

Equality and Inclusion Policy

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Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policy

Introduction

This policy comprises the following sections:

1. [Section 1 - Equal Opportunities](#)
2. [Section 2 - Race Equality](#)
3. [Section 3 - British Values](#)
4. [Section 4 - English as an Additional Language \(EAL\)](#)
5. [Section 5 - Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\)](#)
6. [Appendix](#)

What is inclusion?

Meeting the individual needs of all children lies at the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Every child deserves the best possible start in life, and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. All Early Years providers must have and implement an effective policy for ensuring equality of opportunities and for supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities. Practitioners should focus on each child's learning, development and care needs to ensure that the children and families with whom they work are fully included. Providing an inclusive setting that promotes equality of opportunity does not mean that all children should be treated the same, but that the unique skills and abilities of each child should be recognised and developed, and that 'inclusion is not optional: children have defined entitlements in this area and settings have legal responsibilities' (EYFS and The Inclusion Development Programme).

What is the aim of this policy?

This policy aims to ensure the needs of ALL children are met. The EYFS welfare requirements state, *"Providers have a responsibility to ensure positive attitudes to diversity and difference—not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that they learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society."*

Section 1 – Equal Opportunities

At Little Footsteps Childcare, we aim and work towards operating within an equal opportunity's framework. We firmly believe that all children, parents/carers, and staff have the right to an environment free from discrimination.

Our goal is to foster awareness and understanding of the similarities and differences between individuals.

We integrate positive images throughout our provision and provide regular training to broaden our knowledge of equality and educate ourselves and others on the rights of all people. We actively explore and address equality issues, ensuring that our practices are regularly planned, reviewed, and refined through daily meetings and supervision sessions. This approach helps us meet the specific needs of individuals and groups inclusively.

Respect for individuality is at the core of our ethos. We strive to promote high self-esteem and confidence in children, parents/carers, and staff by recognising their unique abilities. Our provision and environment is designed to be accessible to everyone and adaptable to meet specific needs whenever possible.

All children are provided with equal learning opportunities, and we promptly address any barriers to participation. Our resources and environment are intentionally inclusive, reflecting diverse backgrounds, races, cultures, genders, abilities, and life experiences. We actively challenge harmful stereotypes in a sensitive and supportive way to foster understanding and respect for all.

Daily observations help us focus on the specific needs of each child. By offering carefully designed play opportunities, we create a learning environment where self-respect and mutual respect are integral to our nursery's culture.

Celebrating various cultural and religious festivals is an important part of our approach. Through these celebrations, we educate children and raise awareness of different customs, fostering respect for diversity. This also allows children and parents/carers to share their experiences, enhancing the understanding of different cultures within our community and beyond.

We continually review and monitor our resources and equipment to eliminate stereotyping and negative imagery. Children are encouraged to use all materials and equipment equally, and we regularly review their usage to ensure fairness. Positive strategies are in place to promote equal opportunities for every child, both as individuals and as members of a group.

Our commitment to equal opportunities is underpinned by the policies and procedures set by the Local Authority. These policies and procedures are available to staff and parents/carers for reference, ensuring the consistent implementation of best practices in equality and inclusion.

Do we recruit ex-offenders?

At Little Footsteps Childcare, we use Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to assess applicants' suitability for all positions. We fully comply with current legislation and are committed to treating all applicants for positions fairly. We do not discriminate unfairly against any individual based on a conviction or other information disclosed during the DBS check.

We actively promote equality of opportunity by seeking the right mix of talent, skills, and potential. We welcome applications from a diverse range of candidates, including those with criminal records. All candidates are selected for interview based on their qualifications, skills, and experience.

Since all positions require a DBS check, our application forms, job advertisements, and recruitment materials include a statement informing candidates that a disclosure will be requested.



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Senior management exercises professional judgment when assessing a candidate's suitability for a role. During the interview process, we ensure that an open and balanced discussion is held regarding any offences or other relevant matters. Failure to disclose information directly related to the position sought may result in the withdrawal of a job offer.

We inform all candidates about the DBS check process and provide relevant information upon request. If a disclosure reveals any issues, we undertake to discuss these with the candidate before the possible withdrawal of a conditional job offer.

HAVING A CRIMINAL RECORD WILL NOT NECESSARILY PREVENT EMPLOYMENT AT LITTLE FOOTSTEPS CHILDCARE.

The decision will depend on the specific role and the nature, circumstances, and background of the offenses.

Section 2 – Race Equality

The nursery has a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to develop and implement a race equality policy. We fully embrace this responsibility, viewing it as an opportunity to clearly state explicitly our approach to promoting race equality and fostering an inclusive environment.

What are the aims of the policy?

- To promote equality of opportunity for all members of our nursery community
- To promote good relations between members of our nursery community
- To eliminate unlawful discrimination

What are the fundamental principles that drive the policy?

We strive to ensure that:

- Every child and staff member are supported in developing a strong sense of personal and cultural identity. They are encouraged to build confidence, embrace change, and show respect and openness toward other identities.
- Every child develops the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary to actively engage in our multi-ethnic society and in the wide context to contribute meaningfully to our interconnected world.

How are these principles applied in practice?

We are committed to treating all children equally through our practices and procedures, and we rigorously address any inequalities that may arise. Our nursery's admissions policy is applied consistently and rigorously to ensure that all groups are treated fairly.

In staff recruitment and professional development, we diligently uphold the principles of equal opportunity. We value the cultural diversity of our staff and strive to reflect the community we serve. While we always aim to hire highly qualified individuals, we particularly encourage applications from underrepresented sections of the community to promote a more inclusive workforce.

All job advertisements clearly state that we are an equal opportunities employer, and we welcome everyone to review our policies on equality and inclusion.

How do we address racism and xenophobia?

We are firmly committed to opposing all forms of racism and xenophobia, including prejudice directed towards religious groups, refugees, and asylum seekers. All incidents of racism involving children are documented, along with a clear account of how they were addressed.

Racist behaviour by adults is dealt with promptly and appropriately. For staff, any racist incident may lead to disciplinary action, while incidents involving parents or carers may be regarded as gross misconduct, potentially resulting in the loss of the child's place in the nursery.

Who is responsible for implementing this policy?

The nursery manager is responsible for ensuring that each setting complies with relevant legislation and that The Race Equality policy is effectively implemented and monitored. This involves raising staff awareness of their responsibilities, providing appropriate training, and, in collaboration with the owner, taking prompt action in cases of unlawful discrimination.

All staff members share the responsibility of addressing any racist incidents, developing their awareness of racial and cultural bias, and actively challenging stereotypes and prejudice. They are expected to support all



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children and colleagues, while consistently applying the principles of equality of opportunity in every aspect of their work.

