

Thomas Coram Centre and Nursery School

SEND Information Report



Thomas Coram Centre
and Nursery School
49 Mecklenburgh Square
London WC1N 2NY



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Reviewed annually	

Thomas Coram's SEND Information Report explains how we support children with special educational needs and / or disabilities (SEND). Our SEND policy has more information about what we do every day. Camden Local Authority also publishes the Camden Local Offer. The Local Offer has information about specialist services, schools, colleges and organisations that can provide support and information for families of children and young people with SEND. You can find it here:

www.camden.gov.uk/send-local-offer

Please direct any queries regarding our provision for children with SEND to our SENDCos, contact details below.

Our school SENDCos (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co- coordinator) are Jan Stillaway and Kate Nicolson. You can contact Jan or Kate via the school office;

- 02075200385
- admin@thomascoram.camden.sch.uk

What kinds of SEND are provided for at Thomas Coram?

The nursery provides education and additional support to children with a full range of special educational needs and disabilities including;

- Communication, social communication and interaction, for example speech and language difficulties or Autistic Spectrum Condition.
- Cognition and learning, for example moderate or specific learning difficulties or global delay.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder or difficulties associated with trauma.
- Physical, sensory or health conditions, for example hearing or sight impairment, epilepsy, sensory processing difficulties or genetic conditions.

How is SEND organised at Thomas Coram?

We welcome difference and diversity, and have high aspirations for all of our children. Our school is firmly committed to inclusion and works hard to make it possible for all children, whatever their needs or abilities, to feel included and welcome. We want children with SEND to play and learn with all the children and to have the same opportunities to have fun and make friends. We believe that the views of children and their families are important and encourage families to actively participate in supporting their children's development.

The provision for children with SEND is led by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinators (SENDCos) who are qualified teachers. One SENDCo also has a National Senco Award. We have a Provision Map (See SEND Policy) that outlines activities and interventions for children with SEND that are additional to the offer for all children. The specialist

interventions are selected based on evidential research and professional advice and are monitored for quality and effectiveness by the SENDCos.

We are supported by the area SENDCo who is part of a specialist area SEND team, the Inclusive Intervention Team (IIT). With parents' permission, staff from this team work directly with children, educators in the nursery and families to help all children make good progress.

When we identify that a child has or may have a special educational need or disability we discuss their strengths and needs with their family and collaboratively write an individual education plan for the child (IEP). These are reviewed regularly with the child's family and the child's teaching team. We also draw on the advice and support of the wider professional network available in Camden including specialist teachers, occupational therapists, speech therapists, dieticians and physiotherapists.

Our Head Teacher provides leadership on inclusion and high achievement for all:
Perina Holness.

Our SENDCos have responsibility for SEND including health needs:
Jan Stillaway and Kate Nicolson.

Our SEND Governor has responsibility for monitoring and supporting the school on SEND:
Julie Tucker. They can be contacted via; admin@thomascoram.camden.sch.uk

How does Thomas Coram teach children with SEND?

We want all the children who come to nursery to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. We respect that all of our children:

- benefit from a range of teaching strategies and approaches,
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- benefit from a rich, playful learning environment and opportunities to make friends

Children with SEND learn alongside all the children in the nursery. We teach all children (with and without SEND) through a play based curriculum. The children learn actively by engaging in a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors, some led by adults and some initiated by the children using the rich materials on offer. All children also attend one or two small group sessions every day led by our educators. We encourage and support all children to make friends, play with others and to learn through playful interaction. The curriculum also includes children learning to be independent in self-care, for example learning to wash their hands and use the toilet.

Some children with SEND may need support to access the play-based curriculum for example by being given more help and modelling to learn how to do things, or support to physically access materials. Some children with SEND need support to learn how to communicate or interact with others and this is offered via a range of more specialist teaching strategies in the nursery for example The Picture Exchange Communication System or PECs (see glossary). When needed we employ additional staff to help all children

participate in every aspect of nursery life. We adapt our small group sessions for children with SEND to meet their particular needs, for example to support some children to develop attention and listening skills, social skills or a wide range of language and communication skills.

How do we develop the skills, knowledge and expertise of Thomas Coram staff?

All new staff joining Thomas Coram have an induction programme. Our teachers, Early Years Educators, Nursery Support Assistants and Meal Time Supervisors receive regular training, guidance and updates so that they can meet the needs of all of our children. At least one of our training days has a SEND focus, and SEND is always on the agenda at staff meetings. Staff also receive coaching to help them support individual children.

This helps to ensure that our staff:

- know about the different special educational needs and disabilities of all the children in our school,
- are able to support all our children as they learn through play,
- are able to plan and support children during adult-led sessions, and
- understand the social, emotional and mental health needs of children with SEND.

We provide further specialist training for any staff supporting children with the most complex needs.

What does Thomas Coram do when a child needs support from specialists?

