



Busy Fingers Preschool

Main Street, Little Downham, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB6 2ST Tel: 01353 698633

Email: manager@busyfingerspreschool.org

Registered Charity Number: 308133

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Setting: Busy Fingers Pre-School

Policy: Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Policy owner: SENCo / Pre-School Manager

Approved by: Busy Fingers Pre-School Committee

Date implemented: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

1. Policy Statement

At Busy Fingers Pre-School, we are committed to providing an inclusive, welcoming and nurturing environment where every child is valued as an individual and has the opportunity to learn, develop and participate fully in the life of the setting.

We recognise that children develop at different rates and that some children may require additional support or adaptations to enable them to access the curriculum, participate in activities and achieve their individual potential. We are committed to identifying children who may have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) as early as possible and to providing appropriate support in partnership with children, parents and other professionals.

Our approach is based on the principle that children with SEND should be included in everyday provision wherever possible. We will make reasonable adjustments, adapt our environment and practice, and provide targeted support where appropriate to ensure that children can participate meaningfully alongside their peers.

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in identifying and supporting children's additional needs. We will work openly and collaboratively with families and, where appropriate, with other professionals and agencies to ensure that support is co-ordinated and focused on the individual child.

Our approach is underpinned by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

2. Legislative and Guidance Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance:



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- **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework for Group and School-Based Providers**, including requirements relating to inclusion, assessment, individual needs and equality of opportunity.
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.**
- **Children and Families Act 2014.**
- **Equality Act 2010.**
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.**
- **Data Protection Act 2018** and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).
- Relevant local authority SEND and Early Years guidance.
- The setting's safeguarding and child protection policies.

The SEND Code of Practice applies to early years providers and sets out expectations regarding identification, assessment and support for children with SEND.

This policy should be read alongside the setting's other policies, particularly those relating to safeguarding, equality and inclusion, behaviour, intimate care, medication and health, complaints, confidentiality and admissions.

3. Our Aims

Busy Fingers Pre-School aims to:

- Provide an inclusive environment in which every child is welcomed, respected and valued.
- Identify children who may have SEND as early as possible.
- Ensure that children's individual needs are identified through observation, assessment, professional knowledge and partnership with parents.
- Provide appropriate support and adaptations to enable children with SEND to access learning and participate fully in the life of the setting.
- Use the graduated approach of **Assess, Plan, Do and Review (APDR)** to identify, implement and evaluate additional support.
- Work closely with parents and carers, recognising their knowledge and understanding of their child.
- Work collaboratively with external professionals and services where appropriate.
- Ensure that children with SEND are included in activities, routines, trips and wider experiences wherever reasonably possible.
- Support children's communication, independence, wellbeing and development.
- Ensure that staff have access to appropriate advice, training and professional development.
- Support effective transition into Busy Fingers and on to the child's next setting, including school.
- Ensure that SEND information and records are maintained appropriately, securely and confidentially.
- Promote equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination.



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4. What is SEND?

A child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child may have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age.

SEND can affect children in different ways and may include difficulties relating to:

Communication and interaction

For example:

- Speech, language and communication difficulties.
- Difficulties understanding or expressing language.
- Social communication difficulties.
- Difficulties with interaction and forming relationships.

Cognition and learning

For example:

- Developmental delay.
- Difficulties with attention, memory or processing information.
- Difficulties acquiring early literacy or mathematical skills.
- Specific learning difficulties.

Social, emotional and mental health

For example:

- Difficulties managing emotions.
- Anxiety or emotional regulation difficulties.
- Difficulties developing relationships or engaging with learning.
- Behaviour which may indicate an underlying need.

Sensory and/or physical needs



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For example:

- Hearing or visual impairment.
- Physical disabilities.
- Sensory processing differences.
- Difficulties with mobility or physical development.

A child may have needs in one or more areas.

We recognise that a child does not need a formal diagnosis in order to receive appropriate support. Support will be based on the child's individual needs, rather than solely on a diagnosis or label.

5. Our Inclusive Approach

At Busy Fingers Pre-School, inclusion is embedded within our everyday practice rather than being viewed as something separate from the curriculum.

Our play-based approach provides children with opportunities to learn through:

- Child-led and adult-supported play and activities.
- Stories, songs and rhymes.
- Creative experiences.
- Outdoor learning and physical play.
- Imaginative play.
- Mark-making and early literacy experiences.
- Early mathematical experiences.
- Exploration and investigation.
- Social interaction and developing relationships.
- Opportunities to develop independence and communication.

Practitioners will consider how activities, routines and environments can be adapted to enable all children to participate.

This may include:

- Using visual supports and visual timetables.
- Providing clear and consistent routines.
- Breaking instructions into manageable steps.
- Using objects of reference, pictures, gestures and other forms of communication.
- Providing additional processing time.
- Adapting activities and resources.
- Providing sensory or quiet spaces where appropriate.
- Reducing unnecessary distractions.
- Supporting children through transitions.



