

### **General Statement of Values and Beliefs**

Our aim at Little Chestnuts Preschool is for all children to be happy in our setting and for the setting to be inclusive to all children. We believe that children with a disability are children first, sharing the same needs and desires as all children do.

We feel that where possible, all children should share social and learning experiences with their peers in the setting and within the local community.

Inclusion is a human right with benefits for all. It teaches children and adults to accept and value everyone, whatever their differences, it challenges fear and prejudice.

### **Partnership with Parents**

We understand that parents know their own child best, and we are happy to learn from them about the unique needs of their child. Once enrolled and before a child starts their journey at Little Chestnuts Preschool, a meeting with parent/carers must take place to build the knowledge of the child to ensure the child's special needs are met. A written SEN support plan will be created if needed.

Where we have concern about any aspect of the child's development, we will always talk to parents/carers first. We understand that things happen at home (about which we may not know) and can have a knock-on effect on the child's learning, emotions or behaviour.

### **Partnership with other professionals**

We are keen to work with other professionals known to the child to ensure a consistent and effective approach to intervention. We will also completely new referrals to other agencies/professionals with the consent of parents.

### **The Code of Practice for children with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability**

The SEND Code of Practice provides important guidance and regulations for schools, and all settings offering early education and registered for Nursery grant. This came into effect in September 2014 and covers children and young people aged 0–25 with SEN or a disability.

The code requires that the local authority sets out a 'local offer' of what support they provide for children and young people with SEND. A Local Offer gives children and young people in the borough, who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a disability, information in one place. The Thurrock Local Offer aims to provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information about what services and provisions are available in Thurrock for parents and young people. Please see [www.askthurrock.org.uk/localoffer](http://www.askthurrock.org.uk/localoffer) for more information. The code gives guidance on a graduated approach to identifying and supporting children with SEND and requires that the children, young people and parents are involved in decisions about SEND provision.

*"All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:*

- *Achieve their best*

- *Become confident individuals living fulfilling lives and*
- *Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.*

*SEND Code of Practice 2015”*

If a child is identified, through ongoing observation and assessment, as not progressing in any or all areas of the EYFS, staff will then make specific observations to assess any reasons for this and to find the specific areas that a child is finding difficult. If necessary, after observations are made, staff will meet privately with parents, at a time to suit them, to discuss the child’s progress and any strategies the setting could put in place to aid the child. If appropriate, staff will offer the help of other professionals and complete relevant paperwork with the parent’s consent.

### **The Graduated Approach**

This means frequently reviewing the progress of an individual pupil and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions. It focuses on the individual children's needs, putting them at the centre of all assessment and planning. Support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities should take the form of a four-stage cycle where decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child’s needs. This is known as the graduated approach.

**The approach uses a circular model with 4 stages:**

#### **Assess**

A child's difficulties must be assessed so that the right support can be provided. This should include, for example, asking the parents or carers their opinion, talking to other professionals who work with the child and looking at records and other information. This needs to be reviewed regularly so that the support provided continues to meet the child’s needs.

#### **Plan**

The setting needs to agree parental involvement and the outcomes that the SEN support is intended to achieve – in other words, how the child will benefit from any support they get. All those involved will need to have a say in deciding what kind of support will be provided and decide a date by which they will review this so that they can check to see how well the support is working and whether the outcomes have been or are being achieved.

Special assessments will be arranged within the setting and in conjunction with other professionals

#### **Do**

The setting will put the planned support into place. Staff are responsible for working with the child on a daily basis, but the SENCO and any support staff or specialist staff involved in providing support should work closely to track the child's progress and check that the support is being effective.

#### **Review**

The support the child receives should be reviewed at the time agreed in the plan. You can then decide together if the support is having a positive impact, whether the outcomes have been, or are being, achieved and if or how any changes should be made.

### **The Process should:**

- focus on the child or young person as an individual
- enable children and young people and their parents to express their views, wishes and feelings
- enable children and young people and their parents to be part of the decision-making process
- be easy for children, young people and their parents or carers to understand, and use clear ordinary language and images rather than professional jargon
- highlight the child or young person's strengths and capabilities
- enable the child or young person, and those that know them best to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in the future
- tailor support to the needs of the individual
- organise assessments to minimise demands on families
- bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach, and deliver an outcomes-focused and co-ordinated plan for the child or young person and their parents

### **Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

The purpose of an EHCP is to meet the special educational needs of a child and secure the best possible outcomes for them. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and the additional support needed. Children are assessed for an education, health and care plan by the local authority.

The Children and Families Act 2014 states that a local authority must carry out an EHC assessment if:

- a child or young person has or may have special educational needs (SEN)
- a child needs special educational provision to be made through an EHC plan

### **The typical EHCP process involves:**

1. The parents, staff or other professionals recognise a need.
2. Parents, staff and external professionals collect evidence of the need.
3. A request for an assessment is made to the local authority, supported by the evidence of need.
4. The local authority should respond to the request for assessment within 6 weeks.
5. An assessment is made, and the child (if able), parents, experts and staff contribute to the development of the draft EHC plan.
6. Parents are given 15 days to respond to the draft.
7. The final plan should be agreed and in place within 20 weeks of the request for assessment.