What is the nursery's approach to religious observance?

We respect the beliefs and practices of all children, staff, and parents/carers. We are committed to accommodating all reasonable requests regarding religious observance and practices to promote an inclusive and respectful environment.

Section 3 – British Values

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a legal obligation on early years providers “*to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*” (Prevent Duty). With the introduction of the Prevent Duty in 2015, the Department for Education expanded the criteria of responsibility of preparing children to live in a modern British society and outlined four fundamental British values that should be promoted. At Little Footsteps Childcare, we are committed to fulfilling our legal duty by actively promoting these values in our daily practice.

What are British Values (DFE 2015)?

- **Democracy:** making decisions together
- **Rule of law:** understanding rules matter
- **Individual liberty:** freedom for all
- **Mutual respect and tolerance:** treat others as you want to be

How do we incorporate these into our settings?

The list below is not intended to be exhaustive but gives a good overview of what we do.

Democracy: making decisions together

As part of our focus on fostering self-confidence and self-awareness, as outlined in Personal, Social, and Emotional Development, managers and staff encourage children to understand their role in the wider community. We help children recognise that their views matter, value each other's perspectives, and feel comfortable expressing their emotions, such as when they need help or don't.

When appropriate, we demonstrate democracy in action. For example, children may share their ideas about the theme of their role-play area through a show of hands.

Staff actively support the decisions children make and provide activities that promote turn-taking, sharing, and collaboration. We create opportunities for children to develop inquisitive minds in an environment where questions are welcomed and valued.

Rule of Law: Understanding That Rules Matter

As part of our focus on managing feelings and behaviour, as outlined in Personal, Social, and Emotional Development, staff ensure that children understand their own behaviour and the consequences it may have, helping them distinguish right from wrong.

Staff work closely with children to create rules and codes of behaviour together. For example, children may work together to establish rules for tidying up, ensuring that everyone understands that the rules apply equally to each of them.

Individual Liberty: Freedom for All

As part of our focus on self-confidence & self-awareness and people & communities, as outlined in Personal, Social, and Emotional Development and Understanding the World, children are supported in developing a positive sense of themselves. Staff provide opportunities for children to build self-knowledge, boost self-esteem, and increase confidence in their abilities. For example, children are encouraged to take risks on an obstacle course, experiment with mixing colours, and share their experiences and learning.

Staff promote a variety of experiences that help children explore the language of feelings and responsibility. Children have opportunities to reflect on their differences and understand that we are free to hold different opinions. For instance, children may discuss their feelings about transitioning to Reception Class in a small group, helping them recognise the value of different perspectives.

Mutual Respect and Tolerance: Treating Others as You Want to Be Treated

As part of our focus on people & communities, managing feelings & behaviour, and making relationships, as outlined in Personal, Social, and Emotional Development and Understanding the World, managers and Room Leaders foster an ethos of inclusivity and tolerance. In this environment, diverse views, faiths, cultures, and races are valued, and children are actively engaged with the wider community.

Children develop tolerance, appreciation, and respect for both their own and others' cultures. They learn about the similarities and differences between themselves, their families, and others in terms of faith, communities, cultures, and traditions. Children are encouraged to share and discuss their practices, celebrations, and experiences.

Staff promote and explain the importance of tolerant behaviours, such as sharing and respecting others' opinions. They actively challenge stereotypes by promoting diverse attitudes and introducing resources and activities that counter gender, cultural, and racial stereotypes. For example, staff may share stories that reflect and celebrate the diversity of children's experiences.

A passive approach, such as merely displaying notices or keeping multi-faith books on the shelves, will not suffice in actively promoting mutual respect and tolerance.

What is not acceptable:

- Actively promoting intolerance of other faiths, cultures, or races
- Failing to challenge gender stereotypes or routinely segregating boys and girls
- Isolating children from their wider community
- Failing to challenge behaviours (whether from staff, children, or parents) that contradict the fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs

Section 4 – English as an Additional Language

At Little Footsteps Childcare, we recognise the vital role of a child's first language in their learning process. By establishing strong foundations in their home language, children can transfer these skills to learn new languages. English does not replace the home language, as it is an essential part of a child's culture and identity. Encouraging positive attitudes toward a child's home language fosters a sense of belonging and helps build trusting relationships, which are crucial for all areas of development.

One of the key roles of our practitioners is to build partnerships with parents, supporting them to continue speaking to their child in their first language at home while also helping them develop their English language skills at nursery. During settling-in visits, we gather important information from families, including key words from the child's home language, to ensure their basic needs are met. Families are welcomed into the nursery with greetings in their home language, and visual aids are displayed in all rooms to help families and children understand daily routines and communicate choices related to activities, meals, and drinks.

We believe in providing first-hand experiences to extend children's language and introduce new vocabulary. These experiences may include community trips, cooking activities, music, storytelling, and social interactions with other children.

Our skilled practitioners model language as children play, often providing a running commentary of the child's actions. They adjust their language to suit the child's understanding and rephrase sentences to model correct vocabulary and grammar.

Regular observations of practitioners' interactions are carried out, using the ECAT skills checklist to ensure we are providing the best practice in supporting every child's language development.

For families who require an interpreter, we can provide a translating service for communication needs using Language line.

Section 5 - Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

This policy has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents.

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015 (SEN CoP)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2024 (EYFS)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015

The nursery recognises that every child should be equally valued and included and has the right to be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We welcome all children, parents, and carers into the setting and will endeavor to meet each child's needs.

What is a special educational need?

The nursery uses the SEND Code of Practice (2015) definition of Special Educational Needs and Disability, which states:

xiii. A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

xiv. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she: has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

xv. For children aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers.

For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

xvi. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph xiv. above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

(SEND CoP, Department for Education, 2015, p. 15)

Policy Statement

Little Footsteps Childcare adheres to the legal requirement for Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare. The requirement states "All providers must have and implement an effective policy about ensuring equality of opportunities and for supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities." We positively encourage partnership with parents/carers when supporting and valuing children with special educational needs. In doing this, quality communication, privacy, equality of opportunity and the development of an on-going relationship with the child, parents/carers and any outside agencies involved with the child are paramount.

