


Services covered by this policy:	Children's Service
Post holder(s) responsible for this policy:	Children's Service Senior Manager
Date approved:	1 st February 2025
Approved by:	Jayne Buckingham
Signed:	
To be reviewed:	February 2027

A. Policy statement

Our belief is that everyone at The Hamlet should be happy and safe, is unique and valued, can explore choice and opportunities, is encouraged to unlock their potential, can communicate in their own way and is part of the wider community.

We are committed to being inclusive. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to develop to their full potential through positive experiences, to share opportunities and learn from each other.

B. Purpose of this policy and why we have it.

We recognise that some children have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention, and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in the child's life or may require longer term support.

All children and young people are included within this policy.

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND code of Practice.

C. Scope of this policy

- The Hamlet Users – children
- Parents/carers/home support staff of Hamlet Users
- The Hamlet staff
- The Hamlet Volunteers
- Educational or work placements e.g., Occupational Therapy or Nursing
- Visitors

D. Policy

Our overarching aim is to create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, and respect in which all children can reach their full potential. Children have special educational needs if they have a disability or learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

- A learning difficulty or disability means that a child of compulsory school age has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children of the same age and/or has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the sort of facilities generally provided for others of the same age.
- For children aged two or above, special educational provision is educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children of the same age.
- A child under compulsory school age has SEND if she or he is likely to have a learning difficulty or disability when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.
- A disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as “a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. “Long term” is defined as “a year or more” and “substantial” is defined as “more than minor or trivial”.

The definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEND, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and those with SEND. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they are also covered by the SEND definition.

Procedures and monitoring

The Hamlet will:

- Designate a member of staff to be Special Educational needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO) and share his/her name with parents.
- Ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is the responsibility of all members of Hamlet staff.
- Ensure that our Admissions Policy includes equality of access and opportunity.
- Ensure that our physical environment is, as far as possible, suitable for children and adults with disabilities.
- Ensure that children who learn quicker, (e.g. gifted and talented) children are supported.
- Promote positive images and role models during play experiences of those with additional needs wherever possible.
- Celebrate diversity in all aspects of play and learning.
- Work closely with parents to create and maintain a positive partnership which supports their child(ren)
- Ensure parents are kept informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision, and review of their child’s education.

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- Provide parents with information on sources of independent advice and support.
- Liaise with other professionals involved with children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools.
- Provide a broad and balanced early learning environment for all children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Provide differentiated activities to meet all individual needs and abilities.
- Use a graduated approach (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) to identify, assess and respond to children who have emerging difficulties, suggesting they may have special educational needs or a disability that requires a different approach.
- Ensure that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their parents are consulted at all stages of their child's learning, taking into account their levels of ability.
- Use a system for keeping record of the assessment, planning, provision, and review of children.
- Use an Early Help Assessment Plan (EHAP) where needed.
- Provide appropriate in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.
- Ensure the effectiveness of our SEND provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g., learning support plans, reviews, staff and management meetings, parents and external agencies, inspections, compliments, and complaints. This information is collated, evaluated, and reviewed regularly.
- Seek any further advice or support needed including multi-agency approaches, Early Support and requesting an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment when necessary.
- Provide in-service training for practitioners and volunteers.

The Hamlet will undertake a formal [Progress Check](#) of all children aged two, which will take place during the term they turn two, unless a specific request has been made to have it sooner. The [Progress Check](#) must be completed before the Health Visitor Check, usually in line with the integrated review. The [Progress Check](#) should be completed using a written format that takes in to account the primary areas of learning. This will enable early intervention and allow staff to identify any additional need or disability.

In addition to the [Progress Check](#), The Hamlet uses a graduated approach to assessment and planning coordinated by the SENDCO. Working together with parents, and the observation and monitoring of children's individual progress will help identify any child with special educational needs or disability. The child's key person, supported by the SENDCO, will then work alongside parents to assess the child's strengths and plan for future support, ensuring appropriate records are maintained.

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If a practitioner identifies a child with special educational needs, they will assess and record those needs and provide a number of key actions to help the child. As part of this process the key person will consult with the parents and seek any additional information from external professionals. The targets for the child, any teaching strategies or changes to provision will be set out in a [Learning Support Plan](#). The plan will continually be under review in consultation with the child's parents.

If the support given through the [Learning Support Plan](#) is not sufficient to enable the child to progress satisfactorily, it may be necessary for the Hamlet, in consultation with the parents and any external agencies already involved, to request a statutory assessment by the local authority. This may lead to the child receiving an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan.

If we believe a child and their family would benefit from support from more than one agency, e.g. where a child may have difficulties linked to difficult domestic circumstances, we may request or participate in a multi-agency assessment to get early help for the family. This early help assessment aims to ensure that early help services are co-ordinated and not delivered in a disjointed way.

Responsibilities

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCO)

At the Hamlet the setting SENDCO is responsible for:

- Supporting the identification of children with special educational needs
- Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs in the setting
- Supporting the key person to liaise with parents of children with special educational needs.
- Supporting the key person to liaise with other providers, outside agencies, educational psychologist, and external agencies.
- Ensuring sufficient records of all children with special educational needs are maintained and updated.
- Lead on the statutory assessment process
- Ensuring all staff have received appropriate and sufficient training relevant to the special educational needs and disabilities present in the setting.

Regulations (Health and Social Care Act) and other legal references

- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

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- [The role of the early years SENCO \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- [Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- [Equality Act 2010: guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- [Children Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- [Childcare Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)
- [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

This policy should be read in conjunction with any other relevant Hamlet policies and accompanying procedures.

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