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Meet our SENCO

Hello my name is Emma and I have been working in early years for the past 21 years. As well as being the deputy manager I am also the setting's identified SENCO. This is a role that I took on 14 years ago and over that time I have worked with many families and outside professionals to ensure that Little Doves continues to and will always promote inclusive practice.

SENCO stands for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator

You may be wondering what is a SENCO?
What do they do? How can they help my child and I?
Hopefully this leaflet will provide you with a better understanding of the role of the SENCO.

I have a legal duty to follow the Send Code of practice 0-25 years (2015). This means I have to be familiar with relevant Government legislation and policy on equality, SEN and disabilities and know what duties apply to early years providers like our setting. Together with the manager, I have produced Little Doves Christian preschool SEND policy which you can find on our website (www.littledovescp.org.uk).
Alternatively, a paper copy can be provided upon request.

We have also placed our local offer information with the local authority and this can be viewed, along with a vast amount of other information regarding SEND at www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/category/education/

There are four main elements to the role of the SENCO:

- **Ensuring all practitioners in the setting understand their responsibilities to children with SEND and the settings approach to identifying and meeting SEND.**
  To ensure positive outcomes to this element I work closely with our staff to ensure that appropriate approaches and materials from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) are known and used to assess children. I promote good and inclusive practice and challenge and overcome negative attitudes and discriminatory behaviours from staff, parents and sometimes children.
- **Advising and supporting colleagues.**
  To ensure positive outcomes to this element I attend relevant training to keep my skills up to date and cascade back information to other members of the team. I work with the manager and team members to identify relevant training needs within the setting. I work with key persons who raise concerns over a child's development.
- **Ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by the setting.**
  I always have an open door policy for any parent who has a concern, no matter how trivial it may seem. I work in partnership with parents to develop one plans for their child, always ensuring that the parents and child's views and opinions come first and foremost in the plan. I never lose sight of the fact that the parent knows their child best and I am just here for a short time along their journey helping from the back seat. I am familiar with a wide array of local services and support groups that can be a huge help to families when they discover that their child has a special need. One such group is www.snapcharity.org
- **Liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the setting.**
  I am familiar with the areas local practices for safeguarding children and instigating Early Assessments. Over the years I have liaised with many outside agencies and have developed beneficial relationships with them that have allowed me to help other children. Experience and knowledge of child development have helped to ensure that I am aware of when relevant external referrals should be made.

DfE and DH (2015) SEN and disability code of practice: 0-25 years, para 5.54. **November 2020**