

Oyster Bay Nursery

Special Educational Needs Policy

Date written: October 2026

Date of last update: October 2026

Date agreed and ratified by October 2026

Date of next full review: September 2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Debra Hines
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Grace Sidders Rachel Finch
EYFS SENDCo	Rachel Finch
JLPS Inclusion Lead	Natasha Dodd
Nominated Individual	Debra Hines
Nursery Manager	Grace Sidders

1. Policy Statement

At Oyster Bay Nursery, we are committed to providing an inclusive, supportive and stimulating environment in which every child, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), is supported to develop, learn and reach their full potential.

We have high aspirations and expectations for all children and aim to achieve the best possible outcomes by recognising each child's individual strengths, interests, abilities and needs.

We follow the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), have regard to the SEND Code of Practice, and work in partnership with parents, carers, the Local Authority and relevant professionals to ensure children receive appropriate support.

We recognise that children develop at different rates and that some may require additional or specialist support to access learning, play, communication and everyday nursery activities.

Our approach is based on early identification, inclusive practice, reasonable adjustments, positive relationships and ongoing review.

2. Aims and Objectives

Oyster Bay Nursery aims to:

- Provide an inclusive environment where all children are valued, respected and supported.
- Identify emerging developmental concerns and possible SEND as early as possible.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to children’s individual needs.
- Provide a broad, balanced, engaging and appropriately differentiated curriculum.
- Ensure children with SEND can participate meaningfully in nursery life and activities.
- Work closely with parents and carers at every stage of assessment, planning, support and review.
- Listen to children and take account of their views, preferences and experiences in ways appropriate to their age and communication abilities.
- Work with external professionals and agencies to obtain advice and specialist support when needed.

- Monitor the effectiveness of our provision and make improvements where necessary.
- Support successful transitions between rooms, settings and into school.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has regard to relevant legislation and guidance, including:

- The Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- The statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework.
- Relevant local authority SEND guidance and procedures.

The nursery will review this policy and its procedures when relevant legislation or statutory guidance changes.

4. Inclusion, Equality and Reasonable Adjustments

We do not discriminate against, harass or victimise children because of disability or SEND.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, we consider and make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled children from being placed at a substantial disadvantage. Where possible, we anticipate potential barriers and put suitable adjustments in place before they become a problem.

Adjustments may include:

- Adapting activities, routines or learning materials.
- Providing visual prompts, communication aids or additional processing time.
- Making changes to the physical environment or layout.
- Offering additional adult support where appropriate.
- Using alternative ways for children to communicate or demonstrate their learning.
- Adjusting transitions between activities and providing preparation for changes.
- Working with parents and specialists to identify suitable strategies and resources.

We will consider each child's needs individually and work with the family to identify practical ways to support their participation, development and wellbeing.

Our admissions practice aims to provide equality of access and opportunity. Decisions will be made fairly, with consideration of the child's needs, the reasonable adjustments that can be made and the support required to provide safe, appropriate care.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Nominated Individual and Nursery Manager

The nominated individual and nursery manager are responsible for ensuring that:

- SEND provision is a shared responsibility across the nursery.
- Appropriate staffing, resources and training are made available.
- Practitioners understand their responsibilities for supporting children with SEND.
- The nursery has effective procedures for identifying needs, planning support and reviewing progress.
- Parents are kept informed and involved.
- Relevant records are maintained securely and confidentially.
- The effectiveness of SEND provision is monitored.

The SENDCo

Our SENDCo is **Mrs Rachel Finch**, supported by **Mrs Natasha Dodd, Inclusion Manager**.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Coordinating the nursery's approach to SEND.
- Supporting practitioners to identify and respond to children's additional needs.
- Advising staff on appropriate strategies, adaptations and interventions.
- Working with parents and carers to understand each child's needs and agree support.
- Coordinating individual support plans and reviewing their effectiveness.
- Liaising with external professionals and relevant local authority services.
- Supporting referrals and requests for specialist advice, where appropriate.
- Helping to plan transitions for children with SEND.
- Identifying staff training needs and raising awareness of inclusive practice.
- Helping to ensure records and progress reviews are maintained appropriately.

All Practitioners

Every practitioner is responsible for supporting children with SEND. Staff must:

- Know and follow the strategies agreed for children in their care.
- Observe and monitor children's development and participation.
- Share concerns promptly with the SENDCo and the child's key person, where appropriate.
- Build positive, respectful relationships with children and their families.
- Adapt activities and interactions to support each child's learning.
- Contribute to assessments, support plans and reviews.
- Maintain confidentiality and share information appropriately.