Aims

The nursery aims to:

- Identify special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) at the earliest opportunity.
- Develop a partnership with parents/carers to aid early identification of special educational needs (SEN).
- Recognise each child's needs and ensure that all staff are aware of, and have regard for, the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice on identifying and assessing any needs that may not be met by our universal provision.
- Have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCO) experienced in the assessment of children with SEN.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and other professionals and agencies to identify and meet a child's individual needs, seeking advice, training, or support when needed.
- Provide a wide range of learning opportunities that build on each child's knowledge, experiences, and abilities.
- Monitor and review our practice and provision, making reasonable adjustments where necessary and employing specialist equipment and services where appropriate.
- Ensure that children are treated as equals and are encouraged to take part in every aspect of the nursery day considering their individual needs and abilities.
- Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning, providing positive images and role models of those with additional needs wherever possible.
- Ensure that all children and their families feel welcomed and included in our provision.
- Provide well-informed and suitably trained practitioners to help support parents and children with special educational needs and disabilities. (SEND)
- Develop and maintain a core team of staff who are experienced in caring for children with additional needs. These practitioners will be provided with specific training about special educational needs (SEN) and the SEN code of practice.
- Provide a firm foundation for future learning.

We will do this by:

- Have a designated member of staff for each nursery site to be the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) and share their name with parents.
- Provide a statement showing how we provide for children with SEND and share this information with parents, staff, and other professionals.
- Ensure that the provision for children with SEND is the responsibility of practitioners working in the nursery
- Ensure that our inclusive admissions practice includes equality of access and opportunity
- Ensure that wherever possible our physical environment is suitable for children and adults with disabilities and reasonable adjustments are made
- Provide a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children
- Provide differentiated activities that meet the child's individual needs.
- Ensure the privacy of children with SEND when intimate care is required.
- Work closely with parents to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their child
- Utilise a wide range of strategies to ensure that the child is involved and consulted in all decisions made about their support that considers their age and abilities.
- Signpost and provide parents with sources of independent support.

- Use a wide range of strategies to identify SEND at the earliest opportunity
- Ensure that parents are informed at all stages of the graduated approach including offering guidance and support through the Education Health and Care application process where applicable
- Use Support Plans to implement SEN support as part of the graduated approach ensuring that these assess, plan, and implement strategies to support the child. Support plans will use the child's interests and strengths and include ways for the family to support their learning at home.
- Work in partnership with the child's parents when developing the Support Plan and reviewing its impact.
- Review Support Plans each half term.
- Provide an enhanced transition for children with SEND that is tailored to their individual needs particularly when moving between settings or when starting school.
- Liaise with other professionals who support the child and their family.
- Request support and advice from external agencies when needed such as support from Early Help.
- Provide the necessary resources both human and financial to implement our SEND policy
- Raise awareness of any specialism such as Makaton-trained staff
- Provide training for practitioners
- Ensure the effectiveness of our SEND provision by collating information from a range of sources, including parental feedback, support plan reviews, practitioner input, and advice from external agencies and reviewing this annually.
- Contribute to Norfolk County Council's Local Offer website detailing the SEND provision the nursery offers
- Keep accurate records as required by the SEND Code of Practice
- Provide a complaints procedure and make it available to parents in alternative formats when requested such as Braille, audio, large print and translated into additional languages.
- Monitor and review our policy annually.

What will we do if a child has a special educational need or disability at the time of joining the Nursery?

The Manager will discuss the child with the parents/carers in a sensitive way. Parents will be assured that all information is confidential. A care and/or support plan will be devised in partnership with the parents/carers and any outside agencies involved. Any person already working with the child will be welcomed into the Nursery. Prior to the child starting all professionals involved with the child will be invited to a meeting to ensure the best possible care and education can be provided for the child. If necessary, risk assessments and additional training will need to be undertaken before the child starts.

What is our admissions policy for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities?

We are committed to meeting the needs of all children within our setting. The Children's and Families Act 2014 prohibits discrimination against disabled children and prospective pupils in both admissions and education.

We strive to accommodate and support the wellbeing and development of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Each application for entry will be assessed individually to ensure we can meet the child's specific requirements. The Nursery Manager, in consultation with the Nursery Owner, will make these decisions.

To support children with SEND, the assigned key person will work closely with the SENDCO, ensuring each child receives the necessary support to reach their full potential. This will be done in partnership with parents, following the graduated approach of assess, plan, do, and review, with continuous support and provision.

Little Footsteps is committed to dealing with negative behaviour in a non-confrontational and constructive manner. Wherever possible, disruptive or challenging behaviour will be tackled collectively between staff,

parents and children in the setting. Where reasonable adjustments have been made, we reserve the right to review and modify a child's sessions/attendance as necessary, if found beneficial for the child.

On an occasion when such strategies alone will not alter or prevent negative behaviour, further action will be necessary, including reviewing/ending a child's place at Little Footsteps, on either a temporary or permanent basis. As a last resort, the Managing Director has the right to temporarily suspend or permanently exclude a child in the event of persistent and irresolvable unacceptable behaviour. Children will only be suspended or excluded as a last resort, when there is no alternative action that could be taken, or when it is felt that other children and/or staff are potentially at risk.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO)

Our SENDCO's are:

- Dereham - Donna Nevil, Owner/Manager
- Mattishall – Zoe Smith, Manager

Our Deputy SENDCO's are:

- Dereham – Sally Bradley, Senior Lead Practitioner
- Mattishall – Zoe Sandell, Deputy Manager

The Role of the SENDCO

The role of the SENDCO includes:

- Ensuring all practitioners understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and the nursery's procedures in identifying and meeting SEND
- Advising and supporting practitioners in meeting their responsibilities.
- Ensuring parents are actively involved throughout and that their insights inform the action taken by the nursery to support their child.
- Consulting with outside professionals or agencies that are involved in supporting the child.
- Taking the lead in implementing the graduated approach and supporting practitioners through each stage of the approach.
- Monitoring and maintaining accurate records as required by the SEND code of practice.

What do we do if we suspect a child may have special educational needs?

This is the procedure:

- The member of staff must share their concerns with the room leader, the Manager and the SENDCO.
- The practitioners/SENDCO will carry out in-depth observations and decide on next steps. This may include a monitoring STAR chart ect.
- The Manager/SENDCO/Key person will discuss the concern with the parent/carer - Manager to make the decision on who talks to the parent/carer regarding the observations.
- If the parent/carer shares the concern a care and/or support plan can be devised.
- The SENDCO may then contact the settings SENDCO Early Years Advisor to seek further advice. With the parents/carers written consent.
- Further steps can be taken in consultation with the parents/guardians in conjunction with the SEND code of practice.

Parent/Carer partnership

The nursery adopts a team around-the-child approach where parents are valued as the child's first and foremost educator. Partnerships with parents play a key role in enabling children with SEND to achieve their potential. We fully involve our parents in all aspects of their child's development as well as the support we provide through a variety of ways including:

- Meetings and termly parent's evenings
- Transition evenings
- Parent partnership forms
- Additional support forms
- Parent observations through Family App

Where additional advice, specialist support or funding is required to meet a child's needs, permission will be sought via a consent form to enable us to contact the relevant services.

