

Local Offer

1. How does the early years setting know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs or disabilities?

All children at The Pink Cottage have observations recorded for them by our members of staff relating to their learning and development. We follow the statutory framework known as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in order to ensure individual children's learning and development needs are observed, recorded, monitored and then planned for. Following this process ensures any potential individual needs are identified. These would then be discussed with the room senior, the setting Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and the managers. We would then ensure your child's Key Person spoke to you at a mutually convenient time.

When a child starts at The Pink Cottage they have a special person known as a Key Person who is the main point of contact for the family and a consistent, familiar face for the child to build a good, strong relationship with. The Key Person role is focused on building trusting and respectful relationships between the family, the child and the Key Person. If you have any concerns about your child's development then their Key Person will without question make the time to discuss this with you in private. If your child's Key Person identifies a possible individual need then they will also speak with you in private to discuss things further and plan a way forward together to help support your child's learning and development.

Our SENCO (Taryn Bennett – Deputy Manager) is always available to support staff who are working with children with individual needs. She is trained and continues to attend training to update her knowledge. She liaises with other early years professionals if necessary to gain advice and support on identifying and continuing to support children with individual needs.

Health care professionals such as health visitors and speech and language therapists may identify children's individual needs. The Pink Cottage welcomes and encourages parents, carers and professionals to share this information with them in order for us to plan appropriately to meet their individual needs.

2. How will early years setting staff support my child?

Upon registration, settling sessions are organised for your child. Your child can attend for as many settling sessions as both you and their Key Person feel is necessary. A home visit is also offered as part of the settling process as this can be a very valuable way of building the initial relationship with your child's Key Person in an environment your child is familiar and comfortable in.

During the settling process information relating to your child's individual needs will be shared. Our SENCO and your child's Key Person will work closely together to ensure their individual needs are catered for.

If your child starts at our setting and an individual need or disability is already identified then their Key Person and our SENCO will work together with you and your child to ensure the strategies and agreed interventions already in place are continued. If health services were involved in the identification of an individual need or disability then they may still be working with you and would also have informed the local authority. They will work with us to help identify appropriate support.

If an individual need is identified once your child has started at our setting then the initial process of working closely with your child's Key Person, our SENCO, parents, carers, the child and outside agencies/early years professionals is very similar. A graduated approach will then be adopted to support children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This involves:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do
- Review

This approach will be underpinned by assessment evidence, targeted plans and evidence based support. Your child's Key Person will work very closely with them during each of their sessions ensuring all interventions and support are accessible as and when necessary and they will continue to foster their relationship with your child. Our SENCO will oversee all targeted work within the setting and with outside agencies.

3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage which is the framework that all childcare professionals working within early years settings follow. The framework allows your child's key person to identify specific interests your child has, preferences, strengths and areas where they may benefit from support. It also enables your child's individual learning styles to be identified which helps support the key person and staff to understand how your child engages best within the environment. All this information is collected together in the form of written observations, photographs, examples of work, and your child's key person will simply build and develop their knowledge of your child over time. The information is then documented within your child's individual Development Folder and the key person is able to identify and monitor the progress your child is making.

This process allows your child's key person to plan for your child's individual needs on a weekly basis. Their interests, preferences, strengths and areas where they may benefit from support are addressed through our key person planning. The key person and our SENCO will work together to ensure the environment, activities and resources support your child's learning and development needs and information will be shared with the staff team to ensure continuity and understanding. If necessary, referrals to outside agencies including Speech and Language can be made to ensure your child is receiving any specialist support necessary.

If your child started at our setting with an individual need already identified, then we would ask for copies of any relevant assessments from other professionals before your child starts to ensure we were fully informed. Your child's key person will then be able to ensure continuity of care with regards any strategies and support for their learning and development.

4. How will both you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

Your child's key person will ensure they communicate a range of information about your child's day at the end of each of their sessions. They will also be there at the beginning of your child's sessions to help settle them into nursery and for you to share any necessary information with. If your child's key person is unable to be there both at the start and end of your child's session, another familiar practitioner will be there to ensure continuity for you and your child.

If your child is within the younger area of nursery upstairs, they will receive a special diary in which your child's key person and other practitioners working with your child will record information about their day. Details about their routine, activities and experiences they have enjoyed at nursery and new skills they have learnt will be recorded.

At least once a term a parent/carer meeting will be organised for you with your child's key person. This is an opportunity for you to share information about their progress, learning and development. Your child's key person will share their development folder with you, you will have a chance to read their written observations, enjoy looking at the photos and pieces of work. Your child's key person will also have completed a Development Overview chart in preparation for this meeting which gives both you and them a clear understanding of their progress within the EYFS with regards to their learning and development. A Next Steps form will also be completed which will detail areas of their learning and development to be focused on for the coming term. Your input for this form is very important and ideas can be shared. If you would like, you will be given ideas for activities and experiences you can offer at home to help support their agreed Next Steps. A 2 Year Progress Review is also completed if necessary at the relevant time to give an overview of their learning and Development in the three Prime Areas of learning and Development (Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language).

