AUTUMN COTTAGE CHILDCARE

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND)

Issued: April 2026 ***Next Review: April 2027***

POLICY STATEMENT

For a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Autumn Cottage Childcare (AC) will:

- Follow the SEND Code of Practice (2021), including the appointment of a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).
- Strongly promote equality of opportunity.
- Have a clear approach for identifying, responding to, and meeting the child's needs – using an Assess, Plan, Do, Review methodology.
- Provide an environment in which the child is supported to reach their full potential, through experienced and dedicated Early Years practitioners.
- Support and involve parents through active listening and acting on wishes and concerns.
- Where appropriate, work in partnership with the Local Authority and other external agencies to ensure best outcomes.
- Annually monitor and review practice and provisions and, if necessary, adjust.

METHODOLOGY

ADMISSION

- A flexible admission policy.
- Children already identified with SEND are admitted after consultation between parents, Manager and Key Person (See Child Management Policy), and whether the setting will be able to cater for their needs.

ASSESS

- Some children with SEND may not always be identified until they have been attending AC for a while.
- If, following its observational procedures, AC are of the opinion that a child has or potentially has SEND, AC will meet with the child's parents, Key Person, and the SENCO to discuss the child's needs. This initial assessment will be reviewed regularly and ensure that support is matched to their need.

PLAN

- When formal SEND support is required, the parents, Key Person and SENCO will formulate a plan of strategies and outcomes to put in place, agree expected impact and progress, and set a review date.



DO

- The child's Key Person and SENCO will work with the child to ensure the plans are implemented and parents are encouraged to reinforce these strategies at home.
- The children will be encouraged and helped to join in with all learning experiences and not be excluded from any activities. However, these may be customised to their needs and development.

REVIEW

- The child's progress and achievements are shared and discussed with parents on a regular basis.
- From within the setting, practitioners consider the child's progress in communication and language and physical personal, social and emotional development. Similarly, the impact and effectiveness of the existing support is reviewed and evaluated.
- If there is little or no improvement in the child's progress, more specialist assessment may be required, arranged with parental consent. This may involve the Area Inclusion Officer, Health Visitors, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, Portage, Sure Start etc.
- If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met in the setting without additional personnel and/or equipment, funding will be sought (where available) to ensure that appropriate provision is achieved.
- Any changes arising to the existing plan or additional next steps should be agreed by parents, Key Person, and SENCO. Each change in plan will be reviewed.
- AC ensures the effectiveness of its SEN provision by collecting information from a range of sources e.g. staff meetings, parental and external agency's views, inspections, and complaints. AC provide a complaints procedure.

AC carry out a 2yr progress check on every child admitted before their 3rd birthday, which identifies the child's strengths and any area where the child's progress is slower than expected.

AUTUMN COTTAGE CHILDCARE SEND LOCAL OFFER

Welcome
At Autumn Cottage Childcare, we believe every child deserves the very best start in life. We are committed to providing an inclusive, nurturing and stimulating environment where all children are valued as unique individuals and are supported to reach their full potential. We welcome children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and work in close partnership with families and other professionals to ensure every child receives the support they need to thrive.

Our Setting
Autumn Cottage Childcare provides high-quality childcare and education for children from birth to five years, along with wraparound care for school-aged children.
Our experienced and caring team is passionate about creating an environment where every child feels safe, respected, included and confident.

Our SEND Team
Lead SENDCo: Alison (Ali) Bedford – Deputy Manager
Ali works closely with children, families and professionals to ensure children receive the appropriate support, advice and interventions at the earliest opportunity.
Our SENDCo regularly accesses professional development and works alongside Hampshire Specialist Teacher Advisers, Health Visitors, Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists and other agencies where appropriate.
All staff receive safeguarding and SEND training and work together to promote inclusive practice throughout the setting.

