



SEN and Disability

Local Offer: Early Years Settings

Sandcastles Children's Nursery Ltd

t/a Sandcastles Nursery & Beach School

Ofsted Unique Reference Number EY476948

EYFS v.2024 Statutory Requirements - 3.61 Early years providers must have arrangements in place to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Maintained schools, academies and maintained nursery schools are required to identify a member of staff to act as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and other providers (in group provision) are expected to identify a SENCO. Maintained schools, academies and maintained nursery schools and all providers who are funded by the local authority to deliver early education places are required to have regard to the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice. Other providers may find it helpful to familiarise themselves with the early years section of the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice. Section 77 of the Children and Families Act 2014 requires these and other bodies to have regard to the SEND Code of Practice in exercising their functions under Part 3 of the Act.

This Local Offer template is designed to help you to pull together information so that parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities know what support they can expect if their child attends our setting.

Setting Name and Address	SANDCASTLES NURSERY 425 Marine Road East Morecambe LA4 6AA		Telephone Number	01524 831932
			Website Address	www.nursery-morecambe.co.uk
Does the settings specialise in meeting the needs of children with a particular type of SEN?	No	Yes	If yes, please give details:	
	No			
What age range of pupils does the setting cater for?	24 months - school			
Name and contact details of your setting SENCO	Helen O'Hagan & Judith Stewart SANDCASTLES NURSERY 425 Marine Road East, Morecambe LA4 6AA 01524 831932 sandcastles@nursery-morecambe.co.uk			

Name of Person of person responsible for maintaining LO: Helen O'Hagan Nursery Director

Promoting Good Practice and Successes

The Local Offer will give your setting the opportunity to showcase any good practice you have around supporting children with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities to achieve their full potential. If you have any examples of good practice or success stories, we would encourage you to include these on your Local Offer web pages. For reasons of confidentiality, please ensure you do not use any personally identifiable information when using case studies to illustrate your setting's experiences of supporting children with SEND.

I confirm that our Local Offer has now been published on the setting website.

Please give the URL for the direct link to your Local Offer	http://www.nursery-morecambe.co.uk/for-parents.php		
Name	Helen O'Hagan	Date	30/06/2014 Last reviewed June 2024, Next review due 2027

Please return the completed form by email to: IDSS.SENDReforms@lancashire.gov.uk

The Setting

Sandcastles Private Day Nursery opened in 1991. The nursery operates from the ground floor of a converted detached house on the seafront at Morecambe. Children are grouped into overlapping age based groups.

Older children have access to two main playrooms plus a hall/dining room and annex along with two secure outdoor play areas. Older children are invited to attend several 'club' sessions designed to enhance and inspire their learning – Beach School, Reading Fairy, Cooking club, Garden club. The frequency and content of these club sessions varies to meet the needs of the cohort.

Younger children have access to a main playroom and anti-room which is used for naps in the early afternoon, in addition to our two outdoor play spaces the younger children also have access to a sheltered patio area.

The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 5.45pm, 51 weeks of the year. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 44 children aged 2 years – school age may attend the nursery at any one time. Sandcastles Nursery offers both full and part-time attendance options. The nursery provides funded early education for children aged two, three and four years. At Sandcastles children move freely between indoor continuous provision areas. The nursery has experience of supporting children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Eight members of staff work directly with the children, all of whom hold early years qualifications to at least Level 3. Our director (Helen O) and our PreSchool lead (Helen B) both hold Early Years Professional/Teacher Status (level 6).

The nursery completed the 'Lancashire Quality award' in 2012 and continues to engage in relevant continuous development. Ofsted last inspected Sandcastles in February 2019 and judged us as 'Good'. We work hard to maintain and extend our high standards. In 2024 Lancashire Quality Improvement Team invited us to join their Lead Practice group demonstrating high quality practice across Lancashire.