5. What support will there be for my child's overall well being?

Prior to your child's first day at nursery you will receive copies of all relevant policies and procedures including Safeguarding, Promoting Positive Social and Emotional Skills and Special, Educational Needs. You will receive our 'All About Me' forms which are for you to complete with details about your child's routine, preferences and requirements. These are then used by the key person and other members of staff to ensure your child's individual needs are fully met. The details recorded on these forms are continually reviewed via daily communications with parents/carers both face to face and through written communication within your child's own nursery diary (if applicable).

Our staff approach each nursery day with an inclusive, positive attitude and are naturally welcoming to all parents/carers and children. They are very aware of each child's individual needs and flexibility within the nursery routine and the environment reflects this. All staff act as positive role models to support and promote positive behaviour and a continual positive approach to behaviour management is maintained. To ensure continuity and consistency for the children, staff are based in the same rooms to allow children to be cared for by familiar, friendly trusting practitioners each day.

Strong relationships are built with parents/carers from the very start which helps to promote trust and respect. From the initial settling sessions organised for your child, including the optional home visit, it is the aim of every practitioner within our setting to build and develop an open, trusting relationship with all parents/carers and children. Daily communication, termly parent/carer meetings and annual nursery events are some of the ways we aim to help support the development of this relationship.

During our daily routine visual timetables are in place to help support children to understand what happens next. The older children are supported to develop their independence and to manage their own personal care needs, and are also encouraged to take safe risks.

All our staff are paediatric first aid trained and are also trained in child protection. We are able to administer medication following the completion of the necessary forms.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the early years setting?

We access support and advice from our Early Childhood Service and also the West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) website. If necessary we are able to make referrals to the Speech and Language team, and there are specific tools we can access on the WSSCC website to help monitor the development of children's communication and language. We can request Targeted Setting Support (TSS) if we feel it would help to support our staff to support a child with an identified need. Inclusion Funding can also be applied for to help provide additional support for a child with an identified need. This may include purchasing a particular resource or increasing our staffing levels. Management use the Vulnerable Children and Learners Audit Tool (in consultation with all practitioners) to ensure an accurate record is maintained of children in attendance at our setting who will benefit from and require additional support. It helps us to ensure we take a holistic view of children and families individual needs and that relevant support is put in place. If a referral to the WSSCC Special Educational Needs Team is required (this may be done by the nursery or another childcare professional), the child's individual needs will be discussed at an Early Years Planning and Review Meeting (EYPARM) to determine the best possible course of action. The nursery will be informed and involved as will the parents/carers. Our local Children's Centre also provides valuable information, services and courses for parents and carers. Examples of services offered are: Health Visitor clinics, drop in sessions and also speech and language services. Our nursery subscribes to the WSSCC training scheme and regular training is attended by our staff team.

7. What training are the staff, supporting children with SEND, had or are having?

Our SENCO attends regular SENCO training offered by the local authority which helps to keep her knowledge and understanding up to date. She also attends termly network meetings. The information gained at these courses is then cascaded to other members of the team through fortnightly staff meetings. Other courses such as Promoting Positive Behaviour and courses related to communication and language are also attended by members of our team as we strongly feel continuity and consistency with regards to behaviour management and communication strategies is very important.

All our staff regularly attend training relevant to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which also links in with specific areas of learning and development for children who may have additional needs. A more recent training course is 'What Makes an Effective Individual Plan.' We have cared for many children with additional needs over the years and Individual Plans are an essential tool to document child and parent/carer thoughts, effective strategies, professional details and individual goals for example.

We welcome support from Speech and Language therapists, Early Years Advisory Teachers, Portage workers and other agencies who will support the child with their development. Previously we were awarded a bursary from the local authority inclusion team for in house training on Speech and Language development, as we had several children receiving additional support in this area.

8. How will my child be included in activities outside the early years setting including trips?

All activities and outings are organised and planned taking all children's individual needs and abilities into account. Risk assessments are carried out before each outing to ensure it is safe and accessible for all. Parents/carers are also required to sign permission forms for outings. Relevant policies are shared with parents/carers as part of our registration process to assure them that we are

a fully inclusive early years setting and that each individual child's welfare and learning and development requirements are our priority.

In addition to outings we organise for visitors to come into the nursery from professions such as the police force and the fire service. We have also had visits from parents who have had new babies and the children have experienced watching a baby having a bath and being cared for.

9. How accessible is the early years setting environment? (Indoors and outdoors)

The Pink Cottage is accessible for wheelchairs and pushchairs via our main entrance gate. There is then ramped access to the ground floor via patio doors. We have several stair gates within the building to ensure the safety of children but these can be easily removed for access if necessary. Our pre-school children (Bumblebees) are cared for on the ground floor of the nursery and our younger children (Butterflies) are cared for on the first floor of the nursery which is accessible via stairs. If necessary we would happily work with parents/carers and members of staff to ensure a safe means of transition was agreed for any child with an additional need which meant they needed support with using stairs.

Our nursery garden is also accessible using a ramp. At present we do not have disabled toilet facilities but would happily work with any new families who required specific facilities to help care for their child.

