

Nursery School Information Report

Supporting Children with Additional Needs

2025-26

School Information Report 2025-6

Our aim

At Cambridge Nursery Federation we are committed to helping all our children realise their potential. We seek to meet the needs of all our children, working closely with families to achieve this. We recognise that some children, for part or all of their time at nursery school, might need extra help and support and may be identified as having a Special Educational Need or a Disability.

We aim to provide all children with additional needs with a warm, supportive environment, helping children to be as independent as possible, learning alongside each other through a play-based, child-centred curriculum.

The Special Educational Needs Team

We have dedicated and experienced teams, who have worked for many years supporting children with a range of needs, such as, autism, global delay, hearing impairment, Down's Syndrome and physical disabilities. Meeting the teaching and learning needs of all children is a priority for all members of staff, though there are staff who do have a particular responsibility for this.

The teacher who has specific responsibility for special educational needs and disability is:

Gill Learmond- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)

Mrs Learmond is the Deputy Head and SENCo for Cambridge Nursery Federation that includes Brunswick Nursery School, Colleges Nursery School and The Fields Nursery School. She works across all three schools. She is always happy to talk to families about any concerns they may have or the particular needs of their child and to offer help and support.

She can be contacted by telephone on: 01223 508790 (Brunswick) or 01223 712168 (Colleges) or 01223 518 333 (The Fields) or via email: glearmond@cnf.cambs.sch.uk.

Mrs Learmond is a very experienced teacher and an accredited Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENCo).

Our Federation has a governor with responsibility for SEND. The SEND Governor is Veronica Sharpe, who can be contacted through the school office at your child's school.

Tel: 01223 508790 or email: office@brunswick.cambs.sch.uk for Brunswick

Tel: 01223 712168 or email: office@colleges.cambs.sch.uk for Colleges

Tel: 01223 518333 or email: office@thefields.cambs.sch.uk for The Fields

Further information and SEND Policies are also available on each nursery website: www.brunswick.cambs.sch.uk, www.colleges.cambs.sch.uk or www.thefields.cambs.sch.uk

All children have a keyworker who identifies needs, interests, strengths and difficulties and plans appropriate learning experiences. Additional support may be provided by suitably qualified Teaching Assistants, who work together with the SENCo and keyworkers. This support may be on an individual or shared basis depending on the needs of the child. Our staff have experience of working with a range of strategies to support children with additional needs such as, use of visual cues and sign language.

Support from Additional Agencies

At times it is necessary to make referrals to additional agencies to identify individual needs, assess progress and plan appropriately. We work with additional agencies such as Early Support, the Speech and Language Service, Educational Psychology, Physiotherapy, Health Visitors and Specialist Practitioners to provide support, plans and resources for children. Deciding when additional professionals are involved is discussed with parents who are included in consultations with them. Home visits usually form part of getting to know a family and are sometimes carried out jointly with other professionals if this is helpful for the family. Sometimes additional support may be provided in the home if this is appropriate to the needs of the child and family. Our staff have worked with many professionals and built up very positive relationships with professional agencies; it is common for other professionals to recommend our nursery because they know the warm, supportive, professional experience that our nursery will provide.

Working with Parents/Carers

At our Nursery School we recognise the important part that families play in helping us to understand the specific needs of their child. We actively promote partnership with parents/carers, through the sharing of information and education plans as well as through visits and informal conversations. A number of consultation opportunities are provided throughout the year, depending on the particular needs of the family and child; these can include progress reviews and completing referrals. All families have home visits and are invited for specific progress meetings. Parents are welcome in the nursery and frequently take part in many activities to support their child.

A child with an identified additional need will usually have been referred for additional support with an Early Help Assessment, which is frequently completed by Mrs Learmond, as SENCo with parents/carers and nursery staff. If a child's Early Help Assessment is accepted by Early Support then a lead professional will be appointed to support the family. A specific Family Support Plan might also be put in place. Mrs Learmond (SENCo) is an experienced lead professional and often appointed to this role.

If it is decided that a child's needs are complex and require support beyond that which is normally available in the nursery an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be requested. Mrs Learmond is experienced at making these requests and has successfully supported families through the process on many occasions.

We appreciate that parents/carers know their child best of all. Parents are always encouraged to tell us about any concerns or identified needs as early as possible, so that we can ensure that appropriate support is in place. We operate an open door policy.

Identification of a Special Educational Need or Disability

We work according to the SEN Code of Practice (September, 2014) definition which says that:

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 them. A child has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream school

The SEN Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of special educational need:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, mental and emotional health
4. Sensory and/or physical

Many children and young people have difficulties that fit into one of these areas; some have needs that span two or more; for others the precise nature of their need may not be clear at the outset. We carry out detailed, individual assessments of each child and their situation at the earliest opportunity to make an accurate assessment of their needs. Information is gathered through observation, appropriate assessment and interaction, consultation with keyworkers and other professionals and through discussion with parents/carers. There are many reasons why children may be identified as having special educational needs. Children learn in different ways and at different speeds. Some children have identified physical disabilities, such as deafness, or a diagnosed developmental condition such as autism. Nursery age children often have identified speech and language needs. Whatever a child's needs we work together with parents and other professionals to ensure that targets are set and plans put in place to support a child to be happy in the nursery and to make progress.

