



TORFIELD AND SAXON MOUNT COMMUNITY SCHOOL

SENSORY POLICY

Introduction

Many of the pupils at Torfield and Saxon Mount have communication difficulties and a significant number of those have a diagnosis of autism. Many of our children have difficulty processing sensory information and may avoid or seek sensory stimuli. The schools have reviewed their environment and introduced a more sensory aware environment especially in transition areas such as stairways and corridors. Our environment audit and developments have raised awareness of the impact sensory issues can have on the pupil's behaviour and their ability to access the learning environment by reducing the sensory overload especially in transitional areas. We aim to reduce anxiety for all children with sensory issues.

Objectives

- To provide stimulating curriculum to develop the pupil's awareness of their senses.
- To provide a safe environment where the pupil can relax, have fun and develop learning, social skills and communications skills.
- To provide an environment that reduces sensory overload and reduces the pupil's anxiety.
- To provide lessons that encourage the pupil to explore and understand their environment.
- To encourage interaction and increase opportunities for the initiation of communication and the development of independence skills.
- To develop attention and concentration.
- To give opportunities for the pupil to make choices and decisions about themselves and their learning.
- To develop an increased tolerance of a sensory stimulus.

The Curriculum

The curriculum includes multisensory activities in each subject area. Pupils participate in whole group, small group paired and individual activities designed to increase their understanding and allow them to demonstrate knowledge and skills acquired. Sensory Circuits have been introduced for targeted pupils (where a need is identified in EHCP or through professional advice) to support pupils readiness to learn and reduce sensory overload.

The environment has been developed to include carpeting to suppress additional background noise. Non flash lighting in key ASD specific environments, Site Managers are alerted to address any additional flashing lighting, cupboards and storage purchased to de-clutter class areas and corridor furniture removed to clear transit areas.

Display boards purchased and used to add predictability and uniformity to the environment. Door sensors fitted to enable classes to remain open supporting the feeling of space and clarity.

Library boxes/Museum boxes – allow for specific themes to be explored as a group or individual. Museum boxes incorporate artefacts that can be handled. Subject lessons incorporate multisensory activities that are planned part of curriculum.

Use of multi-sensory activities encourages consolidation of skills and ideas. **Curricular visits** – Use of local amenities through P.E., YAS and curricular visits allows pupils to explore and become familiar with their environment. **Individual programmes** – planned individual sessions will offer a gentle exposure to sensory stimuli in order to stimulate or calm a pupil and help to develop their sensory processing to maximise learning opportunities.

Assessment

Some of our pupils have been assessed by an Occupational Therapist and their advice should be incorporated into any planned intervention or environmental adaptations. Where possible an Occupational Therapist should be consulted when planning sensory work with a pupil.

When reviewing Pupil Profile/Behaviour Plans, teams highlight any sensory issues observed and plan to meet their specific needs.

Developing a sensory programme for specific pupil identified as requiring support

- Consider the pupil's behaviour from a sensory perspective in order to gain insight into what the pupil is trying to communicate through that behaviour.
- Take into consideration the pupil's sensory profile when planning their Individual Education Plan and identify specific aims for the pupil.
- Keep outcomes clear and measurable
- Sensory programme delivered by class T.A.
- Select multisensory activities to be included in whole class planning or for small group work.
- Select sensory activities for pupil's individual programme.
- Use visual support to introduce activities and to enable the pupil to make choices.
- Assess and reward progress at regular intervals - Video some sessions.
- Photograph some activities.
- Reflect on the sessions and evaluate progress.

Health and safety issues

- In order to ensure the pupil's safety activities need close supervision.
- Staff should be aware of child protection issues relating to particular pupils.
- Staff should be aware of a pupil's particular sensitivity to a sensory stimulus and take this into account when planning activities through pupil profiles or behaviour plans.
- If using ICT, video or lighting do not over stimulate a pupil that has epilepsy or visual sensitivity as it could cause a seizure or headache.
- Staff should be aware of pupils that have epilepsy and must not over stimulate the pupil as it could cause a seizure or headache.
- Staff should check that all equipment is safe and hygienic before use.

Training

- all new staff will have training on sensory issues as part of their CPD
- Further training for staff on sensory issues will be incorporated into CPD training schedule in order to;
- Raise awareness on the effect the environment can have in the reduction of sensory overload and the pupil's anxiety.
- raise awareness on the impact sensory difficulties can have on the pupil's behaviour and their ability to access the learning environment.
- Staff working with pupils on specific programmes will receive further training to enable them to undertake this role with confidence.

Resources

Subject leaders and class teachers organise their own multi-sensory resources although they can request support from the senior leaders for a specific difficulty.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is agreed that this policy shall be regularly reviewed and updated.

Guidelines for Staff

Aims

- To provide a stimulating curriculum to develop the pupil's awareness of their senses.
- To provide a safe environment where the pupil can be relaxed, calm and enjoy learning
- To provide an environment that reduces sensory overload and reduces the pupil's anxiety.
- To provide activities that encourage the pupil to explore their environment.
- To encourage interaction and increase opportunities for the initiation of communication, social interaction and development of independence skills.
- To help build up concepts about objects and develop subject vocabulary.
- To develop attention and concentration.
- To give opportunities for the pupil to make choices and decisions about their learning.
- To develop an increased tolerance of a sensory stimulus.

Approach

- Activities may need to be repeated frequently in order for the pupil to develop their skills.
- The pupil should be encouraged to make choices and decisions.
- Use visual support to introduce activities and to enable the pupil to make choices.
- Select multisensory activities to be included in subject planning.
- Select sensory activities for pupil's individual programme.
- Clear outcomes
- Reflect on the sessions and evaluate progress.
- Consider the pupil's behaviour from a sensory based perspective in order to gain insights into what the pupil is trying to communicate through that behaviour and reflect in Behaviour Plan.
- Complete regular assessment relating to learning and progress - Video some sessions.
- Photograph some activities.

This policy is monitored on a day-to-day basis by the Headteacher, who reports to Governors about the effectiveness of the policy on request.

Headteacher

Date October 2020

Chair of Governors

Date

Review Date October 2022