

Rainbow Hands Alternative Provision Prospectus





Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Rainbow Hands.

Whether you're a parent, carer, school, Local Authority or another professional, I appreciate that choosing the right support for a child is an important decision.

Rainbow Hands was created to provide a different kind of support for children who need a different approach. Every child is unique, and I believe they deserve to be understood as individuals rather than defined by a diagnosis or expected to fit into a particular way of learning.

My approach is built around trust, relationships and getting to know each child. By understanding what motivates them, what they enjoy and what they find challenging, I can create opportunities that help them feel safe, develop confidence and make meaningful progress.

This handbook has been designed to give you a clear understanding of who Rainbow Hands is, how I work and what you can expect when working with me. I hope it answers your questions and gives you confidence that every decision is made with the child's best interests at heart.

Thank you for taking the time to read it.

I look forward to supporting you and your family.

Jodie Jackson

Director

Rainbow Hands Respite and Childcare Services Ltd



Section 1 – About Rainbow Hands

Care you can trust. Support they deserve.

Rainbow Hands Respite and Childcare Services Ltd provides specialist childcare, respite care, advocacy and Alternative Provision for children and young people aged 0 to 17 years with additional needs, disabilities and complex needs.

Every child is different. They each have their own strengths, interests, personality and way of learning. At Rainbow Hands, we believe support should reflect that. Rather than expecting children to fit into a particular environment or way of learning, we adapt our approach to meet the individual child.

Our aim is simple: to provide a safe, nurturing environment where children feel understood, respected and supported to develop confidence, independence and new skills at their own pace.

Whether a child attends for respite care, Alternative Provision or community support, relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We take the time to get to know each child, understand what matters to them and create opportunities that allow them to experience success in ways that are meaningful to them.

We work closely with families, schools, Local Authorities and other professionals to provide consistent, personalised support that reflects each child's individual needs. We understand that progress looks different for every child and that success is not always measured by academic achievement. Sometimes the biggest step forward is feeling confident enough to try something new, communicate a need or simply walk through the door with a smile.

Our Alternative Provision has been developed for children who need a different approach to education. Learning is personalised, flexible and built around each child's interests, communication style and individual outcomes. We don't try to recreate a classroom.

Instead, we create opportunities for children to learn through everyday experiences, helping them build confidence, develop new skills and enjoy learning again.

Alongside Alternative Provision, Rainbow Hands provides specialist respite care and practical support for families, recognising the importance of giving children opportunities to develop independence while also providing parents and carers with the reassurance and support they deserve.

Everything we do is guided by one simple belief: every child deserves to feel safe, valued and understood, and every family deserves support they can trust.

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Our Vision

To provide a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where every child feels understood, valued and supported to develop confidence, independence and lifelong skills through personalised care and meaningful learning.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide high quality, child centred support that promotes confidence, independence, emotional wellbeing and a positive relationship with learning. By working in partnership with families and professionals, we create opportunities that help every child make meaningful progress in a way that reflects their individual strengths, needs and aspirations.

Our Values

Relationships First

We believe meaningful progress starts with trust. By taking the time to build positive relationships, children feel safe, confident and ready to learn.

Every Child is an Individual

No two children are the same. We take the time to understand each child's strengths, interests, communication style and support needs so that every session is tailored to them.

Respect

Every child deserves to be listened to, valued and treated with kindness. We celebrate individuality and recognise that every child experiences the world in their own way.

Working Together

The best outcomes are achieved when families and professionals work together. We value honest communication and believe that parents and carers are the experts on their own child.

Celebrating Progress

Progress isn't always measured by academic achievement. Learning a new skill, trying something different, communicating a need or growing in confidence are all important milestones worth celebrating.

Continuous Development

We are committed to continually developing our knowledge, skills and practice to ensure the children and families we support receive the highest quality care and education.



What We Believe

At Rainbow Hands, we believe children learn best when they feel safe, understood and supported.

We believe learning happens everywhere, not just at a table.

We believe every behaviour is a form of communication.

We believe relationships come before expectations.

We believe progress looks different for every child.

Most importantly, we believe every child deserves the opportunity to learn in a way that works for them.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Children won't remember every activity they completed, but they will remember how the people around them made them feel. When a child feels safe, understood and valued, learning naturally follows."



Section 2

Meet Jodie

Hello, I'm Jodie, the founder and Director of Rainbow Hands Respite and Childcare Services Ltd.

Thank you for taking the time to learn a little more about me and the journey behind Rainbow Hands.

Working with children has always been something I have been passionate about. Throughout my career I have supported children and families with a wide range of additional needs, disabilities and complex situations. Over the years, I found myself naturally drawn towards children who needed a different approach. Children who didn't quite fit into the services available to them, who needed more time, greater understanding and someone willing to see beyond the behaviour.

Time and time again I met families who felt exhausted from having to explain their child's needs, fight for support or hear what their child couldn't do. I wanted to create something different. A place where children are seen for who they are, where families feel listened to and where support is built around the individual rather than expecting them to fit into a service.

That is how Rainbow Hands began.

As Director, I continue to work directly with every child and family I support. Building trusting relationships is one of the most important parts of my role. Taking the time to understand each child's personality, interests, communication style and individual needs allows me to provide support that is genuinely meaningful and tailored specifically to them. No two children are ever the same, and I believe that should be reflected in the support they receive. One child may communicate through words, another through gestures, behaviour or play. One child may learn best while sitting quietly with a book, while another may learn through movement, building, exploring or spending time outdoors. There is no right or wrong way to learn, only the right approach for each individual child.

I strongly believe that behaviour is a form of communication. Rather than asking, "How do we stop this behaviour?" I prefer to ask, "What is this child trying to tell us?" That question has shaped the way I work throughout my career and continues to guide every session at Rainbow Hands.

I also believe that parents and carers are the experts on their own child. No report, qualification or assessment can replace the knowledge that families have. By listening, working together and sharing ideas, we can provide children with consistent support that helps them feel safe, confident and understood wherever they are.



Learning has never stopped for me either. I regularly undertake additional training and professional development to ensure my knowledge continues to grow alongside the children and families I support. Education, legislation and best practice are always evolving, and I believe it is my responsibility to continue learning so I can provide the highest quality support possible.

Rainbow Hands is far more than a business to me. It is something I have built from the ground up with one simple goal: to provide care that families can trust and support that every child deserves.

Over time, my role has grown beyond working directly with children. I now regularly support families through EHCP reviews, Annual Reviews, meetings with schools and Local Authorities, Personal Budget applications and SEND Tribunal processes. While my focus will always remain on the child, I believe families deserve someone in their corner who understands both the child and the systems around them

A Few Things About Me

Outside of Rainbow Hands, I'm also a wife and mum to four children.

Like many of the families I support, my own experiences have shaped the way I work. One of my children is autistic with a Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) profile and is also suspected to have ADHD. Navigating education, appointments, assessments and everyday life has given me a greater understanding of how important it is for families to feel listened to, supported and never judged.

Living both the professional and personal side of SEND has reinforced something I have always believed: there is no one-size-fits-all approach to supporting children. Every child deserves to be understood as an individual, and every family deserves to feel heard.

When I'm not working, you'll usually find me spending time with my family, continuing my professional development or thinking of new ideas to improve Rainbow Hands. I genuinely love what I do and consider it a privilege to be trusted by families to support their children during some of the most important moments in their lives.