AIMS of our Nursery:

To work in partnership with families and carers to:

- provide a stimulating and supportive environment where children's individual needs and abilities are recognised and all are encouraged to develop to their full potential
- provide opportunities for development in all areas of learning
- encourage each child towards taking pleasure in their own learning, development and health, as they grow □ encourage self-esteem, self-awareness and self-confidence
- encourage children to form positive relationships and to communicate effectively with other children and adults
- encourage respect for other people's feelings, values, beliefs and property
- encourage children to participate fully in nursery as well as family life
- celebrate achievement and effort at all levels and in all areas

Accessibility and Inclusion

Sandcastles is situated in a converted Art Deco detached house on Morecambe promenade as such our building provides some limitations and challenges. The nursery has sole use of the ground floor of the building. There are three steps to the PreSchool entrance door and two steps into our Explorers (2-3.5yrs) door. Outdoors our older children access the lower garden along a sloped route with a deep step, our younger children descend a flight of tiled steps into the lower garden play area. Families use our loop driveway for drop off and collection of children. We have previously provided nursery care and education for pre-walking children and those using walking frames and aids. We often have children attending Sandcastles who are 'less steady on their feet' where relevant we work with guidance from Longlands Child Development Physiotherapists to ensure that we offer safe challenges tailored to individual children. Both our in and outdoor areas offer a range of textured flooring surfaces with the aim of engaging children's proprioception, vestibular and motor development. Being an inclusive setting on occasion the needs of individual children may clash, where this is the case we work with parents to design attendance plans which allow us to meet the needs of all children.

Our policies and procedures are available to all parents as hard copy (please request) we are also able to provide USB copies of documents allowing parents the opportunity to use their home computer to view / audio describe our policies and procedures; over time we aim to upload our core policies and procedures to our website giving greater access to translation and accessibility apps. Please note as a small PVI setting we try to evolve our practices and policies to best meet the needs of our current families and staff. We work in partnerships with our local children's centres (now called family hubs) and LCC SEND team, we may be able to offer some language translation services / request translator support for Educational Psychology / SEND specialist teacher / Statutory Assessment / EHCP meetings with parents. We are dyslexia aware and provide tailored communication for parents who request dyslexia support (coloured paper, verbal explanations etc).

Our rooms have high ceilings, pale painted walls and lots of natural light. Our furniture and resources are free standing and can be rearranged to suit the needs of individual children or groups. We use photo prompts, symbols and logo signs to help children start to 'read' meaning in images and remember the steps within routine events – eg hand washing. Recently we installed 'acoustic sound clouds' in one of our PreSchool playrooms to reduce echo – we have found this very effective.

Sandcastles is always willing to make reasonable adjustments as needed where possible – please talk to us about your family's needs. Sometimes adjustments take time so please share your needs in advance.

Sandcastles is acutely aware of the emotional strain of parenting children with additional needs, we are here to support you to support your child. Our SENDco will also make time to discuss your needs as a parent.

Identification and Early Intervention

Parents are their children's first and most enduring educator – you are the authority on your own child.

When children join Sandcastles parents will engage in a telephone meeting with their key person, discussing their child's preferences, skills and development. This 'All about me' discussion forms the foundation of the challenges, activities and support children are offered in their first weeks and months as we get to know them. You and your child's key person will collate and share all information and development notes regarding your child in their online learning journal. Each post in your child's online journal invites you to comment, when your child leaves Sandcastles you can download their online journal to keep.

Sandcastles uses a range of information to ensure we are well informed about each child's progress;

- Communication & language screening (WellComm)
- Early Years Foundation Stage documents describing typical development – Development Matters and Birth to Five publications
- Practitioner observation and assessment
- Information from parents/carers
- NHS Health visitor 2 year progress review
- Sandcastles Progress check at age 2-3 years, your child's key person will review your child's learning & development and meet with you to discuss their progress and targets

Where practitioners or parents have worries regarding any child's progress we will work in partnership with parents to promote children's emerging skills and support parents to seek specialist advice.

Sandcastles prepares 'request for guidance', 'referral forms', 'learning & progress summary' documents to support parents in seeking specialist advice. Sandcastles adheres to the SEND Code of Practice [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK](#) and all subsequent guidance and legislation.

