

Bright Stars Preschool

Our Local Offer

The following information sets out how we support children with special educational needs and disabilities.

1. How does the setting identify children with additional needs or SEND?

Before children start our preschool, we visit your child in his or her home. At this visit we complete an Entry Profile form which gives us a chance to get to know your child and their particular strengths or areas where they may need extra support. We ask about your child's interests at home so that this can inform our planning. When your child first starts, we assess their starting points in line with a document called Birth to 5 Matters. We use My Unique Progress to record their development in all areas of learning and this may be a time when any delay in development may be discussed. The next steps may involve your child's key person targeting a specific area of development, such as speech and language skills, to plan in additional opportunities for your child to gain further experience in this area. This would be written and shared with you through a targeted plan.

Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator is called Paul Bargery and he is supported by Nicky Wilson, Felicity Webster and Katie Hooper who specialise in Early Years. Felicity has been working in Early Years for 20 years and Nicky has been working at the preschool for over 40 years. With their wealth of experience they will ensure that families have the best support and resources to help with their child's development.

2. How will I be informed/consulted about the ways in which my child is being supported?

At Bright Stars Preschool and Long Mead Primary we operate a key person approach which ensures you will have daily informal contact with your child's keyperson. There will be opportunities to meet throughout the year. A detailed Learning Journey book will be compiled for your child, this sets out photos and observations of how your child is developing. We value contributions from parents towards your child's learning journey. Three times a year you will have an invitation to a parent meeting when we let you know about your child's progress and any additional support they might need. We are very happy to arrange additional meetings with you if they are required.

3. How will the setting adapt the EYFS framework for my child's needs?

Planning is based upon termly themes which are based upon the children's interests. The themes are broad and allow us to tailor individual sessions to address the needs of individual children. We observe, assess and plan for your child in three prime

areas and four specific areas. For example in the prime area of Communication and Language, we support children in developing their vocabulary alongside their speaking, listening and understanding skills. We do this through focused teaching activities, through the children's play and we will also provide ideas and resources for you to use at home to support your child's communication and language development. At Bright Stars we work closely with speech and language therapists and specialist teachers. The environment is adapted and made accessible to the individual children and their families.

4. What teaching strategies does the setting use for children with additional needs or learning?

At Bright Stars we use the Best Practice Guidance document to support our teaching. This document was created by the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service and it sets out a wide range of teaching strategies that can support children's learning and development. For example at Bright Stars we use Makaton signs to support key vocabulary. Visual resources are used to support all aspects of the curriculum and some children benefit from a 'Now and Then' board to sequence activities in their day.

We are very well-resourced preschool and have a rich and varied indoor and outdoor environment. The environment is divided into different areas of learning with resources clearly labelled and accessible to the children. The staff are highly trained and have a wealth of experience of working with children in the early years. In the preschool our experienced nursery leader works alongside two qualified teachers and together they plan strategies to benefit the children in the class. The four broad areas of need identified in the SEND Code of Practice are:

Communication and interaction

Cognition and learning

Social emotional and mental health

Physical/sensory difficulties.

It is these areas that are addressed when we planning strategies to support individual children.

5. What additional support does the setting provide for children with additional needs or SEND?

The Tonbridge Federation SEN and Disability policy sets out the approach we use to support children. In the early years children may be given a targeted plan and receive interventions such as social skills, fine motor control or additional support with speech and language. If your child is not making sufficient progress through his or her targeted plan, the SENCo or key person may discuss with you the need to refer to other services such as speech and language therapy.

Paul Bargery (SENCo) and/or Nicky Wilson (Nursery Leader) attend the Local Inclusion Team Forum (LIFT) six times a year and, if necessary, we may refer your child to the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service in order to receive additional advice and guidance. You would always be consulted, and your consent obtained, at every stage of the process.

6. How will the setting monitor my child's progress and how I will be involved in this?

At Bright Stars we use a key person approach. Your child will be assigned a key person who will be responsible for guiding, monitoring and supporting the physical and emotional development of your child. Each child has a Learning Journey book which is a detailed compilation of photos, observations, comments and examples of your child's work. It provides evidence of your child's progress and development. We track each child's progress in the seven areas of learning using a document called 'My Unique Progress'. Three times a year you are invited to meet with your child's key person to discuss your child's progress. We complete the 'My Unique Story' document at this time, which is an opportunity for you to ask questions, share information from home and discuss your child's key achievements in preschool. We are very happy to arrange meetings at other times if you have any concerns, and if your child is delayed in any area of learning we will discuss this with you.

7. How do you ensure children with additional needs or SEND can be included in the same activities as other children, including trips?

At Bright Stars we are committed to inclusive practice and as we are only a small preschool, the staff get to know every child very well. At staff meetings we ensure all staff are aware of the individual needs of the children and what we can do to support them. We go on school trips termly and risk assessments are completed for these. We always take into account any conditions or circumstances that may increase the risk to the children. The children have recently enjoyed trips to the local bakery, Godstone Farm and the Assembly Hall Theatre. Parents are always invited on preschool trips.

8. How accessible is the building for children with mobility difficulties/wheelchair users?

We have a disabled car parking space and a ramp at the front of the school to enable wheelchair access to the ground floor of the building. The preschool is accessible for wheelchairs, but we do have flights of stairs within the school building which means travelling on the outside of the building to enter the hall. Whenever possible, we will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of children, parents and staff.

9. How will you support my child's transition to a new setting or school?

Bright Stars Preschool works closely with Long Mead Primary School and many of the children move into the reception class. This makes the transition incredibly smooth as the children are already familiar with the staff, outdoor area and classrooms.

A number of strategies are put in place to make transition as smooth as possible, whether your child attends Long Mead Primary or another school. The key person will meet with the new teacher to discuss the child's needs. A transition book may be made with photos of the new setting and new staff. Children are given opportunities to visit their new class for taster sessions or story time. The 'My Unique Progress' tracking document and the child's learning journey book are passed to the new key person.

10. How does the setting assess the overall effectiveness of its SEN provision and how can parents/carers take part in this evaluation?

There is regular monitoring from the SEND governor and School Leadership Team. Parents are invited to parent events and given opportunities to express their views.

11. Who should I contact if I am considering registering for a place at the setting?

You can contact us at brightstars@tonbridgefederation.co.uk

Tel: 01732 350601

Felicity Webster, Katie Hooper or Nicky Wilson will be happy to arrange a time for you to visit us. If you would like your child to start with us, we will ask you to complete an application form and we will arrange a home visit.

12. What arrangements does the setting have for feedback from parents/carers, including compliments and complaints.

There is regular contact between parents and school staff. Any complaints are dealt with using the Tonbridge Federation Complaints Policy. Feedback from parents and carers can be given by telephone, email or in person. See the Tonbridge Federation complaints policy on the website www.long-mead.kent.sch.uk