



Equality of Opportunities Policy

This policy is updated and revised annually in line with the revised Code of Practice.

Kindness, Resilience & Respect – living our beliefs

Little Oaks promotes a positive self-image to all children and respects their individuality, planning for all children according to their needs, irrespective of their gender, race, religion or ability. We ensure we have non-stereotypical images in order to help overcome preconceived ideas of gender, ethnic origin, culture or religion. Every child is included and not disadvantaged because of home language, culture or religion, family background, learning difficulties or disability. We provide books, materials and equipment that are multicultural and non-sexist, and positive images of all groups including the disabled. We provide a welcoming environment that will offer support and guidance for every child and their carer. We aim to develop children's positive self-esteem and the esteem of others and will set a good example by treating one another and the children with respect.

The legal frameworks for this policy include:

- Education Act 1996
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Special Education Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act 2014
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023
- Safeguarding Disabled Children-practice guidance 2009
- Children Act 1989
- Childcare Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010

Admissions

Children with special / additional needs, like other children are admitted to nursery after consultation between parents / carers, managers and outside agencies (as appropriate).

We ask parents to give as much notice as possible for a child with disabilities or special/additional needs, to enable us to explore how we can provide most effectively for that child. This may include staffing ratios, so each individual case is discussed between families and managers to enable a smooth transition from home to our nursery. Where a request is initiated by an outside agency, the request will be considered in line with our Admissions

Policy. All children are welcome, and information gathered at the initial parents meeting is collected to ensure each child's individual needs are met. In some cases we may seek further professional advice to support the admission of a child with special / additional needs to ensure adequate and suitable provision can be made to suit their needs.

In order to promote Equality and Diversity we will:

- Ensure that all parents are made aware of our policy
- Offer equality and choice for all
- Access additional funding where necessary and available
- Reflect the diversity of members of our society in our publicity and promotional materials
- Ensure our admissions policy promotes equality for all families
- Not discriminate against a family or prevent admission to our setting on any grounds
- Provide opportunities for parents/carers to contribute to their child's care and education
- Use funding from the nursery budget, where possible and as the budget allows, using for special educational needs including training
- Challenge inappropriate attitudes and practices by staff children and parent/carers.

We aim to encourage children to develop positive attitudes about themselves and other people. We will do this by:

- Listening to children and ensuring each child feels included, safe, valued and respected.
- Ensuring that all children have equal access to activities, resources and learning opportunities.
- Making appropriate provision to ensure each child receives the widest possible opportunity to develop their skills and abilities and recognise different learning styles.
- Providing play materials/resources and activities that demonstrates diversity of background and ability, and help to develop positive attitudes to differences of race, culture, language, gender and ability.
- Avoiding stereotypical images in equipment, resources and activities.
- Using positive non-discriminatory language with all children.
- Valuing the home background of all children.

In order to meet children's diverse needs we endeavour to plan a wide range of challenging play opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills, develop motivation, self-esteem and concentration, provide a safe and supportive environment and provide support by different approaches, including additional adult help or other agencies where appropriate.

We are primarily concerned with identifying/planning to meet individual needs, providing a well-planned structured environment with access available for all children, providing a wide range of activities, resources and

equipment, giving access to different types and levels of interaction and communication, identifying any specialist skills, methods or strategies, evaluating and recording individual learning and achievements.

English as an Additional Language

- We will value linguistic diversity and seek support for children and parents as required. We understand that young bilingual learners need time to observe, tune into the new language and try out things that are unfamiliar to them.
- We will try to provide information in languages that reflect the needs of our families who speak English as an additional language.
- Alongside valuing parent's home language, we will provide a range of meaningful contexts in which children have opportunities to develop English. English will be crucial as the language they use to access learning.

Inclusion

We aim to provide a happy stimulating and secure environment for all children regardless of culture, background or disability, where individual abilities are recognised, and children learn through first hand experiences, exploration, practice and discovery.

Each person is regarded as an individual, with differing social, intellectual and cultural backgrounds. Different needs, likes, dislikes, similarities and differences are respected and accounted for.

Nobody in the nursery is subjected to discrimination, racist comments or gender bias. Cultural and religious diversity is respected.

Inclusion is not optional. Children have defined entitlements in this area and settings have legal responsibilities. During play we encourage children to respect and value each other. We discourage them from making hurtful and unkind remarks. We challenge any discriminatory actions or comments made by staff or children.

We acknowledge the diversity of our society and help prepare the children for their part in society. Managers and practitioners ensure that children are helped towards understanding that it is wrong to judge someone because of their gender, race, beliefs, disability or social background. We explain why, talk things through, making it clear immediately the unacceptability of the behaviour and attitudes, by means of explanation rather than personal blame, and praise positive behaviour.

We aim to treat our children with equal respect and provide a range of equipment resources and activities to meet their individual needs. We seek to respond to each child as an individual. We believe in adapting our practice to meet the needs of each child rather than making children fit in with what we do.

We work together with parents and professionals valuing their experience and contribution.

We comply with the two main duties set out in the EQUALITY ACT 2010. These are:

- Not to treat a disabled child 'less favourably'
- To make 'reasonable adjustments' for disabled children.

