

## Early Years 0-5: Introduction

### Improving outcomes in Halton – High aspirations and expectations

The Children and Families Act (2014) introduced a new system for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014. There is now a much greater emphasis on working **with** families of children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities to achieve better outcomes.

**All children in Halton are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education.**

All early years providers in the maintained, private, voluntary and independent sectors that receive funding from Halton Borough Council, are required to have regard to the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 – 25 years'.

Early years providers **must** have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. These arrangements should include a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN.

#### Principles underlying the Code

The SEND Code of Practice describes the principles that should be observed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities. These include:

- taking into account the views of children, young people and their families
- enabling children, young people and their parents to participate in decision making
- collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support
- identifying the needs of children and young people
- making high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people
- focusing on inclusive practices and removing barriers to learning
- helping children and young people to prepare for adulthood

Early years providers in Halton should regularly review and evaluate the quality and breadth of the support they offer or can access for children with SEN or disabilities. Providers should work in partnership with the Local Authority, and other agencies, to explore how different types of need can be met most effectively.

All early years providers have duties under the **Equality Act 2010**. In particular, 'they must not discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children, and they must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at substantial disadvantage. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage. All publicly funded early years providers must promote equality of opportunity for disabled children. The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 focuses on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning' (SEND Code of Practice 0-25, page 69).

All early years providers should also take steps to ensure that children with **medical conditions** get the support required to meet those needs. This is set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.