



Special Educational Needs - SEN

This policy is in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015 and Equality Act 2010.

[SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/303673/SEND_Code_of_Practice_0_to_25_years.pdf)

[Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/100)

Somerset Graduated Response Tool:

[Somerset Graduated Response Toolkit](#)

Who is the SENCo?

The Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is Jayne Windsor supported by Viv Cumming.

What is the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)?

SENCOs, oversee the strategic development of SEN policy and provision and as such is advised to form part of the leadership team. In addition, they ensure the implementation of the SEN policy on a day-to-day basis.

They are a key point of contact for staff, professionals and for parents and can offer support and advice for the identification of needs and suitable provision to meet those needs. Through provision management, they will maintain an overview of the progress of each child with SEND and will seek to develop practice to ensure the effectiveness of interventions and support.

The SENCo also will

- Manage the day-to-day operation of the policy; ensuring these meet the required and relevant Acts and code of Practice. And put these into practice and Regularly review these
- Co-ordinate the provision for and manage the responses to children's needs.
- Co-ordinate provision / training to support children with health complications to ensure that their needs are met;
- Support and advise colleagues;
- Oversee the records of all children with Special Educational Needs;
- Act as the link with parents;
- Act as link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- Monitor and evaluate the Special Educational Needs provision.
- Manage a range of resources, human and material, to enable appropriate provision for children with Special Educational Needs;
- Contribute to the professional development of all staff.
- Provide staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the nursery.
- Draw up Individual Education Plans for children, using an Assess, Plan Do review cycle, our setting response documents, provision plans and my All About Me forms.

- Monitor the progress of children with Special Educational Needs in line with the child's developmental needs. Parents will be invited to meetings so that their views can be added and heard.
- Ensure that the key person is completing the relevant Observation, Recording, Assessment and Planning documents
- Lead in observations and assessments of children with SEN; understanding individual strengths, and interests, to inform teaching and learning.
- Support practitioners to use the Individual Assessment of Early Learning and Development where appropriate
- Liaise with the key person to complete all relevant paperwork and assessments.
- Gather evidence and co-ordinate support, work with colleagues to develop the child's skills through inclusive planning in line with Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum.
- Keep appropriate records which are regularly reviewed and monitored.
- Apply for High needs Funding where appropriate.
- Support agencies and families with requests for Educational Health and Care Plans
- Work closely with parents to ensure background information is collected and shared appropriately.
- Promote a positive working relationship with parents/carers;
- Develop links and liaise as appropriate with other professionals, Health Visitors, SEN preschool Advisory Teacher, Speech and Language Therapists, Inclusion Development Officer, Educational Psychologists.
- Support Professional Development within the whole staffing team,
- Identify individual setting's needs and arrange in-house training where appropriate.
- To complete an Early Help Assessment to request support from agencies as required.
- Support the development of inclusive practice.

Working in Partnership with Area SENCO

The Area SENCO **Jessica Cullen** plays an important part in planning for children with SEN to transfer between early years provision and schools. She helps to make the links between education, health and social care to facilitate appropriate early provision for children with SEN and their transition to compulsory schooling.

Typically, the role of the Area SENCO includes:

- Providing advice and practical support to early years providers about approaches to identification, assessment and intervention within the SEN Code of Practice.
- Providing ongoing support for the setting.
- Strengthening the links between the settings, parents, schools, social care and health services developing and disseminating good practice.
- Supporting the development and delivery of training both for individual settings and on a wider basis
- Developing links with existing SENCO networks to support smooth transitions to school nursery and reception classes.
- Informing parents of and working with local impartial information, advice and support services, to promote effective work with parents of children in the early years.

Our SEN statement

At Clare House we aim to create an environment where everyone is welcomed, all individual needs are met, support is given and information is shared and signposted to the appropriate professionals. The SEN team have regular meetings with our Area SENCo and Health visitors. We also have other agencies such as Speech and Language and Occupational therapy coming in on a regular basis to advise and support us to help us every child's needs.

