

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY

Policy Statement

EDG Nursery is committed to ensuring that every child is welcomed, included and supported to participate fully in nursery life.

Children develop at different rates and in different ways. Where a child has SEND, emerging needs or requires additional support, EDG will work in partnership with parents/carers to **identify needs early, remove barriers, make reasonable adjustments and provide appropriate support.**

A child does **not** need a formal diagnosis before support can begin.

Our approach will be child-centred, strengths-based and focused on what the child needs to participate, develop, communicate, learn and feel secure within the nursery.

Our Aims

EDG Nursery aims to:

- identify additional needs as early as possible;
- provide high-quality inclusive practice;
- recognise children's individual strengths as well as their needs;
- work collaboratively with parents/carers;
- make reasonable adjustments;
- follow the **Assess → Plan → Do → Review** graduated approach;
- ensure interventions and agreed strategies are implemented consistently;
- seek specialist advice where appropriate;
- maintain clear evidence of support and its impact;
- support successful transitions; and
- work effectively with Southwark SEND services and other professionals.

Understanding SEND

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need:

- **Communication and interaction**
- **Cognition and learning**
- **Social, emotional and mental health**
- **Sensory and/or physical needs**

These areas help practitioners understand and plan for children's needs. They must not be used simply to label children.

A child may have needs across more than one area and their needs may change over time.

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Observing Rather Than Diagnosing

Nursery practitioners do not diagnose children.

Staff should describe **what they have actually observed**, for example:

"We have noticed that X is finding it difficult to..."

rather than:

"We think X has autism/ADHD..."

Where behaviour causes concern, practitioners should consider what the child may be communicating and whether there are:

- communication difficulties;
- sensory needs;
- developmental differences;
- emotional needs;
- environmental triggers;
- unmet needs; or
- difficulties understanding expectations.

Children must not be described using inappropriate labels such as "bad", "naughty" or "difficult".

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The Graduated Approach

Where a child requires additional SEND support, EDG will follow:

ASSESS → PLAN → DO → REVIEW

Assess

The key person and SENCO consider the child's strengths, needs, development, observations, parent views and relevant professional information.

Plan

The SENCO, key person and parents/carers agree:

- priorities and outcomes;
- strategies;
- interventions;
- reasonable adjustments;
- who will provide the support; and
- when progress will be reviewed.

Do

Agreed strategies and interventions are implemented consistently.

The child's key person remains responsible for the child's day-to-day support. SEND provision is **not something that happens only when the SENCO is present**.

Review

The SENCO, key person and parents consider:

- What progress has been made?
- What is working?
- What is not working?
- Does support need to change?
- Are further adjustments required?
- Is specialist advice now required?

The cycle should continue according to the child

Southwark describes its graduated offer as beginning with universal **Ordinarily Available Provision** and moving through targeted and specialist support according to need.

SEND Support Plans and Evidence

Where targeted SEND support is required, an appropriate SEND Support Plan should record:

- strengths and areas of need;
- parent/carer views;
- agreed outcomes;
- strategies and interventions;
- reasonable adjustments;
- responsible practitioners;
- relevant professional recommendations;
- review dates; and
- progress/impact.

Plans must be **working documents** rather than paperwork completed solely for compliance.

Staff working directly with the child must know what support has been agreed and how to implement it.

Reasonable Adjustments and Inclusive Practice

EDG will consider reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce barriers experienced by children with disabilities or additional needs.

This may include adapting:

- the environment;
- routines;
- communication;
- resources;
- activities;
- group sizes;
- transitions;

- sensory experiences;
- teaching approaches;
- staff deployment; or
- access arrangements.

Fair does not always mean every child receiving exactly the same support.

Children should be supported to participate alongside their peers wherever appropriate.

Staff should refer to Southwark's current **Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP)** when considering the inclusive provision and adjustments that should ordinarily be available within the setting.

<https://education.southwark.gov.uk/send/processes-guidance-and-panels/ordinarily-available-provision?>

Interventions

Interventions should:

- respond to an identified need;
- have a clear purpose or outcome;
- be appropriate for the child;
- be delivered consistently;
- complement everyday high-quality interactions;
- follow professional recommendations where applicable; and
- be reviewed to establish whether they are making a difference.

Children should not be unnecessarily separated from their peers because they have SEND.

Role of the SENCO

The SENCO coordinates SEND provision within EDG Nursery.

The SENCO will:

- support early identification;
- advise practitioners;
- oversee the graduated approach;
- support SEND Support Plans;
- monitor interventions and outcomes;
- coordinate parent involvement;
- support referrals and funding applications;
- liaise with external professionals;
- ensure recommendations reach relevant staff;
- support SEND transitions;
- identify staff training needs;
- maintain appropriate SEND records; and
- work with management to continually strengthen inclusive practice.

