

Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Local Offer

This document enables families to see the support that they will receive for their children within our setting. It provides clear information about what we offer to ensure all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential in a safe, happy and welcoming environment with committed and friendly practitioners.

We value each child and each family as being unique and aim to meet every child's individual needs.

How do we know if young children need extra help?

Each child within the preschool is allocated a keyperson who will form a close and trusting relationship with the child and family. Prospective families are offered an initial visit and a taster session prior to entry to the preschool.

Your keyperson can begin to observe your child during these visits and at this time you are encouraged to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's development and to pass on any information from health visitor checks. As parents or carers you know your child best, so information is also requested from you via the 'All About Me' booklet and registration form, both of which form part of our new starters pack. All this initial information is fed into your child's 'starting points' assessment.

During your child's time with us, regular observations are carried out by your keyperson and other staff who work closely with your child, so that any new concerns are picked up quickly and acted upon. Observations and assessments contribute to your child's 'Learning Journey' helping us to monitor progress and development. Your child will have a progress check before their third birthday, using information from preschool observations, your health visitor's 2 year check where available, and, importantly, information from you as your child's main carer. This progress check helps us to identify children who may need or benefit from extra support or provision at an early stage.

If your child enters the setting with a known SEND we will collect as much information as possible prior to entry, so that we can prepare our environment accordingly. This may include a home visit by your designated keyperson to begin building a relationship with your child in a familiar environment, and will include liaising with any other professionals already involved with your child.

All staff are experienced and hold relevant qualifications for working in the early years sector and continually update and develop their knowledge, so that they can recognise when children need support.

What is the role of the SENCo?

We have two Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCoS) within the preschool. Nicola and Tracy, along with your child's keyperson, are available for you to speak to at any time.

Nicola and Tracy offer support and advice to parents and other preschool staff, so that the provision we offer is appropriate and best practice. They liaise with the Area SENCo and outside agencies, maintaining continuity between parents, setting and other professionals. They also work closely with schools and other settings to ensure that transitions are as smooth as possible; this may mean meetings to share information and resources or arranging for the keyperson to support the child in a new environment for a time if appropriate.

Both SENCoS and the preschool manager have attended SENCo training and between them they have experience in working with children with a range of needs and disabilities.

How do we support young children with SEND?

As a setting we are committed to making sure that every child has activities, resources, support and opportunities which reflect each child's individual needs at any given time. Observations on each child (whether or not there is an identified SEND) feed into our planning process as an integral part of our provision.

If we begin to have concerns about development or identify a SEND, your child's keyperson and setting SENCo will discuss this with you. Together we will put in place strategies to support your child within the setting and at home where necessary. If there is limited or no progress the SENCo and keyperson will implement 'One Planning', offering specific areas of support to be monitored and regularly reviewed. Throughout this process, the SENCo and keyperson will discuss strategies and concerns with you, so that you are fully involved in drawing up the IEP.

If at any point we think it advisable to refer your child to other agencies, (eg Speech and Language Therapy) this will be discussed with you. With your consent we have access to an Area SENCo who can visit the setting and offer us advice on how best to support your child and family, including obtaining specific resources or equipment. With your consent, we can also liaise with health visitors, Children's Centres, family support workers, specialist teachers or other early years settings, so that early support is continuous and consistent. All reports, assessments and advice from outside agencies are used to inform 'One Plan' targets and strategies. Where possible and appropriate, all professionals involved with your child will be invited to review meetings to enable integrated support.

We follow the principles of Early Support and staff are trained in this.

How do we work in partnership with parents?

We have lots of ways in which we keep in touch with parents and families, including those who do not usually drop off and pick up the children from preschool. Most importantly we have an 'open door' policy and you are welcome to talk to us at any time in person or by phone or email if more convenient. In addition

- Your child has a home/setting contact book, so that we can let you know what your child has been doing and you can tell us about events at home.
- Where possible your keyperson will be available for a chat when you pick up.
- You can look at your child's Learning Journey, and you are encouraged to add to it yourself.
- We have a 'WOW!' board where we display children's achievements at home and at preschool.
- We have a regular newsletter and up-to-date website; newsletters and other letters are available in paper or email form.
- We are a committee-run preschool and you are encouraged to take part in the running of the preschool by joining the committee.
- We are able to lend resources, toys and books to families to support a good home learning environment.
- We have an annual summer fete and open days for families and anyone who is interested in seeing what we offer, along with other events organised for you and your children.

How do we make sure our environment is accessible and appropriate for all children and families?

- Our setting is inclusive. The building is accessible and we make sure that what we provide is accessible to all children.
- There is a large car park with a footpath leading to the building.
- Doorways are accessible for wheelchairs.
- The preschool is a spacious, open environment, with all learning areas, bathroom and disabled toilet on one level.
- We have an accessible outdoor area, all on one level, with no steps. The garden is a combination of safety surface and grass areas. There is a low level large sand pit and a flat digging area.
- Toy storage is at child level and labelled with accessible visuals to allow all children to identify and choose toys.
- We are able to access extra equipment with the help of the Area SENCo, the Toy Library, and outside agencies.
- Children and staff are familiar with visual timetables to support routines.
- Makaton is routinely used within everyday activities.

How are our staff trained?

- All our staff hold a level 2 or 3 qualification which is full and relevant for early years, and our manager is a qualified teacher. All staff are experienced in working with young children and committed to providing the very best opportunities for every child.
- Our SENCos and manager are trained in the SEN Codes of Practice.
- All staff have up-to-date paediatric first aid certificates.
- All staff receive regular training in safeguarding and child protection.
- Staff regularly attend a wide range of training courses and workshops. In particular we have received training via the *Early Language Development Programme* and *Inclusion Development Programme* as well as training in Makaton and positive behaviour management.
- As well as our SENCos we have lead persons responsible for Behaviour Management, Equality, Health and Safety and Safeguarding.

How do we make sure all children are kept safe and well-cared for?

We have policies and procedures in place to make sure the children in our care are safe.

- Risk assessments are in place, are regularly reviewed and added to for specific events, circumstances or children. Parents of children with SEND will always be involved in forming a risk assessment specific to their child.
- All children are welcome to attend outings. Prior to the outing we will discuss with you the best way for your child to access the activity and a risk assessment will be undertaken. Additional staff can be included to maintain high ratios including 1:1 where needed. You will be invited to join the outing if you wish.
- We implement a care plan where appropriate for intimate care or for administering medicines. When medication is given it is recorded in our Medications book.

Our policies are available to view in full at the preschool or on our website.

How can I find out more?

Please contact us by email littleowlsboxted@live.co.uk, phone **01206 273226** or via our website www.littleowlsboxted.co.uk.

Gill Dedhar (manager)

Nicola Carrington Bloomfield (Deputy Manager and SENCo)

Tracy Embleton (SENCo)