



SEND and Inclusion at The Barn – Information for Families

“Our aim is for every child at The Barn to be included, valued and supported equitably, so that they can be the very best they can be. Our curriculum is

‘THE CHILD’.

Through a holistic approach, we provide an accessible, inclusive and enabling environment that removes barriers and supports every child to participate, learn and thrive. Through responsive and ambitious learning, we nurture resilient, independent and confident learners with a strong sense of belonging.

Together, we work in partnership with children and families to provide the individual support each child needs and create equitable opportunities for every child to flourish.”

Setting	The Barn Nursery School
Local authority	Essex County Council
Ofsted registration	EY490758/146923
SEND lead	SEND Manager / SENCO: Mrs Percival (Mrs Bernard & Miss Gibson)
Review date	September 2026 Review at least annually and sooner if statutory guidance changes

Our commitment to children and families

The pursuit of excellence is at the heart of what The Barn offers. Every child is valued and our ambition is that children are safe, happy, included and able to make progress from their individual starting points. We plan provision around the whole child, their strengths, interests, communication, relationships, health and development, and we work in partnership with parents and carers throughout.

We recognise that children develop in different ways and at different rates. We aim to identify additional needs early, remove barriers to participation, make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and put appropriate support in place without unnecessary delay. High-quality inclusive practice is the starting point for every child; targeted or specialist support is added where it is needed.

This SEND Local Offer explains what families can expect from us and follows the 14 questions in Essex County Council's current "Your SEND Offer" format for early years settings. It should be read alongside our safeguarding, equality, behaviour, medication, complaints and other relevant setting policies.

Current legal and policy framework

Our SEND arrangements are informed by the following legislation and guidance in force in England at the date of review:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated 13 July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026.
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (SEND Code of Practice), statutory guidance under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, including the framework for EHC needs assessments and Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate against disabled children and the duty to make reasonable adjustments.
- Essex County Council Early Years SEND guidance, One Planning arrangements, Local Offer and current early years inclusion-funding arrangements.
- Department for Education Inclusive Early Years Fund guidance for 2026 to 2027, alongside existing SEN Inclusion Funding (SENIF) and Disability Access Fund (DAF) arrangements.

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1. How our setting knows if a child needs extra help — and what parents/carers should do if they think their child may have SEND

- Parents and carers know their child best. We welcome information about your child's strengths, interests, routines, communication, health, development and any concerns you may have. You can speak to your child's key person, the SENCO/SEND Manager or a manager at any time; you do not need to wait for a formal meeting or a diagnosis.
- Before and when a child starts, we build a picture of the whole child through discussions with the family, home visits where offered and helpful, settling/taster sessions, a family book or other "all about me" information, and any relevant reports families choose to share from health or other professionals. We use this information to plan a personalised transition and any reasonable adjustments that may be needed from the outset.
- Once a child is attending, practitioners use their day-to-day knowledge of the child, observations during play and routines, information shared by parents/carers, and appropriate assessment to understand progress.
- Current EYFS guidance is clear that assessment should support teaching and should not require excessive paperwork or physical evidence for every judgement.

- If we are worried about progress in any of the three prime EYFS areas — communication and language; physical development; or personal, social and emotional development — we will discuss this with parents/carers, agree how to support the child and consider whether additional or specialist SEND support may be needed.
- Between ages two and three, the statutory progress check at age two provides parents/carers with a short written summary of development in the prime areas. It highlights strengths, any areas where additional support may be needed, and planned strategies. Where appropriate, this is coordinated with other professionals with parent/carer consent.
- A developmental delay, difficult or withdrawn behaviour does not automatically mean a child has SEN. We consider possible underlying communication, learning, sensory, health, emotional or environmental factors and assess needs carefully.
- Difficulties related solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN. We consider the child's development across languages and contexts and value home languages.
- The SEND Code describes four broad areas that can help settings plan support. Children may have needs across more than one area and those needs may change over time:

Communication and interaction For example speech, language, communication or social interaction needs.	Cognition and learning For example difficulties in learning, remembering, processing or developing particular skills.
Social, emotional and mental health For example difficulties with emotional regulation, anxiety, relationships or wellbeing that affect participation and learning.	Sensory and/or physical needs For example hearing, vision, physical, motor or sensory needs that create barriers to access or participation.

