

Improving whole setting inclusive practice and transition support for a young child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Background of setting

The setting was established 30 years ago. The setting aims “to provide a happy, homely and stimulating environment in which children can thrive emotionally and educationally through planned and spontaneous activities” OFSTED reported that “Children's independence is well-promoted as they enjoy a range of carefully planned activities. This provides them with good preparation for their move into full time school. Staff encourage children to become gradually accustomed to their new environment and this ensures children feel safe and secure” There are 2 trained setting SENCO'S with a wide range of experience particularly in relation to speech, communication and language needs. They have successfully liaised with parents, speech and language therapists and health visiting teams.

Aspect of SEND Inclusive practice being developed

- Developing inclusive practice for a child with ASD.
- Extending whole setting support offered from ‘differentiated support’ to SEN Support.
- Establishing a ‘team around the child approach’.
- Preparing for a successful transition.

Challenges

- Staff had no training or experience of working children with autism.
- Professionals involved with child appeared to be working in isolation.
- Staff unclear about how to take next steps following advice from external professionals.
- Concern from parents relating to transfer to school.

Action/activity to change /influence practice

- Whole staff team received support from autism specialist teacher to develop staff skills and knowledge and modelling of appropriate strategies.
- Parents and key person attended communication module as part of inclusion support package
- Contact made with external agencies such as Educational psychology service.
- Meeting with parents arranged to complete ‘All about me’ information ready for transition.
- School based staff and support services contacted and relevant referrals made.

Impact

- Setting based staff can implement appropriate strategies which were modelled to them.
- The child is accessing a wider range of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) activities and is demonstrating increased independence in the setting.
- Planning for the child integrates both education and health information and SMART SEND targets.
- There is a greater level of consistency between home and setting.
- There is increased confidence in the process of transition to school and what services will be involved.
- The setting SENCO has used new knowledge and understanding to put in place the support needed for another child.

Lessons learned

- Providing whole setting support provides a strong basis for increasing knowledge and understanding leading to improved inclusive practice.

- Increased engagement with parents alongside staff provides more consistency of approaches and improved impact for the child.
- The SENCO'S level of confidence and knowledge to support and guide other practitioners is improved through targetted support from the area SENCO team.
- Informing and supporting setting based SENCO's about support services available at transition to school is an important to improve confidence at times of transition.

Contact details for more information

Birmingham Area SENCO Team areasencoteam@birmingham.gov.uk