

Bobtails Montessori Local Offer

1. How does the early years setting know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs or disabilities?

Our SENCO, Christina Young, regularly meets with the nursery manager, Alexandra Openshaw, to discuss each child's progress and development. This is tracked using observations of the children on our online learning journal My Montessori Child. If key workers and other members of staff have any concerns regarding a child's progress, they pass their concerns on to the SENCO. If a parent has any concerns regarding their child's progress and development, they can request a meeting with the key person, SENCO, or manager to discuss this. Once a child has been identified as having a potential extra need or disability, a meeting will be arranged between the SENCO and the child's parent in order to discuss the areas of concern and what kind of assessment and support is potentially available.

2. How will early years setting staff support my child?

Staff at Bobtails treat every child as an individual, and children's key workers design activities specifically tailored to their individual needs and interests. Key workers track their key children's development and progress, and support each child to fulfil their potential.

3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

As a Montessori preschool, we follow the Montessori curriculum in conjunction with the EYFS. Both of these curriculums support each child's individual development and needs. Staff at Bobtails carefully observe each child, and the key person uses these observations to build up a picture of the child's strengths and interests. Information from parents is also used to feed into this. The key person then plans activities which are tailored to support the development of each of their key children.

4. How will both you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

Parents can log into our online learning journal, My Montessori Child, at any time to see updates about their child's progress. Parents can also find suggestions on how to support their child's learning at home on MMC. Parents are also given verbal feedback at pick up time on the door, particularly about things parents and staff are working together to support the child through, such as potty training. Parents can request a more formal meeting with their child's key person or the SENCO if they would like more information or have a concern regarding their child's development, and the key person or SENCO will also request a meeting with parents if they feel that they need to talk about the child's development. If children require extra support then there will be more opportunities for parents and staff to meet, for example if the child is receiving speech and language therapy staff will meet with parents regularly to discuss support strategies and to track the child's progress.

5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

At Bobtails we maintain a high staff ratio, meaning that each child gets plenty of individual attention and nurturing. We are a very small setting, where every staff member is familiar to every child. Children can approach any staff member for help and support, even if they are not that child's key person, and all staff are ready to step in to support any child who needs it. We have a very experienced SENCO and a designated person for safeguarding who between them oversee the wellbeing of all children, both in terms of their progress within the EYFS and their emotional and possible health needs.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available or accessed by the early Years setting?

Depending on the needs of the children, we liaise with a variety of different professionals and services, such as educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, health visitors, the local child development centre and sensory toy library.

7. What training have the staff supporting children with SEND had?

Our SENCO has had specific SENCO training, as well as various training from the speech and language service to help us to support children who are accessing speech and language therapy, and training specifically tailored to helping us support children with Autism. Key workers also receive specific training from speech and language or autism support depending on the needs of their key children.

8. How will my child be included in activities outside the early years setting including trips?

We aim as far as possible to make trips accessible to all children. Usually, parents accompany their children on our trips, meaning that Bobtails staff would be available for any individual children who need extra support. Our regular Friday morning forest school has high staff ratios which means staff can more effectively support those children who need it.

9. How accessible is the early years setting environment (outside and inside)?

We are situated in a village hall which does present some challenges regarding accessibility. Depending on the needs of the individual, we are able to make some adjustments to improve accessibility.

10. How will the early years setting prepare and support my child joining the early years setting and or transfer to school?

Prior to starting at Bobtails, children have two settling in sessions of an hour each, in order to become more comfortable in the setting. We are also able to arrange home visits if required. If a child requires more support, we work with the individual family to help the child become fully familiar with our setting and staff. We support all children to transition to the next stage of their learning journey at school or a different early years setting. For example, reception teachers from the local primary schools are welcome to visit the children here and Bobtails, and staff are happy to accompany children on settling in visits to primary school. Staff liaise with the local primary schools to pass on any information which is relevant to a child's individual needs in advance of their school start date.

11. How are the early years setting's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

Our manager and SENCO meet regularly to discuss how children's special educational needs can be met and how we can help them to make progress. If a child requires specialist support (for example with their speech and language) a plan is put in place to ensure that they have more staff support at times when they need it (for example at story time).

12. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

Once a child is identified as potentially needing additional support, there are various pathways which can be taken to get the child the help they need. We are able, with parental consent, to refer a child for assessment by the speech and language service. Parents are also able to take their child to the health visitor or GP, who will again refer the child on to a paediatrician or other appropriate professional for assessment. Once a diagnosis is made, we at the setting will work closely with the team at the local child development centre (CDC) who will decide what further support is required and organise professional input accordingly.

13. How are parents involved in the early years setting?

Parents can log in and see their child's learning journal online whenever they wish to, and are able to add their own comments and observations. Parents can come in for regular meetings with their child's key person whenever they feel it is necessary, and we also communicate with parents on the door at drop off and pick up about anything which may have happened that day.

14. Who can I contact for further information?

To find out more about how we support children with SEND you can contact our SENCO (Christina Young) or our manager (Alexandra Openshaw) on 01403786176. For more information about SEND in general if you are concerned about your child's development please speak to your child's health visitor or GP.