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Our Local Offer for Children with Special Educational Need and Disability

The aim of our Local Offer is to provide families and carers with information about what support is available for children with additional needs at Freshford Preschool and how to access it.

Our mission statement for children with Special Educational Need and Disability

At Freshford Preschool we are passionate about providing an inclusive, stimulating and supportive environment in which every child is treated as an individual and is given the best possible opportunities to thrive and realize their full potential.

We strive to ensure that our learning environments, equipment, resources and activities support each child in our care and meet their unique needs, learning styles and fascinations.

We recognise that some children may have additional needs that require more specific support and assistance, and we are highly committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to ensure that every child is able to access our services and that our environment and the activities we provide promote their welfare and development.

The Preschool is committed to the integration of all children in its care; we strongly believe that children with additional needs have a right to play, learn and be able to develop to their full potential alongside their peers. Whenever possible, we will strive to ensure that every child with additional needs has access to the same facilities, activities and play opportunities.

The policies, procedures and practices of the Preschool in relation to children with additional needs are consistent with current legislation and guidance; these include the Equalities Act 2010, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

The Preschool believes that by identifying individual needs at the earliest possible stage and taking proactive steps, working alongside parents/carers and other statutory professionals or agencies, all children should be able to play a full, active, and equal part in the Preschool's activities and we are dedicated to achieving this.

How do you know if my child needs extra help?

Your child's play partner (key worker) will carry out an initial assessment of your child six to eight weeks after they have started at the Preschool. In addition, throughout their time at Preschool, play partners will assess whether children are meeting the EYFS development matters statements within each learning and development area through observing them as they play. For those children who join us aged two, play partners carry out a progress check assessing their progress against the three prime areas of learning during the autumn term. These areas are communication and language,

physical development, and personal, social and emotional development. This check can help to identify any areas where children might need some extra support. The staff meet weekly to discuss observations and plan future activities to meet the learning and development needs of the children. We firmly believe that when a child's wellbeing is met, they can access their developmental potential, which is why we follow 'in the moment planning' as well as planning activities homing in on children's current fascinations. Any concerns regarding the development of any children will be discussed and play partners will seek advice from other members of the staff team including the Preschool Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and Preschool Manager. Additionally, on a termly basis, the progress data for all children is analysed and compared and this acts as a further tool to help us to identify any children who would benefit from additional support. Finally, we place great value upon the knowledge of our parents/carers; you are the experts when it comes to your children, and we recognise that working in partnership is integral to ensuring that each child receives the individual support they need to help them progress. We therefore strive to build strong and trusting relationships with our parents/carers, so that you feel comfortable and confident to share your child's progress at home with us and any concerns you may have regarding their development, safe in the knowledge that no action will be taken without your support and consent.

What should I do if I already know my child has special educational needs or a disability before applying for a place at Freshford Preschool?

When applying for a place at Freshford Preschool, parents can outline their child's needs on the initial online application form. The Preschool SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), Abi Jackson, is available to meet with potential parents to discuss the child's and families' needs. Parents can contact the SENCo directly to arrange this on SENCo@freshfordpreschool.co.uk or 07928 013998 during Preschool hours. You are also able to arrange a tour of the Preschool setting, which would provide an opportunity to discuss any requirements for your child. Before your child starts at Preschool you will also complete an 'All About Me' document on Tapestry, the online software we use to share observations to you of your child, which provides an opportunity to share your child's developmental history, their current interests, what is important to your child and how we might be able to help them settle into Preschool. We will also arrange a home visit from your child's play partner during which you can talk through the content of the All About Me document, discuss any concerns and specific requirements, from which your child's play partner will write an individual support plan. It also provides a chance for your child to meet with their play partner in their home environment and start to build that important attachment.

How will staff support my child?

The staff team plan each week's activities following the children's individual fascinations, needs and schemas. Children with additional needs will have an individual education plan (IEP) in place which breaks down their learning and development aims into smaller steps and outlines strategies that staff will use to support them reach these targets. This is closely monitored and updated by the play partner and SENCo, working in partnership with parents/carers. Where we believe a child requires more specialist support, consent will be sought from parents/carers to make a referral to the appropriate external agency (such as Speech and Language Services, Occupational Therapy or Educational Psychology) or to invite external health and education professionals to observe your child playing at Pre-school to provide advice on how to address any learning and development needs. Support activities and targets set by external agencies will be incorporated into our small group focussed activities enjoyed by all children, so that your child remains fully integrated.

How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

There is a clear cycle of observation, assessment, and planning for each child. Planning is carried out considering children's unique interests, learning styles and needs. We also use provision mapping for children with additional needs, which takes into account all the resources we have available, including whole group teaching, small group work and individual interventions.

How will we provide an enabling environment for all children in our care?

There is ramped access available to the Memorial Hall which is then all on one level along with ramped free-flow access to the preschool garden. The multi-level garden also has a ramp to the upper level, ensuring that all areas of our outdoor learning environment are accessible. Our preschool's home is within the village hall and therefore there are some limitations due to the nature of the building and we will be able to discuss these with you during your initial visit. However, we will always do our absolute best to explore, research and where possible instigate adjustments, such as seeking out suitable equipment, or adapting equipment and facilities to make our preschool accessible for every child. Changing facilities are available for children who are still in nappies and foot stools are available to allow children to reach the toilets and hand basins.

