



SENSORY CURRICULUM POLICY

AIMS

At Spring Common we aim to:

- create a happy and stimulating environment for the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of the pupils which takes into account their special needs and individual differences;
- encourage respect for and tolerance of other races, religions and cultures;
- help pupils acquire the knowledge and skills required for everyday living and, through this, make informed choices;
- provide pupils with opportunities to learn about themselves, their society and their culture;
- provide opportunities for pupils to assess evidence, make decisions, negotiate, discuss, listen, make and deal with relationships, solve problems and work independently;
- foster a sense of pride and community within school and in the wider environment.

Although these aims are set out separately, the qualities, attitudes, knowledge and skills developed are interdependent. A whole school approach is essential, including all adults who teach, help and care for our pupils.

RATIONALE

Sensory experiences alone are not an end in themselves, but rather a means of developing the curriculum. A rich sensory environment, especially when tailored for pupils with specific needs, can support development and attainment. Sensory experiences need to be extended into all areas of school life, and therefore part of the broad, balanced and relevant curriculum we offer to our pupils.

A sensory curriculum is part of a whole school curriculum or learning experience. It covers the development of the senses of taste, smell, touch, tactile experiences, vision, sound and bodily experiences. It also covers the development of the integration of all these senses to form a multi-sensory approach for the child to use learning situations. Very special children usually find a sensory curriculum is a vital part of their learning process. It is a tool for learning. The sensory curriculum is extended and integrated throughout the national curriculum for very special children.

DEFINITIONS OF SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

In the normal course of development we develop the ability to process and make sense of our world through our ability to see, hear, smell, taste, touch. We also have a sense our bodies (proprioception) and a sense ourselves in space (vestibular system). These underpin all our learning.

Some people suffer an impairment in one or more of these areas, which may impact on their overall development as a learner.

The sensory range extends from profound and permanent impairment through to lesser and temporary levels loss. Impairments may arise from physical, neurological or metabolic causes.

At Spring Common we recognise that pupils with a sensory impairment may be found across the whole academic ability range. The principle categories of impairment are:

➤ **Hearing Impairment (HI)**

'Hearing impairment' ranges from a mild hearing loss to profound deafness. Hearing loss may be because of conductive or sensory-neural problems and can be measured on a decibel scale. Four categories are generally used: mild, moderate, severe and profound.

Pupils are regarded as having a hearing impairment if they require hearing aids, adaptations to their environment or particular teaching strategies in order to access the concepts and language of the curriculum.

➤ **Visual Impairment (VI)**

'Visual impairment' ranges from minor impairment through to blindness.

Pupils are regarded as having a visual impairment if they require adaptations to their environment or specific differentiation of learning materials in order to access the curriculum.

➤ **Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)**

Pupils with multi-sensory impairment have a combination of visual and hearing difficulties. They are sometimes referred to as deaf/blind but may have some residual sight or hearing.

ENTITLEMENT

All pupils are entitled to a curriculum which engenders their personal and cultural development and prepares them for adult life.

The curriculum offered is delivered to and accessed by every pupil regardless of gender, ability, racial or cultural differences. These issues are addressed fully by the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

INCLUSION

Pupils who attend Spring Common Academy Trust have a range of needs. A whole school ethos is promoted which encompasses and values all pupils and their families. There is a climate which supports flexible and creative responses to individual needs. Appropriate assessment and support arrangements are in place, both within the school and involving external agencies, so that children's needs are properly addressed. All Staff have access to suitable professional development opportunities which will support inclusive practice.

The school will share its knowledge and expertise with other educational establishments in order to promote inclusive practices.

IMPLEMENTATION

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. This method gives rise to new learning, using all the senses to access the curriculum and makes learning fun!

We also offer a range of activities, which include:

- ⇒ sensory rooms;
- ⇒ horse riding;
- ⇒ swimming;
- ⇒ Ipac;
- ⇒ aromatherapy massage;
- ⇒ sensory story sessions;
- ⇒ body awareness programmes.

At Spring Common we currently employ a specialist for sensory, a specialist TA for VI and a specialist TA for VI. These members of staff liaise with specialist teachers, work with identified pupils and run specialist sessions in addition to their regular work in our classrooms.

A SENSORY DIET

Many of our pupils benefit from regular sensory input to help ground them. In conjunction with the Occupational Therapy service, we offer daily sensory circuits and sensory integration session for a number of our pupils. Some of our pupils have a sensory diet, whereby elements of these approaches can be drip-fed through the school day to help keep pupils on task.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Assessment is an integral part of teaching. This extends to the use of sensory approaches to teaching and learning, where assessment is a continuous process, which takes into account the learning process and the way pupils approach and deal with tasks.

Where appropriate, pupils will be involved with self-assessment.

Any notable progress made can be reported to parents via the Annual Summative Report.

Regular feedback from specialist teachers for the visually and hearing impaired.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Any monitoring or observation of planning, teaching and learning through a sensory approach will take place in accordance with the school's monitoring cycle.

Please refer to the current Sensory Action Plan for specific information regarding monitoring and evaluation for the current academic year.

HOME-SCHOOL LINKS

We value parents'/carers' involvement in their child's learning. Teachers keep parent's informed of any approaches used in school.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

This policy has been written according to the guidelines laid down in the school's Equal Opportunities Policy. A sensory approach is intended to include all children, irrespective of their ability, gender, race or ethnicity.

POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate by the designated teacher with responsibility for sensory co-ordinator and SMT, with input from other staff and advisors, as appropriate.
The policy will be reviewed by Governors.

Linda Crook

Linda Crook, teacher with responsibility for sensory, 14/06/16

Policy agreed on: JULY 2016

Signed on behalf of the Trustees _____

Committee: CURRICULUM

Author: _____

Review date (optional): _____

Website **Y**/N