Assessment and Curriculum

The EYFS highlights the essential role of assessments in aiding parents, and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and plan suitable activities and support. Ongoing assessment, or formative assessment, is integral to the learning process, requiring practitioners to understand children's interests and shape teaching experiences accordingly. Practitioners should use their daily observations and those shared by parents and carers to inform and guide their interactions and support strategies.

As a nursery, we use the non-statutory guidance Development Matters as the basis of our curriculum and to aid assessment. Development matters sets out what children need to be taught and the progression of skills needed to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of their reception year. Development Matters also has observational checkpoints that detail developmental milestones children are expected to reach by certain ages.

When evaluating whether a child is meeting developmental expectations, practitioners draw on their knowledge of the child and their professional judgment alongside Development Matters on whether the child is making progress, needs more support, or requires special support across each of the seven areas of learning. These are the prime areas of communication and language, personal social and emotional development, and physical; and the specific areas of mathematics, literacy, expressive art and design, and understanding the world.

As a nursery, we carry out regular written assessments of progress in addition to the statutory written 2-year check.

For some children, it may be necessary to break down the progression steps in Development Matters into smaller parts in one or more areas of learning. This enables the practitioner under the guidance of the SENDCO to create a bespoke curriculum for the child that meets their unique learning needs and to enable closer monitoring of their progression. To do this the nursery will draw on two established assessment frameworks that align with the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- [The Early Years Development Journal – The Council for Disabled children](#)
- [The SENDIT Development Journal – Leeds County Council](#)

The suitability of either framework for the child, the child's progress, and learning needs will be discussed between the SENDCO, the child's key person, and their parents. Any changes made to the child's curriculum or monitoring of progression because of this discussion will be made with the consent of the child's parents.

There may be occasions where the nursery is asked to share information on a child's developmental progress to support their SEN, such as to access specialist support or to request an Education Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA). Should the need for this arise, written consent for information sharing will be requested from the child's parents.

Identifying Needs

Where there are concerns that a child appears to be below expected levels of development, or where their progress gives cause for concern this will be brought to the attention of the SENDCO. The SENDCO will use assessments, formal checks, and any professional reports alongside parent observations to make an informed decision on whether the child has a SEN or not. As part of this process additional assessments such as Wellcomm, may be carried out to determine whether there are underlying factors such as communication difficulties. Parents may also be offered further assessments such as an Early Help Assessment if it is thought there may be contributing external factors. If a child is identified as having a SEN this will be categorised as one of four areas of need as defined by the SEND CoP. These are

- Communication and interaction
- Social emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical
- Cognition and learning

Although SEN is categorised within one of these four areas, we understand that children often experience challenges across areas due to the holistic way in which children develop.

ECAT – Every Child a Talker

Every Child a Talker (ECAT) is a national program focussed on improving the speech, language, and communication skills of children from birth to 5 years of age. The aim of the program is to help practitioners create a developmentally appropriate, supportive, and stimulating environment in which children can enjoy and experiment with learning language.

Little Footsteps Childcare uses the ECAT monitoring tool once per term, completed by the child's key person. The ECAT monitoring tool supports practitioners to assess the developmental level of children's speech, language and communication and identify any areas where support may be needed for both the individual child and the cohort.

WellComm

Little Footsteps Childcare use the Early Years WellComm toolkit to assist with identifying children who may have language, communication, and interaction difficulties. Using a play-based assessment alongside practitioner knowledge of the child the screening tool uses a traffic light system to help practitioners understand the child's current level of speech and language and identify any potential difficulties that require support

Procedure

- When the child reaches 24 months their key person will do a baseline Wellcomm. If the child is over 24 months when they start, then the baseline will be carried out within the first 6 weeks as part of the baseline assessment.
 - if the child scores green in the section that relates to their age then the WellComm is repeated after 12 months
 - If the child scores amber the WellComm is repeated after 3 months.

- If the child scores red in the section that relates to their age, 12 weeks of intervention is carried out by the child's key person using the WellComm Big Book of Ideas for individual support ideas
 - There will also be an intervention record to complete once a week with a brief outline of what's been done and any memorable moments which can be used as evidence if further support is needed.
- They are then reassessed after 12 weeks, if they are still amber or red a support plan/referral may need to be considered.
- It is the key person who completes the Wellcomm or someone else familiar to them who works in the room
- If a child below 24 months scores below on their ECAT, they must have a baseline Wellcomm completed

Children with English as an additional language will not be assessed using WellComm if parents/ or practitioners have concerns about child's development in first spoken language or concerns about other areas of development please bring this to the attention of the SENDCO to discuss next steps.

English as an Additional Language

Where a child is learning English as an additional language and is showing signs of delay, practitioners in partnership with parents will look at all aspects of the child's learning and development to determine whether the child's difficulties relate to learning English as an additional language or if it arises from a SEN or disability. This includes considering their communication and language development in English and their home language. As a nursery, we have access to the [NASSEA EAL](#) assessment framework for the Early Years to use as guidance as well as translation services if required. Difficulties solely related to learning English as an additional language are not SEN. For more information on how the nursery supports children learning English as an additional language please see [Section 4 English as an Additional Language](#).

What about a child who is particularly able and may be gifted and talented?

The SENDCO will observe the child with the parents/carers consent. If appropriate the SENDCO will then suggest with the parents/carers consent contacting a group such as National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE). The parent/carer may pursue other courses of action if they wish.

Early years settings have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to meet the needs of all children, including those with high abilities. Children who are considered gifted and talented may also have a Support Plan to challenge and extend their learning and to meet their individual learning needs.

The Graduated Approach and Support Plans

It is particularly important in the early years that there is no delay in making any necessary special educational provision. Delay at this stage can give rise to learning difficulty and subsequently to loss of self-esteem, frustration in learning and to behaviour difficulties. Early action to address identified needs is critical to the future progress and improved outcomes that are essential in helping the child to prepare for adult life (*Code of Practice, 2015 Chapter 8, Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years*).

The Code of Practice also states that:

- Where a setting identifies a child as having SEND they **must** work in partnership with parents to establish the support the child needs.
- Where a setting makes special educational provision for a child with SEND they should inform the parents.
- All settings should adopt a graduated approach

Little Footsteps Childcare follows the SEND code of practice recommendation that early years providers follow the graduated approach to SEN support. The graduated approach consists of four stages of action described in the SEND CoP as:

Assess

In identifying a child as needing SEND support, the early years practitioner, working with the setting SENDCO and the child's parents, will have carried out an analysis of the child's needs. This initial assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is matched to need. Where there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, more specialist assessment may be called for from specialist teachers or from health, social services, or other agencies beyond the setting. Where professionals are not already working with the setting, the SENDCO should contact them, with the parents' agreement.