How We Identify Children Who May Need Additional Support
Children develop at different rates, however we carefully monitor every child's progress through:

- Daily observations
- Professional knowledge of child development
- Ongoing assessment against the EYFS
- Regular key person assessments
- Partnership with parents and carers
- Transition information from previous settings
- Discussions with health professionals where appropriate

If we identify that a child may benefit from additional support, we will always discuss this sensitively with parents before taking any further action.

How We Support Children with SEND
Every child at Autumn Cottage receives high-quality, personalised teaching and care.
Where additional support is required, we may:

- Adapt activities to meet individual learning styles.
- Modify our environment to reduce barriers to learning.
- Use visual timetables and visual prompts.
- Introduce communication aids such as Makaton, objects of reference or picture exchange where appropriate.

- Provide sensory resources and calming strategies.
- Support emotional regulation through consistent routines and nurturing relationships.
- Deliver small group or individual interventions.
- Work alongside outside professionals to implement recommended strategies.

Support is always reviewed regularly with families to ensure it continues to meet the child's needs.

Working in Partnership with Families

We recognise that parents know their children best.

We work closely with families by:

- Listening to parents' views and aspirations.
- Holding regular review meetings.
- Sharing observations and progress.
- Agreeing shared targets and next steps.
- Working together on consistent strategies between home and nursery.
- Supporting families with referrals where appropriate.

Parents are fully involved in decisions regarding their child's support.

Working with Other Professionals

Where appropriate, and always with parental consent, we work alongside:

- Health Visitors
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Paediatricians
- Educational Psychologists
- Specialist Teacher Advisers
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Portage
- Hampshire SEND Services
- Social Care professionals where appropriate

We value collaborative working to ensure children receive joined-up support.

Individual Planning

Where a child requires additional support, we use a graduated approach of:

Assess → Plan → Do → Review

This enables us to carefully monitor progress and adapt support as children's needs change. Where appropriate, Individual Support Plans are developed in partnership with families and professionals.

Our Learning Environment

Our environment is carefully designed to support all children through:

- Calm, welcoming spaces.
- Small group learning opportunities.
- Free-flow indoor and outdoor play.
- Visual resources.
- Sensory experiences.

- Quiet areas for rest and regulation.
- Flexible routines where appropriate.
- Resources that celebrate diversity and inclusion.

We aim to remove barriers so every child can participate fully in nursery life.

Transitions

We understand that transitions can be challenging for some children.
We support transitions by:

- Offering personalised settling visits.
- Sharing information with parents.
- Liaising with previous settings.
- Working closely with schools.
- Preparing transition reports where appropriate.
- Arranging additional visits when needed.

Our aim is to ensure every transition is positive and well supported.

Accessibility

Autumn Cottage continually reviews its environment to ensure it is as accessible as possible. Reasonable adjustments are made wherever practicable to enable children to access learning and participate in all aspects of nursery life.

Safeguarding

The safety and wellbeing of every child is our highest priority.
All staff receive safeguarding training and understand their responsibility to protect children. Our Designated Safeguarding Leads work closely with families and external agencies where necessary to promote children's welfare.

Our Curriculum

Our curriculum is ambitious, inclusive and built around children's individual interests, developmental needs and next steps.
Children benefit from:

- Language-rich interactions.
- High-quality play experiences.
- Outdoor learning.
- Sensory exploration.
- Early literacy and mathematics.
- Creative experiences.
- My Happy Minds wellbeing programme.
- Opportunities to develop independence, confidence and resilience.

Every child is supported to make progress from their own unique starting point.

Funding and Additional Support

Where appropriate, we can support families to access additional funding or services, including:

- Early Years SEND Support.
- Inclusion Funding (where applicable).
- Disability Access Fund (DAF).

- Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment processes where appropriate.

We are happy to guide families through these processes.

Further Information

If you would like to discuss your child's individual needs before they start with us, or at any point during their time at Autumn Cottage, we warmly welcome the opportunity to meet with you.

Autumn Cottage Childcare

Lead SENDCo: **Alison (Ali) Bedford**

Manager: **Kelly Smith**

We are committed to ensuring every child feels valued, included, supported and inspired to achieve their very best.