2. How our setting supports young children with SEND

- Early action/intervention matters. If a child needs support that is additional to or different from the provision usually available, we work with the family to put this in place promptly. Support is needs-led; where adjustments or additional strategies are within our control, we do not wait for a medical diagnosis before acting.
- We use the graduated approach required by the SEND Code and reflected in Essex One Planning:
 - **Assess** — bring together the child's strengths, needs, parent/carer views, practitioner knowledge and relevant professional advice.

- **Plan** — agree outcomes, strategies, support, who will do what, how often support will take place, what difference we expect it to make and when it will be reviewed.
 - **Do** — the child's key person remains responsible for day-to-day support, with the SENCO advising and coordinating so that agreed strategies are understood and applied consistently.
 - **Review** — evaluate the impact and quality of support with parents/carers, taking account of the child's views and communication, and agree whether to continue, change, intensify or step down support.
- For children receiving SEN support, we use an Essex-style One Plan / SEND support plan as appropriate. This may include a one-page profile, strengths and needs, parent/carer and child views, agreed outcomes, practical strategies, targeted support, advice from professionals, review dates and evidence of impact. The plan is a working document and should be proportionate, useful and understood by the adults supporting the child.
 - The SENCO/SEND Manager leads and coordinates SEND arrangements, supports practitioners, helps families understand the process, liaises with external professionals and keeps provision under review. All practitioners are responsible for understanding and implementing the strategies that apply to children they support.

3. How our setting creates learning and development opportunities for individual children with SEND

Our curriculum is inclusive and based on the EYFS. We maintain high aspirations for every child while adapting the way experiences are presented, the environment, communication, resources, pace and adult support so that children can participate and learn. Provision is shaped around children's interests and developmental needs rather than expecting every child to access learning in the same way.

Examples of adjustments and strategies may include:

- visual timetables, first/then boards, objects of reference, signs, symbols or other augmentative communication approaches;
- simplified language, extra processing time, repetition, modelling and careful use of questions;
- smaller-group or quieter learning opportunities, predictable routines and supported transitions between activities;

- adapted seating, positioning, access routes, tools, toys or equipment;
- sensory-informed adjustments to noise, lighting, movement, touch or the availability of a calm space;
- targeted opportunities to practise communication, interaction, motor, self-care or other agreed skills within meaningful play and routines;
- individual or small-group intervention where it is purposeful, time-limited where appropriate, and reviewed for impact.
- Children are supported to access indoor and outdoor provision. The EYFS requires daily outdoor access or planned outdoor activities and reminds providers of their Equality Act responsibilities, including reasonable adjustments. We therefore plan access and participation rather than excluding a child because an activity needs adapting.

4. How our setting works in partnership with parents/carers

- Respectful partnership with families is central to our approach. We aim for open, two-way communication from the first visit and throughout a child's time at The Barn.
- Parents/carers are invited to share what is working well, what is difficult, what matters to their child and family, and what outcomes they would like to prioritise.
- Your child's key person is a regular point of contact and the SENCO/SEND Manager is available for more detailed SEND discussions and review meetings.
- We share progress and planned next steps through day-to-day conversations, planned meetings, One Plan reviews and, where used, Tapestry or other secure communication/learning-journal arrangements.
- We invite families to contribute observations, photographs, family information and successful strategies from home, and we can suggest practical ideas that complement support in the nursery.
- Where a parent/carer does not usually collect the child, we agree an appropriate way to maintain communication, for example a planned call, email, secure app message or meeting.
- We seek parent/carer agreement before involving specialists or sharing information for SEND planning, except where information must be shared under safeguarding or another legal duty. We explain what information is being shared and why.
- Parents/carers are involved in agreeing outcomes and reviewing whether support is making the intended difference. If an approach is not effective, we discuss this openly and agree the next cycle of action together.