What Happens when a Child has a Special Educational Need or Disability

If a child is identified as having a special educational need or disability this information will be recorded on the nursery SEND list and also on the School Information Management System (SIMS). Children with an identified need requiring some additional support are recorded as being at the level of SEN Support. For some children we provide a programme of specific activities to support progress, with individual targets. Families and, where possible, children are involved in making plans. Nursery staff are involved in monitoring the effectiveness of specific programmes and charting progress, guided by the SENCo. Some children may need only a short period of targeted intervention, such as participating in language or social skills planned activities. Other children may need longer term intervention and support. For some children an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be put in place in consultation with parents, other professionals and the local authority. This provides a detailed plan for children who have been assessed to have complex, significant needs that require ongoing support beyond that which is ordinarily available.

Comments, Concerns and Complaints

We encourage parents/carers to discuss concerns as they arise with their child's Keyworker or SENCo. An appointment can be made through the school office or with the SENCo if it is felt a concern needs to be resolved. Complaints are managed in accordance with the Nursery's Complaints Procedure and Policy, which can be accessed through the school office and on the nursery website, either: www.brunswick.cambs.sch.uk, www.colleges.cambs.sch.uk or www.thefields.cambs.sch.uk

If you have any questions about support for your child, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Gill Learmond (SENCo) or the Executive Head teacher, Mrs Ruth Holman.

Moving into nursery and from Nursery to Primary School (Transitions)

When a child starts at our setting we will work closely with the family to ensure as smooth a start as possible. All children have opportunities to visit and play in the setting before they start and specific meetings and information sharing is arranged for parents. For children with additional needs extra sessions to visit may be organised. Wherever possible the setting SENCo will meet with families to help gather information and decide an appropriate settling in plan and level of support needed. This may also involve other professionals if they are already working with/known to the family.

Mrs Learmond might also visit a child in an existing setting or attend meetings, such as Family Support Plan Meetings, for a child before they start nursery. All children will have a home visit from their keyworker.

We work to ensure that at important times of transition, such as moving to a new school, children and families are well-supported. Reception teachers and school SENCos visit our setting in the summer term to meet children and learn about them from school staff. We share information and hold transition meetings, when appropriate, to ensure that appropriate support and advice will be in place. Children often have additional times made so that they can visit their new school, which they may be able to do supported by a nursery school staff. An up to date record of the child is passed on to the next setting. Mrs Learmond (SENCo) might help the next school to set appropriate next steps. Mrs Learmond may also continue involvement into the next setting, when appropriate. This has sometimes meant attending a Planning meeting for an EHC Plan or carrying out an early review of a Plan. Members of staff from the next school are invited to TAF/FSP (Team around the Family/ Family Support Plan) meetings when we know which school a child will be moving to.

Further Support and Information- The Cambridgeshire Local Offer/ SEND Information Hub

All authorities publish information about how children are supported. In Cambridgeshire this Local Offer provides information explaining the support that is available to children on the Cambridgeshire SEND Information Hub. It includes information from schools about the teaching and services they offer and can be found on the link below:

<https://send.cambridgeshire.gov.uk> or <https://info.cambridgeshire.gov.uk>

This can also be accessed through Cambridgeshire County Council under Children, Education and Families : <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk>

Additional Support

SENDIASS

Additional impartial and confidential support for parents can be obtained by contacting SENDIASS - the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (formerly the Parent Partnership Service) Their contact details are:

SENDIASS , Cambridgeshire County Council ALC2630, New Shire Hall, Emery Crescent,
Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon PE28 4YE

Their confidential helpline is open during term time: 0300 365 1020

Email address: sendiass@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Website: <https://send.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/sendiass> where to get help and support

Pinpoint

A St Ives –based charity supporting Cambridgeshire parents/carers- especially children with additional needs and disabilities.

Tel: 01480 877333

Email: information@pinpoint-cambs.org.uk

Website: <https://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk>

Children's Centres

Children's Centres also provide support and advice for children aged 0-5 with additional needs.

Go to Cambridgeshire Child and Family Centres: ChildAndFamilyCentre.city@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Or to: Cambridgeshire County Council Child and Family Centres Online Directory to find contacts for individual centres

The SEND Code of Practice can be downloaded at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

The government has written a guide to parents which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

For further information about our Nursery School and to view our SEND policy please visit your school website:

For Brunswick parents: www.brunswick.cambs.sch.uk

For Colleges parents: www.colleges.cambs.sch.uk

For The Fields parents: www.thefields.cambs.sch.uk

Gill Learmond (SENCo)

June 2025