My Promise

When you choose Rainbow Hands, you can expect someone who will:

- Take the time to get to know your child.
- Listen to your concerns and value your knowledge and experience.
- Work alongside you, not just for you.
- Celebrate every achievement, no matter how big or small.
- Continue developing my own knowledge and skills to provide the best possible support.

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- Always put your child's wellbeing, dignity and individual needs at the heart of every decision.

Above all, I promise to treat every child with the same patience, kindness and respect that I would want for my own children.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"The greatest lessons I've learnt haven't all come from training courses or qualifications. Many have come from the children and families I've had the privilege of supporting, including my own."



Section 3

What Makes Rainbow Hands Different

Every child deserves the opportunity to learn, but not every child learns in the same way. Many of the children referred to Rainbow Hands have already experienced challenges within education. Some have become overwhelmed by busy environments, others have developed significant anxiety around school, and many have spent months or even years trying to fit into systems that simply weren't designed around their individual needs.

At Rainbow Hands, we do things differently.

Rather than expecting children to adapt to us, we adapt to them.

We recognise that every child arrives with their own strengths, interests, communication style and experiences. By taking the time to understand each child as an individual, we are able to create support that feels achievable, meaningful and enjoyable.

Relationships come before expectations.

Children cannot be expected to learn when they feel anxious, overwhelmed or misunderstood. Before we ask a child to engage in learning, we focus on building trust, understanding what makes them feel safe and creating an environment where they feel comfortable enough to explore, communicate and take positive risks.

Learning looks different here.

Some children may choose to read a favourite book.

Others may practise maths while shopping.

Cooking can become a lesson in measuring, sequencing and following instructions.

Building a train track can develop communication, problem solving and imaginative play.

Walking through the woods can lead to conversations about nature, science and the environment.

Every experience has the potential to become a learning opportunity.

We don't measure success by how closely a child follows a traditional school day.

We measure success by the confidence they build, the skills they develop and the progress they make from their own starting point.

What You Can Expect from Rainbow Hands

One Child at a Time

Every session is delivered on a one to one basis.

This allows support to be personalised throughout the day, adapting to the child's communication, emotional regulation, sensory needs and interests without the pressures of a busy classroom.

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Relationships Before Learning

We believe children learn best when they feel safe, understood and valued. Building trusting relationships takes time, but those relationships form the foundation for meaningful progress.

Learning Through Everyday Experiences

Education doesn't only happen around a table. Children learn through cooking, exploring, shopping, reading signs in the community, solving problems, imaginative play and everyday conversations. Learning is woven naturally into activities that feel meaningful to the child.

Flexibility

No two days are ever exactly the same. Some days a child is ready to take on new challenges. Other days they simply need support to regulate before learning can begin. Our sessions remain flexible because children don't arrive with the same energy, emotions or experiences every day.

Looking Beyond Behaviour

Behaviour tells us something. Rather than focusing on stopping behaviour, we focus on understanding it. By recognising the communication behind behaviour, we can provide support that reduces anxiety and helps children feel understood.

Celebrating Progress

Progress isn't always measured by academic outcomes.

Sometimes success is:

- Trying a new activity.
- Asking for help.
- Waiting patiently.
- Visiting a new place.
- Reading a road sign.
- Tasting a new food.
- Playing alongside another child.
- Feeling confident enough to leave the house.

Every achievement matters.



More Than Alternative Provision

Rainbow Hands offers far more than educational sessions.

Families benefit from someone who understands SEND, works closely with professionals and recognises how important consistency is across every environment.

Support may include communication with schools, attendance at meetings, written reports, progress monitoring and contributions towards EHCP reviews, Personal Budget applications and other professional processes where appropriate.

Our aim is not simply to provide sessions.

Our aim is to provide the right support, at the right time, in a way that genuinely makes a difference.

The Rainbow Hands Difference

At Rainbow Hands, children are never expected to fit into a programme.

The programme is built around the child.

Every decision begins with one simple question:

"What does this child need today to feel safe enough to learn?"

When we answer that question well, confidence grows, communication develops, independence increases and learning follows naturally.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Some of the biggest achievements aren't measured in certificates or grades. They're measured in smiles, confidence, trust and the moment a child realises they can do something they never thought possible."

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Section 4

Our Approach

Every child who comes to Rainbow Hands brings their own experiences, strengths, interests and challenges. There is no single approach that works for every child, which is why every programme of support is tailored to the individual.

Rather than asking children to fit into a particular way of learning, we take the time to understand how they learn best and adapt our approach accordingly.

Support is always built around the child, not the diagnosis.

Relationships First

Everything begins with building trust.

Many of the children who attend Rainbow Hands have experienced environments where they have felt overwhelmed, misunderstood or unable to succeed. Before expecting a child to engage in learning, we focus on building a positive relationship where they feel safe, respected and accepted.

Trust cannot be rushed. By allowing relationships to develop naturally, children become more confident, communicate more openly and are more willing to explore new experiences.

Child Centred Support

No two children receive exactly the same support.

Every session is adapted to reflect the child's:

- Interests
- Strengths
- Communication style
- Sensory profile
- Emotional presentation
- Individual outcomes

This flexible approach allows support to remain meaningful and responsive to the child's needs on that particular day.

Learning Through Interests

Children learn best when they are engaged.

By building activities around a child's interests, learning becomes more enjoyable, motivating and meaningful.



Whether that interest is vehicles, books, dinosaurs, animals, cooking, technology or nature, those interests become opportunities to develop communication, literacy, numeracy, problem solving, independence and confidence.

Children are far more likely to engage when learning feels relevant to them.

Regulation Before Expectation

Emotional regulation is at the heart of everything we do.

A child who feels anxious, overwhelmed or distressed cannot be expected to engage in meaningful learning.

Rather than increasing demands during these moments, we first support the child to regulate using strategies that reflect their individual needs.

Once they feel safe and emotionally available, learning can begin naturally.

Every Behaviour Has Meaning

Behaviour is one way children communicate.

Rather than focusing on stopping behaviour, we take time to understand what may be causing it.

Children may communicate through behaviour because they are overwhelmed, anxious, unable to express themselves, experiencing sensory discomfort or trying to meet a need they cannot yet explain.

By understanding the reason behind the behaviour, we can provide support that helps reduce anxiety and build more effective ways of communicating.

Learning Happens Everywhere

Education is not limited to worksheets or classroom activities.

Some of the most valuable learning happens during everyday experiences.

Preparing lunch develops independence.

Shopping develops maths and communication.

Reading signs develops literacy.

Visiting the park develops confidence, problem solving and social understanding.

Conversations during a walk develop language.

Everyday experiences provide opportunities to develop skills that children will use throughout their lives.

Celebrating Individual Progress

Progress looks different for every child.



For one child, progress may be reading a new word.
For another, it may be asking for help instead of becoming overwhelmed.
It could be trying a new activity, tolerating a different environment, communicating a choice or building enough confidence to join an activity they previously avoided.
Every achievement matters because every step forward builds towards greater confidence, independence and future success.

Working Together

Children achieve the best outcomes when everyone works together.
Parents and carers know their child better than anyone else. Schools, therapists and other professionals all bring valuable knowledge and experience.
By working in partnership and sharing information, we can provide children with consistent support across every environment.
We believe that listening to one another and working towards shared goals gives children the greatest opportunity to make meaningful progress.