Plan

Where it is decided to provide SEND support, and having formally notified the parents, the practitioner and the SENDCO should agree, in consultation with the parent, the outcomes they are seeking, the interventions and support to be put in place, the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and a clear date for review. Support plans should take into account the views of the child. The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the child, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and provided by practitioners with relevant skills and knowledge. Any related staff development needs should be identified and addressed.

Parents should be involved in planning support and, where appropriate, in reinforcing the provision or contributing to progress at home.

Do

The Early Years practitioner, usually the child's key person, remains responsible for working with the child within the room. With support from the SENDCO, they should oversee the implementation of the Support Plan. The SENDCO 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.

Review

The effectiveness of the support and its impact on the child's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support should be evaluated by the practitioner and the SENDCO working with the child's parents and taking into account the child's views. They should agree any changes to the outcomes and support for the child in light of the child's progress and development. Parents should have clear information about the impact of the support provided and be involved in planning next steps.

This cycle of action should be revisited in increasing detail and with increasing frequency, to identify the best way of securing good progress. At each stage parents should be engaged with the setting, contributing their insights to assessment and planning. Intended outcomes should be shared with parents and reviewed with them, along with action taken by the setting, at agreed times.

The graduated approach should be led and co-ordinated by the setting SENDCO working with and supporting individual practitioners in the setting and informed by EYFS materials, the Early Years Outcomes guidance and Early Support resources (*information is available at the National Children's Bureau website*).

One-Page Profiles

Where appropriate practitioners in partnership with parents will create a one-page profile for the child to complement the support plan. The one-page profile will identify what the child enjoys, how they communicate,

and how they like to be supported. This will be available to be viewed by all practitioners who will be working directly to support the child.

Children with medical needs or care needs

For children with specific medical or care needs the nursery will work with the parents and any relevant agencies to put in place a [care plan](#) for the child. If necessary, a [risk assessment](#) may also be carried out as part of the care plan. The SENDCO will be responsible for ensuring that any training to carry out medical or care needs is provided.

Medical care needs or a medical diagnosis are not automatically considered SEND under the Send Code of Practice (2015). However, a child with medical needs may be identified as having SEND if their condition significantly affects their ability to access provision and requires support beyond what is normally available after reasonable adjustments have been made. The decision on whether a medical/care need is considered a SEND will be made by the SENDCO in partnership with the parents/carers.

Children of premature birth

At Little Footsteps Childcare we are committed to providing inclusive and individualized support to all children, including those born prematurely. Premature birth refers to babies born before 37 weeks of pregnancy. Research indicates that children born before 32 weeks gestation are at a higher risk of having developmental delays and/or require reasonable adjustments to access provision. This risk increases further for children born before 28 weeks.

Where a child is born prematurely we will:

- Consider corrected age when assessing developmental milestones, particularly for children born before 32 weeks gestation up until 2 years of age.
- Monitor development through regular observations and assessments.
- Work with parents/cares to support their learning and development.
- Work with other agencies and health professionals when necessary to meet the needs of the child

What is corrected age?

Corrected age is the age the child would be if they had been born on their due date and is calculated by subtracting the number of weeks the child was born premature from their chronological age. For example, if the child was born 8 weeks early and their chronological age is 16 weeks their corrected age is 8 weeks.

What is developmental catch-up?

Many premature babies experience a period of catch-up in growth and development during which they progress at a pace closer to that of their full-term peers. This catch-up most often occurs between 6 months and 2 years of age.

Where a child is born prematurely, parents/carers are encouraged to discuss their child's individual needs and any concerns they may have regarding their child's development with the SENDCO.

Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

The SEND Code of Practice states

'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 educational health and care needs assessment' (SEND CoP 2015 section 5.49)

If it is considered necessary to apply for an Education Health and Care needs assessment (EHCA) through the Local Authority this will be done in consultation with the child's parents and led by the setting SENDCO.

Where a child has a EHCP in place support plans will be used to ensure that progress is made towards the EHCP outcomes within day-to-day provision.

Where a child starts at the nursery with an EHCP or obtains one after starting with us the local authority **must** review that plan as a minimum every twelve months (6months in Early Years). 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.

How often are support plans and care plans reviewed?

We aim to review the support plans every half term and the care plan every 6 months. Both are subject to change in circumstances and maybe reviewed at an earlier date if necessary. Those responsible for the review are the child's key person, the SENDCO, the parents/carers and the Manager.

What about staff training?

Staff will receive training a minimum of 3 times a year (Relating to an area of SEN). They will also receive additional training during monthly staff meetings. Senior Staff and the SENDCO are responsible for this. Particular training may be required in relation to a child's individual needs.

The SENDCO's training is updated every three years via NoodleNow, as well as targeted training available through the local authority. The SENDCO also attends the local authority SENDCO Network meetings every term.

Training may also be provided by professionals working with an individual child to ensure their needs are met and to provide strategies and advice to enable the child to reach their full potential.

What is the role of students and temporary staff?

Student and temporary staff will work with all the children equally but not have any special responsibility for children with special educational needs.

How do we address parents/carers concerns?

It is important for parents/carers to feel free to discuss any issues or concerns they have about their child. The SENDCO/Manager/key person where possible will be available for discussion in a quiet area where confidentiality can be maintained; normally the best place for this type of discussion is the office or a room that is not being used.

Supporting Transition

We recognise that periods of transition may be particularly difficult for children with SEND and use a wide range of strategies to support this which can be adapted to the individual needs of the child.

Transition between rooms.

All children within the nursery take part in a thorough settling-in and transition process.

When a child is moving between rooms, transition reports are written by the child's current key person and shared with the child's new key person. The transition report outlines the child's progress in the prime areas of learning as well as any identified SEN needs. One-page profiles are also shared with the child's new key person.

There will be lots of opportunities for the child to spend time in their new room with a practitioner familiar to them to get to know their new key person and get used to their new room. Where on consultation with the child's parents it is felt that these transition visits may not benefit the child, the new key person will visit their child's current room regularly to spend time with them, further supporting the child while going through this transition.

Parents are also invited to attend a transition evening where they can have a tour of the room and meet the practitioners working within the room. This also provides parents with the opportunity to speak with their child's new key person.

A transition booklet will also be created for the child to have a visual to refer to, and for the parent/carer to discuss this change at home, in a positive way.

Where the child is moving to another setting a transition report will be written and shared with the receiving setting with parental consent.

Transition to school.

As a nursery, we endeavor to ensure that the transition to school is a positive experience for all children. We are proud of our community links with local schools and invite the teachers from the children's receiving schools to come and meet them in the summer term. For children with SEN, we recognise that some children may benefit from a more enhanced transition which may include meetings with the school or additional visits to the school.