We are able to translate documentation for families whose first language is not English. The Family Information Service also provides many different information leaflets in a variety of languages. We ask parents/carers to translate any specific or special words to help ensure the children settle as quickly as possible and we also display key words from different languages within the nursery.

10. How will the early years setting prepare and support my child to join the early years setting, transfer to a new setting/school?

Successful transitions is something we are very aware of at our nursery and we therefore work very closely with parents/carers and/or staff at the child's new setting/school to ensure all goes as smoothly as possible. Settling sessions are organised at our nursery prior to your child starting. Three/four settling sessions are organised in the lead up to your child's start date but more can be organised if we feel your child would benefit from it. In addition to the settling sessions at nursery we offer a home visit. This is a valuable opportunity for your child to meet the member of staff who will be their key person in their own home environment where they feel safe and comfortable. A senior member of staff would also accompany the key person and photos of the nursery and toys and resources are shared with the child and some important paperwork is shared with the parents/carers. Subsequent settling sessions are also a valuable opportunity to discuss your child's routine and any specific requirements and for the relationship between your child and their key person to be developed. Your child's key person will encourage you to bring a special comforter in from home (if your child has one) and also family pictures for us to laminate to help ease the transition process. Sleeping aids and even your child's own blanket can be a comfort at sleep times. Quite often a key person will make a special set of laminated picture cards for the child to take home with photos of the rooms at nursery, your child's key person and other members of staff.

When children start the transition process to a new setting/school every effort is made to communicate as much information as possible with parent/carer permission. Your child's key person will liaise with the new key person or the teacher and share key information about their learning styles and learning and development needs. In addition we always invite the teachers into our setting to meet the children in their current early years environment. When children are transitioning to school, practitioners ensure there are plenty of opportunities during the Summer Term for familiarisation with this concept through play. A school role play area and dressing up resources are provided. Specially created picture books of local schools are shared with the children in addition to the schools websites, and specially chosen books about starting school are also shared.

Transition meetings can be specifically arranged for children with additional needs from our setting to school. These will involve yourselves, your child's key person, their new teacher, and may also involve the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) at the school and possibly the head teacher.

11. How are the early years setting's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

With support from your child's key person and our SENCO we would be able to look at adapting existing equipment or providing additional resources for our setting. As a staff team we carry out regular audits of our equipment and resources which we can then evaluate and allocate required resources to further enhance our provision if necessary.

We are able to borrow resources from our local Children's Centre which enable us to access a wider range of resources we do not necessarily have on offer all the time. These may include a wide range of specialist sensory equipment.

12. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

Your child's key person will work closely with you to discuss the areas your child needs support within. Our SENCO would then also work closely with your child's key person to complete observations. These would be reviewed and a plan would then be formulated to ensure that your child receives the appropriate level of support for their individual need. Your key person would work with you to develop strategies to continue the support at home. This would be a shared process between the setting and home.

If it is necessary that your child requires support from outside agencies in addition to the support we can offer within the setting, whilst liaising with you, they will also advise on what support and how much your child may need.

13. How are parents involved in the early years setting? How can I be involved?

We actively encourage all parents and carers to be as involved in our nursery as they wish to be. They play a significant role in planning for their child's Next Steps in their learning and development and on a daily basis as information is shared. From the initial registration when routine information is shared, we encourage information to be shared about additional needs and any outside agencies which may be involved with the family.

When we review policies we may ask for parent/carer involvement as their ideas are valued. We also choose different topics for suggestions to be made in relation to, and these are displayed on our Parents/Carers Information Board.

Termly parent/carer meetings are a fantastic opportunity to share information and be actively involved in your child's learning. Your child's key person will encourage and support you to write observations on their achievements at home on our 'Look What I Can do...' slips. Prior to your meeting, your child's key person will give you a 'Thoughts From Home' sheet. This enables you to update them on any changes you have noticed in relation to their learning and development and any changes within your family for example.

We have a Comments Box located in our entrance hall and on our termly newsletters parents/carers are encouraged to complete the tear off slip at the bottom to share their ideas and suggestions. When a child leaves our setting, we give the parents/carers a 'Thoughts and Ideas' feedback form. This enables them to give feedback in relation to our setting and the service we have provided. We really appreciate families taking the time to complete as the responses help inform our future policies and daily practice within the nursery.

If parents/carers wish to they are welcome to come and volunteer within our nursery and help out at events and on local outings.

14. Who can I contact for further information?

- The nursery managers (Katharine Neighbour and Zoe Miller) can be contacted at the nursery. Your child's key person and our SENCO (Taryn Bennett), can also be contacted here on – 01243 604674. Alternatively you can speak with one of them during nursery opening hours. They will be able to offer advice about other professionals who will be able to support your child, such as Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, and Portage.
- Your local Children's Centre can access relevant support for you. They also have Family Support Workers who work within the community. They will be able to assist you with the completion of any paperwork and they also offer free computer and internet access. The Children's Centre in Selsey can be contacted on – 01243 642906.
- The Family Information Service can also put you in contact with relevant professionals who will be able to offer advice and support. They can be contacted on 01243 777807.
- The West Sussex County Council website also offers a wealth of information relating to the Local Offer and children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.
www.westsussex.gov.uk.