Continuous Reflection

Every session provides an opportunity to learn.
Detailed observations help us understand what has worked well, identify emerging needs and plan future support.
Our approach is constantly evolving because children grow, develop and change over time.
We regularly reflect on our practice and continue developing our knowledge to ensure every child receives the highest quality support possible.

Our Promise

Every decision we make begins with one question:
"What does this child need today?"
The answer may look different every day, and that's exactly as it should be.
By listening, observing and adapting our approach, we provide support that helps children feel safe, develop confidence and continue making meaningful progress in a way that works for them.

Rainbow Hands Thought

*"Some children need more time. Some need more space. Some need a different approach.
None of those things change their potential."*



Section 5

Who We Support

Every child is unique, and there is no single profile of a child who attends Rainbow Hands. Some children join us because school has become overwhelming. Others are waiting for the right educational placement, require a more personalised approach to learning or need additional support outside of school. Some attend for respite care, while others access Alternative Provision as part of their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), Section 19 provision or a Personal Budget.

What they all have in common is the need for support that is built around them as an individual.

Rainbow Hands supports children and young people aged 0 to 17 years with a wide range of additional needs, disabilities and complex needs.

Support is always tailored to the individual child rather than their diagnosis, recognising that two children with the same diagnosis may have completely different strengths, interests and support needs.

Children We Commonly Support

Rainbow Hands may be suitable for children and young people who:

- Are autistic.
- Have ADHD or attention and executive functioning differences.
- Have learning disabilities.
- Have developmental delay.
- Have speech, language and communication needs.
- Have sensory processing differences.
- Experience anxiety or emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA).
- Have experienced trauma or adverse childhood experiences.
- Have physical disabilities or medical needs.
- Require support with emotional regulation.
- Need help developing independence and everyday life skills.
- Benefit from consistent one to one support.
- Learn more successfully outside of a traditional classroom environment.

Alternative Provision

Rainbow Hands can provide Alternative Provision for children who:

- Are unable to access mainstream education.
- Are awaiting a specialist school placement.

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- Require interim educational provision.
- Need a gradual transition back into education.
- Require Education Other Than At School (EOTAS).
- Require provision under Section 19 of the Education Act.
- Access support through an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- Receive funding through a Personal Budget.
- Require a highly personalised educational programme.

Every referral is carefully considered to ensure Rainbow Hands can safely meet the child's needs and provide appropriate support.

Respite and Childcare

Rainbow Hands also provides specialist respite and childcare for children with additional needs.

Respite offers children opportunities to build confidence, develop independence, access new experiences and enjoy meaningful activities, while giving parents and carers valuable time to rest, recharge or spend time with other family members.

For many families, respite is far more than a break. It is an opportunity for everyone to maintain positive wellbeing and continue enjoying family life.

Partnership Working

Rainbow Hands works alongside:

- Parents and carers.
- Schools and education settings.
- Local Authorities.
- SEND teams.
- Social workers.
- Occupational Therapists.
- Speech and Language Therapists.
- Educational Psychologists.
- CAMHS.
- Paediatricians.
- Other professionals involved in supporting the child.

Working together allows support to remain consistent across every environment and helps ensure the best possible outcomes for each child.



Is Rainbow Hands Right for Every Child?

As much as we would love to support every family that contacts us, the honest answer is no. Choosing the right provision is incredibly important, and part of our responsibility is recognising when another service may be better placed to meet a child's needs.

Before any placement begins, we take the time to understand the child's strengths, needs, interests and current situation. This helps us decide whether Rainbow Hands is the right fit and ensures that every child receives the support that is most appropriate for them.

If we feel another service would better meet a child's needs, we will always be honest and, wherever possible, help signpost families to alternative sources of support.

Our priority has always been finding the right support for the child, whether that is with Rainbow Hands or elsewhere.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"The best outcomes happen when the right child is matched with the right support at the right time. Saying 'no' when we aren't the right provision is just as important as saying 'yes' when we are."



Section 6

Alternative Provision Explained

Alternative Provision is education that takes place outside of a traditional school environment for children who are unable to access, or fully benefit from, mainstream education.

There are many reasons why a child may need Alternative Provision. Some children experience significant anxiety around attending school, while others may be awaiting a specialist placement, require additional support to access learning or need an educational programme that can be delivered in a more personalised way.

At Rainbow Hands, Alternative Provision is built around the individual child. There is no set timetable, no classroom expectation and no one-size-fits-all approach. Every programme is carefully planned around the child's strengths, interests, communication style and identified outcomes.

Our aim is not to replace school.

Our aim is to provide children with opportunities to continue learning in an environment where they feel safe, understood and able to engage.

How Our Alternative Provision Works

Every programme begins by getting to know the child.

We take time to understand their interests, communication style, sensory needs, emotional wellbeing, educational history and the outcomes everyone is working towards.

From there, we create an individual programme that reflects the child's needs and builds on their strengths.

Sessions remain flexible and responsive because we understand that every day is different.

Some days a child may be ready to take on new challenges, while on other days they may need additional support to regulate before learning can begin.

Our approach allows children to experience success without the pressure of trying to fit into an environment that may not currently meet their needs.

Learning Without a Classroom

Learning happens throughout every session.

Some activities are planned in advance, while others develop naturally through the child's interests and curiosity.

Learning may include:

- Reading and literacy.
- Functional maths.

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- Communication and language.
- Science and exploration.
- Cooking and food preparation.
- Shopping and budgeting.
- Community learning.
- Nature and outdoor activities.
- Creative activities.
- Independent living skills.
- Problem solving.
- Emotional literacy.

Children are encouraged to ask questions, make choices, solve problems and develop confidence through meaningful experiences rather than completing activities simply because they have been planned.

Individual Programmes

Every child receives an individual programme of support.

This may include:

- Educational learning.
- Emotional regulation.
- Sensory support.
- Communication development.
- Independence skills.
- Community access.
- Social communication opportunities.
- Preparation for future education where appropriate.

Support is regularly reviewed and adapted as the child's confidence, skills and needs develop.

Working Towards EHCP Outcomes

Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan, every session is planned with their identified outcomes in mind.

Learning opportunities are carefully linked to the provision specified within the EHCP, allowing children to continue making progress towards their individual educational, communication, independence and emotional wellbeing goals.

Detailed observations help demonstrate progress and provide valuable evidence for Annual Reviews, EHCP reviews and other professional meetings.



Flexible Support

Alternative Provision can be commissioned in a variety of ways depending on the child's circumstances.

Support may be funded through:

- Schools.
- Local Authorities.
- Personal Budgets.
- Direct Payments.
- Self-funding.

Provision can also complement existing educational placements where additional support is required outside of school hours.

More Than Education

Alternative Provision is about far more than completing academic work.

For many children, learning begins with feeling safe.

It might start with building trust, developing communication, trying something new or simply believing that they can succeed.

Once those foundations are in place, children become more confident, more independent and more willing to engage with learning.

That journey looks different for every child, and that is exactly how it should be.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Alternative Provision isn't about taking children out of education. It's about finding the environment where education becomes possible again."



Referral



Initial Conversation



Getting to Know the Child



Building Trust



Creating an Individual Programme



Learning Through Everyday Experiences



Observing Progress



Reviewing and Adapting Support



Growing in Confidence and Independence

Section 7

Learning Through Everyday Experiences

Learning happens everywhere.

For many children, sitting at a table with a worksheet is not the best way to learn. It may create anxiety, reduce engagement or simply not reflect how that child learns best.

