



# Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup

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## Additional and Special Needs Policy.

### **Definition of Additional or Special Educational Need:**

'Educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in ordinary schools.' Code of Practice, DENI

'A learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made'. Education Order, 1996.

### **Principles:**

Ballygawley Early Years playgroup is open to all children and families in the local community regardless of religion, race, culture, social class, ability or disability.

### **Playgroup Aims:**

The aim of the playgroup is to offer an integrated experience of play and learning to all children.

### **Objectives:**

- To ensure that all provision is accessible by all children including those with special needs.
- To provide the necessary support to ensure that all children have access to the same quality of play and learning experience.
- To support and promote the development potential of each child within the playgroup.
- To develop a partnership with the parents/guardians of all the children attending the playgroup.
- To provide ongoing feedback to parents/guardians regarding their child's progress whilst attending the playgroup.
- To ensure each child within the playgroup experiences integration fully and completely i.e. physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually.

### **Procedures:**

- It is our aim to have regard for the Code of Practice (See Appendix 1) on



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the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs.

- An AENCo (Additional Educational Needs Co-ordinator) or SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) will be identified within the setting and they will have responsibility for the co-ordination of provision, supporting other staff, liaising with parents/guardians and external agencies, maintaining a SEN register and ensuring there is an effective additional needs and special needs policy.
- All children including children with additional/special needs will be admitted, where possible, following consultation with parents, the Playgroup Leader and other relevant professionals.
- The Playgroup's system of observing, assessing and recording enables staff to monitor closely all children's needs and progress on an individual basis.
- The AENCo/SENCo will keep a written record of all children requiring planning for additional/special needs.
- The playgroup operates a key-worker system enabling staff to identify individual needs and, where possible, work on a one to one basis. We also consult closely with parents/guardians during this process. We believe in implementing early intervention strategies when an additional/special need is identified.
- Parents/guardians views and contributions are valued and we aim to foster a two-way communication to promote parental/guardian involvement.
- All parents/guardians are advised to familiarise themselves with the additional needs and special needs policy at the start of the playgroup year. Should you have any queries please ask a member of staff.
- Some children will begin playgroup already having been identified as having a additional/special need. Other children may only have their additional/special needs identified for the first time while attending the playgroup. It is the aim of the playgroup to have regard for the Code of Practice (see Appendix 1) on the identification and assessment of additional/special need.
- The setting's AENCo/SENCo will attend/update any relevant training on additional/special needs and support other staff in ensuring the Policy is implemented effectively.

## **Signs a child maybe having difficulties:**

1. Makes little or no progress, even when staff have used approaches that



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target their difficulties.

2. Continues, in certain areas, to work at a level well below that expected of a child their age.
3. Displays persistent emotional/behavioural difficulties despite management strategies having been implemented.
4. Has sensory or physical problems and makes little or no progress despite having personal aids or equipment to support them.
5. Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and needs specific support in order to learn.

## **Partnership Approach Statement:**

The Additional/Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator within Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup (in conjunction and with the respective parents/guardians) will develop links with a variety of external agencies/professionals to ensure that all early intervention strategies are evidenced based and recommended/reviewed by the specialist in the area where the need/s have been identified. These include:

Health Visitors  
Educational Psychologists  
Physiotherapists  
Speech & Language Therapists  
Occupational Therapists  
Southern Education Support Team  
Social Workers  
General Practitioners  
Voluntary Agencies e.g. Autism NI, RNIB.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Code of Practice**

### **Four Stages -**

**Stage 1:** Staff identify and after consultation with the Setting's



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AENCo/SENCo and parents/guardians, register the child's special educational needs. The AENCo/SENCo at the setting together with the Child's keyworker and Parents/Guardians draw up an action plan which is reviewed weekly. The outcome of this review is shared with the Parents/Guardians. If the Additional/Special Educational needs identified require Specialist interventions (e.g. Speech & Language Therapist) the Parents/Guardians will make the referral through the Child's General Practitioner.

**Stage 2:** The Healthcare Professional (e.g. Speech & Language Therapist, Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist) are responsible for devising the Treatment/Education Plan in conjunction with the Parents/Guardians. The Parents/Guardian may share this Treatment/Education Plan with the AENCo/SENCo. The AENCo/SENCo takes lead responsibility for liaising with the Parents/Guardians, collecting and recording information within the setting and ensuring, where possible, that the treatment/education plan (or part thereof) is being effectively implemented by the staff during the child's time at the setting. The Plan is reviewed at the time intervals recommended by the Healthcare Professional and the outcomes shared with the Parents/Guardians.

**Stage 3:** A referral is made by the AENCo/SENCo/Parents/Guardian to the Board who consider the need for a statutory assessment and if appropriate, a multi-disciplinary assessment.

**Stage 4:** The Board considers the need for a statement of special educational needs. If the Board decides that this is the appropriate course of action they will issue a statement, monitor its implementation and arrange a review.

This policy was updated on 05/2015 and reviewed again in 01/2016 and 12/2016, and adopted at meeting of Ballygawley Early Years Management Committee.

This Policy Links with the Following:

- Managing Aggression and Challenging Behaviour including Bullying
- Confidentiality and Clients Access to Records Policy
- Consent for Observations Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy.