

## Special Needs Policy

PopSoc aims to provide a safe, caring and supportive atmosphere in which all children can play freely and feel happy, confident and of equal worth.

### Definitions of Children With Special Needs

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A child is classed as having a learning difficulty if they have either:-

- ∇ A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- ∇ A disability which prevents or hinders the child from making use of the educational facilities generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

A child must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or medium of communication at home is different from the language in which he or she is taught.

Special educational provision means:-

- ∇ *“For a child of two years or over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the child’s age in maintained schools, other than special schools, in the area. For a child under two, educational provisions of any kind.”*

(Education Act 1996, Section  
312)

- ∇ *The Disability Discrimination Act states that a child has a disability if: “they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”*

(Disability Discrimination Act 1995,

Part 3)

### Aims & Objectives of Special Needs Policy

PopSOC aims to provide children who are classed as having special needs with:-

- ∇ A stimulating, physically and emotionally safe environment to play in
- ∇ An environment in which to make friends and become involved in a community
- ∇ An atmosphere which will facilitate the development of confidence, self-esteem and social skills
- ∇ An atmosphere which affords opportunities for independence
- ∇ An environment where no child is restricted in their play through lack of provision.

PopSOC's objectives are:-

- ∇ To plan activities which take into account the various needs of children in the setting and which are differentiated to accommodate those needs
- ∇ To treat all children as equals and ensure that children have equal opportunities
- ∇ To ensure that staff take every available opportunity to develop their understanding with regards to special needs
- ∇ To make links with external agencies and thereby gain information in order to provide a more appropriate environment for each child with special needs
- ∇ To ensure that all staff are aware of the Special Needs Policy and are in agreement with it
- ∇ To ensure that information about admissions of children with special needs are known and given to all staff members who work with the child
- ∇ To complete Healthcare Plans for every child with special needs in order to identify, assess and review the individual's needs with regards to play provision at PopSOC
- ∇ To develop relationships between staff and parents to facilitate communication concerning the needs of the child.

### **Beliefs & Attitudes Regarding Equal Opportunities**

*“The child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter Of The United Nations ...in particular the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity.”*

(The UN Convention On The Rights Of The Child, 20<sup>th</sup>

November 1989)

All children have equal worth and should be valued as individuals. Children have the right to play and develop in an environment which is physically and emotionally safe. This environment should be completely free of prejudice or discrimination from staff and children.

### **Procedure For Identification & Review**

The person with responsibility for special needs will:-

- ∇ Along with colleagues, collect known information about the child
- ∇ Seek additional information from the parents and, if relevant, from School, Health Services or Social Services and Local Authority Development Workers.
- ∇ Keep parents fully informed of their child's needs and make them aware of any known relevant voluntary groups that can offer them support
- ∇ Keep a record of all known relevant information, observations and assessments about the child.

If there is involvement of external support agencies they may:-

- ∇ Give advice on individual play targets
- ∇ Provide more specialist assessments
- ∇ Give advice on the use of new or specialist equipment or strategies.

**The name of the persons with responsibilities for special needs are Ceri Taylor and Alex Staples.**

### **Admissions For Including Children With Special Needs**

Where we have the facilities to provide effectively for a child with special needs, applications will be treated in the same way as all other applications.

When approached by a parent of a child with special needs, our staff will assess the environment to consider how and if it can be manipulated in order to provide valuable play opportunities for the child. These actions will vary for each child depending upon the disability but may involve:-

- ∇ Physical changes, for example moving furniture or altering the position of various activities
- ∇ Access to various toys and Games for children with special needs

- ∇ Communication systems

### **Allocation of Resources To & Amongst Children With Special Needs**

Where possible, each child with a significant special need will be given a member of staff who will specifically observe and aid the child in their playing activities while still being available for other children if necessary.

We are able to access numerous toys and activities from Toy Libraries around York which are specifically aimed at children with special needs, while also carrying a number of suitable toys ourselves.

### **Staff Qualifications & Experience With Special Needs**

#### **Ceri Taylor – Manager; Inclusion Co-ordinator**

Experience of working with children with the following special needs:-

- ∇ Autism
- ∇ Asperger's Syndrome
- ∇ Physical difficulties
- ∇ Speech and language difficulties
- ∇ Food allergies/intolerances
- ∇ Behavioural Difficulties

Additional training:-

- ∇ Inclusion training

#### **Alex Staples – Deputy; Special Needs Co-ordinator**

Experience of working with children with the following needs:-

- ∇ Autism
- ∇ Asperger's Syndrome
- ∇ Cerebral Palsy
- ∇ Food allergies/intolerances
- ∇ Speech and language difficulties
- ∇ Attachment Disorder

Additional training:-

- ∇ Behaviour Management
- ∇ MENCAP training

## **James Lawrence – Deputy**

Experience of working with children with the following needs:-

- ∇ Autism
- ∇ Downs Syndrome
- ∇ Left Optic Fibrosis Syndrome
- ∇ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- ∇ Food allergies/ intolerances
- ∇ Behavioural difficulties
- ∇ Learning difficulties
- ∇ Speech and Language difficulties

Additional training:-

- ∇ Including Children With Special Needs In Mainstream Groups
- ∇ Basic and Advanced Child Protection
- ∇ Working Together To Safeguard Children

### **Arrangements For Special Needs Training**

Our Special Needs Co-ordinator and Inclusion Co-ordinator endeavour to undertake additional Special Needs training in order to be able to relay this training to the rest of the team and inform the way that children with special needs are provided for.

In addition to various compulsory staff training courses, our staff are encouraged to undertake courses to enhance their own personal understanding of special needs. On-site is kept, at all times, information about various special needs for staff to read through at will.

### **Specialist Services from Whom Advice May Be Sought**

Multi-agency input is very significant in supporting children with special needs. Advice may be sought from the Local Educational Authority (LEA), Health Services, Social Services and other parties on matters relating to our work on special needs.

### **Arrangements For Partnerships With Parent/Carers**

Parents of all children should feel they are treated as parents who can:-

- ∇ Play an active and valued role in their children's development
- ∇ Have a knowledge of what rights they can expect for their child
- ∇ Have access to information, advice and support about any special provision, including transition to and from other settings.

### **Links with Other Providers**

We endeavour to foster links with schools, childminders, holiday schemes, nurseries and playgroups to facilitate smooth transitions between all settings.

Advice from other services cannot be sought without written parental consent. With consent we are able to communicate with Health Visitors.

Policy written January 2009

Policy agreed