We are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and outside agencies to raise aspirations and expectations for all children. By focusing on the each child we ensure positive outcomes and enable the individual to fulfil their true potential and make a smooth transition into compulsory learning.

At Clare House nursery we carryout robust observational assessments on each child; this informs their personal learning pathway. We try to ensure that the key person and practitioners to have a good understanding of each child and their preferred learning style and pattern of development. The collated information enables us to identify any concerns in their development which will then be shared by the key worker with Jayne Windsor our settings Manager and SENCo Or Viv Cumming SENCo support.

We work closely with parents and ensure that they are consulted and informed about strategies we use to support their child's learning and development within the setting. In line with the SEND Code of practice, we will always inform parents when introducing teaching strategies which are additional or different from those which are part of our daily or weekly routine. We will keep parents informed about their child's progress and ensure that their permission is sought before proceeding, or taking further advice/making referrals, all communications and meetings are conducted in an open and respectful manner.

As a setting we fully recognise and appreciate the importance of partnerships. If we are to achieve a successful outcome then this can only be done with parents/carers and the setting working together in a cohesive, trusting and respectful relationship. We follow a graduated response to meeting children's needs and follow the SEND code of practice 2015.

We aim to provide a parallel curriculum that offers each child the opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential. This may need us to match the room to the child's developmental ability rather than their chronological age. This is assessed on an individual basis and regularly evaluated.

The aims of this policy are:

- To create an environment that meets the Special Educational Needs/Health care of each child.
- To ensure that the Special Educational Needs of children are identified, assessed and appropriate provision is made.
- To ensure that all health care needs are planned for, and training is delivered.
- To make clear the expectations of all partners in the process.
- To ensure that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in providing for children's Special Educational /Health Needs.
- To enable all children to access to all elements of the nursery's curriculum.
- To ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their child's education.
- To ensure that children attending our setting have a voice in this process.

To achieve this we will...

- Provide a welcoming, receptive and responsive environment in which parents/carers work in partnership with staff to meet each child's individual needs.

- Ensure effective communication between staff and children, staff and parents/carers, staff/parents/carers and outside agencies, and staff.
- Ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum which is delivered using a variety of high quality teaching techniques and follows children's own interests.
- Plan for and regularly assessments of children's individual needs following a "assess, plan, do, review" cycle involving parents/carers every step of the way.
- Develop a strong leadership and management team to support staff and stakeholders to identify needs and enable them to access training.
- Meet with parents regularly allowing flexibility for meeting times and respecting them as their child's first educators.
- Ensure transition periods are well planned for and information is transferred promptly and confidentially. Where children are new to our setting and areas of need have already been identifies a Pre-school entry plan may be organised.
- Work collaboratively with the area SENCo (Jessica Cullen) to monitor the progress and provision for children with SEND, and to monitor the accessibility of the physical learning environment, the curriculum and information for children with disabilities.
- Ensure all Nursery policies are inclusive and are known, and accessible, to all parents/carers, staff and ensure that parents/carers are well informed about the support they can expect to receive.
- This policy represents the agreed principles for Special Educational Needs throughout the Nursery, all staff at Clare House have read and agreed this policy.

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Inclusion

At Clare House we aim to offer choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel they are valued as part of our nursery community.

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Staff use the 'Graduated Response strategy' to meet children's Special Educational Needs. Learning and activities have clear learning objectives, we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform our planning for the child's next stage of learning.

Here is a link for more information regarding what a graduated response is :

[What to expect from education \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/what-to-expect-from-education)

Assess, Plan, Do Review employs a small-steps approach, this features significantly in the provision that we make in the nursery. By understanding the existing levels of attainment and then finely grading the steps we can set and targets, that ensure that all children experience success.

We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible we do not withdraw children from the nursery situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the main learning environment.

Identifying and assessing SEN for young children whose first language is not English requires particular care. Early year's 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.

We recognise that difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language (EAL) are not SEN.

Where children have English as an Additional Language with consent from parent/carer we can seek support from an outside agencies. Practitioners will come into the nursery and act as a translation for the child and help us to gather specific observations to support their learning.

At Clare House staff respond to children's needs by:

- Providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy;
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences;
- Planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- Supporting children to regulate their emotions by using some of our strategies.
- Having behavioural expectations to allow children to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- Helping individuals to understand their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.
- Using Somerset Total communication.

Somerset Total Communication

Somerset Total Communication aims to support the speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) of people who have limited speech and language skills. The aim of STC is to make sure that children, young people and adults in Somerset with speech, language and communication needs have a consistent approach to meeting their communication needs in all aspects of everyday life.

Helping people to communicate effectively, can enrich relationships, build confidence, improve self-esteem and enable participation in community life

Somerset Total Communication adopts a holistic approach to meeting individual needs by teaching individuals to combine the use of action gesture sign pictures symbols and objects to purposefully communicate simple messages. Use of Inclusive Communication strategies can help everyone, including those with a wide range of communication and learning requirements.

Total Communication is -

- Using your voice - and varying its tone, pitch and volume
- Using natural gesture e.g. pointing
- Using body posture and demonstration e.g. if you are talking about beating an egg, demonstrate what to do

- Using objects of reference e.g if you are talking about an apple - show an apple
- Using pictures, photographs and video clips
- Using signs and symbols

Our Admission Arrangements

All children are welcomed into our early years setting, regardless of their educational/health needs. When we know that a child may have an additional need before starting with us, we will endeavour to set up a good transition for child and family into our setting. This will involve a pre-school entry plan meeting which will give staff a clear understanding of the child's needs and give them a starting point to be able to plan activities appropriately. Effective planning is enabling for children and helps to ensure that parents and practitioners have shared expectations for the induction process.

Identifying Children with SEND

At Clare House we believe that all children develop and learn at different rates, as is reflected in the EYFS and our Opening Statement.

Through our observations we may identify where children need some adult support which is either additional or different to that which their peers require. We understand that it is important to identify individual needs as early as possible and put things in place to help them, as early intervention has been shown to improve children's long term outcomes.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, staff set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's emerging learning needs.

A child is identified as having a special educational need and/or disability (SEND) 'where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from, or additional to, that normally available to children of the same age' (SEND Code of Practice)

The SEND Code of practice identifies learning needs in the following areas

- **Communication and Interaction:** Children with speech, language and communication needs have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. These needs may change over time.
- **Cognition and Learning:** Support for learning difficulties may be required when children learn at a Differing pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs including moderate learning difficulties severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia, affect one or more specific aspects of learning.
- **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties:** Children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These

behaviours can reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, attention deficit disorder or an attachment disorder.

- **Sensory and/or physical needs:** Some children have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. This may include vision impairment, hearing impairment or multisensory impairment. Some children with a physical disability require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

When further support is required

Where a child appears not to be achieving expected developmental goals, or where their progress gives cause for concern, practitioners should review all the information about their learning and development. Information is initially gathered from within the setting, such as formal checks, practitioner observations and any more detailed assessment of the child's needs will be considered alongside parent's views and thoughts.

All planning and interventions will be carefully monitored. If our ongoing assessments show that a child may need some additional support put in place, we will make full use of all available resources both within and outside the setting. The child's parents will be informed about every stage.

In liaison with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), the child's Key person will offer interventions that are 'different from' or 'additional to' those provided as part of the nursery's usual working practices. The Key person will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information.

If the SENCo, Key person and parents feel that the child would benefit from further support, the SENCo will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs. The Individual Assessment of Early Learning and Development (IAELD) is designed to be completed if practitioners are concerned about a child's rate of progress compared with their peers, or when some of their skills appear to be delayed. The IAELD assesses a child's skills within the setting in collaboration with parents or carers.

We will record the strategies used to support the child within an Assess, Plan, Do Review (APDR). The APDR will show the short-term targets set for the child and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. In most cases, this review will take place once a term. Parents will be fully involved in this process.

