

Script for ECEY6011

My name is Caitlin and I am the nursery's designated Early Years Additional Learning Needs Lead Officer. My position is one that is required by law under The Additional Learning Needs System. This system replaced the previous Special Educational Learning Needs, more commonly known and referred to as SEND. The Additional Learning Needs System now includes additional disabilities, such as learning difficulties like dyslexia (National Day Nurseries Association, 2025). This is a big turning point in which our expectations have been raised. Let's ensure we keep doing what we're doing to help these individuals.

Within the setting, we do have a few children with additional learning needs, with these varying from Autism, ADHD, Global Developmental Delay, and Speech and Language difficulties. These children receive interventions centred around them and their needs, as their needs require many different approaches and resources. In order for us to ensure these children receive support that is right for them, they all have Individual Development Plans, commonly referred to as IDP's. These are a legally binding document, therefore everything stated in it, must happen. These plans ensure each child receives the support best for them.

In preparation for the upcoming inspection, I would like to take this opportunity to ask you all to read every IDP again, as they have recently undergone a review following the new year. You may note that some may not have changed a lot, which is fine, it just means that the child is still working towards these targets. I would also like to remind you that any additional training you think you may require to assist you in working with these children is encouraged. If you do not feel comfortable asking now, that is fine, just come and see me at some point during the week. If you are unsure which training you may require, do not feel afraid to ask me this either. I am here to help you too. Sam, I'm sure you'd be able to help point people in the right direction too. **Sam says feedback.** We will meet up at some point to book people on what they've suggested.

We are seeing an increase in the amount of children coming through with ALN, therefore, Sam, I would like to speak with you in order to discuss this and extra training.

If you suspect a child in your care may have additional learning needs, please observe them and make notes. This will help us down the line in getting a diagnosis. The more proof, the easier the process is on the child, as well as their parents and caregivers. May I remind you to come to me with your concerns before consulting parents and carers. In the interest of the parents and carers wellbeing, I would rather come to a collective decision as a team before worrying parents and carers, especially if we do not come to

the decision they might have ALN. Essentially, we do not wish to worry them for no reason. Let's get our facts straight first. If after observations and discussions we come to the conclusion there might be ALN, then we will bring up our concerns with parents and carers. It is important I remind you, that when it comes to ALN, proof and evidence is vital. Without evidence and proof, we risk delaying the diagnosis, which as we know is long enough as it is at the moment.

Another thing I would like to bring attention to is wellbeing. I understand our wellbeing seems to be good, judging by the feedback Sam has gathered from parents and children. However, there is always room for improvement. I understand we are prioritising our outdoor area to maximise the children's outdoor learning experiences. As you all know, we follow the Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Scheme (HSPSS), which aims to establish local healthy school schemes through health and education partnerships in every local authority in Wales (Caerphilly Early Years & Childcare Service, no date). Our setting is one that is vital to a child's development. We are lucky and fortunate that our setting has a mutual understanding of the importance of wellbeing and how we promote it through play-based learning. Our focus is taken away from traditional learning, and we are now leaning towards a much better approach of play-based learning.

We adjust our provision following the "notice, analyse and respond" approach. If we notice children are not using certain things in the classroom, we take it away, and replace it with something of their interest. This promotes play, and gives them the opportunity to learn through their own choices and experiences. This approach encourages child-led learning. In addition to this method, we are also fortunate enough to have the flexibility to adjust our curriculum to suit the needs and interests of the children. We can do this by ensuring the child's voice is at the heart of the curriculum, and allowing them to assist with designing their learning environment (Care Inspectorate Wales, no date). Ysgol Feithrin Pont-y-pŵl leads by example here, and I think we can learn a lot through them, which is why I will be visiting them next week.

One of the ways we're looking at improving well-being is through engagement with parents and caregivers, as well as the community. If we can involve them in different ways, such as inviting parents in to read stories to a small group of children, I think that would work well. Again Sam, you have some brilliant ideas there from the feedback too. By fostering positive relationships within the setting, we also earn trust. If parents and carers trust what we do and how we do it, wellbeing will soar.

To ensure quality, I would like to remind everyone of the comprehensive services, where families are able to access support ranging from antenatal care, health visiting services and speech and communication guidance, which reflects the importance of the first

1,000 days. We do have pamphlets in reception, but as we know, some parents do feel ashamed picking one up, so I would like for every child to go home with each pamphlet of services, to hopefully get some additional support to those hard to reach parents who may be too proud to ask for help, or feel they may be judged. We know who were targetting here being a small setting.

Going back to our outdoor area, Sam and Lauren, you both have amazing ideas with curriculum and learning environments, I think we should work together closely over the next week with the caretaker to ensure maximum happiness levels for all children when they are outside. Our setting is in a built up area, which means our outdoor area is classed as a built environment. This allows children to develop their skills holistically. Built environments include benefits for physical wellbeing, by providing them with the space that encourages and allows full body movements such as running and jumping. It also allows them to develop their coordination and balancing skills. As our fence is facing the main road, children are able to learn from observations, how to act safely in built up areas.

As well as promoting physical development and wellbeing, our outdoor area also gives children the opportunity to develop emotionally and socially too. By being outdoors, we are able to allow them to develop a positive self-image, self-esteem and self efficacy, which gives them a sense of mastery when completing an emotionally harder task, like understanding emotions and regulating them.

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