

The Sensory Curriculum

Parent Information

2020-21

The Sensory Curriculum at Sherbourne Fields School aims to develop each child to their full potential by offering an immersive multi-sensory approach to learning.

The Sensory Curriculum Framework

Throughout this booklet you will see the areas of learning that are available for our Sensory Learners at Sherbourne Fields School.

At Sherbourne Fields School, the Sensory Curriculum follows a thematic approach to learning. All of the activities and learning opportunities are derived from the topic theme. This allows the students to become fully immersed within a sensory experience, allowing the pupils to develop their sensory cognitive, communication and thinking skills in a range of contexts. These occur in the classroom, outside space and the wider community. The activities/experiences are dependent on the individual student's needs and their preferred learning styles, so this allows the pupils to reach their full potential. Developing the student's communication (conventional and unconventional) skills is an integral part of the curriculum, your child's voice is celebrated in a wide array of activities and experiences.

There are six learning areas that the Sensory Curriculum is derived from. However, throughout all lessons and activities; communication and sensory cognition is always at the focus. The pupils (child depending) develop their communication skills through these activities, either conventional or unconventional forms (these can include stilling, change in breathing pattern, vocalisations, change in facial expression, gesturing or purposeful eye contact). Experiences are repeated regularly to allow students to develop familiarity and feel confident to interact.

Each sensory class' curriculum has been designed to specifically meet the needs of the children who have more complex learning styles. The children remain in their Sensory classrooms for the majority of their timetable. This is to enable a consistent and highly structured approach to ensure the best possible outcomes for these targeted children. The pupils within the Sensory classes require a high level of adult support, both for their learning needs and also for their personal care. The structure within Sensory Classes means the same regular staff work with the students allowing for the building of positive relationships and in-depth understanding of individuals. Although the majority of the time is spent with the very familiar adults, the students do access planned opportunities to participate in activities with members of staff who are less familiar.

The curriculum aims to develop flexibility and to reduce rigidity. The class team are specialist in the understanding of individual's communication strategies, behaviour approaches and responding to sensory/physical needs. This enables the assessment of progress to be outstanding and this leads to high quality next steps and target setting.

Hopefully you will find the booklet useful and informative however, if you would like any further information or have any questions about the Sensory Curriculum please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher at school.

The Sensory Curriculum, 6 Learning Areas

The focus of learning for the Sensory Curriculum is communication, developing functional skills and experiencing, engaging and developing interests. The Sensory Class follow the Sherbourne Fields Sensory Curriculum, their timetable follows the six areas of learning. The Sensory Curriculum provides an immersive multi-sensory curriculum, with the individual students needs at the centre. This enables the learning to be tailored to the pupils preferred learning styles.

Personal Development

Personal Development is the pupils ability to show an awareness of themselves, to build positive working relationships with the staff and their classmates. There are times when this occurs during standalone lessons. However, primarily this is continually worked on throughout the school day. The students are encouraged to work on their independence and self-care needs. This could include tolerating support to wash their hands, pushing their hand through in a sleeve or taking a loaded spoon to their mouth.

Activities include: TAC PAC, Massage Sessions, Sound Bath, Intensive Interaction/Joint Interaction Session/Peer Interaction



Mathematics and Numeracy

Involves using a multi-sensory approach to maths providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their sensory cognitive skills. Maths is present throughout the curriculum, for example emptying ingredients into a bowl, showing an awareness of cause and effect objects and developing object permanence. Lessons can be linked to mathematical theme including number, shapes and colour.

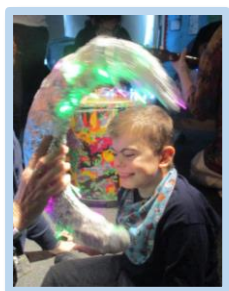
Activities include: Activities based around colour, numbers or shapes. Number songs/ rhymes, financial education stories, choosing activities



Language and Literacy

Language and Literacy involves giving children opportunities to experience a total communication environment. This is by communicating in both conventional and unconventional forms of communication, including intensive interaction, objects of reference, music cues, TOBIs (True Object Based Icons), photos and/or symbol. It is the development and encouragement to enable children to react and response to sounds, (both object and vocal), familiar phrases/words and rhymes/songs. Children are supported in their early reading skills, such as recognising themselves in a mirror, recognising their own photo and choice making etc.

Activities Include: Sensory Stories, Write Dance, Sensory Exploration, Choosing Activities and Interaction Sessions.

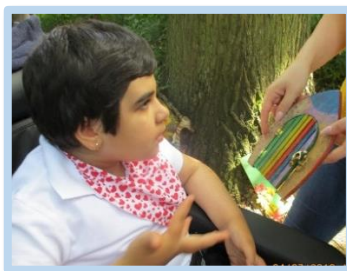


The World Around Us

The World Around Us, allows the children to become fully immersed within a sensory experience and encourages the children to explore and show curiosity in the world around them. The activities are often based on the topic themes. In previous years the children have explored objects and experiences linked with the Polar region or become a Superhero or demonstrating their ability to melt chocolate using a microwave.

Throughout the year the pupils have the opportunity to participate in Cultural Days, this allows the students to become fully immersed in different countries and cultures.

The pupils have the opportunity to experience a wide variety of different ICT equipment, including switch toys, cause and effect toys, iPads and using switches to activate everyday equipment such as a microwave and hair dryer. At Sherbourne Fields we use the Switch Progression to support the children's learning. The pupils also have the opportunity to go on trips in the local community.



Physical Development and Movement

Physical Development and Movement Sessions are devised to develop your child's gross and fine motor skills. For some children their physiotherapy programmes are integrated into learning opportunities.