The child's key person will usually take the lead in implementing the agreed strategies during daily nursery routines, with guidance from the SENDCo.

6. Identifying and Assessing SEND

We recognise that children develop at different rates and that a delay or difference in development does not automatically mean a child has SEND.

We use ongoing observations, interactions, assessments and information from parents to build a picture of each child's development and identify when additional support may be beneficial.

We consider the child's progress across relevant areas of learning and development, including communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, and their ability to access and participate in nursery experiences.

Concerns may be identified through:

- Routine observations and assessments.
- The progress check at age two.
- Information shared by parents or carers.
- Observations from the child's key person or other practitioners.
- Information from health professionals or other agencies.
- Concerns about communication, interaction, sensory needs, physical development, learning or emotional wellbeing.

When concerns arise, we will discuss them sensitively with parents and listen carefully to their knowledge and understanding of their child.

We consider the whole child and their circumstances. This includes whether the child is learning English as an additional language, their previous experiences, opportunities to learn, attendance and any relevant changes in family circumstances. We will not assume that a child has SEND simply because they are learning more than one language.

Where additional needs are suspected, we gather relevant observations and information and consider what adjustments or support may help the child progress. Where appropriate, we seek advice from the SENDCo, parents and external professionals.

7. Partnership with Parents and Children

We recognise parents and carers as essential partners in understanding and supporting their child.

We will:

- Share concerns openly, sensitively and promptly.
- Listen to parents' views, knowledge and concerns.
- Involve parents in assessment, planning, implementation and review.
- Agree achievable outcomes and strategies together.
- Share information about the support available and relevant sources of independent advice.
- Provide opportunities to discuss progress and any changes in need.
- Respect family circumstances, cultural backgrounds and preferred ways of communicating.

Children will be involved in decisions affecting them in ways appropriate to their age, development and communication. Their preferences and responses will be considered when planning activities, support and adjustments.

We will explain that seeking additional support is intended to help the child thrive and is not a judgement about the child or their family.

8. The Graduated Approach to SEND Support

Oyster Bay Nursery uses the graduated approach of **Assess, Plan, Do and Review**. This cycle enables us to understand children's needs more fully, put suitable support in place and adapt that support as the child develops.

Stage 1: Assess

We gather and analyse information about the child's strengths, needs and progress. This may include:

- Observations and assessments by practitioners.
- Information from the child's parents or carers.
- The child's views and responses.
- Relevant developmental records.
- Advice from external professionals, where appropriate.

We review the information regularly to ensure our understanding remains accurate and that support reflects the child's current needs.

Stage 2: Plan

The SENDCo, key person and parents or carers work together to agree:

- The outcomes we want the child to achieve.
- The support, adjustments, activities or interventions that will be provided.
- Who will be responsible for implementing the agreed support.
- How progress and impact will be monitored.
- When the plan will be reviewed.

Where appropriate, the child's views and preferences will inform the plan.

The agreed actions and outcomes will be recorded in an individual support plan, which may be called an Individual Plan or Individual Provision Map (IPM), according to the nursery's recording arrangements.

Stage 3: Do

The agreed strategies and interventions are put into practice.

The child's key person will usually implement the support during everyday nursery activities, with guidance from the SENDCo. Other practitioners will be made aware of the strategies they need to follow.

The SENDCo will support staff to monitor the child's response and identify whether the agreed provision is helping the child make progress.

Support may include adapted activities, visual resources, communication strategies, small-group opportunities, additional adult guidance or specialist recommendations.

Stage 4: Review

At the agreed review date, the SENDCo, key person and parents or carers will consider:

- The child's progress towards the agreed outcomes.
- Which strategies have been effective.
- Whether the child's needs or circumstances have changed.
- Whether additional or different support is needed.
- Whether specialist advice should be sought.

The plan will be updated as necessary. The Assess, Plan, Do and Review cycle will be repeated as often as required to ensure support remains appropriate and effective.

9. Additional Support and External Professionals

Where a child continues to make less than expected progress despite targeted support, we will discuss the situation with the child's parents or carers and consider seeking further advice.

With appropriate parental involvement and consent where required, we may work with professionals such as:

- Health visitors.
- Speech and language therapists.
- Portage workers.
- Educational psychologists.
- Specialist teachers.
- Paediatric or other relevant health professionals.
- Local authority SEND and early years support services.

In Kent, this may include the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service (STLS), where the service is appropriate and available under local arrangements.

