCP. This will be developed by the nursery SENCO in cooperation with the child’s parents/carers, the child’s key person and may include any external agencies involved with the child. The starting point and focus for the plan will be on the pathway which will focus on the child’s interests and the parent’s aspirations and high expectations for the child, which will then be broken down into manageable steps and achievable outcomes.
* The nursery SENCO and the child’s Key person will oversee the ILPP targets and ensure strategies are used universally and effectively across the setting and are shared with parents/carers and other settings the child may attend to maintain continuity, promote inclusion and achieve the best outcomes. We may adapt the environment, routines and resources as required to meet the individual needs of the child.
* ILPP targets will be reviewed and new ones planned by the nursery SENCO, the child’s Key person and the parents/carers.
* We will access additional support from other professionals and external agencies where necessary with parental consent. As a setting we will seek advice and support from our area SENCO. We have formed positive working relationships within a multi-agency framework in order to support children with SEND and their families and to ensure we are meeting the requirements of the SEND code of practice and best practice for safeguarding children, instigating Early Help assessments if required.
* Our nursery SENCO will monitor and work with all other staff to ensure effective implementation of the ILPP and subsequent continuity of care and education by everyone.
* We ensure that parents are informed at all stages of assessment, planning, provision, monitoring and review of their child’s progress. Each child’s key person, SEN support worker and the SENCO will liaise with parents/carers informally at each session and more formally at review meetings and parent’s evenings. Staff at The Mulberry Bush staff values parent partnerships and are approachable and welcoming from the outset. We strive to build positive partnerships that encourage parents to feel they can speak freely, in confidence either informally or in private at any time. Written progress summary reports are shared with parents/carers and their comments, ideas and opinions are requested. We work with parents on an individual basis to establish and maintain a positive and informed partnership, we will adapt our practice to meet their needs and family commitments with regards to how we communicate. Particularly if parents/carers do not usually attend the nursery to drop off or pick up, separated parents or when their first language is not English or if written English is not suitable.
* Each child has a digital online Learning Journey (Tapestry) which is available to parents to view and contribute to using a personal secure password. Each child also has a home link book and an activity bag to share information and resources between the key person and parents/carers to help maintain continuity in their child’s learning and development by supporting the home learning environment.
* All personal, sensitive documentation is kept in the child’s file in a locked cabinet to ensure confidentiality. We are registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO – Data control). Our data protection officer is the nursery Principal: Cheryl Knight and all sensitive information is handles and stored in line with Data Protection 2018 / GDPR 2018. *Please see the nursery Privacy Notice section 10/10.1a nursery policies and procedures.*
* Further funding may be applied for to provide additional support for a child where appropriate. This may be to provide additional resources or support in order to keep them safe, for the safety and wellbeing of others or it may be to ensure the child has the opportunities and support to be included and to access the full breadth of the curriculum. A risk assessment may be carried out to ascertain the level of support a child might need and how staff can be deployed to achieve the most effective targeted support, this will be carried out by the nursery Principal, Cheryl Knight who is the nursery Inclusion and designated Health and Safety coordinator.
* Our nursery SENCO has completed specific SENCO training and attends and completes ongoing continual professional development training and wider reading in order to keep her own knowledge and skills up-to-date and to support our team effectively.
* Staff at The Mulberry Bush Montessori Nursery all attend and complete continual professional development training, including SEN training, paediatric first aid, safeguarding and health and safety training as well as specific training linked to the particular needs of a child attending. We have regular meetings, discussions and training events to ensure all staff are knowledgeable, confident and competent in meeting the needs of children within our setting with SEND.

**Accessibility of the environment**

* Handrails have been fitted in toilets.
* Handrail to free-flow outdoor area.
* The Montessori prepared, child centred environment means resources are easily accessible by the children, who have free choice within this continuous provision. We also operate free flow provision so the children can access the outdoor learning environment throughout the day.
* There are limitations to access the nursery by adults in wheel chairs due to the age and layout of the building. We will explain the limitations of the nursery building to all interested parties, parents and visitors and will make changes or adapt our provision wherever possible and we will continue to do whatever we can to welcome children at the nursery with disabilities.