If the review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents prior to any support being actioned. In most cases, children will be seen in the nursery by external support services. This may lead to 'additional' or 'different' strategies and external support outside of the nursery. External support services will provide information for the child's new outcomes. The new strategies within the APDR will, wherever possible, be implemented in the child's nursery setting.

If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for additional funding may be required. Parents who will be fully involved with the process, the funding will enable us to source appropriate resources which will be used in the best way to support the child and scaffold their individual learning with the setting.

Allocation of resources

The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special needs provision within the nursery, including the provision for children with additional needs. We may apply with parental permission for Exceptional Needs Funding through Somerset County Council.

Early Help assessment (EHA)

The EHA is a shared assessment and planning framework for the use across all children's services and all local areas in England. It aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them. The EHA is aimed at children and young people with additional needs or who have needs that are not being met by their current service provision

Every family goes through challenging times at some point. Early help means working with parents and families so that small problems don't become big problems. Early help is for everybody, for families with children and young people of any age and it's parent's choice whether to have it or not.

There are lots of reasons why people look for early help. It could be that they are worried about a child's health, development or behaviour, or how they're doing at school, or perhaps because they are caring for a disabled child. It may be that money or housing is affecting the family. Maybe the child or family is affected by domestic abuse, drugs or alcohol or crime. Perhaps the child is a carer for other people, or maybe there's been a bereavement in the family that's made life a real challenge.

Early help assessment is a conversation to work out how to help stop small problems turning into big problems. Families can talk about things that are going well and things that they're proud of as well as things that they're finding a challenge. This person will also talk with the child or children in the family to make sure they understand how they are feeling and anything they think they might want some help with. What happens next will be different for every family. They might make a plan to sort out the problems or arrange meetings with other people who might be able to help. This is called a team around the family meeting. They might want to get a service (like family support or therapy or a children's centre) to give the help and advice. These are just examples. Parents have control over what happens next and can say what they want. If they decide they'd like some help, the person they talked with will ask if they can share details of the conversation. They need to be happy with this and give permission. This is to make sure the people who will be supporting them are able to do a good job and understand the journey they and their family have been on.

Higher needs Funding

Early Years High Needs funding is applicable for those children whose needs will determine appropriate modifications being made within a setting. Funding is allocated in response to the needs of the child and requirements of the provision at the time of application. The nature of a child's development can change significantly in the early years and this process may be repeated on request of Somerset county council. The funding is allocated through a universal banding system in Somerset, based on the description of special educational need, which goes from band 1 to band 7. The allocation is for the institution or provider must be used towards providing additional support for the child in whose name the application was made.

Disability access funding

Disability Access Fund is money that is available to a nominated childcare provider once a year. 3-and 4-year-old children who meet these criteria are eligible if the child is in receipt of a Disability Living

Allowance and the child receives the Early Years Entitlement at a childcare provider in Somerset. As a setting we provide information and where necessary can support parents with making the request.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

The SEND Code of Practice 2024 states that

Where, despite the setting having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, the setting should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

Where a child has an EHC plan, the local authority must review that plan as a minimum every twelve months. As part of the review, the local authority can ask settings, and require maintained nursery schools, to convene and hold the annual review meeting on its behalf.

At Clare House we are always willing to host annual review and other meetings which support the EHCP process

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

As a setting we provide information to help to inform the EHCP assessment and review processes.

We collate information to enable us to describe and explain children's needs

We observe children carefully and monitor their progress

We identify learning outcomes and create personalised learning plans

We actively record children's and parents views interests and aspirations

We work closely with education health and care services

Please find more information regarding the EHCP process Via the link:

[Education, Health and Care Plans \(EHCP\) \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-health-and-care-plans-ehcp)

Local Offer

Like all Local authorities (Somerset) publishes a Local Offer, setting out in one place information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. In setting out what they 'expect to be available', local authorities should include provision which they believe will actually be available.

The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it.

- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.

Each setting or provision is required to publish their Offer, and this collectively informs the Local Authority offer. **Please find Clare House offer on our website.**