IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

PRINCIPLES
Children who are thought to have Special Educational Needs are identified and assessed as early and thoroughly as is possible and necessary. Referral can come from many sources, e.g.

- class teacher request;
- parental request;
- DHA or GP request;
- following diagnostic tests.

Early identification, assessment and provision for any SEN child is very important for the following reasons:

- it can minimise the difficulties that can be encountered when intervention and provision occur;
- it can maximise the likely positive response of the child;
- it can allow for a temporary learning difficulty to be overcome and for future learning to be unaffected;
- if the child's learning difficulty proves less transient then the external agencies can be brought in earlier and very likely with more success.

Children will receive support in the classroom and a small number may be withdrawn for short periods for more individual help. We ensure that a child’s Special Educational Needs are known to any other nursery/school to which they may transfer.

THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION
The Nursery's core curriculum is inclusive and differentiated and thereby allows most children to achieve their potential without additional support, i.e. the curriculum is based on the principles of:

- setting suitable learning challenges;
- responding to children’s diverse learning needs;
- overcoming potential barriers to learning.

However, there are sometimes circumstances in which some additional/different action is needed, if children with special educational needs are to make adequate progress. In all cases, there are decisions to make about what resources, targets and actions are most appropriate to the needs of the child. Staff ensure that the resources that they have at their disposal are being used effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of all children.

A process for identification, assessment and provision in accordance with the Code of Practice has been established. This process recognises that there is a continuum of Special Educational Needs and that the needs of the majority of SEN children lie at the Early Years Action stage.

Stage 1 Early Years Action
When the required action in support of SEN children is possible from within the resources and expertise that are already available in the mainstream provision
IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS
then these actions are described in the SEN Code of Practice as Early Years Action. After a child has been identified as possibly in need of extra support consultation is carried out with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), information is collected and initial action is taken to address the identified special educational needs. There is discussion with parents during this stage. The SENCO takes responsibility for monitoring and managing the child's SEN provision. The SENCO liaises closely with the child's teachers and parents/guardians.

1. At Early Years Action if any additional support is deemed necessary then individual education plans (IEP) are drawn up for each child and progress is reviewed regularly (at least twice a year and usually at least termly). Views are invited from parents, carers and children and highly valued as a contribution to the review process. Parents are informed about their child's learning and encouraged to participate fully in their child's education at all stages.

2. For children of an ethnic minority groups, (including those whose first language is not English or Welsh as appropriate), lack of competence in English (or Welsh as appropriate) does not conform to the definition of SEN. The child's home, language, culture and community, should all be considered to ascertain if interpreters or bilingual support staff are required. The Nursery always endeavours to make good use of any source of relevant and accurate ethnic advice.

3. During Early Years Action, the Nursery will, as necessary, call upon the help of external specialists perhaps for one off help in identification or assessment.

Stage 2 School Years Action Plus
When the Nursery requires ongoing or regular support in monitoring and delivering the SEN provision for an individual child from outside agencies and other specialists the process has then moved to Early Years Action Plus. Teachers and parents/guardians should be made well aware (by the SENCO) of the agencies and outside specialists who are involved.

Stage 3 Statement of Special Educational Needs
N.B. This stage is only applicable for around two per cent of children and referral will only be considered if the child is of statutory school age. However, information gained from the nursery can be of great help in securing a prompt statement for children aged 5 or over.

In a few cases, the correct provision depends upon resources that can only be accessed via a statement of special educational needs. In such a case the Nursery will make a referral to the LEA. After referral the Local Education Authority (LEA) considers the need for a statutory assessment and may make an interdisciplinary assessment if this is deemed appropriate. If the LEA makes a statement it will then arrange, monitor and review the provision.
IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

In most cases any movement through the support procedure is defined in terms of thresholds. However in exceptional circumstances, children may demonstrate such significant or unforeseen difficulties that with multi-professional and parental agreement a rapid move through the process is necessary immediately.

INVOLVING THE CHILD AND PARENTS

The effectiveness of any assessment and intervention will be influenced by the involvement and interest of the child and his/her parents. Both the parents and the child have important and relevant information to offer and if the child is consulted then his/her self esteem and confidence often benefit. Successful education is dependent on the active and positive participation of parents/child/teachers, supported when and where appropriate by other specific professionals and agencies. Parents are always contacted if assessment or referrals indicate that a child has SEN. The parents are spoken to and consulted along with the child with respect to background history, current and future needs and aspirations. The dialogue with the parents and child should:

- contain an explanation of the purpose of any assessment arrangements;
- contain a reference to the possibility of regular reports about the child;
- occur within a system that:
  - has a structure that encourages and records the child's comments;
  - has a structure that facilitates systematic feedback to the child.

Once that identification, assessment and intervention have taken place, children and parents are kept regularly informed by a variety of means, e.g. personal contact, reports, annual reviews and the formation and implementation of IEP. Case conferences are organised as appropriate and all concerned individuals and agencies will be invited to attend. Parents and children are always informed of the 'points for action' and any decisions made during the case conference.

ASSESSMENT

The provision of SEN supports the philosophy and principles in our Assessment Policy - See policy for Assessment, Recording and Reporting.