Activities include: Music and movement sessions, swimming and games/activities such as skittles, curling etc.



Swimming

Most of the children have the opportunity for one lesson of swimming each week. There is a swimming coach and support staff to ensure children develop confidence and individual ability safely in the water. The majority of the children love to spend time in the water, which provides a stimulating experience.



Creative Arts

Involves enabling children to explore and experience a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities for them to develop their communication and sensory cognitive skills through choice making and reaching/grasping materials. The pupils are supported in cooking activities, allowing the children to use all their senses to explore the ingredients.

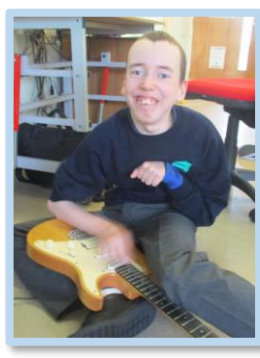
Activities include: Art and Design Projects, Cooking, Music session (see below for more details)



Music

Sensory Learners have a minimum of one music lesson a week. This is often one of the most popular activities with our students. The pupils have the opportunity to experience and explore a wide array of instruments and sound generating objects. This enables the students to explore the sounds, rhythms and textures.

Throughout the year all pupils are provided with opportunities to listen to different musicians perform, including an orchestra, rock and roll band, violin and flute duo and many more.



Themes

The themes are planned for a yearly cycle to provide a variety of activities and experiences.

Primary

AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
All about me and my family	Food, Festivals and Colour	Weather/ Climate	My World and Beyond	Superheroes/ Fantasy	Let's go Outside

KS3/ KS4

AUTUMN 1	AUTUMN 2	SPRING 1	SPRING 2	SUMMER 1	SUMMER 2
All about me, my independency and life skills.	People	Leisure and Professions	Festivals, Culture and Countries	Lights, Camera, Action	The Environment

Scrapbooks

Throughout the year, the Sensory Curriculum Team make observations about the progress of your child. They record how your child responds, and use evidence such as photographs, the pupils work and observations to create a Scrapbook. This provides a wealth of evidence to support the significant steps of progression taking place in accordance with the Sensory Curriculum Assessment process. The team monitor your child's engagement in activities and experiences, using the Engagement Model. This allows the class team to develop a rounded knowledge of each child.

Areas of Engagement

The 'Areas of Engagement' are an assessment approach used for students who are not yet engaged in subject specific learning. The recommendation for this group of pupils is that they are assessed using the 5 areas of engagement for learning. These 5 areas are exploration, realisation, anticipation, persistence, initiation. These areas can be used to support the learning of our Sensory Learners.

Key Stage 5

In Key Stage 5 the students continue to work in small groups supported by a high staff ratio to experience a rich programme where they can develop their communication skills. They will explore a variety of auidial, visual, kinaesthetic and tactile experiences through a thematic approach to lessons, which include: TAC PAC, Swimming, Music, Intensive Interaction, Sensory Madssge, Sensory Cooking and Sensory Story. The student's timetable is split between sessions, for accredited modules (see below for more details) and sensory experiences/activities. Their learning is collated in a combination of portfolio's and scrapbooks.

Accreditation

During their time in Key Stage 5 students will work towards gaining pre-entry level accreditation by completing a variety of ASDAN courses. This will include Personal Progress and a small number of Towards Independence modules. Staff will compile a portfolio of evidence for each student to show how they meet the assessment criteria and these will be externally moderated at the end of Year 14.

ASDAN Towards Independence Modules could include:

- Baking Sensory
- Creativity Developing Communication Skills: Sensory
- Engaging with around me: Events
- Engaging with around me: Objects

The ASDAN Personal Progress Units could include:

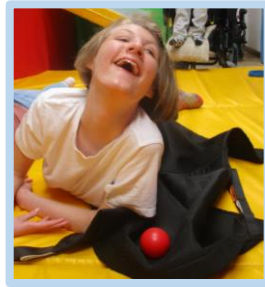
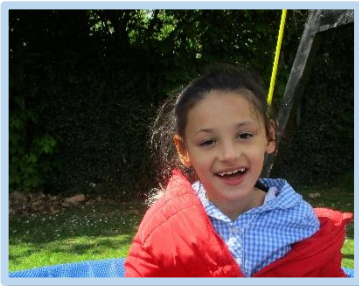
- Engaging in new creative activities
- Getting on with other people
- Encountering experiences
- Being healthy
- Developing self-awareness: All about me



Environment

The Sensory Classrooms, are bespoke classrooms developed to suit the needs of the sensory learners. There is often a large safe mat area, so the pupils can explore. There is a large screen area, to support the learners, who have a visual impairment but also allow the classroom to become adapted into an immersive space. There has been the inclusion of different lighting, which has again supported the classroom to become an immersive space, also to change the feel of the room. The classroom is also used as a sensory environment. The students have access to their outside space and sensory garden, so learning can take place both indoors and outdoors.

We regularly make use of our excellent on-site facilities and have whole group activity sessions in areas such as the Swimming Pool, Outside Sensory Garden and the Pets Court Yard.



Celebration of Achievements

We believe it is really important to celebrate all the achievements that the children make, whether it is responding to a new stimulus, showing persistence with completing a shoe box task or showing interest towards their classmates.

Each month we take part in a whole school celebration of achievement, where the children get nominated for a Head Teacher award for fantastic achievements. This is celebrated during assembly.

Breakfast and After School Club

At Sherbourne we run an after school club on a Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. We also run a breakfast club Monday to Friday. The children are able to access a variety of activities.

