



## Section 2.3 Roles and Responsibilities in Early Years Settings:

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for providing high quality inclusive education and training to all. This is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practice.

- Early Years Inspection Framework 2019



\* HQT (*high quality teaching*)

Providers **must** have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. Para 5.4 SEND Code of Practice

Every person within a setting plays a key role in supporting children with SEND, some of these are listed below.

## **The South Glos Way: A SEND and inclusion toolkit for South Gloucestershire education settings and professionals**

### **The Role of the Committee/Trustees**

The Committee or trustees are volunteers, usually parents and are jointly responsible for and have a duty to support the manager to develop a fully inclusive setting through:

- Safeguard the children in their setting and follow the welfare requirements, including a current DBS certificate and subscription to the update service for all staff including volunteers.
- Recruit the staff in the setting and ensure they are qualified to work in their respective roles and manage their contracts.
- Ensure the staff team access all relevant up to date training and more specifically for practitioners who support children with their medical needs.
- Comply with current legislation and keeping up to date with legalities on Health and Safety.
- Keep the setting financially viable: considering children (alongside the manager/leader) who are needing access to additional funding to maintain their place at their setting: ensuring the staff team are making reasonable adjustment in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- Consider implementing regular savings into a specific account for SEND provision including staffing, training and resources.
- Ensure the setting offers an Inclusive environment that allows for flexibility in providing individualised learning.

*All early years providers should take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet those needs. This is set out in the EYFS framework.*

Para 5.11 SEND Code of Practice

### **The Role of the Manager/Leader**

The role of the manager or leader in an early years setting is crucial as they are typically the most influential person in the setting, and are responsible for developing a fully inclusive setting through:

- Creating policies and procedures for the setting
- Managing practitioners with clear expectations for all to be inclusive of all children, especially those who are considered vulnerable, disadvantaged or those with SEND.
- Meeting with parents and support the key person to meet with parents to discuss children's learning and development
- Ensuring there is a named SENCO and that all staff understand this role
- Ensuring that all staff know, understand and can support all children in their care regardless of the child's background or needs.
- Making supervision and professional development a priority including succession planning for all staff, especially for the specific and defined role of the SENCO
- Identifying training needs for all staff and specifically for the SENCO in relation to supporting all children but especially those with SEND.

## **The South Glos Way: A SEND and inclusion toolkit for South Gloucestershire education settings and professionals**

- Working closely with the SENCO on the implementation of policies for SEN and disabilities
- Alongside the owner/committee, manage the day to day accounts and support the SENCO with making requests for funding
- Ensuring everyone in the setting, including parents and their children have high aspirations and is working towards the best outcomes for all children in their care
- Providing an inclusive environment that offers individualised/differentiated planning to meet the needs of all children.

For childminders who are lone workers, it is expected they know, understand and follow the Code of Practice and are able to support the children in their care.

*Childminders are not required to have written policies and procedures. However, they must be able to explain their policies and procedures to parents/carers and others (for example Ofsted Inspectors or the childminder agency with which they are registered) and ensure any assistants follow them.*

*EYFS 2021 – 3.3*

### **The Role of the SENCO**

All setting **must** identify a SENCO in their setting – **EYFS Para 3.67**

For lone working childminders, they are expected to undertake the role of the SENCO within their setting. A childminder who works with one or more assistants should nominate someone to undertake the SENCO role, this may or may not be themselves.

**ALL** early years SENCOs can access support from an Early Intervention Officer by contacting them directly or via [earlyyears@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyears@southglos.gov.uk)

*‘As a SENCO, you are given the opportunity to support the whole team to work cohesively towards giving every child equal learning opportunity to ensure they are given the best start in life. Tapping into the individual child’s learning style and thinking out of the box to ensure we demonstrate equity across the setting pushes me to do my best every day, for every child.’*

SENCO, South Glos Day Nursery

The role of the SENCO involves:

- Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting’s approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- Advising and supporting colleagues
- Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting, and
- Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting

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### SEND Code of Practice 2015

A SENCO **should** be an experienced practitioner with a sound knowledge of child development, who is able to lead and support the practitioners in their setting to identify children early and support them to meet the children's differing needs within an inclusive setting.

*"It is such an important and rewarding role to have. Although it can be challenging, knowing you have helped so many children and their families is the best feeling in the world"*

SENCO, Day Nursery South Glos

*"The role of SENCO is integral to a Childminders practice, supporting families and children to meet their full potential, whatever that may be, by observing, assessing and detailed planning for their individual needs and bringing together external professionals as required. Working alone, it is sometimes daunting to know how to help, but with guidance from the LA we have succeeded in supporting our SEN children "*

Childminder – South Glos

The SENCO has responsibility for:

- The day-to-day operation of implementing and the overseeing the SEN policy in practice and coordinating the SEN provision within the setting.
- Keeping up to date with the SEND Code of Practice and current legislation and have sound knowledge of current practices and access relevant training to the role.
- Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the setting's approach to identifying and meeting SEN.
- Advising and supporting colleagues in their setting, especially when working directly with a child with SEN e.g. through modelling or demonstrating
- Meeting with parents to ensure their voice is heard as part of the graduated approach to supporting their child.
- Advising, signposting and guiding parents through the SEND process so that they can participate in decisions.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals and have good communication skills, including recording and sharing information at meetings.
- Making referrals to other agencies and liaising with professionals as part of the graduated approach
- Link with the local authority to ensure best practice and where appropriate, access available funds to support identified children and develop the settings inclusive practice through the whole team approach.