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- Providing repetition and reinforcement.
- Using small-group or individual activities where appropriate.
- Adapting expectations while maintaining high aspirations for the child.

The aim is not to remove challenges, but to provide the appropriate support and adaptations that enable each child to access learning and develop their independence.

6. Identifying Children with SEND

Early identification is important because timely support can help children to make progress and reduce the impact of difficulties on their learning and development.

Children's needs may be identified through:

- Information provided by parents or carers.
- Information from previous settings or professionals.
- Initial discussions and observations when a child joins the setting.
- Ongoing observations.
- EYFS assessment.
- Monitoring of children's progress and development.
- Practitioner concerns or professional judgement.
- Patterns in a child's communication, interaction, learning, behaviour, sensory development or physical development.
- Information from health visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, specialist teachers or other professionals.

Practitioners will not assume that a child has SEND solely because they are working below age-related expectations. Consideration will be given to the child's overall development, circumstances, experiences, language background and individual characteristics.

Where a child has English as an Additional Language (EAL), practitioners will consider whether difficulties are related to acquiring English or whether there may also be an underlying SEND need.

Where concerns arise, these will be discussed with the SENCo and, where appropriate, with the child's parents or carers.

7. The Role of the SENCo

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) has responsibility for coordinating the setting's SEND provision.



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The SENCo will:

- Co-ordinate the identification and support of children with SEND.
- Support practitioners in identifying children's individual needs.
- Work with the manager and wider staff team to promote inclusive practice.
- Support the implementation of the graduated approach.
- Help practitioners to assess children's needs and plan appropriate support.
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Maintain appropriate SEND records.
- Coordinate APDR plans where required.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers.
- Liaise with external professionals and agencies where appropriate.
- Support referrals and requests for advice where necessary.
- Contribute to applications for Education, Health and Care Needs Assessments where appropriate.
- Support effective transition arrangements.
- Identify staff training and development needs.
- Keep up to date with relevant legislation, guidance and local SEND developments.
- Ensure that SEND information is shared appropriately with relevant staff.
- Support the setting to develop an inclusive environment.

The SENCo will not work in isolation. SEND is the responsibility of the whole setting, and all practitioners have a role in identifying and supporting children with additional needs.

8. The Role of Practitioners

All practitioners are responsible for supporting inclusion and meeting children's individual needs.

Practitioners will:

- Develop positive relationships with children and families.
- Know the children they work with and understand their individual strengths and needs.
- Observe and assess children's development.
- Raise concerns promptly with the SENCo.
- Implement agreed strategies and adaptations.
- Contribute to APDR planning and reviews.
- Record relevant observations and evidence of children's progress.
- Communicate regularly with parents and carers.
- Follow advice provided by the SENCo and external professionals.
- Attend relevant training and professional development.
- Promote children's independence and participation.
- Maintain high expectations for every child.



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Practitioners should not wait for a formal diagnosis before making reasonable adaptations to support a child's needs.

9. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

We recognise parents and carers as experts in their children and value their knowledge, experiences and views.

We will:

- Listen to parents' concerns and observations.
- Share information openly and sensitively.
- Involve parents in identifying needs and planning support.
- Discuss strengths as well as areas where additional support may be required.
- Agree appropriate strategies with families.
- Share progress regularly.
- Involve parents in APDR reviews.
- Seek consent where appropriate before sharing information with external professionals, while recognising that safeguarding and legal requirements may require information to be shared without consent.
- Provide opportunities for parents to contribute to decisions about their child's support.
- Signpost families to relevant sources of information and support.

Where parents have concerns about their child's development, these will be listened to and considered alongside the setting's own observations and assessments.

10. Assess, Plan, Do, Review

Busy Fingers Pre-School uses the graduated approach of:

Assess

The SENCo and practitioners will gather information about the child's strengths, needs and current level of development.

This may include:

- Observations.
- EYFS assessments.
- Information from parents.
- Information from previous settings.



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- Monitoring of progress.
- Information from external professionals.
- Consideration of the child's communication, learning, interaction, physical development, sensory needs and wellbeing.

Plan

Where additional support is required, the SENCo and practitioners will work with parents to identify appropriate outcomes and strategies.

Plans will identify:

- The child's strengths and interests.
- Areas of need.
- Desired outcomes.
- Strategies and adaptations.
- Who will provide the support.
- How frequently support will be provided.
- Resources required.
- How progress will be monitored.
- When the support will be reviewed.

Do

Practitioners will implement the agreed strategies and adaptations within everyday provision.

Support should be embedded within the child's normal experiences wherever possible rather than unnecessarily separating the child from their peers.