Sometimes a child needs support from specialist teams and services. As a Camden maintained school, we have access to professionals who are funded by the local authority, local charities or the NHS. If a child is already supported by a professional network when they join the school we request permission from their family to share information and work collaboratively with the family and the professionals to best meet the child's needs.

If a child's needs emerge while they are attending nursery we discuss with their family whether or not it is appropriate to seek further professional support, for example speech and language therapy. With the permission of a child's parents, we are able to refer children to a wide range of services including:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS),
- Coram Creative Therapy Services,
- Early Years' Speech and Language Service,
- Mosaic Feeding Clinic and Sleep Clinic
- Family Support and Social Services,
- Inclusive Intervention Team,
- Mosaic (Child Development Multi- disciplinary team including physio therapists, paediatricians, dieticians, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists),
- Sensory Advisory Service.
- Teachers of the Deaf and Visually impaired

How does Thomas Coram identify, assess and plan for children with SEND?

We have termly assessment and review cycles to make sure that every child makes progress and that their development is 'on track' for their age. These cycles, along with ongoing observations and evaluations, are part of the graduated response where we assess, plan, do and then review children's development. This assessment cycle can help us identify when a child is developing differently. Sometimes a child's family may raise concerns about their child or sometimes an external professional such as a therapist or doctor may identify a need.

We assess children's progress drawing on our educators' knowledge of child development, the early year's curriculum (Development Matters 2021) and when appropriate more specialised tools such as the Early Years Profile (see glossary). We also use a standardised assessment to check the early language development of all children. Children's families contribute to assessment and external professionals may help by sharing their observations of children's strengths and needs.

Our teaching teams plan for all children collaboratively. When a child has a special educational need we may also write an Individual Education Plan, (an IEP), with the involvement of their family and appropriate professionals. This plan is reviewed with the child's family around every 8 weeks. Some children may have a plan for a short time and others may need a plan throughout their time at nursery.

The IEP provides a detailed targeted plan for support. This is sometimes provided solely through the high quality teaching provided by the nursery team and sometimes additional staff are employed to ensure the child can access the full curriculum and appropriate specialist interventions or therapy. The IEP will include, when appropriate, how we support children to develop across the whole curriculum including, learning to eat healthily and be more independent in self-care.

When a child has very complex SEND and/ or health needs families may request a statutory assessment of their child's needs by the local authority to identify whether the child would benefit from an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP). Families can find out more about EHCPs on Camden's local offer website.

When a child has SEND how does Thomas Coram review their progress?

When a child has an Individual Education Plan (IEP), their Key Person and the SENDCo will regularly review their progress with the child's family. Any external professionals working with the child will also be invited to contribute to ongoing assessment. New targets and strategies are then agreed for the child at home and at nursery.

We write a summary of development or report when children transfer from the toddler age phase to the Kinder age phase at around 3 years old and when they transfer to primary school at around 4 years old. If a child has an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan), they also have an Annual Review of the plan, usually around every six months.

How does Thomas Coram make sure children with SEND have a broad and balanced curriculum? How do we enable children with SEND engage with children who do not have SEND?

We plan for children with SEND to access a broad and balanced curriculum by making sure that most of their learning takes place through play in the nursery with and alongside the other children. If we offer specialist interventions, we offer these in the nursery environment rather than withdrawing children to a separate space. When educators lead activities such as cooking, dance or gardening we plan ways that all children, including those with SEND can participate.

For educational visits, we plan for the needs and interests of children with SEND, making reasonable adjustments when needed.

The curriculum at Thomas Coram is routinely differentiated for children with SEND. For example, we provide:

- additional time and support for children to access activities
- tasks broken down into small steps to help all children succeed
- a less stimulating, low distraction environment when needed
- visual supports and use Makaton signs and other strategies to aid communication
- adjusted tools and materials such as adapted cutlery or seating
- focused adult support and modelling of particular skills
- a modified menu to support selective eaters

How does Thomas Coram make the environment safe, accessible and stimulating for SEND children?

We work hard to make sure that our school building, including all our rooms and gardens are safe, stimulating and accessible for all children. Providing "Enabling Environments" is at the heart of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Our provision and activities are varied and motivating offering a wide range of materials and experiences. We actively seek to learn about individual children's interests so that we can offer them highly motivating activities at nursery.

When appropriate, visiting professionals such as the Teacher of the Visually Impaired or an Occupational Therapist will provide guidance to ensure the nursery is fully accessible. When needed we provide particular equipment, such as specialist seating or a wheelchair accessible changing area. If a child has a particular health need we may write a risk assessment, with input from a range of professionals to ensure they are safe and well at nursery.

Our school is located on one level, on the ground floor and is accessible for wheelchair users.

Some of the activities and experiences on offer to children with additional needs are; visual communication tools, small specialist groups, access to a sensory room, intensive interaction and food play/ food based activities. Please see our provision map for more information (see SEND policy).

