



**Castle Tower School**

## **Sensory Curriculum Policy**

<b>Date Ratified by Board of Governors</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	2027

Castle Tower welcomes pupils aged 3-19 who face a wide range of barriers to learning. Educational opportunities are provided within our Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Post 16 departments.

## **Our Vision**

### **Vision:**

To be a leading light in special education through educating, nurturing and inspiring all our school community.

### **Mission:**

Castle Tower School is committed to creating a community which:

- Ensures everyone is safe and included
- Always learns
- Promotes independence and resilience
- Celebrates achievements
- Looks forward with hope to the future

Everything we do is driven by our core values:

- Child-centred
- Nurturing
- Fun
- Team work
- Inclusive
- Independence

## **Our Ethos**

Castle Tower strives to create a caring community in which every member feels valued, supported and happy. All staff work to maintain an ethos in which fairness, tolerance, compassion and forgiveness permeate all relationships within the school community. High standards of respect, self-discipline, commitment and sensitivity are sought and everyone is encouraged to set and achieve the highest personal, academic and social goals. The safety, welfare and development of everyone in our school community is of paramount importance to all staff and Governors.

At Castle Tower, there is continued development of the quality of the teaching and learning environment. Resources are used efficiently. Opportunities are created for learning in co-operative and interactive settings. Pupils are presented with challenging as well as stimulating teaching and learning opportunities. Staff at Castle Tower seek close working relationships with other providers and services throughout each stage of our pupil's education and through the transition stage to further education and life after school.

## **Introduction**

The aim of this guidance is to provide practical information regarding learning and teaching taking place in the Sensory Classrooms within Castle Tower School across the primary and secondary department. This guidance supplements the "Sensory Curriculum Policy".

This guidance is divided into the following sections:

**Section 1: Sensory Integration**

**Section 2: Sensory Curriculum**

**Section 3: Assessment**

**Section 4: Writing PLP's**

**Section 5: Total Communication**

**Section 6: A sensory Day and ways of working**

**Section 7: Resources available within our school**

**Section 8: Supporting websites, books and alternative resources**

## Section 1: Sensory Integration




The pupils in our Sensory Classes are placed there due to the range of needs and abilities they present to us in school. Many of the pupils have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, complex learning needs or Profound and Multiple Learning difficulties as well as other Sensory Processing issues which mean that they need some specialist support in their learning and a different learning environment from the majority of pupils entering our school. Most of the pupils in the Sensory classrooms will stay in these specialised classrooms as they move through the school, however, there can be some movement back into the main body of the school if staff feel the structures that child requires are met and that they can cope in a busier classroom environment. Sometimes integration with their peers from other classes is required and this can also be facilitated.

“Sensory integration is about how our brain receives and processes sensory information so that we can do the things we need to do in our everyday life.” (<https://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/What-is-SI>)

Many of the pupils within the Sensory Classroom experience difficulties with Sensory Integration known as Sensory Processing Disorder. The Sensory Classrooms provide sensory learning experiences which are tailored to meet the Sensory Difficulties experienced by our pupils. The staff in the rooms aim to help support pupil learning using the range of resources available to us in school (see Section 6).

Through using a Sensory Integration approach infused in the sensory curriculum, we aim to support our pupils in developing all 8 senses systems:

		
<b>Visual</b> – “Visual stimuli is picked up by visual receptors located in the eye. Visual receptors are stimulated by light, colour and movement.”	<b>Auditory</b> – “Auditory receptors are located in the inner ear and identify loud, soft, high, low near and far noises in the environment.”	<b>Olfactory</b> - ‘Olfactory’ receptors located in the nose. The olfactory senses can distinguish between a range of smells.”
		
<b>Tactile</b> – “Tactile receptors identify the sensation of touch and are all over our bodies in our skin. Some areas of our skin have more tactile receptors than other areas e.g. mouth and hands. The tactile senses are important for identifying touch, pressure, pain, temperature and texture.”	<b>Gustatory</b> – “Taste is picked up by gustatory receptors which are located on our tongues and are linked to our olfactory senses (smell). Sweet, sour, bitter, salty and spicy flavours are processed through our gustatory sense.”	