However:

SEND is everyone's responsibility.

All practitioners working with a child are responsible for understanding and implementing their agreed support.

EDG SEND Folder

EDG maintains a **SEND Folder within the nursery office.**

The SENCO and management must ensure this remains organised, current and accessible to authorised staff.

The folder should contain or clearly signpost, as appropriate:

- EDG SEND procedures and templates;
- SEND referral information;
- SEND Support Plan templates;
- Assess–Plan–Do–Review documentation;

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All policies contained within this handbook have been created in line with current legislation and statutory guidance. EDG Nursery reviews all policies annually and updates them sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance, and recognised sector best practice.

- SEND Transition Checklist;
- parent consent documentation;
- current Southwark referral pathways;
- Southwark EYIF information;
- current EHC needs assessment information;
- useful professional/service contacts;
- relevant guidance and process maps; and
- information about the Southwark Local Offer.

Staff considering a SEND referral, funding application or statutory assessment should refer to the SEND Folder and current Southwark online guidance before proceeding.

Child-specific confidential records must be stored securely and only accessed by those with a legitimate need to know.

Referrals and External Professional Support

A referral should not be the first action taken simply because a concern has been identified.

Unless the child's needs require more immediate specialist involvement, EDG should be able to demonstrate:

IDENTIFIED NEED → SUPPORT PROVIDED → REVIEW → IMPACT → NEXT STEP

Before making a referral, the SENCO should ensure there is sufficient relevant evidence.

This may include:

- observations;
- developmental assessments;
- parent/carer views;
- SEND Support Plans;
- Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycles;
- interventions already attempted;
- evidence of impact;
- reasonable adjustments;
- professional reports;
- relevant health information;
- transition information; and
- evidence explaining why further support is required.

The aim is **good-quality evidence, not unnecessary** . . .

The SENCO must check the current requirements for the particular Southwark service before submitting a referral, as forms and referral routes can change.

Working With External Professionals

With appropriate parent involvement and consent, EDG may work with:

- health visitors;
- speech and language therapists;
- educational psychologists;
- occupational therapists;
- physiotherapists;
- SEND Inclusion Practitioners;
- Southwark Early Years/SEND teams;
- health professionals; and
- other relevant specialists.

Professional recommendations should be incorporated into the child's support where appropriate and communicated to practitioners who need to implement them.

A referral does **not** mean EDG stops providing support while waiting:

ASSESS → PLAN → DO → REVIEW continues while external support is awaited.

Southwark Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF)

Where a child's needs require additional provision beyond EDG's ordinarily available provision, the SENCO should consider whether **Early Years Inclusion Funding (EYIF)** may be appropriate.

Southwark's current 2026/27 EYIF process uses the **EYIF Provider Portal**. Applications must be submitted by the relevant panel deadline, and the guidance includes application information, levels of need, process maps, panel dates and Provider Portal instructions.

The SENCO must follow the **current Southwark** guide old saved form.

Parent consent must be obtained in accordance with the application process. Southwark advises settings to contact its Early Years Inclusion team if assistance with portal access or the process is required.

<https://education.southwark.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage/early-years-inclusion-fund?>

Early Years Inclusion Enquiries: EarlyYearsInclusion@southwark.gov.uk

Where a child continues to require significant support despite appropriate and purposeful action, EDG should work with parents and relevant professionals to consider whether an **EHC needs assessment** may be appropriate.

Southwark states that settings should make use of appropriate provision and professional support before requesting an EHC needs assessment. Where the setting considers an assessment necessary, parental/carers consent is required.

Southwark provides a specific:

- **EHC request form for settings;**
- guidance for completing the request; and
- relevant annual-review documentation.

These should always be accessed from the current Southwark page rather than relying on an outdated saved version.

<https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/education/education-health-and-care-ehc-plan/information-schools-and-other-settings?>

Evidence should clearly demonstrate:

CHILD'S NEEDS → PROVISION ALREADY MADE → PROGRESS/IMPACT → PROFESSIONAL EVIDENCE → WHY FURTHER PROVISION MAY BE REQUIRED

Southwark specifically identifies evidence about the child's SEND, what the nursery has already done, progress resulting from additional support, and relevant physical, emotional, social and health development as information that can support an assessment request.

Transitions Between Rooms

Transitions between rooms are carefully planned to ensure children feel confident, secure and supported.