At Rainbow Hands, learning is built into everyday experiences that feel meaningful, enjoyable and relevant to each child.

Rather than separating education from daily life, we use real experiences to develop skills that children will continue to use throughout childhood and into adulthood.

Our approach encourages curiosity, independence, communication and confidence while ensuring learning remains purposeful and engaging.

Learning Through Interests

Children are naturally more motivated when activities are based around something they enjoy.

Taking time to understand a child's interests allows us to create learning opportunities that feel enjoyable rather than demanding.

For one child this may be trains, vehicles or construction.

For another it may be animals, books, Disney characters, music, nature or technology.

Whatever captures a child's interest can become an opportunity to develop new skills.

By following the child's motivation, learning becomes something they want to be part of rather than something they feel they have to do.

Everyday Activities Become Learning Opportunities

Many everyday experiences naturally support learning.

Preparing lunch can develop:

- Reading.
- Following instructions.
- Sequencing.
- Measuring.
- Fine motor skills.
- Safety awareness.
- Independence.

A visit to the supermarket can develop:

- Functional maths.
- Money skills.



- Communication.
- Problem solving.
- Decision making.
- Road safety.
- Social understanding.

A walk through the community can develop:

- Reading.
- Observation.
- Science.
- Geography.
- Communication.
- Confidence.
- Independence.

Building with Lego or train tracks can develop:

- Creativity.
- Planning.
- Problem solving.
- Turn taking.
- Communication.
- Fine motor skills.
- Imaginative play.

Children often don't realise they are learning because they are busy enjoying the activity.

Child Led Learning

Children are encouraged to take an active role in their own learning.

They are offered opportunities to make choices, solve problems, ask questions and explore their own interests.

This doesn't mean there is no structure.

It means we use the child's motivation to guide learning whilst ensuring activities continue to support agreed outcomes and individual goals.

Children who feel involved in their learning are often more engaged, more confident and more willing to try new experiences.

Developing Independence

Developing independence is just as important as developing academic skills.



Every session provides opportunities for children to build confidence in everyday tasks, including:

- Preparing food.
- Making drinks.
- Tidying away.
- Looking after belongings.
- Making choices.
- Following routines.
- Shopping.
- Using money.
- Travelling safely within the community.
- Solving everyday problems.

These are skills that will continue to support children throughout their lives.

Learning at the Child's Pace

Not every day looks the same.

Some days children are ready to challenge themselves.

Other days they need reassurance, movement or additional regulation before they are ready to engage.

Learning remains flexible because every child arrives with different experiences, emotions and energy levels.

By responding to the child rather than the timetable, we create an environment where success feels achievable.

Looking Beyond Academic Learning

Education is about much more than reading, writing and maths.

Children also need opportunities to develop:

- Confidence.
- Communication.
- Emotional regulation.
- Resilience.
- Independence.
- Curiosity.
- Friendships.
- Problem solving.
- Decision making.

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- Self-esteem.

These skills support children not only within education but throughout everyday life.

Every Achievement Matters

Progress isn't always measured by completing a worksheet or moving up a level.

Sometimes the biggest achievements are:

Walking into a new place without feeling overwhelmed.

Trying a new food.

Reading a sign independently.

Waiting for a turn.

Asking for help.

Joining a game.

Leaving the house.

Smiling more often.

Feeling proud of themselves.

Every one of these achievements builds confidence and creates the foundations for future learning.

At Rainbow Hands, we celebrate every step forward because every child's journey is different.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Children don't stop learning because they're outside a classroom. Sometimes that's where the best learning begins."

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Section 8

Emotional Regulation

At Rainbow Hands, we recognise that emotional regulation is the foundation for learning. Children who feel anxious, overwhelmed or distressed are not choosing to struggle. They are communicating that something feels too difficult, too unpredictable or too much for them in that moment.

Rather than expecting children to push through those feelings, we take the time to understand what they are experiencing and provide the support they need to feel safe again.

Only when a child feels emotionally regulated are they truly ready to learn.

Every Child Regulates Differently

There is no single strategy that works for every child.

Some children need movement.

Some need quiet.

Some need reassurance.

Some need space.

Others may need sensory input, time outdoors or simply someone to sit alongside them without placing any demands.

Getting to know each child means understanding what helps them regulate and recognising the early signs that they may be becoming overwhelmed.

By responding early, we can often prevent situations from escalating and help children return to a place where they feel calm and able to engage.

Regulation Before Expectations

There are times when learning needs to pause.

If a child is becoming overwhelmed, frustrated or anxious, continuing to increase demands is unlikely to be helpful.

Instead, we prioritise helping the child feel safe.

This may involve reducing demands, changing the environment, offering movement, using sensory equipment, spending time outdoors or simply allowing time to recover.

Supporting regulation is never viewed as time away from learning. It is an essential part of the learning process.



Understanding Behaviour

At Rainbow Hands, we don't believe behaviour happens without a reason.

Behaviour is often a child's way of communicating something they cannot yet express with words.

It may tell us they are:

- Feeling anxious.
- Overwhelmed by sensory input.
- Finding communication difficult.
- Tired.
- Frustrated.
- Confused.
- Needing reassurance.

Rather than asking, "How do we stop this behaviour?" we ask, "What is the child trying to tell us?"

Understanding the reason behind behaviour allows us to respond with empathy, consistency and appropriate support.

Co-Regulation

Many children need an adult to help them regulate before they can begin to regulate independently.

This is known as co-regulation.

By remaining calm, predictable and emotionally available, we help children develop the skills they need to recognise and manage their own emotions over time.

Co-regulation is not about fixing a child's emotions.

It is about supporting them through those emotions until they feel safe enough to regain control.

Creating a Safe Environment

Children regulate more successfully when they know what to expect.

Rainbow Hands provides a calm, predictable environment where children are supported without judgement.

We use:

- Consistent routines.
- Clear expectations.
- Visual supports.
- Flexible planning.

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- Calm communication.
- Individual sensory strategies.
- Opportunities for movement and breaks.

Children are never expected to hide their emotions. Instead, they are supported to understand them and develop strategies that work for them.

Celebrating Emotional Growth

Emotional development often happens gradually.

Success may look like:

A child asking for help instead of becoming overwhelmed.

Taking a few deep breaths before continuing an activity.

Recovering more quickly after becoming upset.

Trying something that previously felt impossible.

Recognising how they are feeling.

Accepting support from a trusted adult.

These moments are just as important as academic achievements because they build the confidence children need to continue learning and developing.

Looking to the Future

One of our long-term aims is to help children develop an understanding of themselves.

By recognising what helps them feel calm, what causes them to feel overwhelmed and what strategies work best, children gradually become more confident in managing their own emotions.

This journey takes time, patience and trust, but every step forward is something to celebrate.

At Rainbow Hands, emotional regulation isn't a separate part of the day.

It is woven through everything we do.

What Regulation Can Look Like

Every child regulates differently.

There is no "right" way to regulate.

A child may regulate by...

-  Spending time outdoors
-  Reading a favourite book
-  Listening to music
-  Going for a walk
-  Building with Lego
-  Playing with trains
-  Sitting quietly
-  Cuddling a favourite toy
-  Talking to a trusted adult
-  Moving their body
-  Drawing or colouring
-  Watching bubbles
-  Having a snack or drink
-  Spending time in a quieter environment
-  Rocking or using movement equipment

All of these can help a child feel safe enough to return to learning.

Regulation isn't avoiding learning.

Regulation is preparing the brain for learning.



What Progress Can Look Like

At Rainbow Hands, progress isn't always measured by tests or worksheets.

Sometimes progress looks like...

- ✓ Walking through the front door independently.
- ✓ Trying a new activity.
- ✓ Reading a road sign.
- ✓ Waiting for a turn.
- ✓ Asking for help.
- ✓ Trying a new food.
- ✓ Playing alongside another child.
- ✓ Tolerating a new environment.
- ✓ Using words instead of behaviour.
- ✓ Feeling proud of an achievement.

Every child starts from a different place.

Every step forward matters.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Children don't need someone to control their emotions. They need someone who helps them understand them."



Section 9

Communication

Communication is at the heart of everything we do.

Every child communicates, even if they do not use spoken language. Communication can take many forms, including facial expressions, body language, gestures, signs, sounds, pictures, assistive technology, behaviour and play.

At Rainbow Hands, our role is to understand how each child communicates and to provide opportunities for them to develop confidence in expressing themselves in ways that are meaningful to them.

There is no expectation that every child will communicate in the same way. Instead, we build on their existing strengths while encouraging new skills as they grow in confidence.

Understanding Individual Communication

Every child has their own communication profile.

Some children enjoy conversations and ask endless questions.

Some communicate using single words or short phrases.

Others may use signs, gestures, symbols, visual supports or communication devices.

Some children communicate through their behaviour, showing us when they are happy, anxious, overwhelmed or excited.

Getting to know how a child communicates is one of the first and most important parts of building a successful relationship.

Communication Throughout the Day

Communication isn't limited to planned activities.

Every moment provides an opportunity to encourage interaction, choice making and language development.

This may include:

- Choosing between activities.
- Asking for help.
- Requesting favourite items.
- Talking about interests.
- Sharing experiences.
- Following instructions.
- Solving problems together.
- Making decisions.
- Talking about emotions.

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These natural opportunities often create far more meaningful communication than structured tasks alone.

Supporting Communication

We use a range of strategies depending on the individual child's needs.

These may include:

- Simple, clear language.
- Visual supports.
- Now and Next boards.
- Objects of reference.
- Makaton or other signs where appropriate.
- Gestures and modelling.
- Photographs.
- Written words.
- Choice boards.
- Communication books.
- AAC devices provided by the child or family.

The strategies used are always guided by what works best for the child.

Giving Children Time

Not every child communicates immediately.

Some children need additional time to process information before responding.

At Rainbow Hands, we understand the importance of slowing down, allowing thinking time and avoiding unnecessary pressure.

By giving children the time they need, we create opportunities for more successful communication and reduce feelings of frustration or anxiety.

Listening Is Just as Important

Good communication is not only about speaking.

It is also about listening.

We listen to what children say, but we also pay attention to what they show us through their behaviour, body language, interests and actions.

Understanding those messages helps us adapt our support and respond in ways that help children feel understood.



Communication Builds Confidence

As children become more confident in expressing themselves, they are often able to:

- Make more choices.
- Build stronger relationships.
- Develop independence.
- Solve problems more effectively.
- Reduce frustration.
- Participate more fully in learning.
- Feel heard and understood.

These are skills that support children throughout every aspect of life.

Working Together

Communication is most successful when everyone works together.

Where appropriate, we work alongside parents, schools and Speech and Language

Therapists to provide consistent approaches across different environments.

Sharing successful strategies helps children feel more confident because they know what to expect wherever they are.

At Rainbow Hands, we celebrate every form of communication because every child deserves to have their voice heard, whether that voice is spoken, signed, shown or shared in another way.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Communication isn't about how a child speaks. It's about whether they feel heard."



Section 10

Sensory Support

Every child experiences the world differently.

For some children, everyday sights, sounds, smells, textures or busy environments can feel overwhelming. Others actively seek movement, pressure or sensory experiences to help them feel calm, organised and ready to engage.

At Rainbow Hands, we recognise that sensory needs are an important part of understanding each child. By taking the time to understand what helps a child feel comfortable, we can create an environment where they feel safe, regulated and ready to learn.

There is no right or wrong sensory profile. Every child is different, and our role is to understand what works for them.

Understanding Sensory Needs

Sensory processing is how our brain receives, organises and responds to information from the world around us.

Some children may be sensitive to certain sounds, lights or textures.

Others may seek movement, enjoy deep pressure or constantly look for opportunities to climb, jump or explore.

Some children may have a combination of both.

Understanding these differences allows us to adapt our support so that children are not expected to cope with unnecessary discomfort throughout the day.

Creating the Right Environment

The environment plays an important role in helping children feel calm and able to engage.

Where appropriate, we adapt the environment by considering:

- Noise levels.
- Lighting.
- Visual distractions.
- Available sensory equipment.
- Quiet spaces.
- Opportunities for movement.
- Access to outdoor environments.

These adjustments are often simple but can make a significant difference to how comfortable a child feels.



Sensory Strategies

Sensory support looks different for every child.

Strategies may include:

- Access to sensory resources.
- Time outdoors.
- Movement breaks.
- Heavy work activities.
- Deep pressure activities where appropriate.
- Quiet spaces.
- Fidget resources.
- Swinging or rocking movements.
- Water play.
- Messy play.
- Opportunities to climb, balance or explore.

These strategies are always guided by the individual child's needs and preferences.

Following the Child

Sometimes a child needs movement before they can concentrate.

Sometimes they need quiet.

Sometimes they simply need time.

Rather than expecting every child to complete activities in the same way, we remain flexible and responsive throughout each session.

Supporting sensory regulation isn't separate from learning—it is often what makes learning possible.

Outdoor Learning

The outdoors provides valuable sensory experiences that are difficult to recreate indoors.

Whether exploring woodland, visiting parks, gardening or simply spending time outside, children benefit from opportunities to move, explore and experience the natural world.

Outdoor learning also supports communication, curiosity, confidence and emotional wellbeing while allowing children to regulate in an environment that often feels less demanding than an indoor classroom.



Working With Families

Parents and carers often know exactly what helps their child regulate.

We value this knowledge and use it to help create consistent support across different environments.

By sharing successful sensory strategies, we can help children feel more confident whether they are at home, at Rainbow Hands or accessing other services.

Every Child Is Different

Sensory support is never about encouraging every child to use the same resources or strategies.

It is about recognising that every child experiences the world differently and responding in a way that respects those differences.

By understanding a child's sensory profile, we can reduce unnecessary barriers, support emotional regulation and create an environment where they feel comfortable enough to explore, communicate and learn.

At Rainbow Hands, sensory support is woven naturally into every session because helping children feel comfortable is one of the foundations of meaningful learning.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"When we understand how a child experiences the world, we can stop asking them to cope with it alone."

Did You Know?

Sensory needs aren't always obvious.

A child who constantly moves may be trying to help themselves concentrate.

A child who covers their ears may be overwhelmed by sounds others barely notice.

A child who refuses certain clothing may not be "being difficult"—they may genuinely experience those textures differently.

Understanding these differences helps us respond with curiosity instead of assumptions.

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Section 11

Building Independence

Independence is about far more than learning to complete tasks without help.

It is about building confidence, developing problem-solving skills and giving children the opportunity to believe in their own abilities.