		
<p><b>Proprioception</b> - “Body awareness or where parts of our bodies are and how they are moving (e.g. hand waving beside head) are processed by the ‘Proprioception’ sense. Proprioceptive receptors are triggered by movement and muscle contraction (tightening).”</p>	<p><b>Vestibular</b> - “Movement and balance are processed by ‘Vestibular’ receptors which are located in our inner ear. Any activity which changes the position of our heads effects are vestibular senses. Usually the vestibular and visual senses work very closely together. Vestibular senses can distinguish between speed and direction of movement.”</p>	<p><b>Interoception</b> - “This is a fairly new area for discussion in sensory integration; interoception is how our body tells our brain what is going on inside our body, when we are hungry or feel full, when our heart is beating fast or when we have that sensation of butterflies in the stomach.”</p>

Information and pictures collated from Middletown Centre for Autism and (<https://www.sensoryintegration.org.uk/What-is-SI>)

Pupils who experience issues with Sensory Processing Difficulties usually respond to sensory input in one of two ways – Over-responsive/Hyperactivity or Under-responsive/hypoactivity. They may respond to different sensory input in different ways such as being over-responsive to smells but under-responsive to tactile experiences.

The table below shows what each of these mean and the typical pupil responses you may see in a pupil. “It is important to remember that these differences in sensory processing should not always be viewed as difficulties, but rather as a different way of seeing and sensing the world. Children and young people with autism may notice input that others are unaware of and can therefore bring a different perspective and an attention to fine detail.” (Middletown Centre for Autism)

	Over-Responsive / Hyperactivity	Under-responsive/hypoactivity
<b>Explanation</b>	Attends too much to sensory input Has difficulty filtering out irrelevant input	Does not register or attend to adequate amounts of sensory input
<b>Pupils Experiences</b>	Very Aware of noises – cannot focus on teachers voice Very Aware of smells Very aware of visual stimuli Aware of feeling of clothes Feelings of sensory overload and anxiety	Brain not alert enough for interaction, learning and engagement Not aware of what is going on around them Low registration May sensory seek
<b>Pupil Responses</b>	Defensiveness Avoidance Easily Upset Anxiety Distractibility Sensory Overload – may lead to pupil “shutting down” May engage in disruptive behaviours Avoids close proximity to others	Disinterested/disengaged Appears lethargic Slow processing information Delayed or no response to instructions or questions Becomes engaged in highly active or multisensory tasks Difficulty completing work

	May engage in repetitive behaviours to block out sensory input	Frequently stands or moves in classroom Swings in chairs Enjoys fast movement Frequently Fidgets Frequently touches objects and people Likes to hold fidget toys Sniffs objects and people Makes noises in quiet environments Enjoys 'rough' play
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Information collated from Middletown Centre for Autism and further information can be found at <https://sensory-processing.middletownautism.com/>

Working on sensory processing is a large part of the Sensory Day. A lot of the work that is undertaken may need to be in conjunction with our Allied Health Professionals such as an OT or Speech and Language therapists looking at ways of engaging a sensory diet to support pupils learning environments and prepare and engage them in their learning. Staff may also need to carry out additional assessments such as using the Sensory Profile (further information can be found about this in Section 3: Assessment) in order to guide them down the routes of the most appropriate resources which should be employed to gain the maximum benefit for a child.