5. How our setting supports the wellbeing of young children with SEND

- Children learn best when they feel safe, secure, understood and valued. The key-person relationship is therefore especially important. Practitioners respond sensitively to children's emotions and communication, provide reassurance and support regulation, and work with families to understand individual routines and triggers.
- Personal care, including toileting and nappy changing, is provided respectfully and with attention to dignity, privacy, communication and independence.
- Where a child has medical needs, allergies or requires medication, we follow the setting's health and medication procedures and work with parents/carers and relevant health professionals. Individual healthcare or care information is incorporated into planning where appropriate.
- Risk assessments and safety plans are adapted to the child and the activity. Reasonable adjustments are considered so that risk is managed without unnecessarily limiting participation.
- We use positive, relational approaches to behaviour and recognise that behaviour can communicate a need, emotion, sensory experience, pain, communication difficulty or other barrier. Persistent or withdrawn behaviour prompts curiosity and assessment rather than assumptions.
- A child's views are taken seriously in ways appropriate to their age and communication. This may be through words, choices, play, gesture, expression, behaviour, photographs, symbols or observation of preferences and engagement.

6. Staff training and experience in supporting young children with SEND

- The Barn is committed to safer recruitment, staff supervision and continuing professional development. The SENCO/SEND Manager supports colleagues to understand their SEND responsibilities, identify barriers, use agreed strategies and review their impact. SEND is a whole-setting responsibility rather than the responsibility of one person alone.
- Training is matched to the children attending and to staff development needs. Depending on individual needs and professional advice, this may include communication and language, autism-informed practice, sensory or physical needs, emotional regulation, intimate care, medical procedures, use of specialist equipment, or other relevant areas. Statutory safeguarding and paediatric first-aid requirements are maintained in line with the EYFS.

- Where we need additional knowledge before a child starts or when needs change, we work with the family and relevant professionals to plan training, practical guidance and safe implementation. We evaluate whether training changes practice and improves the child's access, wellbeing and outcomes.
- The Barn is a stronger Practice Hub and has access to high quality CPD that staff are encouraged and supported to join.
- Time is allowed within the working day to ensure that staff have the opportunity to learn from best practice within working hours.

7. Specialist services and expertise accessed by our setting

- Where a child continues to make less progress than expected despite well-matched support, or where specialist advice would help us understand and meet needs, we may involve appropriate professionals with parents/carers. Depending on the child, this can include:
- health visitors and other Healthy Child Programme professionals;
- speech and language therapists;
- Portage or early-years home-learning support;
- educational psychologists and specialist teachers/advisory services;
- paediatric, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, sensory or other health services where involved;
- Essex early years SEND/inclusion professionals, including the local-authority advice available to setting SENCOs;
- Family Hubs/Early Help or social care services where a wider multi-agency response is appropriate.
- Professional advice is incorporated into the child's plan and translated into practical strategies for everyday routines and learning. Involving specialists does not replace the setting's responsibility to continue appropriate support while advice is sought.

8. How our setting includes young children with SEND in community-based activities and outings

- We aim for children with SEND to take part in the same rich experiences as their peers, including outdoor learning, local visits, special events and outings, with adaptations where needed. Planning starts with the child's strengths, communication, mobility, sensory needs, health needs and the practical barriers that could affect participation.

- Risk assessments consider individual needs and reasonable adjustments, including staffing, transport/access, toileting, medication, communication, sensory regulation and emergency arrangements where relevant.
- Parents/carers are involved when their knowledge is needed to plan safe and meaningful participation, and relevant professional advice is followed.
- Where an activity cannot be made accessible in its original form, we seek a reasonable alternative that preserves the purpose and quality of the experience rather than simply excluding the child.

