SEND Policy

Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten

Policy Review Date: September 2026

Next Review Due: September 2027

Manager: Ms Keshere Russell

SENCo: Ms Ines Nunes

Contact Details: info@sunflowermontessorikindergarten.co.uk / 01277201120

1. Policy Statement

At Sunflower Montessori Pre-School, we are committed to providing an inclusive, nurturing Montessori environment where every child is valued as an individual. In line with the principles of the Montessori philosophy and the statutory requirements set out in the Children and Families Act, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, and the Equality Act, we ensure that all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), have access to high-quality early years education.

We welcome children from the age of 2 years and recognise that early identification and intervention are key to supporting positive outcomes.

2. Definition of SEND

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

This may include difficulties in:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Physical or sensory needs

3. Aims

We aim to:

- Provide an inclusive Montessori environment that supports independence and self-esteem
- Identify SEND at the earliest possible stage
- Work in partnership with parents and carers
- Collaborate with external professionals where appropriate
- Ensure all staff are trained and confident in supporting children with additional needs
- Remove barriers to learning and participation

4. The Montessori Approach and SEND

Our Montessori environment supports SEND through:

- Carefully prepared environments promoting independence
- Individualised learning plans based on each child's development
- Mixed-age group learning to encourage peer modelling
- Hands-on, sensory learning materials
- Freedom within structure to support self-regulation

We adapt materials, routines, and teaching approaches to meet individual needs.

5. Identification of SEND

Children may be identified through:

- Ongoing observation and assessment
- Developmental monitoring (including the 2-Year Progress Check)
- Discussions with parents/carers
- Concerns raised by staff
- Input from health visitors or other professionals

If concerns arise, we follow a graduated approach in line with the SEND Code of Practice.

6. The Graduated Approach (Assess – Plan – Do – Review)

We follow a four-part cycle:

Assess

- Observe the child
- Review progress
- Discuss concerns with parents

Plan

- Develop an Individual Support Plan (ISP)
- Set clear, achievable targets

Do

- Implement strategies within the Montessori environment
- Provide additional adult support if needed

Review

- Monitor progress
- Meet regularly with parents
- Adjust support as necessary

7. The Role of the SENCo

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) will:

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Support staff in identifying and meeting children's needs
- Liaise with parents
- Work with external agencies (e.g., Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists)
- Maintain records
- Apply for additional funding where appropriate (e.g., Inclusion Funding in Essex)

8. Partnership with Parents

We believe parents are children's first educators and essential partners in supporting SEND.

We will:

- Share concerns early
- Involve parents in planning and reviewing support
- Respect confidentiality
- Provide information about external support services

9. Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

Where a child's needs are significant and long-term, we may support families in requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment through Essex Local Authority.

We will:

- Provide detailed evidence
- Attend review meetings
- Deliver provision outlined in the EHCP

10. Supporting Medical Needs

We work closely with parents and healthcare professionals to ensure that children with medical conditions are fully supported in our setting.

Individual healthcare plans will be developed where necessary.

11. Accessibility and Inclusion

We are committed to ensuring that:

- Our premises are safe and accessible
- Reasonable adjustments are made
- Resources reflect diversity
- Children are never excluded due to SEND

12. Safeguarding

Children with SEND can be more vulnerable to safeguarding concerns. We ensure:

- All staff receive safeguarding training
- Vigilance in monitoring welfare
- Clear reporting procedures

This policy should be read alongside our Safeguarding Policy.

13. Staff Training

We are committed to continuous professional development. Staff receive:

- SEND awareness training
- Autism awareness (where applicable)
- Behaviour support training
- Ongoing professional development

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislative changes occur.
Commitment to Inclusion

At Sunflower Montessori Pre-School, we believe every child is unique and capable. Through the Montessori ethos of respect, independence, and individualised learning, we ensure that children with SEND are supported to flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.