Visual timetables are used to assist children with the daily routine and dual language books are used with children with English as an Additional Language. We use visual displays to remind children of our preschool Golden Rules and our Forest School rules. We provide many multi-sensory activities for all the children in our care.

What qualities, skills and experience do the Freshford Preschool staff team have to support my child's unique needs?

Our 2017 Ofsted inspection report commented "The manager leads the well-qualified staff team extremely well, through peer observations, one-to-one supervisions and team meetings. The manager and staff have a wealth of opportunities to deepen their professional knowledge and build valuable partnerships with other professionals, to support continuity in children's care." All our staff team who work directly with the children have early years qualifications from Level 3 up to qualified teacher status. All staff members attend regular training courses on a diverse range of subjects from Behaviour Management to Supporting literacy in the Early Years. Our SENCo attends termly SEND updates run by Bath and North-East Somerset Council.

How will both you and I know how my child is doing?

Our 2017 Ofsted inspection report commented that our "staff undertake high-quality observations and assessments of children's learning. They use their findings to plan precisely for children's ongoing development."

Through evaluating IEPs each term (or more often if needed) and our ongoing assessments recorded in your child's learning journal through Tapestry, we have a clear picture of each child's progress in all areas of learning and development. Assessment data is analysed by the Preschool management team each term, and the learning and development Preschool sub-committee scrutinise this analysis during its termly meetings. Each child has a Tapestry learning journal, and they are available for parents/carers to view at any time and are always shared and discussed at parent/carer consultations. Parents/carers are asked to contribute to the journal, so it becomes a lovely record of a child's learning journey. Parents/carers are fully involved in reviewing their child's IEP and will work with our SENCo and any external agencies involved in

supporting their child to set the next targets and will meet regularly through 'Team Around the Family' or 'Family Service Planning' meetings which provide an excellent opportunity for everyone to share information, look at how a child and family are doing, ensure they are being supported appropriately and decide what the next steps are for the child.

How will you help me to support my child's person's learning?

As mentioned previously, we firmly believe that working in partnership with parents/carers is one of the most important aspects of successfully supporting a child's welfare, learning and development and in realising their full potential.

Our 2017 Ofsted report noted that "partnerships with parents are first class. The manager and staff share a wealth of information with parents to help ensure learning can be extended at home. Parents are overwhelmingly complimentary about the preschool. They comment about the exceptional care and learning experiences that their children receive."

Parents/carers who get involved during these early years are more likely to remain involved through-out their child's education, resulting in the best possible outcomes for their children. Parents/carers are encouraged to spend time in the preschool, by volunteering as a parent helper, or attending fundraising or family events. You are also able to access valuable information on the preschool website, as well as attending parent stay and play sessions which give lots of ideas of how you could set up stimulating learning environments and activities at home.

What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

Freshford Preschool prides itself on the excellent care it provides for our children. In our May 2017 Ofsted inspection, we were graded Outstanding for our contribution to the personal development, behaviour, and welfare of the children attending the preschool. The inspector commented that "children display exceptionally high levels of self-esteem and confidence. They build excellent relationships with staff, who know them well. Children flourish and make superb use of the outside area to be physically active. They gain a wonderful awareness of people's similarities and differences and of cultures different to their own."

When appropriate we work closely with health visitors to ensure that coordinated support is available and that individual family circumstances are always considered. Children with additional medical needs have a health care plan which details how staff manage the administration of medications and provide personal care. Our behaviour policy clearly details how children with emotional and behavioural needs are supported, our behaviour expectations and how we can support all children's behaviour in the setting.

How will my child be included in activities outside the setting, including trips, walks, and Forest School?

Parents/carers are invited to go out with their children on trips, walks and Forest School sessions in order to maintain high adult/child ratios when we leave the Memorial Hall and to provide opportunities for parents/carers to see the value of learning in the outdoor environment and the positive effects this can have upon all children. If your child has mobility needs, we will endeavour to attract extra funding from the Local Authority so that we can employ an extra staff member to support their physical requirements while on walks and in the Forest School environment. If funding is not available, we will ask you or another family member to support us on those activities so that your child can continue to benefit from the Forest School experience.

How will you prepare and support my child with transition to school?

One of the biggest transitions a child goes through is starting school. For families with children with additional needs this can be a particularly worrying time. Preschool to school transitions are planned to take into account individual children's needs. For example, for some children we may have a Team Around the Family (TAF) transition meeting inviting the receiving school's SENCo, reception teacher and all other agencies involved with the family and a plan is devised to support a smooth transition. Reception teachers from Freshford, Combe Down and other relevant local schools visit the Preschool to meet children coming into their class and talk to their play partners. A transition document is shared with the parents and receiving school which reports on the child's characteristics of effective early learning and progress in the seven areas of learning and development. Children with IEPs will have their records of support forwarded to the school SENCo and class teacher.