## Section 2: Sensory Curriculum

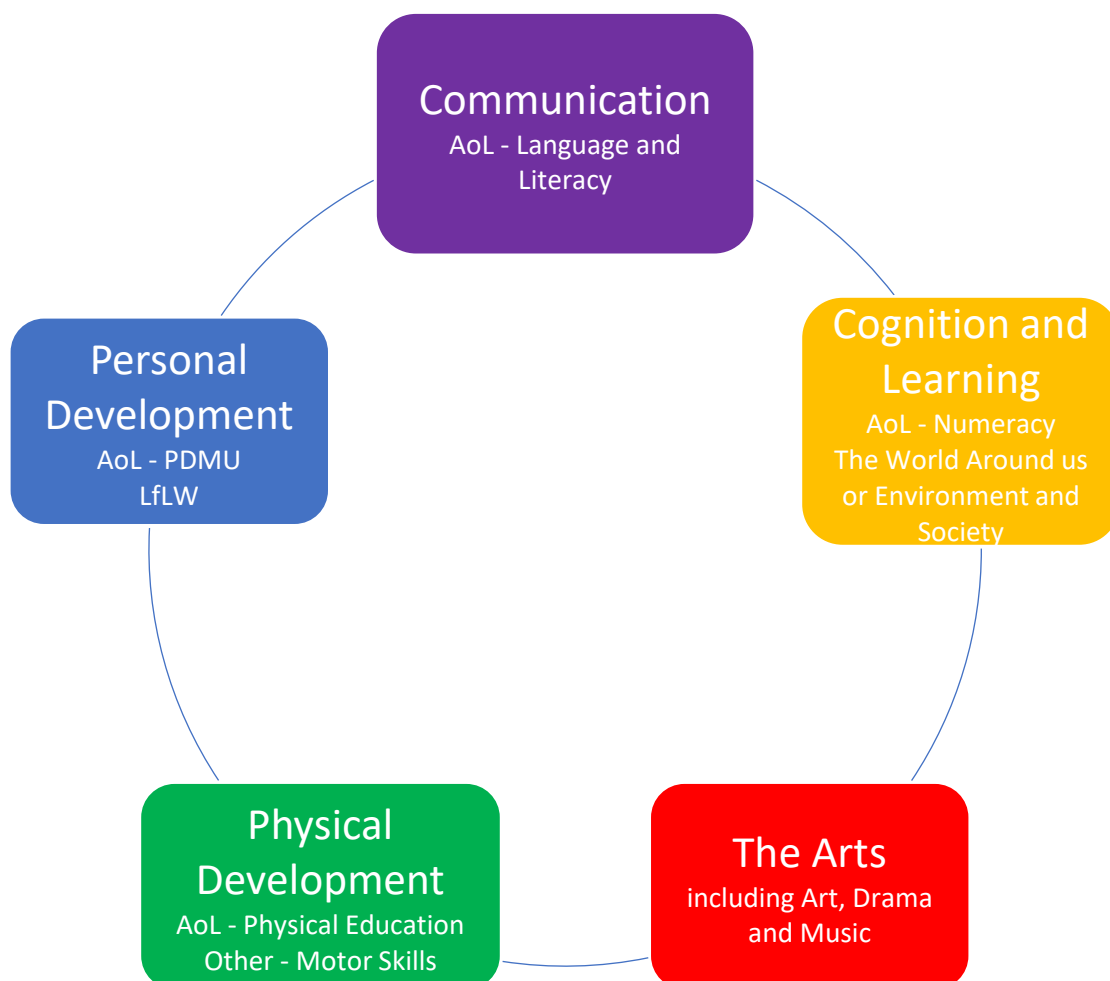
The Sensory Curriculum within the sensory classrooms allows our pupils to follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum adapted to meet their range of needs through a multi-sensory and functional skills approach. The key to the sensory curriculum is to support our pupils in their learning process in order to grasp key life skills, communication, sensory integration and help develop skills at their ability level, taking account and celebrating all the small steps they make.

The Sensory Curriculum is divided into two-parts: the Explicit Curriculum and Hidden Curriculum. The Explicit Curriculum covers all your areas of Learning which brings in all your topic work. The Hidden Curriculum covers your daily routines such as your scent of the day, morning routines, using timetables, visuals, objects of reference and so on.