Review

The effectiveness of support will be reviewed regularly.

The review will consider:

- What has worked well.
- What has not worked.
- Evidence of progress.
- The child's views and experiences (where developmentally appropriate).
- Parents' views.
- Practitioner observations.
- Advice from external professionals.
- Whether support should continue, be adapted, increased or reduced.

The cycle will then continue, ensuring that support remains responsive to the child's changing needs.



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The graduated approach is an ongoing cycle rather than a one-off intervention.

11. SEND Support

Children who require additional support will receive provision appropriate to their individual needs.

Support may include:

- Adaptations to the learning environment.
- Visual aids.
- Additional adult support.
- Small-group activities.
- Individualised activities.
- Communication strategies.
- Sensory adaptations.
- Support with transitions.
- Support with social interaction.
- Additional opportunities for repetition and reinforcement.
- Adaptations to resources or activities.
- Specialist equipment where appropriate.
- Advice and strategies recommended by external professionals.

Where a child continues to experience difficulties despite appropriate support, the SENCo will discuss whether additional advice or specialist involvement may be appropriate.

12. Working with External Professionals

Busy Fingers Pre-School recognises the importance of multi-agency working.

Where appropriate, the setting may work with professionals and services including:

- Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT).
- Specialist Teaching Services.
- Early Support services.
- Health visitors.
- Paediatric services.
- Educational Psychology.
- Occupational Therapy.
- Physiotherapy.
- Community nursing or other health professionals.



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- Local authority SEND services.
- Other professionals involved in supporting the child.

The SENCo will coordinate communication with external professionals wherever appropriate and ensure that advice is shared with relevant practitioners.

Recommendations from professionals will be considered alongside the child's individual circumstances and incorporated into the child's provision where appropriate.

13. Education, Health and Care Plans

Where a child's needs cannot reasonably be met through the support ordinarily available within the setting, the SENCo, in partnership with parents and relevant professionals, may consider whether an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment is appropriate.

Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Busy Fingers Pre-School will:

- Ensure relevant staff are aware of the child's identified needs and outcomes.
- Deliver the provision that is the responsibility of the setting.
- Monitor the child's progress towards identified outcomes.
- Work with parents and professionals.
- Contribute information to annual reviews where required.
- Support effective transition arrangements.

14. Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility

Busy Fingers Pre-School is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure that children with disabilities are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with children who do not have a disability.

Adjustments may include changes to:

- The physical environment.
- Activities and resources.
- Communication methods.
- Routines and transitions.
- Adult support.
- The organisation of the learning environment.
- Expectations and ways of accessing activities.



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Adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, taking account of the child's needs and the circumstances of the setting.

15. Supporting Children's Communication

Communication is central to children's learning, relationships and wellbeing.

We will support children's communication through:

- Talking with children throughout the day.
- Modelling language.
- Using simple and clear language where appropriate.
- Giving children time to respond.
- Using visual supports.
- Using gestures and objects alongside spoken language where appropriate.
- Following children's interests.
- Providing opportunities for turn-taking and interaction.
- Supporting children to communicate their choices, needs and feelings.
- Working with Speech and Language Therapy where appropriate.

We recognise that communication may be expressed through speech, gestures, facial expressions, body language, visuals, signs or other forms of communication.

16. Children with English as an Additional Language

Busy Fingers Pre-School recognises the benefits of multilingualism and values children's home languages.

Having English as an Additional Language does not, in itself, mean that a child has SEND.

When considering whether a child may have SEND, practitioners will consider:

- The child's development in their home language where information is available.
- The child's communication with family members.
- Their understanding and use of English.
- Their social interaction.
- Their overall developmental profile.
- Information from parents and other professionals.

Appropriate communication support will be provided without assuming that difficulties learning English indicate a special educational need.



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17. Transition

Effective transition is particularly important for children with SEND.

When a child joins Busy Fingers, we will seek relevant information from parents and, where appropriate, the child's previous setting or professionals.

Transition may include:

- Additional settling-in opportunities.
- Visits to the setting.
- Visual information about the setting.
- Photographs of staff and key areas.
- Individual transition plans.
- Gradual introduction to routines.
- Sharing relevant information with parents and professionals.

When children move on to school, we will work with parents and the receiving school to share appropriate information and support continuity of provision.

Where appropriate, transition meetings or additional visits may be arranged.

The child's strengths, interests, communication methods, successful strategies and areas of need will be shared to support a positive transition.

18. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

SEND information will be recorded accurately and kept securely.

Records may include:

- Observations and assessments.
- Parent discussions.
- APDR plans.
- Review records.
- Professional reports.
- Correspondence with external agencies.
- EHCP documentation where applicable.
- Records of reasonable adjustments and support.

Information will only be shared with individuals who have a legitimate reason to access it.