Support for individual children is tailored to reflect their emerging skills, areas for development and the advice of specialists and parents. Support plans are designed during 'Targeted Learning Plan' meetings which parents attend. Our TLP's are short term and focus on defining challenges and progress we are keen to achieve within a half term. Where children struggle to achieve progress despite TLP support we work with parents to seek further specialist advice and guidance.

Whilst parents guide our support and intervention plans we do have a professional obligation to ensure that children have access to health, education and medical care as such we discourage parents from opting out of specialist services and advice.

Sandcastles has experience of partnership working with

Speech and Language Therapists

Occupational Therapists

Health Visitors

Social Workers

General Practitioners

Visual/Hearing Impairment specialist teachers

Educational Psychologists

Physiotherapists

Portage Workers

Paediatricians

SEN Inclusion Teachers

Family Hub team

Teaching and Learning Part 1

– Practitioners and Practice

At Sandcastles all teaching and learning is routed in play, we believe that: Young children develop and learn best through play and first-hand experiences with the companionship of other children and of interested and supportive adults.

All aspects of development and learning in young children are interlinked, and children are born with brains and bodies which are ready to learn and move in increasingly complex and co-ordinated ways, given favourable conditions. Sandcastles offers such favourable conditions: space, freedom with responsibility, autonomy with comradeship, and companionable adults who have understanding of how children develop and learn, who can share in new discoveries, sympathise with setbacks and upsets, and prepare the nursery inside and outside for each child's interests and needs. In recent years evidence guides us to recognise the sometimes previously over looked foundation of physical development with young children's bodies needing to experience and explore movement ahead of later developing skills for stillness.

Play is neither easy to plan for, nor simple to support. Sandcastles plans using a flexible range of 'in the moment', weekly, seasonal and annual planning to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Each child will experience our curriculum uniquely. We provide free flow continuous provision so empowering children to choose their 'subject' time table each day. With adult support (observation, reflection, planning) children can experience all areas of learning within any single activity area. Different planning formats are used to support and inspire different skills – e.g. planning a group session to teach continence is inappropriate, whilst planning a session practising hand washing may be effective.

Children have very different temperaments. Some children need energetic, questioning and communicative adults in order to encourage them to explore and experiment. But more outgoing children can have their development hindered by this type of approach, experiencing it as interfering. All children need adults who listen attentively, develop conversation, and think out loud together with them.

Children's powerful learning mechanisms mean that a lot of their development happens through playing and experimenting.

For example, through repeated experiences of playing with water and other liquids, children move from simple actions (e.g. a baby flicking water with her fingers) to more complex, co-ordinated actions (e.g. a four year old carefully pouring water from one container into another and then carrying the container over to the sand and mixing the two substances together to make the best consistency of sand to build castles with). Through repeating and practising these physical actions and experiments, children develop concepts about shape, space, and the properties of substances. At Sandcastles we plan and review the play resources and opportunities which we offer to children.

The development of language gives children an additional and immensely powerful mechanism for organising experiences and learning. Through conversation with adults and other children, children are increasingly able to distance themselves from what they are doing and reflect on it, or see another point of view. When adults engage with children co-operatively (e.g. thinking over a problem together; guiding a child by discussion through a process like cooking a cake which the child could not do independently), they are providing a very powerful structure to support children's learning.

The Key Person role:

At Sandcastles individual children's progress is monitored from their settling in visit to leaving by their key person who uses photos, notes, examples of work and transcriptions to record development highlights. Key people also prepare 2-3 year progress checks and screen children's developing communication skills using WellComm.

Whilst key people are responsible for admin the principle purpose of a key person system is to create a nurturing relationship with you and your child. Children cannot learn or take risks unless they feel safe and supported. When assigning key people we take into account existing staff-family relationships, the sessions that the child attends, the hours the team member works and the compatibility between the child, parent/carer and the team member.

What does the Key Person approach role mean:

For the baby or young child

The key person makes sure that, within the day-to-day demands of the setting, each child for whom they have special responsibility feels individual, cherished and thought about while they are away from home.

For the parents and close carers at home

The key person ensures they build a personal relationship with individual children. There are many benefits of this approach including reassuring parents that their child is known and cared for by a particular staff member, the approach also provides an opportunity for parents to liaise and collaborate with someone else who loves their child.