At Rainbow Hands, independence is encouraged throughout every session in ways that are appropriate to the child's age, stage of development and individual needs. We recognise that independence looks different for every child, and progress is measured from their own starting point rather than compared with others.

For some children, independence may mean preparing a snack or making a drink. For others, it may be making a choice, asking for help, visiting a new place or developing the confidence to try something they have previously avoided.

Every step towards greater independence is worth celebrating.

Learning Through Real Life

The most valuable learning often happens during everyday experiences.

Rather than teaching life skills in isolation, we build them naturally into daily activities, helping children understand why those skills are important and how they can use them in everyday life.

Children are encouraged to take an active role in activities such as:

- Preparing snacks and simple meals.
- Making drinks safely.
- Tidying away after activities.
- Organising personal belongings.
- Following routines.
- Shopping.
- Handling money where appropriate.
- Road safety and community awareness.
- Planning activities.
- Solving everyday problems.

These experiences help children develop practical skills while building confidence and self-esteem.



Encouraging Choice

Having the opportunity to make choices is an important part of developing independence. Children are encouraged to make meaningful choices throughout the day, whether choosing an activity, deciding where to visit, selecting resources or helping to plan part of their session.

Providing choices encourages communication, decision making and confidence while helping children feel involved in their own learning.

Where appropriate, visual supports, photographs or objects of reference may be used to make choices accessible for every child.

Problem Solving

Life doesn't always go to plan, and learning how to solve problems is an important life skill. Children are supported to think through challenges, explore different solutions and develop confidence in their own ideas.

Rather than immediately providing the answer, we encourage children to think, explore and discover solutions with support when needed.

This helps build resilience alongside practical problem-solving skills.

Building Confidence

Confidence grows through positive experiences.

By providing opportunities that are achievable while still gently encouraging children to step outside their comfort zone, we help them discover what they are capable of.

Some achievements may seem small to others, but they can represent significant milestones for the individual child.

Whether it is ordering their own drink, reading a sign independently, carrying their shopping basket or trying a new activity, every success helps build confidence for the future.

Preparing for Adult Life

Although many of the children we support are still young, developing independence starts early.

Every opportunity to practise communication, decision making, responsibility and everyday life skills helps prepare children for greater independence as they grow older.

Our aim is not to rush children towards independence but to provide opportunities for them to develop these skills at a pace that feels safe, achievable and enjoyable.



Working Together

Families play an important role in developing independence.

By working together and sharing successful strategies, we can encourage children to use their skills across different environments and celebrate progress together.

Consistency between home, Rainbow Hands and other settings helps children feel more confident applying their skills in everyday situations.

Every Achievement Matters

Building independence is a journey.

Some children take large steps.

Others take smaller ones.

Both are equally important.

At Rainbow Hands, we celebrate every achievement because every new skill, every decision made independently and every moment of confidence contributes towards a child's future.

Independence isn't about doing everything alone.

It's about giving children the confidence, skills and support they need to do as much as they can for themselves.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"One day, the things we practise together become the things a child realises they can do on their own. That's why every small step matters."

Rainbow Hands in Practice

For example:

Making Toast

To most people, making toast is just making toast.

At Rainbow Hands it can develop:

 Following instructions

 Sequencing

 Fine motor skills

 Waiting safely

 Spreading

 Tidying up

 Communication

 Confidence

 Independence

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Section 12

Measuring Progress

Every child starts their journey from a different place, which means progress looks different for every child.

At Rainbow Hands, we don't compare children to one another. Instead, we focus on the progress each child makes from their own starting point, celebrating every achievement, however big or small.

Progress isn't always measured through reading, writing or maths. It can also be seen in confidence, communication, emotional regulation, independence, relationships and a child's willingness to engage with new experiences.

Every step forward matters.

Observing Progress

Detailed observations are completed following every session.

These observations are far more than a record of what happened during the day. They help us understand what is working well, identify new areas for development and ensure support continues to meet the child's changing needs.

Observations may include:

- Activities completed.
- Communication and interaction.
- Emotional regulation.
- Sensory needs.
- Independence.
- Community experiences.
- Learning opportunities.
- Achievements and successes.
- Areas requiring additional support.

By reviewing observations over time, we can clearly demonstrate progress and adapt future sessions to continue building on each child's strengths.

Individual Outcomes

Where appropriate, children work towards personalised outcomes based on their individual needs.

These may be linked to:

- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- School targets.



- Individual learning goals.
- Independence skills.
- Communication.
- Emotional wellbeing.
- Social development.
- Family priorities.

Outcomes are regularly reviewed and adapted as children develop new skills and gain confidence.

Working Towards EHCP Outcomes

For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, sessions are planned to support the outcomes and provision identified within their EHCP.

Learning opportunities are naturally embedded throughout the day, allowing progress to be demonstrated in meaningful and practical ways.

Where appropriate, reports can contribute towards:

- Annual Reviews.
- EHCP reviews.
- Personal Budget reviews.
- School meetings.
- Professional reports.

This helps ensure everyone involved is working towards the same goals.

Sharing Progress

Families are kept informed through regular communication and detailed observations.

We believe parents and carers should have a clear understanding of what their child has achieved, what strategies have been successful and how they can continue supporting progress at home if they wish.

Celebrating achievements together helps build confidence not only for the child, but for the whole family.

Reflecting and Adapting

Children grow, interests change and support needs develop over time.

For this reason, Rainbow Hands continually reflects on practice and adapts sessions to ensure they remain engaging, meaningful and relevant.

There is no fixed programme that every child follows.



Instead, support evolves alongside the child, allowing them to continue making progress at their own pace.

Success Looks Different for Every Child

Progress may look like:

- Reading a word independently.
- Trying a new activity.
- Asking for help.
- Following a visual timetable.
- Waiting for a turn.
- Communicating a choice.
- Visiting a new place.
- Preparing a snack.
- Managing a transition more successfully.
- Building confidence in the community.

Every achievement represents another step towards greater confidence, independence and future success.

At Rainbow Hands, we celebrate those moments because they matter.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Sometimes the biggest progress isn't measured by what a child can do. It's measured by what they now believe they can do."



Rainbow Hands in Practice

Building Confidence in the Community

When a child first attends Rainbow Hands, they may feel unable to leave the house, visit a shop or enter a busy environment.

Rather than expecting immediate success, we break these experiences down into manageable steps.

For one child, progress may look like:

- Sitting in the car.
- Walking to the entrance of a shop.
- Going inside for two minutes.
- Choosing an item.
- Paying at the till.
- Returning the following week with greater confidence.

Each stage builds on the last, helping the child develop confidence, resilience and independence at a pace that feels achievable.

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Section 13

Working in Partnership

Supporting a child is never something that should happen in isolation.

Children achieve the best outcomes when everyone involved in their care and education works together towards shared goals. At Rainbow Hands, we believe strong partnerships are essential to providing consistent, meaningful support that helps children feel secure and understood across every environment.

Whether we are working alongside parents, schools, therapists or Local Authorities, our aim is always the same: to place the child at the centre of every decision.

Working With Families

Parents and carers know their child better than anyone else.

Their knowledge, experience and understanding are invaluable, and we believe they should be listened to, respected and involved throughout their child's journey.

We value open and honest communication and encourage families to share updates, concerns, achievements and ideas. By working together, we can provide consistent support that reflects the child's changing needs and celebrates their progress.