Advice from specialists will be considered alongside the knowledge of parents and the observations of nursery practitioners. Recommendations will be incorporated into the child's support plan where appropriate.

We will explain the purpose of any proposed referral, discuss the information that may need to be shared and work with the family throughout the process.

10. Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments and Plans

If a child's needs cannot be met adequately through the support ordinarily available in the nursery and additional targeted support, including specialist advice, has not led to sufficient progress, we may discuss whether a request for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment is appropriate.

Requests will be considered in partnership with the family and in accordance with the relevant local authority process. The Local Authority decides whether an EHC needs assessment should take place and whether an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should be issued.

Where a child has an EHCP, we will work with the family, the Local Authority and relevant professionals to support the outcomes and provision specified in the plan, as applicable to the nursery.

11. Curriculum, Learning and Individual Support

We provide a broad, balanced and inclusive early years curriculum that recognises children's individual strengths, interests and needs.

Our approach may include:

- Adapting activities and resources.
- Providing additional opportunities to practise developing skills.
- Using visual timetables, picture cues, signing or other communication supports.
- Supporting language development through play, stories, songs and everyday interactions.
- Offering sensory opportunities or reducing overwhelming sensory experiences where appropriate.
- Allowing additional time for processing information and completing activities.
- Supporting positive interactions and friendships.
- Providing predictable routines and preparing children for changes.
- Following strategies recommended by parents or relevant professionals.

We aim to help children participate alongside their peers wherever possible, while recognising that some children may require individualised support or alternative approaches.

We will also identify staff training needs and make use of relevant skills within the team, including specialist communication approaches such as Makaton where staff have the appropriate training.

12. Records and Information Sharing

We maintain appropriate records of children's development, assessments, support plans, interventions and reviews in accordance with the EYFS, data protection requirements and the nursery's record-keeping procedures.

Records relating to SEND will be handled sensitively, stored securely and shared only with people who have a legitimate reason to access them.

Parents and carers can discuss their child's records with the nursery and access information in accordance with applicable requirements.

Where information needs to be shared with another setting, school, the Local Authority or an external professional, we will explain what information is being shared and follow applicable consent, confidentiality and safeguarding requirements.

Records will be retained and transferred in line with the nursery's data protection and retention procedures.

13. Transitions

We recognise that transitions can be particularly significant for children with SEND. We will work with families to plan transitions that support children's confidence, security and continuity of care.

Support may include:

- Additional settling-in sessions or visits.
- Visual resources, photographs or social stories to prepare children for change.
- Meetings with parents, the receiving setting and relevant professionals.
- Sharing information about the child's strengths, communication, routines, interests and support strategies.
- Agreeing practical arrangements to support continuity of provision.

Information will be shared with the receiving school or setting in accordance with applicable requirements and with parental involvement and consent where required.

14. Staff Training and Resources

Oyster Bay Nursery recognises the importance of staff knowledge and confidence in supporting children with SEND.

We will identify training needs through supervision, team discussions, observations and reviews of children's support plans.

Where appropriate, training may cover:

- Early identification of developmental concerns.

- Inclusive teaching and play-based learning.
- Speech, language and communication needs.
- Autism and sensory differences.
- Supporting children's emotional regulation and interactions.
- Disability awareness and reasonable adjustments.
- Relevant communication approaches and specialist strategies.

We will make reasonable efforts to provide appropriate staffing, equipment, learning materials and other resources to support children with SEND.

15. Monitoring and Evaluating Provision

We regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our SEND provision.

Information considered may include:

- Children's progress and individual support plan reviews.
- Feedback from parents and carers.
- Observations and feedback from practitioners.
- Advice and reports from external professionals.
- Staff training and supervision discussions.
- Complaints, concerns and lessons learned.
- Relevant inspection findings and changes to statutory guidance.

The management team and SENDCo will review this information at least annually and identify any improvements required to our policy, practice, resources or staff development.

16. Complaints and Concerns

We encourage parents and carers to raise any concerns about their child's support as early as possible.

In the first instance, parents can speak to the child's key person, SENDCo or Inclusion Manager. If the concern is not resolved, it can be referred to the Nursery Manager or provider in accordance with the nursery's Complaints Policy.

We will listen carefully, respond respectfully and seek to resolve concerns promptly. Parents may also seek independent advice and support from relevant SEND information, advice and support services.

Safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with the nursery's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and relevant procedures.

17. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local authority procedures or the nursery's practice.

The review will consider feedback from parents, children where appropriate, practitioners, management and external professionals.

All staff will be informed of relevant changes and will be expected to follow the current policy.