How does Thomas Coram work in partnership with the parents and carers of our children with SEND? How do we consult with children with SEND?

We know that the active involvement of parents and carers in the education of their child is crucial to a child's success and that families always have the most in-depth knowledge about their child. We seek the engagement of parents in every aspect of their child's development and in all decisions made about their child.

We communicate with children's parents and carers in a range of ways including, informal 'handover' conversations at the start and end of the day, regular reviews of children's progress at IEP and other review meetings, newsletters and other information on our ParentHub app, notices and displays. Families of children with SEND work with the SENDCos via meetings, email and phone calls, as well as informally.

Staff photograph and document significant moments for children at nursery and these are shared via the child's Profile Book. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in planning and reviewing their child's progress. Families working with the IIT service have the additional support from the specialist teachers and educators.

We periodically offer support groups/ workshops for parents of children with additional needs including with social communication difficulties and Autism. We offer signposting via the Local Offer to families to services for children with SEND. All parents are encouraged to join the governing body of the school whenever vacancies arise. We welcome feedback from parents and seek this informally and via questionnaires.

Some children are able to clearly communicate their preferences for their care and education but with others, it may be challenging to consult them directly. We employ a variety of strategies to seek children's views including play and conversation but also careful observation of their interests and behaviour. We discuss their likes and dislikes with their parents, carers, and offer children as much choice as possible to allow them to express their needs and wants.

How does Thomas Coram plan smooth transitions for children with SEND joining or leaving the school, or moving groups within the school?

When children are new to Thomas Coram, we have an individualised, gradual settling process which is explained in our Parent Handbook and on our website. When a child transfers from another early years setting or is already being supported by external professionals we seek permission from parents for information sharing. This helps us ensure an appropriate level of support is in place when their child starts nursery and helps us give them a warm welcome.

Children who start nursery at two will transfer to the older age phase at three years old. When this happens, we have a transition process including opportunities for families to meet their new Key person and see their new learning environment. We support children to visit their new class gradually and meet their teachers before they transfer. The child's previous team of educators will share information about them with their new Key person.

When children leave the nursery school to start reception we share information about children with SEND with their new teacher before they start. For children with complex SEND this usually includes a meeting involving their family, the school SENDCo, their nursery key person and staff at their new school.

Some children with SEND may need a more personalised transition plan when moving to a new school. For example, we may

- prepare an "All About Me" transfer record about the child for the new school,
- arrange additional visits for the child to the new school,
- invite the child's new teacher(s) to visit them at nursery
- Create a transition book for the child, including photos of new classrooms and staff.

How does Thomas Coram support the social, emotional and well-being of children with SEND?

We believe that personal development and emotional well-being is really important for all children. We know that children are unlikely to flourish unless they are enabled to develop positive relationships, feel safe and are engaged in healthy lifestyles. We are also aware that some children with SEND are particularly vulnerable when it comes to this area of development and that some are not able to communicate their needs as clearly as other children.

The Early Years Foundation stage clearly emphasises the importance of personal social and emotional development and of the development of self-regulation. When we plan for children with SEND we always take these aspects of their development into account. If children appear to be experiencing difficulties in terms of emotional well-being, we work with their families and, when appropriate, with external professionals to help us respond to their individual needs.

We always consider what is individually motivating for children and plan to make nursery a positive and supportive experience including using appealing resources related to their interests.

We think carefully about how we can support all children to develop warm relationships with adults and make friends with other children. For example, some children may need targeted support to help them develop the social skills needed to interact and play.

Please see the school website for our Medicines policy. Children with particular medical needs have an Individual Health Care Plan, which sets out their medical condition and needs.

Thomas Coram provides regular support and training for staff on safeguarding, keeping children safe and meeting children's emotional needs. We have a Designated Safeguarding

Lead, who is also the head teacher. All of our staff, governors and volunteers have an up-to-date DBS (Disclosing and Barring Service) check.

How do we support children who are looked after by the local authority?

We offer children who are looked after by the local authority all the opportunities we offer other children at our school. We do this by close liaison with their carers and Children's Social Care. We sometimes need to make particular arrangements to ensure the needs of these children are fully met.

How does Thomas Coram know they are successful in helping children with SEND?

We monitor carefully to ensure that all children with SEND make good progress from their starting points and record this via their profile books, assessment documents and reviews of their individual plans. This is done with the participation of their families and external professionals when appropriate.

Arrangements for complaints

If parents and carers are unhappy with any aspect of the nursery school, they have recourse to the Complaints policy (on the school website). This usually involves speaking first to their child's Key Person and then as necessary the Head teacher.

Camden's Local Offer is published here

<https://cindex.camden.gov.uk/kb5/camden/cd/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

Glossary

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS); this is a phased programme designed to help children communicate. It involves children learning to use picture cards to request items and express themselves.

Early Years Profile; An assessment document used to gather detailed information about a child's current level of skills in a range of areas for example self-care skills, listening skills or hand eye co-ordination.