



SEN and Disability
Local Offer: Early Years Settings
Lancaster Steiner School

www.lancashire.gov.uk

Guidance for Completion

This template is designed to help you write or update your Local Offer. The template aims to give you suggested headings to collate and organise your information. The final published Local Offer needs to include this information but can be presented and published in your desired format.

Please read the accompanying Guidance notes.

The Setting

The early years setting offers provision from 9.00am – 1.00pm Monday to Friday. The setting is registered for a mixed aged group from 4 to 6 years. There is approximately 5 children in the group/class. The transition class teacher leads the morning session. There is 1 room for the children.. In addition there is daily use of a large garden/outdoor area. The Education Management Committee for the Lower School currently oversees the provision . The Early Years Trustee has overall responsibility for the quality of the provision

Accessibility and Inclusion

What the setting provides

The building: The setting is housed in a single storey wooden building set in a large garden area. There is wheelchair access from one of the main entrances. On street parking is usually available nearby. There is a disabled toilet in the building. In the tarmacked area at the front of the building there is a small storage area for buggies and racks for bikes. The corridors are illuminated with strip lighting. The walls are painted in muted colours such as creams/greens/pinks. The floor is wooden. With the exception of the accessible disabled toilet all internal doors around the building are standard door size. The front door and door to the kindergarten cloakroom are double doors. There are parent information boards in the front entrance areas. The board contains information about the setting. A folder of school policies is kept in school office. Copies of some policies are available on the school website and, for families who require it, we are able to make copies of policies available electronically. Needs of parents and children are identified at entry. This would include the need for letters/documents in larger print size.

The rooms The rooms are illuminated by natural light and by pendant lights. Most windows have curtains. The Kindergarten room colouring is pastel pink, the transition class is painted teal. The floor is wooden with wool rugs. The rooms are created to be cosy and like home. The majority of resources are open-ended in that they can be used imaginatively. Most resources are made from natural materials that stimulate the senses in a gentle way. They are arranged to be accessible to children and include wooden planks, chairs, racks, tables, wooden shapes, blankets, pegs, shells, fir cones, logs and so on, as well as more formed resources such as dolls house, farm, boats and railway tracks. Resources are chosen to meet the needs of the 4–6 year age group. There are no electronic devices available to children. Technology used is related to daily activities and includes corn grinding wheel, children’s knives, apple peelers and corers etc. Resources are chosen to meet the needs of the 4–6 age group to develop coordination and physical control

Identification and Early Intervention

Every child is seen as an individual who has already learned much about the world through their early family life. Before your child begins our transition class a meeting is set up with the teacher, SENDCo, parents or carers and the child. This is a relaxed meeting in which the family and teacher begin their relationship and the teacher and SENDCo have the opportunity of gaining a fuller understanding of your child. If at this stage parents or staff have already identified a Special Educational Need or Disability this is the opportunity to share information and support requirements. Children's progress is closely monitored in our setting. Each child has their own learning journey which includes written observations of them in the transition class, observations and comments from parents/family, tracking information about their progress across the areas of learning and development within the EYFS, photographs of them at play and examples of work they have done. More detailed information about learning journeys and what is in them is shared with parents when their child begins attending our setting. This is to ensure parents understand what they are, how they are used in the Transition class and how parents can contribute to them. Children's learning journeys are available for parents to look at any time they would like. Although the teacher is available to chat to parents at drop off and pick up times, we make arrangements for teacher to meet with parents each term to look at the learning journey and discuss progress and any concerns.

Additional appointments can be made outside of these times to discuss any issues in more depth and more confidentially than is often possible at pick up and drop off times. If a child is experiencing some difficulties or delay in their development this is shared with parents and options/appropriate next steps are discussed. Staff may also undertake a child study to gain a fuller picture of the child. For some children the next steps may involve

- targeting a specific area of development and planning additional opportunities for the child to have experiences designed to support the area of learning and development identified.
- This would then be reviewed to see how the child has progressed and whether or not additional steps need to be taken to support the child's progress and development.
- For other children the next step may also include developing a targeted learning plan where specific aims are developed with parents to support the child's development. Staff would involve the school SENDCo who could advise on strategies or next steps.
- We may also discuss with parents whether it would be appropriate to refer their child to other services, such as speech and language therapy. This would require parental consent.
- Another next step may be to ask the local authority Inclusion Teacher to visit the child in the setting to provide some additional advice and guidance to practitioners to support them in meeting the needs of the child. This visit is called a 'Request for Guidance' and can only be undertaken with parental consent. Our SEND and Inclusion policy provides the context for supporting children through these 'next steps', this is referred to as the graduated response. Our SEND Policy is available in the setting or you can see it by following this link https://lancastersteinerschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/20201208-LSS_SEND_and_Inclusion_Policy_2020.pdf

Teaching and Learning Part 1 – Practitioners and Practice

In our transition class we follow the principles of Steiner Waldorf Early Years education. We work with the principle that children learn through doing and by copying or imitating what they see adults do. A mixed age group from 4 to 6 years is also used so that children play with, and learn from, children of different ages as they would in a family.