### ***The Explicit Curriculum***

In Castle Tower we follow a thematic approach to our learning and teaching. The sensory classes are following a 4-year cycle of Topics. The topics can be found on MS Teams>Sensory Team>Planning. This is to ensure variety for pupils as often pupils in sensory classes remain in the same class for a number of years. From this cycle of topics, individual class teachers make a Curriculum Overview for the year providing an outline of what is being covered across the year within their classrooms – Long Term Planning. These then help to inform the Medium-Term Planning which takes place termly within the classrooms. Outline copies of these form of Planners can be found on MS Teams>Sensory Team>Planning.

The key elements within our sensory curriculum are:



When planning for teaching through these elements, teachers should take into considering a multisensory approach to their learning activities.

### *Communication*

This element of the curriculum is about making communication meaningful and interesting to the pupils and adapting it to meet their specific needs. We also work closely with our Speech and language colleagues to provide a consistent approach and to ensure pupils needs a catered for.

Communication takes account of the 3 elements of language and literacy: Talking and Listening, Reading and Writing. These will be differentiated to meet the needs of the individual pupils as outlined in the Pupils PLP.

Activities such as developing total communication and Attention Autism will come under Talking and Listening and Sensory Stories will come under Reading.

### *Cognition and Learning*

Numeracy within the sensory curriculum will be functional and based on life skills which will help the pupils throughout their life with the key focus being on practical skills. Pupils will also have opportunities to experience all elements of the numeracy curriculum through sensory play and practical experiences such as shape, space and measure, time, money, handling data in order to help develop understanding and experiences.

The World Around us (Primary) and Environment and Society (Secondary) are our key areas where our main topic planning comes from. These subjects help pupils to understand the world and how the world works. By using a thematic approach, it helps pupils connect their learning about the world through all their subject areas. The activities planned for their topic will be practical, sensory activities and ones which help the pupils understand the topic at their level.

### *Personal Development including social and emotional development.*

This element takes into account the areas of learning PDMU (Primary) and Learning for Life and work (secondary). Planning will activities which are designed to develop personal skills, social and emotional skills, cooker (Home Economics) and to prepare them for the outside world.

### *Physical Development*

Physical Development takes into account Gross Motor and Fine Motor skills development, Sensory Circuits and Physical Education.

### *The Arts*

Music takes place in many forms through the school day through our welcome time, topic related songs and rhymes primary movement, listening and responding to music and specific music lessons. Many of our music activities also involve elements of drama such as performing and responding.

Art can be linked to the class topic and provides pupils with the opportunities to experiment with sensory experiences, textures, materials, making objects, cutting, sticking and so on.

Drama can involve role play, sensory play and topic-based learning.

A sample outline planner can be found on MS Teams>Sensory Team>Planning.

### ***The Hidden Curriculum***

The Hidden curriculum will probably make up most of the sensory curriculum day. This curriculum supports our pupil learning experiences making it accessible to them despite the needs they present



with. These are activities, routines and environment which we create day and daily but mean so much more to our pupils than just a routine. Sometimes the curriculum may be unintended consequences of the learning experiences we provide. Whilst some of the resources are explicitly planned for such as the symbols we use with particular pupil; they may not be evident within our Planners and may be seen more in the Pupils Personal Learning Plan (PLP).

Some of the learning experiences will include:

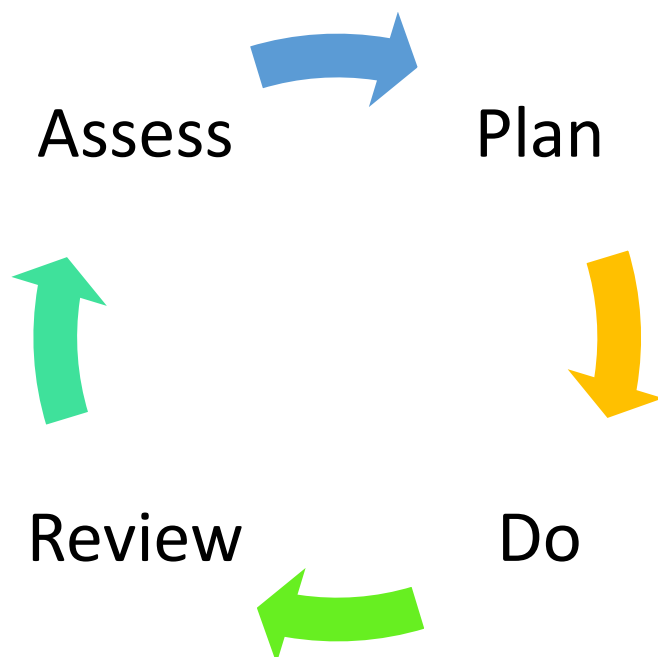
- Morning Routine such as Welcome Song, Weather Song, Self-Registration and so on
- Scent of the Day
- Objects of Reference
- Visual Schedules
- Workstation procedures
- Feeding Routine