9. Our accessible environment

- The Equality Act 2010 requires providers not to discriminate against disabled children and to make reasonable adjustments. We therefore consider accessibility proactively and discuss known access needs with families before a child starts wherever possible.
- Reasonable adjustments may relate to the physical environment, routines, communication, sensory environment, assessment, equipment, staffing approaches or the way an activity is delivered. We will be open with families about any physical limitations of the premises and will work with them and relevant professionals to identify practicable adjustments or alternative arrangements that support access and participation.
- We use visual and other communication supports where helpful and seek accessible formats or translation/interpretation support where reasonably required for effective communication with families.
- We adapt resources and obtain specialist equipment where appropriate, drawing on professional advice and available funding routes.
- We review environmental barriers as children's needs change, rather than treating accessibility as a one-off exercise.

10. How our setting prepares and supports young children with SEND when joining the setting and when transferring to another setting or school

- A carefully planned transition can make a significant difference to a child's security and success. When a child joins The Barn, we offer a personalised settling process. This may include home visits, taster or settling sessions, opportunities for parents/carers to stay and play, a familiar key person, additional visits, photographs or visual information about the setting, and early sharing of successful strategies.
- When a child moves to another setting or school, SEND support includes planning and preparing for that transition. With parent/carer agreement, we share relevant information with the receiving setting

so that effective support can continue. This may include the current One Plan/SEND support plan, communication methods, successful adjustments, healthcare information, professional advice and progress information.

- We can invite the receiving teacher/key person and SENCO to meet the child and observe helpful strategies in practice.
- A transition meeting can be arranged to agree responsibilities, visits, resources, training and any reasonable adjustments needed before the move.
- Where a child has an EHC plan, transition planning is coordinated with the local authority and the plan is reviewed in line with statutory arrangements. EHC plans must be reviewed at least annually.
- We continue to value personal information about the child — what they enjoy, what motivates them, how they communicate and what helps them feel secure — as well as formal records. This supports a receiving setting to see the child as a whole person rather than as a list of needs.

11. How our setting organises its resources to meet the needs of young children with SEND

- Managers deploy staff, time, space, equipment and training flexibly within the EYFS staffing requirements and the resources available to the setting. Decisions are based on the child's assessed needs and intended outcomes, not on a fixed package for a diagnosis.
- Core provision is used first to make the setting inclusive and accessible for all children.
- The key person and SENCO agree how targeted support can be embedded into ordinary routines and play so that children are not unnecessarily separated from peers.
- Where criteria are met, we work with families and Essex County Council to access relevant additional funding. Current Essex arrangements include Special Educational Needs Inclusion Funding (SENIF) and Disability Access Fund (DAF). Early Years Pupil Premium may also strengthen provision for eligible children.
- For 2026 to 2027, the Department for Education has also introduced the Inclusive Early Years Fund, distributed by local authorities to eligible providers to support setting-wide inclusive practice and early intervention. This complements, rather than replaces, existing funding routes.
- Additional funding is used purposefully for the child/cohort and inclusion priorities for which it is intended, for example staffing approaches, specialist resources, environmental adaptations or training, and its impact is reviewed.
- A child's access to funded early education and reasonable support must not be made conditional on securing a particular additional-funding award. Essex guidance is explicit that children should not be excluded while SENIF is awaited.