We will focus on each child's individual learning, development and care by:

- Removing or helping to overcome barriers for children where these already exist.
- Being alert to the early signs of needs that could lead to later difficulties and responding quickly and appropriately, involving other agencies as necessary.
- Stretching and challenging all children.

Staff Training

Managers and practitioners are encouraged to attend training opportunities to support their awareness and understanding of equality and diversity.

Our Little Oaks SENDCO attends training around special educational needs and the code of practice.

Staff members have equal access to identified training to ensure professional development.

Funding is made available, where possible, from within the nursery budget to allow staff to access training.

Any complaints will be dealt with in accordance with our complaints policy.

We will routinely review and monitor this policy and our practice to ensure that we are fully implementing the policy for Equality of Opportunities and SEND. We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the policies and update annually or as and when deemed necessary.

SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy

This policy is updated and revised annually with the revised code of practice. We apply the SEND Code of Practice to ensure that children with Special Educational Needs and their families are welcomed and fully inclusive in all aspects of Nursery life.

The legal frameworks for this policy include:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023
- Equality Act 2010

We will identify children who give cause for concern as early as possible by observing and assessing the child's stage of development, gathering information, recording progress made, interacting with the child and meeting with parents / carers to ensure they make the best possible progress.

We will seek support and advice from parents, external agencies and other relevant professionals to ensure that relevant background information about children is collected, recorded and updated and that we are offering effective provision and appropriate targets for children with additional needs.

Graduated Approach

We will consult with parents and complete an Early Identification Assessment Summary form to start the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review, to address any learning and development needs. We will implement and record development targets and strategies over an identified period to enable the child to progress.

This will include information about:

- Small, stepped targets for the child. They will be written as SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed).
- Strategies to be used
- Provision to be put in place
- Review date
- Outcome of action to be taken
- Targets set in partnership with parents and a review date
- Progress against targets and reviews with parents to decide on next stage of action.

During this cycle we may consider that a referral may be needed to another professional or specialist. Once a specialist becomes involved, we work with

them to write joint targets or shared outcome plans to support the development of the child. All records are kept strictly confidential and used only on a need-to-know basis. Records are updated regularly with the full knowledge and support of parents.

Children with special/additional needs are defined as having a learning difficulty if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age.
- A disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. (Ref: SENDCode of Practice)

Parents

- We work together with parents as partners, recognising that they have unique knowledge and experience about their children, and we value the contribution they make. Parental agreement will always be sought before any contact is made with any professional outside our setting.
- Parents are always involved in any discussions made in relation to educational provision and arrangements made to meet their child's needs.
- Parents are kept fully informed of their child's progress including any cause for concern. Where necessary we will liaise and work with relevant outside agencies and professionals to meet the child's specific needs.
- We aim to provide a range of suitable learning opportunities to support structured programmes already in place by other agencies.
- We welcome any advice, support and involvement from any external agency that may be involved with children in our care.

Advice and guidance may be sought from:

- Buckinghamshire Early Years Inclusion Team
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Health Visitors
- Educational Psychology

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

In conjunction with parents we take advice from Buckinghamshire Inclusion Advisors with regard to making a referral for a formal assessment leading to an Education, Health and Care plan.

During this time we continue to gather evidence and to implement targets or outcome plans.

On transition to another setting or school all SEN information is shared with the knowledge of the parents.

The name of our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) is: Anna Cooper.

The SENDCO will:

- Advise and support other practitioners within Little Oaks.
- Ensure IEPs are in place for children identified as having additional needs.
- Promote effective relationships with parents of children with additional needs.
- Ensure the Equality of Opportunity and SEND policies are put into practice.
- Ensure staff understand, are familiar with and follow the practice as stated in this policy.
- Establish a record of SEND and ensure it is kept up to date.
- Act as a link with parents, external and support agencies.
- Promote staff development and, alongside the Principal, ensure appropriate training for SEND / Inclusion.
- Monitor the Equality of Opportunity and SEND policies and, alongside the Principal, regularly evaluate and review.
- Liaise regularly with the LA SENDCO Team and SEND / Inclusion team members through meetings, courses, on an individual basis and by invitation to the setting when specific advice and support have been requested.

The SENDCO will attend LA training courses to extend their SEND knowledge and keep up- to-date with current SEND issues and Code of Practice for their professional development and will address training issues in relation to SEND for other members of staff as appropriate.

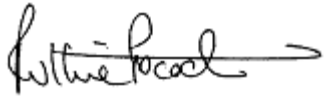
The SENDCO liaises regularly with the Looked after Children (LAC) Coordinator, Amy Buckridge. Together they liaise with the appropriate professionals to set targets as and when needed with regard to Looked After Children, to help support their individual needs and development.

Any complaints will be dealt with in accordance with our complaints policy.

We regularly review and monitor this policy and our practice to ensure that we are fully implementing the policy for Equality of Opportunities and SEND.

We will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the policies and update annually or as and when deemed necessary.

Last review: 9-2025 / RP
Review Date: September 2026

Signed: 

Ruthie Pocock, Co-Principal