



Delamere School Sensory Policy

Date of Policy: January 2020

To be reviewed: Annually

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies, including the following policies, documents and guidance: Curriculum Policy, Assessment and Recording Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, Autism Policy, Behaviour Support Policy, Communication Policy, Transition Policy and Teaching and Learning Policy.

Overview

We learn about our environment through our senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch and movement. Without any of these we are limited in our capacity for learning. Many students at Delamere School have sensory impairments or difficulties so they must learn to develop each of their senses individually and in combination. We aim to provide a stimulating multi-sensory curriculum for all our students who will benefit from this approach, to encourage more awareness of visual, auditory and tactile experiences, give rise to new learning and make learning fun!

At Delamere School, the sensory curriculum therefore forms an integral part of every subject taught within the National Curriculum framework. This also includes the Early Years Foundation Stage framework.

In addition, many of our students, particularly individuals with autism, experience sensory perceptions in different ways; they may display 'hyper' (over) sensitivities, 'hypo' (under) sensitivities or sensory seeking behaviours in one or more of the sensory channels. Hypersensitivities may be displayed through exaggerated or unrelenting responses to a particular stimulus; typically characterised by sensory seeking or stimming. Hypo-sensitivities are characterised by fear or avoidance of objects and activities. The resulting behaviours (withdrawal, self-injury, aggression) can become barriers to learning and to enable effective learning to take place, a programme of sensory integration may be required. This involves adults adapting the environment, using aids or altering approaches to teaching. Often consideration of the children's differing senses can result in a reduction of behaviours that impact on a child's learning.

"The role of professionals should be to help people use their natural processes to learn and grow. This might mean helping people develop strategies for dealing with sensory oversensitivity: using earplugs or colored lenses, adapting clothing to accommodate tactile sensitivities, providing opportunities for deep pressure or vestibular stimulation, etc. It might mean teaching self-monitoring and self-management of behaviour and emotions." (Jim Sinclair, 1998)



Intent

Our vision, our values and our rights underpin all of our policies and the education we deliver. Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that: “The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions that affect children”. This policy has been created to keep the children at Delamere School safe and happy.

- To enable each pupil, whatever the degree of special need, to access the curriculum so that they can reach their full potential and to enhance self-esteem.
- To stimulate and maintain pupil curiosity, interest and enjoyment in their own education
- To teach using a multi-sensory approach to develop and promote the use of all the senses; visual, auditory, tactile, taste, smell, vestibular and proprioceptor thereby encouraging students to discover their individual learning styles.
- To meet the needs of all pupils individual needs by offering appropriate forms of educational resources.
- To ensure there is no discrimination against pupils with any sensory difficulties/differences in the learning environment, whilst taking into account the constraints of the school building.
- To promote consistent responses to change in the environment.
- To encourage the ability to locate and direct attention towards the source of stimulation.
- To encourage the use of all the senses to the fullest extent available.
- To ‘moderate’ senses to provide optimal ‘working’ conditions.
- To encourage awareness of different properties and differentiate between modalities.
- To promote integration of sensory information which will form the basis for understanding the surroundings. (Widening pupil’s horizons).



Implementation

The Delamere school curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum are used to inform planning and school provide access to literature and training regarding Sensory Difficulties/Differences.

We offer a range of Sensory activities which include:

- Sensory room sessions
- Hydrotherapy sessions
- Tacpac
- Music Therapy
- Pet Therapy
- Sensory Circuit
- Splash sessions
- Swimming
- Rebound Therapy
- Pet Therapy
- Massage
- Messy/Sand/Water play
- Physical Education including Soft Play

Use of sensory outdoor areas both at lunchtime and during directed time

Short Sensory profiles are completed for every pupil with sensory anomalies at Delamere, which identify individual areas of difficulty and need for intervention. All class staff at Delamere are trained in sensory needs and have access to a range of strategies to support children who experience these. Class teams may seek advice from the head of autism and the sensory integration lead in order to develop individual personalised sensory diet plans.

Children with more complex sensory difficulties, who are showing limited progress in this area, may require a referral to a Sensory Occupational Therapist. This will be agreed through discussion with families and approved by the Head Teacher.

Resources

Sensory resources are in use in all curriculum areas around school and are monitored and developed by each subject coordinator. Sensory room resources are monitored separately by a member of staff. The outdoor play areas are continuously developed to include more sensory play equipment and opportunities.

The Sensory Circuit is continually set up with a range of climbing, balancing and movement activities to provide regular vestibular and proprioception input for



children with difficulties in those areas. The circuit is located in the Small Hall and further resources are available in drawers in between the Small Hall and Hydrotherapy pool, which may be signed out for use in classrooms where children may have difficulties transitioning to a new area in school.

Role of the Sensory Integration Lead TA

Through working in conjunction with a specialist Sensory Occupational Therapist, our Sensory Integration Lead TA has developed a thorough knowledge of sensory needs and assessments for the children at Delamere. They may support individual children with sensory difficulties in the following ways:

- Participation in observation and assessment, including completing sensory profiles for pupils with more complex sensory difficulties.
- The planning and implementation of individual sensory diets.
- Liaison with colleagues, families/carers and other relevant professionals.
- Recommending equipment or strategies for use with individual pupils based on their needs (sensory diets).

Assessment

Staff at Delamere School promote multidisciplinary team working, with an agreed baseline of skills for each pupil being achieved through the sharing of assessment results and joint observation and assessment. This in turn leads to planned short, medium and long-term objectives that form the basis of an appropriate pupil centred curriculum, summarised through Annual Review targets, Personalised Learning Targets (PLTs) and individual curriculum targets.

Role of the Senior Management Team

- To contribute to the preparation, review and updating of the Sensory Policy.
- To identify training needs and provide feedback to all staff regarding any courses attended relevant to the development of the Sensory Curriculum.
- To liaise with the Sensory Integration Lead TA regarding the monitoring of individual sensory planners.
- To monitor the use of the Sensory Circuit in liaison with the Sensory Integration Lead TA, to ensure it is having maximum impact on children's learning and well-being.



Parental Involvement

Parents are kept informed of their child's progress through the Interactive Learning Diary (ILD) or Target Tracker, parent's evenings, visits to class, email, photos, videos, letters, PLTs and Annual Reviews. Copies of termly timetables, highlighting opportunities offered on a weekly basis, are also made available to parents. More detailed planning information, including a copy of the Sensory Policy, can be made available to parents on request.

Equal Opportunities

The school aims to develop individual potential to the full and is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. As previously mentioned the school promotes a multi-sensory curriculum where all sensory differences are equally valued and respected. This inclusive approach incorporates social and cultural elements. Activities are planned so that all pupils are able to participate fully and equally, pupils are equally valued and cultural diversity is celebrated.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The child's learning is continually reviewed against their Personalised Learning Targets, which are updated on a termly basis and against curriculum targets. Medium Term learning objectives are updated annually as part of the review process and parents are informed of their child's progress as outlined above. Each pupil's progress will be monitored through observations which are accessible to parents through the ILD or Target Tracker.

Impact

This policy will promote the following, that are embedded into the school; Attachment Aware, Self-Regulation and Team Teach.

This supports excellent teaching, learning and progress. It will promote the high standards and high expectations set out in the school's aims.

All of the school's interventions are designed to prepare pupils for later life, pushing them to try new experiences outside their comfort zones.