## **The South Glos Way: A SEND and inclusion toolkit for South Gloucestershire education settings and professionals**

*SENCO's highlighted the importance of communication with colleagues. Information sharing between key workers and the SENCO was noted as an intrinsic part of the identification process. .... the process of identifying SEN as one which is embedded through their typical process for monitoring the development of all children.*

Identifying Special Educational Needs in the  
Early Years: perspectives from SENCOs- NASEN

*Childminders are encouraged to identify a person to act as SENCO and childminders who are registered with a childminder agency or who are part of a network may wish to share that role between them.*

SEND Code of Practice 2017 – 3.67

### **The Role of the Key Person**

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requires that every child must be assigned a key person.

*The keyperson must seek to engage and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. They should also help families engage with more specialist support if appropriate.*

EYFS .1.16

*The early years practitioner, usually the child's key person, remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. With support from the SENCO, they should oversee the implementation of the interventions or programmes agreed as part of SEN support. The SENCO should support the practitioner in assessing the child's response to the action taken, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.*

Para 5.42 SEND Code of Practice

Alongside their colleagues, the key person should:

- Provide a well-planned and effective learning inclusive environment which caters for the children in their care. Adapting and differentiating provision for their key child to access the experiences and activities.
- Carry out effective observations of the children's play, language and behaviours and be able to recognise emerging difficulties.
- Work collaboratively with parents to work towards the best outcomes for these children using appropriate SEN support.
- Recognise the importance of working alongside parents and ensuring the parents knowledge of the child is also recorded as part of monitoring the developmental progress of their child.
- Have a clear knowledge of the graduated response and how to implement this as part of a whole team approach to supporting children with SEND in their care.

## **The South Glos Way: A SEND and inclusion toolkit for South Gloucestershire education settings and professionals**

- Have a sound knowledge of the SEND policies and procedures in the setting and a have a full understanding of their roles and responsibilities within their setting.
- Seek support and training from the manager and/or SENCo as required.

### **The Role of the Practitioners**

*The graduated approach should be led and co-ordinated by the setting SENCO working with and supporting individual practitioners in the setting and informed by EYFS materials*

Para 5.45 SEND Code of Practice

The practitioners working alongside their colleagues need to also support all the children with SEND as part of the whole team approach. In most cases the practitioners working in a setting will not be supporting children directly, however the SEND code of Practice **must** be followed to provide an inclusive environment and practitioners **must** make reasonable adjustment in order for children to access the curriculum so they are included in all activities.

Early years providers and educational settings should have arrangements in place that include a clear approach to assessing SEN. This should be part of the setting's overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all children.

Para 5.20 SEND Code of Practice

The practitioners **must**:

- Have a sound working knowledge of the **whole** EYFS framework
- Have a sound knowledge of the current SEND Code of Practice
- Have a sound knowledge of child development
- Be able to observe, assess and monitor the child's progress and development using the EYFS and be able to identify children's emerging needs
- **Alongside their colleagues** be able to gather key information, which captures the uniqueness of the child, such as their skills, interests and motivators which builds a clear picture of the child
- Have a clear knowledge and understanding of their role in the graduated approach and engage parents and carers in a child's learning and development
- **Alongside their colleague's** plan and deliver an appropriate and effective learning and inclusive environment
- Seek support and training from manager and/or SENCo as required

### **The Role of the Volunteer**

Studies have shown the potential value, specifically with literacy skills of volunteers (including parents and grandparents) on children with SEN within the early years setting.

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Volunteers would typically have **no** access to children without supervision and/or a current DBS certificate and subscription to the update service. The volunteer would be supporting the practitioners in the room to follow the EYFS curriculum and would **not** be expected to write reports on children.

The volunteer in the setting should be able to:

- Work in the setting alongside the practitioners as part of a team, supervising and supporting children to access the inclusive play environment
- Be aware of the children's emotional needs and know the importance of informing a qualified practitioner
- Support children during mealtimes and snack routines and be aware of the potential risks with feeding and eating for all children, and taking into account the use of visuals and Makaton to do this.
- Support the practitioners in delivering high quality structured interventions and group times for children with SEND as the 'supportive adult'

### **Further Guidance and Support**

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

<https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

NASEN -Early Years SEND Review Guide

<https://www.sendgateway.org.uk/whole-school-send/find-wss-resources/>

SEND Code of Practice -Section 5 Early Years Providers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

A Celebratory Approach to SEND assessment in the Early Years DFE

[https://www.pengreen.org/a-holistic-approach-to-send-assessment-in-the-early-years-section-](https://www.pengreen.org/a-holistic-approach-to-send-assessment-in-the-early-years-section-1/#:~:text=A%20Celebratory%20Approach%20to%20SEND%20Assessment%20in%20the,Principles.%20...%204%20Current%20Legislation%20and%20Frameworks.%20)

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