For children with **SEND, emerging needs or additional needs**, transitions will be individually planned and may be **extended, adapted or completed more gradually** according to the child's needs and readiness.

The **SEND Transition Checklist must be completed** before the transition is finalised to ensure the receiving team understands the child's:

- needs;
- strategies;
- interventions;
- routines; and
- reasonable adjustments.

Where appropriate, receiving staff should have opportunities to **observe the child within their current, familiar environment** before the move so that they understand how the child communicates, engages and is successfully supported.

Information and agreed interventions must transfer between teams to ensure **consistency and continuity of support**.

Staff must refer to the **EDG Transitions Policy and SEND Transition Checklist** for the full procedure.

Transition to School or Another Setting

Children with SEND may require additional transition planning when moving to school or another setting.

With appropriate arrangements, EDG should share relevant information including:

- SEND Support Plans;
- successful strategies;
- communication needs;
- reasonable adjustments;
- interventions;
- professional recommendations; and
- EHCP information where applicable.

Additional visits, observations, transition meetings be arranged where appropriate.

Safeguarding and SEND

Children with SEND can experience additional barriers to communicating concerns or being understood.

Staff must remain alert to:

- changes in behaviour;
- unexplained injuries;
- communication difficulties;
- dependency on adults;
- intimate-care needs; and
- assumptions that concerning behaviour is simply related to SEND.

SEND must never be used to explain away a safeguarding concern.

Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately under EDG's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Parent Information and Southwark Local Offer

EDG will ensure families can easily access information about SEND support.

Up-to-date **parent-facing information about Southwark's SEND Local Offer must be available on the Parent Information Board outside the front of the nursery and accessible through the EDG Nursery website.**

This should clearly signpost parents/carers to Southwark's Local Offer, which provides information about SEND support, services, education, health, social care and activities for children and young people aged 0–25.

<https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/welcome-southwark-send-local-offer?>

Parents who need assistance accessing the Local Offer team:

Telephone: 020 7525 3104

Email: localoffer@southwark.gov.uk

The SENCO should periodically check that information displayed **outside the nursery and on the website remains current.**

Key Southwark SEND Contacts and Resources

The SENCO should always check the **SEND Folder and current Southwark webpages**, as contacts and referral routes may change.

Southwark SEN Team – EHC assessments and plans

Telephone: **020 7525 4278**

Email: sen@southwark.gov.uk

Early Years Inclusion Funding / Provider Portal support

Email: EarlyYearsInclusion@southwark.gov.uk

[Southwark EYIF guidance and applications](#)

Educational Psychology / SEND Inclusion Practitioner support

Telephone: **020 7525 5798**

Email: SEN-EducationalPsychologist&EHO@southwark.gov.uk

[Southwark Educational Psychology Service](#)

Southwark Local Offer

Telephone: **020 7525 3104**

Email: localoffer@southwark.gov.uk

Before Making a SEND Referral or Funding Application

The SENCO should check:

- ☐ Parents/carers have been appropriately involved
- ☐ Appropriate consent has been obtained
- ☐ The child's strengths and needs are clearly evidenced
- ☐ Relevant observations/developmental assessments are available
- ☐ SEND Support Plan is current
- ☐ Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycles are evidenced
- ☐ Strategies/interventions already attempted are recorded
- ☐ Impact/progress has been reviewed
- ☐ Reasonable adjustments are recorded
- ☐ Relevant professional reports are included
- ☐ Health/risk information is included where relevant
- ☐ Transition information is included where relevant
- ☐ The reason **additional support is now required** is clear
- ☐ Current Southwark referral/application requirements have been checked
- ☐ A copy of relevant documentation is retained appropriately

Staff Training

Management and the SENCO will identify training needs according to the children attending EDG.

Training may include:

- SEND awareness;
- communication and language;
- autism-informed practice;
- sensory needs;
- behaviour as communication;
- visual communication/Makaton where appropriate;
- specific interventions; and
- individual children's needs.

Staff must seek guidance if they do not understand how to implement an agreed strategy or intervention.

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

SEND records must be:

- factual;
- respectful;
- accurate;
- current;
- securely stored; and
- shared only where there is an appropriate reason to do so.

Staff must follow EDG's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy when recording or sharing information.

Related EDG Policies and Procedures

- Inclusion and Equality Policy
- Transitions Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Key Person Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Medication/Medical Needs Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Partnership with Parents Policy
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy
- SEND Transition Checklist
- SEND Support Plan / Assess–Plan–Do–Review documentation

Statutory and Local Guidance

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2?utm_

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<https://education.southwark.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage/early-years-inclusion-fund>

<https://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk/welcome-southwark-send-local-offer>