



Access Policy

At the Centre we aim to provide a rich and varied environment through a play based curriculum. We believe that all children develop and learn at different rates and this is reflected in the general curriculum and philosophy of the Centre. We are in the process of ensuring that the physical environment, curriculum and information are accessible to Mums, Dads, Carers and children.

Physical Environment

The external parts of the majority of our buildings have Grade 2 listing and many parts of the Centre were built before the 1930s. They were not designed for disabled access. However the Centre is committed to increasing access to all its buildings and actively seeks advice upon accessibility and is responsive to need.

A substantial part of the Centre is at ground floor level (although there are some small steps) and the outside play areas are spacious. Doors between outside and inside are always open when both areas are in use. The entrance gate is wide (however there is a small step directly onto the public pavement). There is a ramp, which gives a wheelchair accessible entrance to Shelter 6. The Centre is committed to ensuring wheelchair/restricted mobility access, through liaison with the appropriate services and will make alternative room arrangements if an access difficulty to the first floor rooms prohibits participation from any stakeholders.

Our newest building (Shelter 5, completed December 2010) was designed and built in line with the building regulations regarding access. There are 2 disabled access toilets, ramps and a lift enabling wheelchair/restricted mobility access to both floors of the building. The internal details of the building e.g. demarcation around doors support visually impaired users. Internal and external doors are wide to give ease of access.

There are currently 4 disabled access toilets in the Centre, used by adults and children. Following a forthcoming consultation with the visual impairment team we will make reasonable adaptations to the environment according to their recommendations.

As appropriate, table heights are adjusted for children in wheelchairs to ensure access to all activities. There are some areas of grass and safety surfacing in the garden area.

Curriculum

At Rachel McMillan we offer a very accessible curriculum in which independence is promoted, with children having free choice of activities and resources throughout the setting. Staff meetings are held fortnightly to discuss all children, in order to plan for any intervention/differentiation that will ensure all children have access to the curriculum. PLPs are written and updated on a termly basis and are shared with all staff at the children's meetings. Advice on strategies and additional resources for children with SEN is sought regularly from external agencies including Speech and Language Therapists, Portage, Health Visitors, Educational Psychologists and CAMHS. These resources are used with all of the children at the nursery.

Alternative communication systems, (e.g. Makaton and PECs) have been used to help children with communication difficulties access the curriculum.

At the Centre we are also committed to providing a rich and stimulating physical environment through displays, which are at child level, updated regularly, and are reflective of all of the children's experiences.

Information

At the Centre we share information about what's happening at the nursery through the parent information boards, a text service, verbally and through regular letters. We are exploring the most effective way to provide letters in a variety of languages. At the admission meeting our settling procedure for new children is explained to Mums, Dads and Carers. All families receive a Home Visit from members of the shelter team, where any questions can be answered. The nursery timetable is set up so that staff are available, especially at the beginning of each session, for informal discussions between staff and Mums, Dads and Carers. Mums, Dads and Carers are also able to make individual appointments with staff to discuss their child's progress and during regular parent consultations. When a child leaves the nursery to go to primary school, transition meetings may be held to pass on any concerns/information about a particular child.

Every child is monitored carefully by all staff and, if any concerns arise, a member of the shelter team will invite the Mums, Dads and Carers in for a confidential discussion. Mums, Dads and Carers and children's privacy is always respected.

The children across the Centre are actively involved in self-evaluation through their Special Books. Each child has a time with staff to look at their book on an on-going basis, to talk about what they are doing and their learning.

Monitoring

The Headteacher, in consultation with the Inclusion Leader and Governors, will monitor and report on the success of the Access Policy. Future plans to improve access in the areas mentioned above will be incorporated into the Centre Development Plan.

Reviewed June 2017