The key person approach does not mean that attachments with parents will be undermined. In fact, this works the other way round: attachments at home and in the early years setting can support each other.

The key person approach does not mean that the key person should be with their key children all the time. Children need, and benefit from, interactions with other adults and children in the early years setting. Children often choose who they want to be attached to and these choices should be respected.

Teaching and Learning Part 2

- Provision & Resources

At Sandcastles our practitioners are each allocated administration time to plan, assess and reflect on their key children's progress. Our manager is supernumerary which allows our team more opportunities to individualise our interactions with children and attend meetings with specialists and parents.

Our greatest 'resource' is our staff expertise as such our manager discusses children's needs and staff confidence with key people during our regular professional development 'supervision' sessions.

All nursery settings within Lancashire receive a small volume of funding within their Early Years Free Entitlement Funding, this component provides a small budget to support settings to identify and meet children's needs ahead of applying for specific SEND funding. In addition to directly supporting children's attendance we have previously allocated this funding to pay for: our subscription to WellComm data management, team training, offering individual children extended and individual inductions and liaising with previous nursery settings when children transition to Sandcastles.

Development Reviews

Sandcastles operates an open door policy with our EYP/Director, SENDco and team of Nursery Practitioners available to discuss your child each day. We welcome family involvement and aim to work in partnership with parents and carers in the care and education of children.

Following on from your stay and play visit, your key person will give you a brief list of typical development milestones which we will ask you to take home and note on which skills your child has fully mastered. This helps us to match our challenges to your child's ability making activities engaging and exciting but achievable.

On your child's first day at Sandcastles we will share photos of what they have been enjoying and exploring (young children often need visual prompts to jog their memory to allow them to describe their day). Your child's online journal will include team photos and brief bios of our practitioners to help both you and your child get to know us. We love to see families adding information and photos from home to their child's online journal. Notes, photos and videos from home are very valuable to us as they both support us to build a relationship with your child and document your child's development and interests.

Your child's Health Visitor will complete a Healthy child progress check when your child is aged around 27 months old. Your Health Visitor will contact you directly to schedule this check. Please let us know when your child's HV review is scheduled and share any feedback with us. Health Visitors are always welcome to visit Sandcastles – please extend our invitation to yours if you feel this might be beneficial.

At Sandcastles your child's key person will also review your child's development and will invite parents into nursery to talk through their children's development following their first term in nursery, we call this discussion our '2 year old Progress check'. We produce a short document to record our discussion. Sandcastles screens children's communication skills regularly using the WellComm programme this screening along with our professional judgements inform our discussions at this 'check'. Where our discussions highlight children needing additional support we then collaborate with parents to design support and discuss if specialist guidance / Targeted Learning Plans might be required to support your child more intensively.

For children requiring 'Targeted Learning Plans' to more specifically describe support and intervention within Sandcastles we will host regular (half termly) review meetings with you here at nursery. These meetings provide an opportunity for our team and you to share progress and define new support plans and targets for the coming 6-9 weeks. Sandcastles staff are also available to attend or host 'Team around the Family' meetings / engage with other professionals supporting your child where necessary. For children with 'SEND plans' or 'Education, Health and Care Plans' Sandcastles follows the statutory process.

Transitions

Identified 'transitions' within Sandcastles:

Joining/leaving nursery	Promotion to PreSchool
Daily arrival & departure	Changing attendance
Within the day: clubs / playing out / lunch etc	Parent routine changes – e.g. new job
Changes in family home life – new baby / divorce / moving / sibling starting school	

*Whilst most children will transition to a new key person on promotion to PreSchool we plan ahead and overlap key people and provide an extensive programmes of visits to deliver a seamless transition.

Often, transitions involve a process of change that requires children to adapt their thoughts, feelings and behaviours to meet new expectations. Where possible we talk to children making them aware of upcoming transitions and establish predictable routines to help transitions move from being a challenge to a marker of a step within their nursery journey / day.