Families receive regular feedback following sessions, helping them understand what their child has enjoyed, what they have achieved and any strategies that have been particularly successful.

Working With Schools

Where appropriate, Rainbow Hands works closely with schools to help provide consistency between educational settings.

This may include sharing observations, discussing successful strategies, contributing towards individual targets or supporting transition planning.

Our aim is not to replace school, but to complement the support already in place and help children continue making progress towards their educational outcomes.

By working collaboratively, we can create a more joined-up approach that benefits the child.

Working With Professionals

Many children are supported by a wider network of professionals.

Where appropriate, Rainbow Hands works alongside:

- Local Authorities.
- SEND teams.
- Social Workers.

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- Occupational Therapists.
- Speech and Language Therapists.
- Educational Psychologists.
- Paediatricians.
- CAMHS.
- Family Support Workers.
- Early Years professionals.
- Other agencies involved in supporting the child.

Working together allows everyone to develop a clearer understanding of the child's strengths, support needs and progress.

Education, Health and Care Plans

Rainbow Hands has experience supporting children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

Where appropriate, sessions are planned to complement the outcomes and provision identified within the child's EHCP.

We can contribute to:

- Annual Reviews.
- Progress reports.
- Evidence of outcomes.
- Observation reports.
- Review meetings.
- Personal Budget reviews.

By providing detailed observations and practical examples of progress, we can help demonstrate how children are developing within everyday situations.

Advocacy and SEND Knowledge

As well as working directly with children, Rainbow Hands has a strong understanding of the SEND system and the challenges many families face when accessing appropriate support.

We understand that navigating EHCPs, school meetings, Personal Budgets, Alternative Provision and other SEND processes can feel overwhelming.

While our primary role is supporting children, we are also able to contribute professionally to discussions about a child's needs, progress and the provision that best supports them.



Sharing Information

Good communication helps children receive consistent support across different environments.

With parental consent, information may be shared with relevant professionals where it supports the child's wellbeing, learning or agreed outcomes.

Equally, information shared by families and professionals helps us adapt our own approach to ensure support remains individualised and responsive.

A Shared Goal

Although everyone involved may have different roles, we all share the same goal.

Helping children feel safe.

Helping them enjoy learning.

Helping them develop confidence.

Helping them become as independent as possible.

Helping them achieve the best outcomes for their future.

By respecting one another's knowledge and working together, we can provide children with the consistency and encouragement they need to continue making meaningful progress.

At Rainbow Hands, partnership isn't simply something we talk about. It is part of everything we do.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"When families and professionals work together with trust and respect, children don't just receive support—they experience consistency, understanding and the confidence to keep moving forward."

Rainbow Hands in Practice

Working Together for Better Outcomes

A child may use a visual timetable successfully during sessions at Rainbow Hands.

By sharing this strategy with parents and school, the same approach can be introduced across different environments.

The child no longer has to learn three different routines or expectations.

Instead, they experience consistency, which reduces anxiety, builds confidence and makes everyday life a little easier.

Small changes, shared by everyone, can make a big difference.

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Section 14

Referrals and Getting Started

Every child is different, which is why every referral begins with a conversation.

Before any placement starts, we take the time to understand the child's strengths, interests, support needs and the outcomes everyone is hoping to achieve. This helps us decide whether Rainbow Hands is the right provision and ensures that any support offered is personalised from the very beginning.

Choosing Alternative Provision or specialist support is an important decision, and we want families and professionals to feel confident that Rainbow Hands is the right fit.

Who Can Make a Referral?

Referrals are welcomed from:

- Parents and carers.
- Schools and education settings.
- Local Authorities.
- SEND teams.
- Social workers.
- Health professionals.
- Personal Budget holders.
- Direct Payment recipients.
- Other professionals supporting the child.

If you are unsure whether Rainbow Hands is suitable, please get in touch. We are always happy to discuss a child's needs before making any decisions.

Our Referral Process

Every referral follows a similar process to ensure the best possible start.

Initial Enquiry

This is an opportunity to discuss the child's needs, current situation and what you are looking for from the provision.

Getting to Know the Child

We gather information about the child's interests, communication, sensory needs, routines, strengths and any support already in place.

Where appropriate, we may review reports, EHCPs or other relevant documentation to help build a full picture of the child's needs.



Planning Support

If Rainbow Hands is the right provision, an individual programme of support is planned around the child's identified needs and agreed outcomes.

This includes considering the most suitable session times, activities, learning opportunities and any reasonable adjustments required.

Beginning Sessions

The first few sessions focus on building trust, helping the child become familiar with the environment and developing a positive relationship.

We understand that every child settles differently and sessions are adapted to reflect their confidence and emotional wellbeing.

Ongoing Review

Support is regularly reviewed through observations, discussions with families and communication with professionals where appropriate.

As children develop, their programme continues to evolve to reflect their changing needs and achievements.

Individual Support Plans

Every child receives an individual approach.

There are no standard programmes because no two children are the same.

Support is planned around:

- The child's strengths.
- Their interests.
- Their communication style.
- Their sensory profile.
- Educational outcomes.
- Family priorities.
- Professional recommendations where appropriate.

This ensures every session remains meaningful, enjoyable and purposeful.

Before Sessions Begin

Before support starts, we will discuss:

- Medical information.
- Allergies.
- Medication requirements.

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- Personal care needs where applicable.
- Communication preferences.
- Emergency contacts.
- Consent.
- Risk assessments where appropriate.

This allows us to provide safe, personalised support from the very first session.

A Partnership From Day One

From the first conversation, our aim is to build a positive partnership with everyone involved.

We recognise that starting a new provision can feel daunting, particularly for families whose child has experienced challenges in the past.

By taking time to listen, answer questions and understand what matters most to each family, we aim to make the transition as smooth and positive as possible.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Every child deserves the chance to start somewhere they feel welcomed, understood and accepted from day one."



Section 15

Funding Options

We understand that arranging funding for specialist support can sometimes feel confusing. Rainbow Hands accepts a variety of funding arrangements and will always work openly with families and commissioning organisations to ensure everyone understands what is included within the agreed package of support.

Funding Routes

Support may be funded through:

- Local Authorities.
- Schools and education settings.
- Personal Budgets.
- Direct Payments.
- Self-funded arrangements.
- Other agreed commissioning arrangements.

Funding arrangements are discussed before support begins to ensure expectations are clear for everyone involved.

Personal Budgets

Where appropriate, Rainbow Hands can provide personalised costed provision plans to support Personal Budget applications.

These plans clearly outline:

- The proposed programme of support.
- Weekly hours.
- Educational outcomes.
- How the provision supports EHCP outcomes where applicable.
- Costed packages.

This information can assist families during discussions with Local Authorities and may be used as supporting evidence during the Personal Budget process.

Alternative Provision Commissioning

Schools and Local Authorities can commission Rainbow Hands to provide Alternative Provision where appropriate.

Provision is always individually planned and can be adapted to reflect:

- Educational needs.
- Emotional wellbeing.

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- Communication.
- Sensory regulation.
- Independence.
- Community learning.

Each package is developed around the individual child rather than following a standard timetable.

What's Included?

Depending on the agreed package, provision may include:

- Individual one-to-one support.
- Planning and preparation.
- Educational activities.
- Community-based learning.
- Observations.
- Progress monitoring.
- Parent communication.
- Professional liaison where appropriate.
- Reports linked to agreed provision.

