St Andrew’s School

Supporting Children with Autism Spectrum Conditions

Sensory Policy

**Introduction**

This policy document sets out the school's aims, principles and strategies for addressing the sensory needs of all pupils, who exhibit sensory sensitivity.

**Rationale**

Our senses provide us with a means of interacting with and being part of society and enable us to understand and respond to the environment around us. Many individuals, particularly those on the autistic spectrum, have difficulties in integrating or making sense of sensory inputs which often manifests itself as withdrawal, distress or challenging behavior. Addressing sensory issues should result in increased engagement with the curriculum and therefore improved learning experiences, along with greater opportunities for engagement in both school and non-school activities. Sensory assessment can further personalise learning programmes, especially for those pupils with complex learning difficulties.

Addressing sensory need and accommodating sensory preferences is important for all our pupils with a sensory sensitivity. This policy will therefore apply to all those pupils within school.

**Aims**

* To inform school staff, parents, carers and young people of the importance of sensory issues in the education, health and wellbeing of pupils.
* To put in place a means of recording, assessing, documenting, addressing and reviewing the sensory needs, responses and preferences of pupils.
* To provide an adapted environment and personalised teaching strategies that address the sensory needs and requirements of pupils, so resulting in improved learning experiences which positively impacts on health and wellbeing.

**Equal Opportunities**

 Pupils will have their personal sensory issues, needs and preferences documented. Where sensory perception, needs and preferences impact on education, health and wellbeing, this policy and its associated procedures will be used to personalise and inform the teaching and learning.

**Procedure for Sensory Profiling and Assessment**

Where relevant, pupils will have a sensory profile drawn up through observation by class-based staff. The profile outlines observed reactions to the following inputs:

* Sound
* Vision
* Movement and body awareness
* Taste and food preferences
* Smell
* Touch – hands
* Touch – body

For example, staff will record if a pupil appears to react particularly positively, negatively or unusually to certain sounds. A pupil on the autistic spectrum may put their fingers in their ears and hum.

Pupils may contribute to their own sensory profiles. Pupils may be hypo or hyper-sensitive to stimuli and either response must be recorded.

The strategies may address specific issues that impact on learning and will include planned opportunities for addressing the issue with a view to reducing negative behavior.

**Reporting**

Sensory profiles and sensory strategies will be reviewed and discussed prior to a school Annual Review taking place.

Pupils with complex sensory profiles should be referred to Occupational Therapy.

**Addressing Sensory Needs at St Andrew’s School.**

There are a number of resources in school to help address sensory needs. These include:

* Ear defenders
* Chewy tubes
* Wedge Seats
* Bubble seats
* Weighted blankets
* Gym Balls
* Manual dexterity manipulation toys

Students sensory needs will change therefore resources that may work one day may not work the next.

Reviewed Annually

October 2017 – Ruth Cranston