**Working with other professionals:** We work with the following professionals:

* SEN/AEN Team (Area Senco, Family Support Key Worker, Specialist Teacher, Behavioural Support).
* Early Years Advisor
* Specialist Health Visitors
* Speech and Language Therapist
* Local Children’s Centre Staff
* Physiotherapist
* Occupational Therapist
* EWMH Service (CAMHS)
* Community / Consultant Paediatrician / Registrar
* Social Care Team
* Practitioners/Teachers from other settings

Advice from professionals in other areas may be sought as the need arises e.g. allergy nurse, diabetic nurse, administering certain, specific medications, first aid, personal care or dietary requirements.

**Further information**

* The Key person and the nursery Principal are always available for advice and support to parents in the first instance. There is a list of every child and who their Keyperson is within the playroom.
* Our nursery SENCO is also available to offer parents advice. She also shares good practice, resources ideas and strategies with other settings and parents to support the home learning environment.
* We signpost parents to other professionals, relevant reading books and resources, training, support groups and websites, health visitor, GP, speech and language therapist, local children’s centre.
* If a child’s needs have been referred to a specific team we can support parents by accessing these services, sharing information and working together.
* We advertise our provision and we welcome families to visit our nursery. We aim to ensure we are actively promoting inclusion and equality in our setting.
* As a team we share the same goals and aspirations for consistently high quality, inclusive provision for all children. The nursery Principal and the nursery Senco support all staff, students and volunteers to ensure they are individually and collectively confident and competent when working with children with special needs and that continuity across the setting is maintained. All staff are able to identify concerns, follow the graduated response with the support of the nursery Senco, help to assess, plan, do and review. To maintain a flexible approach and implement activities, strategies, adapt and differentiate their practice or the environment in order to promote inclusion and effective development and learning opportunities for all children. We have been proudly awarded the Good Beginnings: Autism Friendly Environments Bronze Award in which all staff contributed and participated.

**Moving on: Transition to school/or another setting**

* We first discuss the transition process with parents and arrange a transition meeting to plan the transition for a child with SEND into school/setting. As well as parents/carers and nursery staff, these meetings could involve reception school teachers and LSA’s, school SENCO, specialist teacher, any other professionals involved such as speech and language therapist, family support key worker, area SENCO, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, EWMHS.
* For a child with SEND the transition will be tailored to meet their individual needs and may be a longer and more involved process than for other children to aid a smooth and effective transition.
* We share all documentation such as learning journeys, EYFS or Early support profiles, ILPPs, My Support Plans, early year’s assessments, observations.
* We invite receiving schools/setting to visit our nursery and the child’s SEN support person or the nursery SENCO may visit the school/setting with the child prior to their starting date to familiarise themselves with the environment and the new teacher/LSA and allow the new teacher/LSA time to observe the child in a setting and to share information and strategies that are in place to support the child, in partnership with parents.

**Supporting Documents:**

Mulberry Bush Terms and Conditions

Mulberry Bush Prospectus and Admissions Policy

Registration Document

Parental Involvement and Positive Parent Partnerships

Inclusion & SEND Policy

Achieving Positive Behaviour

Equality Policy

Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy

Confidentiality

Information Sharing

Privacy Policy

Provider Records and Sharing Information

Working in Partnership with other agencies

Transition Policy

For Covid-19 pandemic please see our Covid policy for vulnerable children and additional measures in place.

THE MULBERRY BUSH MONTESSORI NURSERY’S LOCAL OFFER WAS WRITTEN BY: Cheryl Knight (Nursery Principal and Inclusion Development coordinator), Jo Walton (Nursery Senco) and Leander Trunks (Speech and Language coordinator, 2nd Senco)