As a nursery, we complete the Norfolk Supporting Transition and Inclusion Records for all children transitioning to school. The STAIR consists of a brief overview of the child's development across the prime areas and the characteristics of effective learning as well as information on any support plans or care plans that are in place for the child.

Record Keeping

The nursery maintains a record of all children in its care as required by the EYFS framework and the SEND Code of Practice. The SENDCO is responsible for keeping a record of the steps taken to support the child including any documents or reports provided by other professionals concerning the child's needs. These records will be kept in line with the data protection and GDPR policy and are available for viewing by the parent/carer on request.

Who is responsible for monitoring this policy?

The Managers and the owner have this responsibility. Parent/Carer views are of particular value in the development of this policy.

Who is responsible for reviewing the policy?

The Managers and the Managing Director are responsible for periodic policy review. Reviews can also be undertaken as the result of training, a concern, issue, parental input, regulation changes and/or other reason.



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Appendix

The following pages contain examples of the documents that Little Footsteps Childcare may use to fulfil the requirements of this policy.



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Example NASSEA Framework Assessment Tracker for Children Learning English as an Additional Language (EAL)

To complete this tracker please check the descriptors and colour off any statements that are achieved and select the step that 'best fits'

Child's Name:

DOB:

SEN: Yes No

First Home Language

EYPP: Yes No

Additional Languages

		Personal Independence, Social and Emotional			Listening/Understanding			Speaking			Building Literacy Skills		
Date	Step	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
	Colour												



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Childs Name: _____

EYFS Descriptors – Step One

Personal Independence, Social and Emotional Skills Development	
Responds with interest to activities in the setting	
Mirrors the actions of other children in the setting during play activities or to follow routines.	
Joins in willingly with routines.	
Carries out simple social routines with support/independently.	
Selects own activities within the provision with support/independently	
Willingly shares equipment in the setting with others	
Responds actively in small group activities verbally or non-verbally. (Uses single words or common phrases)	
Initiates play/communication with another child/adult using gesture, touch, and non-verbal means.	
Listening/Understanding	
Is willing to make eye contact with others in the setting	
Responds with understanding when addressed by name	
Listens to others for short periods of time.	
Shows understanding by pointing to a named item	
Follows routines and single step instructions when supported by prompts and supportive gestures	
Can make a practical response to a simple direct question to indicate familiar contexts	
May respond to yes/no questions	
May echo words or phrases while processing meaning	
Speaking	
Communicates in language of the home to express immediate needs and to respond to immediate events in the setting.	
Able to make basic needs known to others	
May rely on gestures and other non-verbal means of communication	
Echo's single words or phrases connected to immediate tasks and needs	
Names some common items in the setting independently	

Makes simple verbal response to a direct question	
Communicates meaningfully in the context of an activity using words and phrases (colours, numbers etc.)	
Attempts to follow simple modelled structures in small group activity or routines	
Joins in with action songs and rhymes, counting and repetitive phases. (Response may be limited and prompted by cues from others)	

Building Literacy Skills – (Reading and Writing)	
Responds to pictures in a supportive situation where some content is familiar	
Shows an awareness that print carries a message	
Shows an interest in books	
Recognises meaning of common symbols and environmental print in the setting (coat, toilet, books, water etc.)	
Recognises own name in print	
Shows developing awareness of differences between print and pictures	
Starts to write copy some letter forms in English	
Begins to copy or write a name	
Engages in mark making with support/independently to convey meaning	
Makes independent choices of books including audio materials	
Begins to recognise the name of familiar items and names of others	

EYFS Descriptors – Step Two

Personal Independence, Social and Emotional Skills Development	
Listens attentively in whole group situations	
She's developing concentration for longer periods on task	
Readily accesses all the setting	
Can confidently follow all daily routines alongside others	
Willing to engage in role-play alongside others	
Engages in informal talk alongside others	
Listening/Understanding	
Can understand simple straightforward language and frequently use expression if the context is supported and they are connected to familiar content and concrete experience	
Can take part in short simple social conversations during familiar routines and concrete tasks	
Can respond to simply phrased factual questions by giving simple answers	
Begin to listen more attentively in large groups where language is supported	
Speaking	
Makes requests and shares ideas include simple English when prompted and supported by modelling	
Shows a developing awareness of rhyme and rhythm when joining in with songs and story alongside others	
Requires common key topic vocabulary words introduced in supported contexts	
Can comment in simple terms to make observations and explain ideas join creative and exploratory activities	
Can use some condiment adjectives	
May try to communicate more fully but using fragmented or incomplete English to express ideas and intention	
Can you give short retelling of part of a story or a sequence (may still be incomplete and fragmented and rely on objects and images to support)	
Building Literacy Skills – (Reading and Writing)	
There is an awareness of the print is read from left to right in English	
Response with interest story activities	
Can give some basic information or simple can comment about story content/character/images using basic tenses	
Reads a range of familiar words and some simple sentences independently	

Recognises some initial sounds and can link these to common words from own vocabulary during phonics sessions	
Beginning to identify initial and final letter sounds in familiar words	
Form recognisable letters in English	
Attempts to write some familiar high content words	

EYFS Descriptors – Step Three

Personal Independence, Social and Emotional Skills Development	
Listens to others attentively and responds appropriately following social conversations most of the time	
Can use a range of age-appropriate social vocabulary when engaging with peers and the current interests of the group	
Can negotiate and make request join peer interactions	
Is responsive to the information and ideas of others during a discussion or activity	
Manages own personal belongings confidently	
Confident in most social routines in the setting	
Listening/Understanding	
Can respond to step instructions appropriately	
Beginning to attempt responses to more open-ended questions	
Listening stamina is increased to match that appears in a range of groupings including whole class	
Listens intensively to discussions and content of focus sessions or to information represented on the IWB	
Can remember and retail some of the information they have seen or heard	
Contributes actively to discussion showing some understanding of the content and expressing own opinions and feelings	
Speaking	
Beginning to use more regular intonation in questions	
Can retell events in a connected recount or narrative where content is familiar using story language where appropriate	
Speaks to others socially using simple but mostly regular grammatical structures	
Attempts to use a range of verb forms in connected speech when retelling events (with some errors)	
Uses some vocabulary introduced on task and in taught sessions	
Follows modelled speech to reproduce some complete sentence structures	
Makes relevant spontaneous comments socially and during tasks	
Actively engages in role-play alongside others sustaining action in role	
Begins to notice and can sometimes self-correct irregularities in own speech e.g., comed goed he do	
Building Literacy Skills – (Reading and Writing)	
Shows interest and enjoyment in shared reading experiences	