12. How we decide on appropriate support for young children with SEND

- Support decisions are made through the graduated Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle with the child and family at the centre. We draw on evidence from the child's daily experience, parent/carer knowledge, practitioner assessment and, where relevant, professional advice. We agree what difference we want support to make and review whether it is achieving that outcome.
- Support may be adjusted in intensity, frequency, method or staffing when the evidence shows that a different approach is needed.
- Where progress remains less than expected despite relevant and purposeful action, we consider further specialist involvement with parents/carers.
- Where the setting has taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet a child's SEN and expected progress has not been made, we will consider with the family whether an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment should be requested. Parents/carers also have the right to ask the local authority for an EHC needs assessment.
- An EHC needs assessment does not automatically lead to an EHC plan. The decision rests with the local authority under the statutory process. We support families by providing clear evidence of needs, action taken, impact and the child's and family's views.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

- If a child has an EHC plan, we use the outcomes and provision in the plan to inform day-to-day support and contribute to statutory reviews. We liaise with the local authority and other professionals as required. We do not promise or guarantee the outcome of an EHC needs assessment or an application for an EHC plan.

13. How we involve all parents/carers in our setting

- Our open-door culture is intended to make parents/carers feel welcome, informed and able to contribute. Families are encouraged to share their knowledge of their child from the outset and to participate in setting life, learning, celebrations and feedback opportunities in ways that are accessible to them.
- For SEND planning, involvement is more than being informed: parents/carers help identify priorities, agree outcomes and strategies, review progress and decide next steps. We explain processes in clear language and provide time for questions. Where a family needs additional support to participate, we will consider reasonable communication adjustments and can signpost to independent information, advice and support.

14. Who to contact for further information

Your child's key person is usually the first point of contact for day-to-day questions. For SEND concerns, planning, reviews or help understanding next steps, please ask to speak to the SENCO/SEND Manager. A nursery manager is also available if you would prefer to discuss a concern with them.

<i>SEND Manager / SENCO</i>	<i>Mrs Percival* Mrs Bernard, Miss Gibson</i>
<i>The Barn Nursery School</i>	<i>Greenstead Farm, Crocklands, Greenstead Green, Halstead, Essex, CO9 1QY</i>
<i>Telephone</i>	<i>07444 781027</i>
<i>Email</i>	<i>iwantaplace@hotmail.com</i>
<i>Ofsted URN</i>	<i>EY490758/146923</i>

If you are unhappy or need independent advice

We aim to resolve concerns promptly through discussion. If you remain unhappy, please ask for a copy of the setting's complaints procedure. Under the EYFS, providers must have a written procedure for concerns and complaints, keep a written record of complaints and outcomes, and notify the person who made a written complaint of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. Parents/carers must also be given details of how to contact Ofsted if they believe the provider is not meeting EYFS requirements.

For free, confidential and impartial SEND information, advice and support in Essex, families can contact Essex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS):

Telephone: 01245 204338

Email: send.iass@essex.gov.uk

Website: www.essexsendiass.co.uk

Policy references and useful links

The following sources were checked when this Local Offer was reviewed on 7 October 2026. Statutory requirements always take precedence over this summary if guidance changes.

- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (GOV.UK) — current group/school-based framework effective 1 September 2026 — [open source](#)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (GOV.UK) — current statutory guidance — [open source](#)
- Children and Families Act 2014 — Part 3 SEND provisions — [open source](#)
- Equality Act 2010 — [open source](#)
- Essex Early Years SEND guidance — [open source](#)
- Essex “Your SEND Offer” guidance and template — [open source](#)
- Essex Local Offer — [open source](#)
- Essex One Planning — [open source](#)
- Essex SEND funding information — [open source](#)
- DfE Inclusive Early Years Fund: 2026 to 2027 — [open source](#)
- SEND reform: putting children and young people first — consultation status — [open source](#)

2026 SEND reform — important status note

The Government consulted in 2026 on wider SEND reforms, including earlier and more consistent support. The consultation “SEND reform: putting children and young people first” closed on 18 May 2026. At the review date for this document, the Department for Education states that feedback is being reviewed before the Government sets out its response and next steps. This Local Offer therefore follows current legislation and statutory guidance and does not describe consultation proposals as if they were already law.

Document control

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Version	2026.1
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Owner	The Barn Nursery School Victoria Percival SENCO/SEND Jess Allen Register Person