Aims: We want our children to experience a smooth educational and emotional transition into, through and out from nursery. This will support children to make the best all round progress.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion: Children and parents are actively involved in the process and their perceptions about transition are explored and valued. Building relationships with children and families helps parents to share confidences and concerns with us earlier.

Principles that underpin the policy

Transitions are not overlooked or left to chance, but thought about and planned in advance.

Effective transition takes time and is a process rather than an event. Transition is about the setting fitting the child, not the child fitting the setting.

Children's emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement should be monitored through transition periods. Children should ideally enjoy the transition process. Transitions should motivate and challenge children. Styles of teaching and learning should meet the needs of children and not pre-conceived notions of what is or is not appropriate or 'next'. Children and parents are individuals; our policies and practices must offer flexibility to be responsive.

Key points:

- We are honest and earn children's trust – we ask parents not to sneak off but to say goodbye even if this is upsetting for children.
- We are honest and earn parent's trust – if your child is struggling, we will explain this to you and together design support to help your child through their transition.
- We see our role extending through children's first half term at school – equipping your child for the challenges of school and ensuring school understands your child is a key part of our role.

Science behind our approach to Transitions - University of Bath. Dr Julie

Turner-Cobb 2005 □

- Stress hormone Cortisol was found to rise 3 months prior to starting school
- Cortisol levels increased further as children join primary school.
- Within 6 months of starting school children had adapted well and Cortisol levels were reduced to lower than the 3 month prior to school level.
- Children observed as less socially interactive at school were not necessarily more anxious but rather used removing themselves from social situations as a coping mechanism.
- Children with lower morning cortisol levels were better able to focus their attention and inhibit impulsive behaviour.
- Extended periods of high cortisol impact brain physiology

We feel the above might likely extrapolate to younger children with them potentially experiencing 'stress' when joining a nursery setting or moving rooms within a setting.

Examples of how Sandcastles supports transitions:

	Joining Sandcastles	Becoming a PreSchool	Starting school	New key person
All children	<p>Manager / Director hosting 1:1 prospective family tours</p> <p>Hosting a minimum of 1 settling in visit. Scheduling additional visits as best suits child and family.</p> <p>Key Person 'All about me' phone discussion.</p> <p>Review Learning journey from previous settings.</p> <p>We are happy to visit your family at home.</p> <p><u>Returning following 4+wks absence:</u> Parent – practitioner 'chat' & potentially stay & play.</p>	<p>Children encouraged to role play being BIG.</p> <p>We position mirrors and verbally praise – encourage children to acknowledge and admire their progression.</p> <p>We talk about the progression within reach of life: Baby - Explorers – PreSchool – School.</p> <p>We talk about PreSchool attitudes and characteristics (trying hard, finding out, helping others, team work) we draw attention to positive actions and encourage children to feel pride and confidence.</p>	<p>Continuation of Baby- Explorer - PreSchool– children start talking about going to school after summer..</p> <p>School group visual display.</p> <p>Teachers invited into nursery.</p> <p>Children share learning journeys with teachers (either at nursery / take to school).</p> <p>We share our experience of children and parent's interest, learning styles & expertise with teachers.</p> <p>We remind parents of local school events – PTA BBQ's & Visit days etc. We introduce parents to one another as relevant.</p> <p>We introduce children to uniforms, food trays, school environment / staff.</p> <p>Top tips parents leaflets / Info Workshop sessions / Digital info groups etc</p> <p>Transition to school documents prepared and shared with parents and teachers late in Summer term.</p>	<p>Transition process ideally moves slowly.</p> <p>Parents and carers introduced to new key person.</p> <p>Where possible child will choose new key person/ have already established relationship. Parents will be invited to voice any preference.</p>

Personalised support	<p>Practitioners are able to join child at SEN playgroups before child joins Sandcastles.</p> <p>Family member invited to accompany child for initial sessions / first term.</p> <p>Practitioners visiting family at home.</p> <p>Staff available to attend specialist training individual to child. Staff available to attend multi-disciplinary meetings in advance of child joining.</p>	<i>As relevant to individual child.....</i>	<p>We will contribute / host individual SEN transition to school meetings & complete paperwork as appropriate / required.</p> <p>Practitioners available to visit school/potential school – environment / experiences alignment.</p> <p>Tailored support to build foundation of success – communication skills and social / emotion skill.</p>	<p>Key person photo & biography shared with family.</p> <p>Child may be offered opportunity to choose own new person – experience and availability influences allocation.</p> <p>Opportunity to spend extended time with new key person.</p>
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At Sandcastles we encourage parents to be involved by:

- Welcoming parents into nursery at home time each day.
- Welcoming parents into nursery whenever they have a query or concern. We aim to offer meetings the same day that parents raise any concerns.
- Inviting parents to join us for fun events – fire engine / Wreath making / guests at lunchtime etc.
- Newsletters, photos, memo notes to inform parents of curriculum coverage.
- Encouraging parents/carers and families to come in and share their skills – dentist, singer, vet.

Further Reference

- Seamless Transition: Supporting continuity in young people’s learning, Ref DFES – 0267 – 2006
 - Every Parent Matters, Ref LKAW/2007
 - Progress Matters – Reviewing and enhancing children’s development, Ref. 00217 – 2009BKT-EN
 - The Impact of Parental Involvement on Children’s Education, Ref DCSF – 00924 - 2008
- www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk
- www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications

Staff Training

Sandcastles currently employs 8 Nursery Practitioners who work as key people to named groups of children. All of our 8 staff are qualified to at least level 3 (NNEB or equivalent) and continue to attend additional training / in house coaching / online tutorials throughout their career.

Our SENDco / Manager hold termly meetings with key people where we discuss individual children’s progress and our intervention and support plans and our ongoing training needs.

Our SENDco attends termly LCC SENDco training along with Educational Psychology service led CPD. Rebecca Watson attends termly Language Lead networking. Helen Baines is booked to attend Gersalt S&L training in 2025.

Sandcastles Staff with Additional Responsibilities

All Sandcastles staff keep their skills updated with regular training. Named staff take responsibility for specialist roles within our nursery. Please see the 'our team' section of our website for our full list of specialist roles. <http://www.nurserymorecambe.co.uk/our-team.php>

Child Protection & Safeguarding: Director, Manager & Deputy

Special Needs Co-Ordinators: Director and Manager

Behaviour Management: Director and Manager

Equality Named Co-Ordinator: Kat Hilton & Director and Manager

Health & Safety: Director and Manager & Deputy

Director: Helen O'Hagan, Manager: Judith Stewart, Deputy: Rebecca Watson.

Further Information

Queries and questions:

If parents or prospective parents/carers have any queries, comments or suggestions please phone Helen O'Hagan on 01524 831932 or contact us via our website. <http://www.nursery-morecambe.co.uk/contact-us.php>

Choosing a nursery: We are happy to discuss your child's needs and your ambitions many months in advance of your child joining Sandcastles. Touring our nursery does not imply any obligation for you to sign up to Sandcastles – we are happy to discuss how we might theoretically provide for your child's individual needs. Every child is different and whilst this document will hopefully have helped to inform you it cannot replace the value of visiting our nursery with your child to discuss your needs in detail.

Working in partnership with Parents/Carers: Sandcastles families have daily access to our director / manager and our team of nursery practitioners. Your child will have a named 'key person' who is your first port of call for all questions and queries. Staff are available to share information at the start or end of each child's day, however our priority is the welfare and interests of children in our care as such we aim to keep adult conversations brief. Whenever you wish to have a longer chat with your child's key person or Director / Manager / SENDco please either phone us or mention this as you drop your child off in the morning and we will make time to meet with you the same day / same week.

If you are worried about your child's progress: Please share your worries with us, you know your child best. It is not possible for our small team to effectively deliver expertise in every field however we are well equipped to guide you towards the most relevant help and professional advice where needed e.g. speech therapists, educational psychologists, physiotherapists, dieticians etc.

We welcome feedback, if you feel you need to **compliment or challenge our conduct** please find our complaint management process and our anonymous feedback facility at <http://www.nursery-morecambe.co.uk/feedback.php>

Document prepared by Helen O'Hagan

Document revised: 03/06/2024

Next review due 2027