Any additional services requested outside the agreed package will always be discussed in advance.

Honest Conversations

We understand that funding decisions are often outside a family's control.

If Rainbow Hands is unable to meet a child's needs or if another service would be more appropriate, we will always be honest and, where possible, help signpost families towards alternative support.

Our priority will always be ensuring children receive the right provision, whether that is with Rainbow Hands or elsewhere.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"The right support isn't always the easiest to find, but every child deserves the opportunity to access it."



Section 16

Frequently Asked Questions

What age range do you support?

Rainbow Hands supports children and young people from birth to 17 years of age. Every referral is considered individually to ensure we can safely and appropriately meet the child's needs.

Who is Alternative Provision suitable for?

Alternative Provision may be suitable for children who are unable to access mainstream education, are awaiting a specialist placement, have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), experience Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), require provision under Section 19 of the Education Act or benefit from a more personalised approach to learning. Every child is different, so we always recommend an initial conversation to discuss whether Rainbow Hands is the right provision.

Do you follow the National Curriculum?

Our Alternative Provision is highly personalised and is designed around each child's individual needs, interests and agreed outcomes.

Where appropriate, activities can support National Curriculum objectives and EHCP outcomes, but our priority is ensuring learning is meaningful, accessible and appropriate for the individual child.

Do you provide one-to-one support?

Yes.

All sessions are delivered on a one-to-one basis, allowing support to be fully tailored to the child's communication, sensory needs, emotional wellbeing and learning style.

Some children need peer socialisation, and this will be arranged on a case by case basis.

Where do sessions take place?

Sessions may take place:

- At Rainbow Hands.
- Within the local community.
- At the child's home where appropriate.

The location is agreed as part of the child's individual support plan.

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**Do you offer community-based learning?**

Yes.

Community learning is an important part of many programmes and may include visits to parks, libraries, museums, shops, cafés, woodland areas and other local facilities.

These experiences provide valuable opportunities to develop communication, confidence, independence and everyday life skills.

How long are sessions?

Session lengths vary depending on the child's needs and the agreed package of support.

Some children benefit from shorter sessions initially before gradually increasing their time as confidence develops.

Do you support children who may occasionally need help with personal care?

Yes.

As part of providing safe childcare and Alternative Provision, Rainbow Hands can support children with incidental personal care, such as helping with hand washing, changing clothes after accidents, supporting younger children with toileting where appropriate, or assisting with other day-to-day care needs that arise naturally during a session.

Any support is discussed with parents beforehand and delivered in line with the child's individual needs, parental preferences and appropriate risk assessments.

Where a child requires ongoing or regulated personal care beyond the scope of our current registration, this will always be discussed openly with families to ensure the correct arrangements and registrations are in place.

Will I receive feedback after sessions?

Yes.

Families receive regular communication following sessions, together with detailed observations that record activities, achievements, progress and any important information from the day.

Do you write reports?

Yes.

Where appropriate, Rainbow Hands can provide reports to support:

- Annual Reviews.
- EHCP reviews.
- Personal Budget reviews.

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- School meetings.
- Professional meetings.
- Alternative Provision reviews.

Reports are based on observations and evidence gathered during sessions.

Do you attend meetings?

Where appropriate, yes.

Rainbow Hands can contribute to meetings relating to the children we support, providing observations and professional input where this has been agreed in advance.

Can Rainbow Hands support EHCP outcomes?

Yes.

Where a child has an EHCP, activities and learning opportunities can be planned to support the provision and outcomes identified within the plan.

How is progress measured?

Progress is measured through detailed observations, ongoing assessment and regular communication with families and professionals.

We recognise that progress looks different for every child and celebrate every achievement, no matter how big or small.

What funding options are available?

Support may be funded through:

- Schools.
- Local Authorities.
- Personal Budgets.
- Direct Payments.
- Self-funding.

Funding arrangements are discussed before support begins.

What happens if Rainbow Hands isn't the right provision?

Choosing the right support is incredibly important.

If, after discussing your child's needs, we feel another service would be better placed to support them, we will always be honest and, wherever possible, help signpost you towards alternative services.

Our priority is always ensuring children receive the support that best meets their needs.



How do I make a referral?

The easiest way is to contact Rainbow Hands by telephone or email.

We'll arrange an initial conversation to discuss your child's needs, answer any questions and decide together whether Rainbow Hands is the right fit.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"There are no silly questions when it comes to your child. If you're unsure about anything, please ask. We're always happy to help."

Section 17

Why Families Choose Rainbow Hands

Choosing the right support for a child is an important decision.

Every family is looking for something slightly different, but they all want to know the same thing:

"Will my child be safe, understood and happy here?"

At Rainbow Hands, everything we do is centred around building trusting relationships, understanding individual needs and creating opportunities for children to experience success in a way that works for them.

Families choose Rainbow Hands because they know their child will be treated as an individual, not a diagnosis.

Families Choose Rainbow Hands Because...

Every child is treated as an individual.

There are no standard programmes or one-size-fits-all approaches. Every child is supported in a way that reflects their own strengths, interests and needs.

Relationships always come first.

Trust takes time. We believe children make the greatest progress when they feel safe, understood and genuinely valued.

Learning is personalised.

Activities are built around each child's interests, communication style and individual outcomes, making learning meaningful and enjoyable.

Support is flexible.

Children don't have good days and difficult days because they choose to. Sessions adapt to how each child is feeling, ensuring support remains appropriate and responsive.

Care you can trust, support they deserve

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Progress is celebrated.

Every achievement matters, whether it's trying a new activity, communicating a need, developing independence or building confidence.

Families are valued.

Parents and carers know their child better than anyone else. We listen, work together and build support around the whole family.

Communication is open and honest.

Families receive regular feedback, detailed observations and honest conversations about progress, challenges and next steps.

Support extends beyond sessions.

Where appropriate, Rainbow Hands works alongside schools, Local Authorities and other professionals to help provide consistent support across every environment.

We continue learning too.

Professional development is an ongoing commitment, ensuring our knowledge and practice continue to develop alongside the children and families we support.

Our Commitment

When a child joins Rainbow Hands, they aren't expected to fit into our way of doing things. Instead, we take the time to understand who they are, what they enjoy, what they find difficult and what helps them feel safe.

From there, we build support around them.

Because every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow and experience success in a way that is right for them.

Thank you for taking the time to read our handbook.

We hope it has given you a clear understanding of who we are, how we work and the values that guide everything we do.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss how Rainbow Hands may be able to support your child, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Rainbow Hands Thought

"Children may not remember every activity they completed, but they will remember the people who believed in them."

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Contact Rainbow Hands

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Supporting children and young people aged 0–17 years

Specialist Childcare • Respite • Alternative Provision • SEND Advocacy

A Note About This Handbook

This handbook is intended to provide an overview of the services offered by Rainbow Hands Respite and Childcare Services Ltd. As every child is unique, support is always tailored to individual needs and circumstances. Some services may be subject to assessment, availability, funding arrangements and relevant regulatory requirements. We welcome the opportunity to discuss individual needs and provide personalised information where appropriate.

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to read about Rainbow Hands.

Whether you're a parent looking for the right support, a school exploring Alternative Provision, or a professional wanting to understand how we work, I appreciate you taking the time to get to know us.

Every child deserves the opportunity to feel safe, understood and successful. I look forward to the possibility of working together to help make that happen.

Rainbow Hands Alternative Provision Handbook

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