Attempts to mark intonation for questions and repetitive phrases in shared texts	
It's beginning to read words in simple sentences using phonics and visual clues	
Can locate some features of a book e.g., title front and back	
Can hear and link some sounds too familiar words	
Uses developing phonic knowledge to attempt to write new words	
Can spell some common familiar words accurately	
Will attempt to read own messages	
Produces handwriting within age related expectations	
Can rehearse and compose simple sentences with some use of basic tenses	



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Example Support Plan

Name	Date Of Birth	SEN Support Status	Date First On Plan	Plan Start Date		Review Date	Plan Number

Identified Area of Need	Other Professional Involvement
Communication & Interaction Cognition & Learning Social Emotional & Mental Health Physical and/or Sensory	

What you need to know about me	
My strengths, things I can do well and things I enjoy.	My identified needs, where I need extra support to help me



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My Support Plan		
My SMART targets are (link to areas of learning)	Who can help me and how? (method/activities/resources)	Ideas for when I'm at home



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Reviewing My Plan		
How am I doing?		
Emerging Seen for the first time	Developing Seen sometimes	Achieved Seen often

It may be required to obtain additional SEN Inclusion funding to enable us to best support your child and meet their needs. I give permission for Little Footsteps to obtain additional funding.

Key Person _____ Key Person Signature _____
 Parents Name _____ Parents Signature _____ Date _____

Example One Page Profile




Child's Name

What people admire about me

At nursery I like

I may need help with

How you can support me

How I communicate my wants and needs

Mealtimes and Dietary

Personal Care

Comforting Me

Keeping me safe

Other ways I am supported




Last updated 5/9/24



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Example SEND Risk Assessment

Early Years SEN Risk Assessment: Individual Child Risk Assessment: Child's name					
Assessed By:		Date of Assessment:		Review Date:	
What hazards are present or may be generated?	Who might be harmed	Nature of Harm	What is the potential severity of harm? What is the likelihood of harm occurring?	What precautions are needed to either eliminate or reduce the risk of an accident happening?	Revised severity of harm? Revised likelihood of harm occurring?



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RISK RATING MATRIX

(Notes To Aid Completion of The Risk Assessment Format)

Table 1

Potential Severity of Harm	Meaning	Likelihood of Harm	Meaning
Fatal/Major Injury	Death, major injuries or ill health causing long term disability/absence from work.	High Likelihood	Occurs repeatedly / event only to be expected
Serious Injury	Injuries or ill health causing short-term disability/absence from work (over three days)	Possible	Moderate chance/could occur sometimes
Minor Injury	Injuries or ill health causing no significant long-term effects and no significant absence from work	Improbable	So unlikely that probability is close to zero



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Example Individual Care Plan

Childs Name:		Childs Photo:	
Childs DOB:			
Date:			
Review Date:			
Parents Name:			
Parents Signature			
Overview:		Care/Prevention: •	
Symptoms/Reactions/Signs:	Immediate action:		Follow up:



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Example STAR Approach – Behaviour Analysis Chart

Name _____

Date	Time	Setting	Trigger	Action	Result	Initials
		Where did the incident occur?	What happened just before?	What behaviour did the child display?	What was the result for the child? How did the adult/s respond? How did other children respond?	

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Example Every Child a Talker (ECAT) – Monitoring Tool

Stage	Listening and Attention	Understanding (Receptive Language)	Talking (Expressive Language)	Social Communication
0-11 months	Turns toward a familiar sound then locates range of sounds with accuracy. Listens to, distinguishes and responds to intonations and sounds of voices. Reacts in interaction with others by smiling, looking and moving Quietens or alerts to the sound of speech. Looks intently at a person talking, but stops responding if speaker turns away Listens to familiar sounds, words or finger plays Fleeting Attention – not under child's control, new stimuli takes whole attention.	Stops and looks when hears own name. <i>(by 12 months ☒)</i> Starts to understand contextual clues, e.g. familiar gestures, words and sounds	Communicates needs and feelings in a variety of ways including crying, gurgling, babbling and squealing Makes own sounds in response when talked to by familiar adults Lifts arms in anticipation of being picked up Practises and gradually develops speech sounds (babbling) to communicate with adults; says sounds like 'baba, nono, gogo'. <i>(by 11 months ☒)</i>	Gazes at faces and copies facial movements, eg. sticking out tongue. Concentrates intently on faces and enjoys interaction. Uses voice, gesture, eye contact and facial expression to make contact with people and keep their attention. <i>(by 12 months ☒)</i>
8-20 months	Moves whole body to sounds they enjoy, such as music or a regular beat Has a strong exploratory impulse Concentrates intently on an object or activity of own choosing for short periods. Pays attention to dominant stimulus – easily distracted by noises or other people talking.	Developing the ability to follow others' body language, including pointing and gesture Responds to the different things said when in a familiar context with a special person (e.g. 'Where's Mummy?', 'Where's your nose?'). Understanding of single words in context is developing, e.g. 'cup', 'milk', 'daddy'	Uses sounds in play, e.g. 'brrrm' for toy car Uses single words. <i>(by 16 months ☒)</i> Frequently imitates words and sounds. Enjoys babbling and increasingly experiments with using sounds and words to communicate for a range of purposes (e.g. teddy, more, no, bye-bye) Uses pointing with eye gaze to make request and to share an interest Creates personal words as they begin to develop language	Likes being with familiar adult and watching them. Developing the ability to follow an adult's body language, including pointing and gesture. Learns that their voice and actions have effects on others. Uses pointing with eye gaze to make requests, and to share an interest. <i>(by 18 months ☒)</i>