Activities are chosen because they are meaningful –e.g. baking bread for a snack – and offer lots of learning experiences. Children’s play and learning through active play is also given central importance. Using writing and practical maths, such as counting plates for snack, are things that children may choose to do. However, formal learning, including reading and writing, begins in Class 1. The setting works within the framework of the EYFS but has a number of exemptions from the more formal aspects of learning in some of the areas of learning and development. The setting is also exempt from all EYFSP Assessment Regulations. The rooms are resourced to meet the needs of the 4 –6 year old age group. Practitioners use Steiner principles, Development Matters and the Statutory Guidance for the EYFS to plan provision and activities for the children in their care. The EYFS identifies 3 prime areas of learning and development (Communication and Language, Physical, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development) and the four specific areas (Mathematics , Understanding the World, Expressive Arts and Design, Literacy). These areas are provided for within a range of activities. The activities and provision are adapted to suit the needs of all children at each stage of development. For some children a greater level of differentiation is required because they have additional or special educational needs. Practitioners are sensitive to the developmental needs of the children in their care and when, they are differentiating activities and provision, have this in mind so that all children are able to access the setting in a way that is appropriate to their needs. Children’s progress and development is maintained through observations of children by the teacher and other practitioners and parents. Each half term trackers are used to record children’s development against the EYFS. Parents are informed of these observations. There are termly parent and teacher meetings. It is also the role of the teacher/key person to help parents to develop ways in which they can support their child’s learning at home. Parents are able to speak to their child’s teacher at any time if they would like further information or advice about supporting learning at home. Children’s ideas and opinions about their own learning and experiences are listened to and valued and much is learnt about how children experience their world through close observation of play. Practitioners record these observations for the child’s learning journey. Where children have additional needs the teacher will meet with parents to agree suitable provision for the child. The teacher also works closely with the school SENDCO who supports the teacher in making decisions about how best to support the child. The school SEND policy can be viewed at https://lancastersteinerschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/20201208-LSS_SEND_and_Inclusion_Policy_2020.pdf

The Transition Class provides resources that are developmentally appropriate for the 4-6 age group. We ensure there are resources available that overlap with the age phase below and above so that children who are developing more slowly or more quickly can access resources appropriate to their stage of learning and development. Where children require access to resources that are significantly different to the resources available within their age phase we make arrangements to share resources with younger or older groups. Where children need resources that are not usually available in our setting we endeavour to access these from loan facilities, support services or by purchasing. We liaise with parents and outside professionals to ensure resources are appropriate for the needs of the child. We work regularly with external agencies who visit children in the setting, some will have more experience of this than others but they are supported by the SENDCO and the Early Years teacher. For some children it may be the case that at specific times of the day they require additional support. As a setting we endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to provide this. We look to provide additional support flexibly using existing staff from within the wider school if this is appropriate. We undertake risk assessments of the places we intend to visit and consider the needs of the children who will be visiting. We make reasonable adjustments when planning trips and outings to ensure the places we visit are accessible and meet the needs of the children attending our setting. In the case of a child who has specific needs during an outing, we may do an individual risk assessment for that child.

Transitions

When restrictions are lifted families are invited to visit the class. This gives families the opportunity of making an informed choice. The next step is an informal meeting with the teacher. Parents and child attend. The child also has this time to get to know the teacher better. The teacher will talk to parents about their and their child's preferences for a settling period and endeavour to meet these needs as best we can. Where possible the teacher will undertake a home visit so the child can meet

the teacher in a comfortable and familiar environment. If required the SENDCo may also be involved at this stage.

We have a comprehensive transition procedure when children enter or leave the kindergarten. Many children chose to continue into Lower School and transition is managed between the transition teacher and the Class 1 teacher. When possible we invite the new teacher to visit our setting as part of the transition but will always liase with new settings before a child moves on.

Staff Training

Our transition class teacher has Steiner Waldorf teacher training, qualification level 3 of the Dutch VET (Pedagogical Child Carer Level 3) and has many years experience working in Steiner Kindergartens.

The school has an experienced SENDCO who has a working knowledge of CAFs, the EHCP process and leading TAF meetings, working with intervention support programmes and external professionals such as speech and occupational therapists. The whole school SENDCO provides additional training and advice.

Further Information

This is a school with good relationships between parents and staff. Parents are involved in many aspects of the running of the school. There is a strong community and parents are very supportive of each other. Parents/carers contributions are welcomed and parent/carer views are seen as important. Opportunities are always made to answer questions or resolve concerns. Feedback can be through discussion or in writing. The school has a complaints procedure, details are on school notice boards and the school website.