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Information will be handled in accordance with the setting's confidentiality, data protection and safeguarding procedures.

19. Staff Training and Professional Development

Busy Fingers Pre-School recognises that effective SEND provision depends on knowledgeable and confident practitioners.

The SENCo and manager will identify relevant training needs based on:

- The needs of children attending the setting.
- Staff knowledge and experience.
- Advice from external professionals.
- Changes to legislation or guidance.
- Local authority training opportunities.
- Development priorities identified through monitoring and self-evaluation.

Training may include areas such as:

- Communication and language.
- Autism.
- Speech and language development.
- Sensory needs.
- Social and emotional development.
- Supporting children with physical disabilities.
- Inclusive practice.
- EAL.
- SEND identification and APDR.
- Supporting transitions.

Knowledge gained through training will be shared with the wider team where appropriate.

20. Monitoring and Evaluating SEND Provision

The SENCo and manager will monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision.

This will include consideration of:

- Children's progress.
- The effectiveness of interventions and adaptations.
- Staff confidence and knowledge.
- Parent feedback.



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- Professional advice.
- Quality of observations and assessments.
- Participation and inclusion.
- Transition arrangements.
- The use of APDR.
- Whether children's individual needs are being appropriately met.

SEND provision will form part of the setting's ongoing self-evaluation and improvement processes.

21. Equality, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

Busy Fingers Pre-School is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all children.

We will not discriminate against children because of disability, SEND, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, gender, family circumstances or any other protected characteristic.

Children will be supported to participate in the full life of the setting wherever reasonably possible.

We recognise that equality does not always mean treating every child in exactly the same way. Providing different support or reasonable adjustments may be necessary to ensure that children have genuine equality of opportunity.

22. Safeguarding and SEND

Children with SEND may be more vulnerable to safeguarding risks. Practitioners will remain alert to individual vulnerabilities and will follow the setting's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

SEND must never be used as an explanation for behaviour or presentation that may indicate a safeguarding concern.

Where a safeguarding concern arises, staff will follow the setting's safeguarding procedures and report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Safeguarding concerns will be acted upon regardless of whether a child has an identified Special Educational Need or Disability.



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23. Complaints

Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their child's SEND provision with the SENCo or manager in the first instance.

If concerns cannot be resolved informally, parents may follow the setting's formal complaints procedure.

Parents will not be disadvantaged because they have raised concerns about their child's support or provision.

24. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where there are significant changes to:

- Legislation.
- Statutory guidance.
- Local authority requirements.
- The needs of children attending the setting.
- The organisation or provision of Busy Fingers Pre-School.

The SENCo and manager will be responsible for ensuring that the policy remains current and reflects the setting's actual practice.

Appendix 1 – Busy Fingers SEND Graduated Approach

Stage	What we do	Who is involved
Assess	Gather information through observations, assessment, parent discussions and professional advice.	Key person, practitioners, SENCo, parents
Plan	Agree outcomes, strategies, adaptations and how progress will be monitored.	SEnCo, key person, parents and relevant professionals



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Do	Put agreed support and adaptations into everyday practice.	Key person and wider team
Review	Evaluate progress, consider what has worked and agree next steps.	SENCo, key person, parents and relevant professionals

The cycle is repeated as required and support is adapted according to the child's changing needs.

Appendix 2 – Examples of Inclusive Provision

Examples of support that may be incorporated into Busy Fingers' everyday provision include:

Communication and interaction

- Visual timetables.
- Now-and-next boards.
- Visual choice cards.
- Objects of reference.
- Modelling language.
- Songs and rhymes.
- Small-group communication activities.
- Additional processing time.

Cognition and learning

- Breaking tasks into smaller steps.
- Repetition and reinforcement.
- Practical and sensory learning.
- Adapted resources.
- Individualised activities.
- Additional adult modelling.

Social, emotional and mental health

- Consistent routines.
- Visual preparation for changes.
- Emotion resources.



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- Calm/quiet spaces.
- Adult support with co-regulation.
- Support with turn-taking and relationships.
- Predictable transitions.

Sensory and/or physical needs

- Adapted seating or positioning.
- Sensory resources.
- Reduced sensory distractions.
- Adapted physical activities.
- Additional support accessing the environment.
- Specialist equipment where recommended.

These examples are not exhaustive. Provision will always be based on the individual child's needs.

Appendix 3 – Useful Documents and Information

Busy Fingers Pre-School will maintain access to current versions of:

- EYFS Statutory Framework.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years.
- SEND guide for early years settings.
- Local authority SEND Local Offer.
- Relevant Early Years SEND guidance.
- Relevant external agency guidance.
- Setting SEND records and APDR documentation.

The SEND Code of Practice identifies the importance of early identification, appropriate SEN support and partnership with parents and professionals.