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16-26 months	Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories. Enjoys rhymes and demonstrates listening by trying to join in with actions or vocalisations. Rigid attention – may appear not to hear.	Selects familiar objects by name and will go and find objects when asked, or identify objects from a group. Understands simple sentences (e.g. Throw the ball)	Copies familiar expressions, e.g. 'Oh dear' and 'All gone' Beginning to put two words together (e.g. 'want ball', 'more juice') <i>(by 24 months ☒)</i> Uses different types of everyday words (nouns, verbs and adjectives, e.g. <i>banana, go, sleep, hot</i>) Beginning to ask simple questions. Beginning to talk about people and things that are not present	Gradually able to engage in 'pretend' play with toys (supports child to imagine another's point of view). Looks to others for responses which confirm, contribute to, or challenge their understanding.
22-36 months	Listens with interest to the noises adults make when they read stories. Recognises and responds to many familiar sounds e.g. turning to a knock on the door, looking at or going to the door. Shows interest in play with sounds, songs & rhymes Single channelled attention. Can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained – using child's name helps focus. <i>(by 36 months ☒)</i>	Identifies action words by pointing to the right picture, e.g., "Who's jumping?" <i>(by 30 months ☒)</i> Understands 'who', 'what', 'where' in simple questions (e.g. <i>Who's that/can? What's that? Where is....?</i>). Developing understanding of simple concepts (e.g. <i>big/little</i>)	Uses language as a powerful means of widening contacts, sharing feelings, experiences and thoughts Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic Learns new words very rapidly and is able to use them in communicating. Uses gestures, sometimes with limited talk, (e.g. reaches toward toy, saying 'I have it'). Uses a variety of questions (e.g. <i>what, where, who</i>). Uses simple sentences (e.g. 'Mummy gonna work.') Beginning to use word endings (e.g. <i>going, cats</i>)	Uses language as a powerful means of widening contacts, sharing feelings, experiences and thoughts. Holds a conversation, jumping from topic to topic. Enjoys being with and talking to adults and other children. Interested in others' play and will join in. Responds to the feelings of others.
30-50 months	Listens to others in one to one or small groups, when conversation interests them. Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall.	Understands use of objects (e.g. "What do we use to cut things?") Shows understanding of prepositions such as 'under', 'on top', 'behind' by carrying out an action or selecting correct picture.	Beginning to use more complex sentences to link thoughts (e.g. using <i>and, because</i>). Can retell a simple past event in correct order (e.g. <i>went down slide, hurt finger</i>).	Beginning to accept the needs of others, with support. Can initiate conversations. Shows confidence in linking up with others for support and guidance.

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	Joins in with repeated refrains and anticipates key events and phrases in rhymes and stories. Focusing attention – still listen or do, but can shift own attention. Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own choice of activity).	Responds to simple instructions, e.g. to get or put away an object Beginning to understand 'why' and 'how' questions.	Uses talk to connect ideas, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next, recall and relive past experiences. Questions why things happen and gives explanations. Asks e.g. <i>who, what, when, how</i>. Uses a range of tenses (e.g. <i>play, playing, will play, played</i>) Uses intonation, rhythm and phrasing to make the meaning clear to others Uses vocabulary focused on objects and people that are of particular importance to them Builds up vocabulary that reflects the breadth of their experiences Uses talk in pretending that objects stand for something else in play, e.g. This box is my castle'	Talks freely about their home and community. Forms friendships with other children.
40-60+ months	Maintains attention, concentrates and sits quietly when appropriate. Two-channelled attention – can listen and do for short span.(varies according to the demands of the task) Early Learning Goal Children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.	Responds to instructions involving a 2-part sequence Understands humour, e.g. nonsense rhymes, jokes. Able to follow a story without pictures or props Listens and responds to ideas expressed by others in conversation or discussion Understands instructions containing sequencing words; first...after...last, and more abstract concepts – long, short, tall, hard soft, rough. Early Learning Goal	Extends vocabulary, especially by grouping and naming, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words. Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play situations. Links statements and sticks to a main theme or intention. Uses talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, ideas, feelings and events. Introduces a storyline or narrative into their play. Early Learning Goal	Has confidence to speak to others about their own wants, interests and opinions. Initiates conversation, attends to and takes account of what others say. Explains own knowledge and understanding, and asks appropriate questions of others. Shows awareness of the listener when speaking. Expresses needs / feelings in appropriate ways. Forms good relationships with adults and peers.

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		Children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer “how?” and “why?” questions about their experiences and in response to stories and events	Children express themselves effectively, showing an awareness of listeners’ needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are about to happen in the future. They develop their own narrative and explanations by connecting ideas or events	Early Learning Goal Children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. Children are confident to talk in a familiar group, to share their ideas. They form positive relationships with adults and other children. They work as part of a group or class and understand and follow the rules.
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Notes on monitoring early communication and language

Observation and best-fit judgements

- Judgements of a child's stage of development are made through a process of ongoing observational assessment and discussion with the ELLP.
- Observation involves noticing what children do and say in a range of contexts, and includes information from the family about what children do and say at home.
- For children learning English as an additional language, it is important to find out from families about how children use language in their mother tongue and how they communicate at home. When assessing children, consider their communication abilities in their home language as well as in English.
- The assessment is a 'best fit' match to an age band. This involves considering what is known about the child, and matching it to the development described in the bands. This should be considered separately for each strand of communication and language.
- Within each band, a judgement can be made on three levels:
 - Emerging** - a child sometimes demonstrates some of the characteristics
 - Working within** – a child often demonstrates several of the characteristics
 - Secure** – a child almost always demonstrates most of the characteristics
- Development of speech sounds is not specifically assessed, but it is useful to be aware of typical development which is described in the table to the right.

Checkpoints

- Alongside the 'best fit' judgement, certain 'Checkpoint' statements are included. Marked with a flag  and a specific age, these are particular statements which should be noted.

Guidance on typical development of speech sounds	
Stage	Speech sounds (Developing speech and being understood applies to all languages. Order of acquiring specific sounds – here in English – may vary with other languages)
0-11 months	Babbles using a range of sound combinations, with changes in pitch, rhythm and loudness. Babbles with intonation and rhythm of home language ('jargon').
8-20 months	Speech consists of a combination of 'jargon' and some real words and may be difficult to understand.
16-26 months	Many immature speech patterns, so speech may not be clear. May leave out last sounds or substitute sounds (e.g. 'tap' for 'cap'). Uses most vowels, and <i>m,p,b,n,t,d,w,h</i>
22-36 months	Speech becoming clearer, and usually understood by familiar others by 36 months although some immature speech patterns still evident. May still substitute sounds or leave out last sound. Emerging sounds including <i>k,g,f,s,z,l,y</i> .
30-50 months	Speech can mostly be understood by others even in connected speech. Emerging use of <i>ng, sh, ch, j, v, th, r</i> – may be inconsistent. Sound clusters emerging (e.g. <i>pl</i> in <i>play</i> , <i>sm</i> in <i>smile</i>) though some may be simplified (e.g. 'gween' for 'green').
40-60+ months	Overall fully intelligible to others. May be still developing <i>r</i> and <i>th</i> . May simplify complex clusters (e.g. <i>skr, str</i>).

Making good progress

- The goal of monitoring children's development is to plan and provide more tailored support to enable each child to make good progress.
- Look at the proportion of children whose skills are delayed, age-appropriate or above age related expectations in each strand of language and communication. If children are making accelerated progress, the proportion of children who are delayed should decrease over time.
- In considering whether a child is delayed, age-appropriate or above age-related expectations in each strand of language and communication, it is necessary to consider the child's actual age in months in relation to the overlapping age bands.
 - If a child is within two months of the end of an age band and development is not yet within that band or is still 'Emerging', then a judgement of **delayed** would be made.