Where needed Little Chestnuts Preschool will support parents to request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment.

We follow a 'a child-centred approach' that underpins the SEND Code of Practice, putting the child at the heart of all planning decisions. Planning what is important to the person now and for the future and what support they require is a crucial -part of the EHCP process. Planning helps build the person's place in the community and helps the community to understand their needs.

### **Disabled Children and the Equality Act 2010**

Little Chestnuts Preschool sets out an inclusive approach, designed to be responsive to the individual needs of children and parents. We focus on delivering improved outcomes for all children and closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged children and others. Our setting is inclusive to all children. We are familiar with and work within the boundaries of the Disabled Children & the Equality Act 2010.

## English Additional Language (EAL)

The EYFS framework states that: *'For children whose home language is not English, providers must take reasonable steps to provide opportunities for children to develop and use their home language in play and learning, supporting their language development at home. Providers must also ensure that children have sufficient opportunities to learn and reach a good standard in English language during the EYFS, ensuring children are ready to benefit from the opportunities available to them when they begin year 1. When assessing communication, language and literacy skills, practitioners must assess children's skills in English. If a child does not have a strong grasp of English language, practitioners must explore the child's skills in the home language with parents and/or carers, to establish whether there is cause for concern about language delay'.* (EYFS, 2021)

The EYFS framework has been developed to be inclusive so that the early years curriculum and assessment is accessible to children with EAL. Little Chestnuts ensure our provision promotes progress for children with EAL by adhering to the underlying principles of the EYFS framework. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers. It is therefore important to find ways to work with EAL or non-English speaking parents to support the progress of children with EAL in all aspects of EYFS learning. We use google translate when messaging our parents to help break down that barrier of communication. We also use this with our EAL children to scaffold and aid their understanding.

There are 5 stages to language acquisition and it's important for practitioners to have a good understanding of these stages when supporting children with EAL.

The first 3 stages apply to early years, these are:

### Step 1 : **New to English**

Children may appear silent, reluctant to speak and appear shy or withdrawn but this is normal in the early stages of learning a language. This is a listening phase when the child tunes in to the English language and begins to notice patterns.

### Step 2: **Early acquisition**

When the silent stage ends, children may appear to make a leap in progress and improve rapidly. At this stage children will be able to understand clear two-step instructions and be able to ask functional questions. They will listen attentively to stories for a short time and begin to understand and use descriptive words.

### Step 3: **Developing competence**

This stage is characterised by an increase in confidence, listening stamina and a willingness to engage in conversation with their peers. They will respond to open-ended questions and use tenses to plan and recount past events.

We strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for children with EAL and their families. We do not make assumptions about their needs based on their cultural, social, ethnic, religious or linguistic background.

We create a welcoming and inclusive environment by:

- becoming familiar with the child and their background by meeting and consulting the family
- ensuring the correct spelling and pronunciation of names
- developing an understanding of their culture and language
- encouraging parents to come in and share their cultural and linguistic heritage with the setting
- working with parents to complete a profile of their accomplishments, likes, dislikes and routines

- acknowledging the importance of the home language in books, displays and resources
- communicating school policies and key messages in the home language
- use google translate or accessing support from charities or the local offer to gather or create resources in their home language
- celebrate the culture and heritage for example by adding religious holidays and cultural events to the setting's calendar and curriculum
- use a variety of formats and media to communicate, for example using video messages, symbols or images as well as written or spoken
- communication provide toys, resources and activities that reflect the home culture and language

The Code of Practice states "Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early years practitioners should look carefully at all aspects of a child's learning and development to establish whether any delay is related to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from SEN or disability. Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN." (Code of Practice, 2014)

### **Record Keeping**

All assessments and information on the child must be kept up to date and stored in safe place.

This information is confidential and should only be shared with the parent/carers and setting staff. Sharing with other professionals involved in the care and development of the child must be authorised by parent/carer, except in the event of a safeguarding concern.

A record of the child's needs, medical, attendance, observations, individual support plan and referrals must be tracked within the setting.

### **Special Needs Co-ordinator**

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) in this setting is Gina Halls.

The SENCO is not solely responsible for children with SEN, but will lead SEN across both settings, ensuring that children are being supported effectively. The SENCO will liaise with parents and other professionals to ensure the children make maximum progress during their time at the setting.

Staff working with SEN children will attend training and will share good practice with their colleagues.

The SENCO must be familiar with the Code of Practice and will maintain a register of children in the setting currently thought to have additional needs.

## Support Services

There is a range of local support services available:

- *Thurrock SEN Services* - [sen@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:sen@thurrock.gov.uk)
- *Speech and Language Therapy* – available through referral from yourself or your health visitor, GP, or from Nursery with parental consent
- Services for children with hearing or visual impairment
- Educational Psychology
- Occupational Therapy – help with fine motor and spatial awareness difficulties.
- Physiotherapy – for children with mobility difficulties
- The Parent Advisory Team – provides information and support for children with disabilities and their families - [info@patt.org.uk](mailto:info@patt.org.uk)