As a Sensory Team, there are themes which are common throughout all the classes such as the Scent of The Day, Visual Schedule resources and so on. These resources can be found as follows:

- Scent of the Day – MS Teams>Sensory Team> Sensory Curriculum
- Objects of Reference – boxes are available in each classroom and also by contacting the Head of the Sensory Team in your department
- Visual Schedules – Training available through MS Teams>Training>Training materials>Sensory and ASD; Symbols can be found on MS Teams>Total Communication
- Workstations – Training available through MS Teams>Training materials>Sensory and ASD; Ideas for resources can be found MS Teams>Sensory Team>Workstations
- Feeding – advice can be sought from the Speech and Language Therapy Team where required.

### Section 3: Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the Learning and Teaching Cycle in Castle Tower.



#### School Based Assessments

School based assessments are used each September during our assessment month in order to find a baseline for where pupils are working. These assessments take place in Literacy, Numeracy and Personal Development. The assessments are used to inform the Pupils PLP to write specific targets for pupils and also to inform classroom planning for topics and areas of learning. Throughout the year these assessments will be reviewed and updated with pupil progress. It may not be appropriate to carry out all the assessments at the beginning of the year, particularly if it is an area which is not going to be a focus within the PLP targets or classroom planning. For example, when assessing Numeracy you may teach the topic of Time in Term 3 therefore it may be more realistic to carry out this assessment at the start of Term 3 rather than the beginning of the year.

As a school, a number of assessments have been devised to meet the needs of our pupils. These assessments have been adapted to support the assessment of pupils in the Sensory Classrooms. The assessments available are:

- Communication
- Fine Motor Skills
- Life Skills
- Numeracy
- Social Interaction

These assessments can be found on MS Teams>Sensory Team>ASD Assessments. The most appropriate assessments for pupils should be selected and used within the assessment month in September. Using the “Important Dates” calendar, these should also be reviewed at the end of the school year and stored in the pupils Red Assessment File.

As part of our ongoing developments through the SDP, these assessments will be updated and new assessments will be created to address areas where gaps are identified.

### **Sensory Profile**

The Sensory Profile is mainly used by Occupational Therapists to help identify the areas which pupils need sensory support as part of developing a sensory diet. This can also be completed by class teachers in Castle Tower School to give them a better insight into the sensory needs of the pupils and identify which skills need worked on as a priority and to guide learning and teaching in the classroom. These can be completed as you feel it is required and are not required for every child.

Training and the Sensory Profiles can be provided by your Head of Sensory in your department.

### **Standardised Assessments**

Standardised assessments are used to provide information on Literacy and Numeracy levels. These assessments form part of our Annual Review Paperwork which is prepared either in October for an early review or March. Pupils who have a statement of Moderate Learning Difficulties are the only pupils who should go through these types of assessments. Further details on these assessments can be found in the School Assessment Policy or through the Area of Learning coordinators.

### **Statutory Assessments**

As we follow the Northern Ireland Curriculum within Castle Tower school, we also assess our pupils using the Levels of Progression for Communication, Using Mathematics and Using ICT. The majority of our pupils fall under the Q Skills levels which are the Pre-requisite skills to the levels of progression. Some of our pupils are assessed using the Quest for learning assessment tool which is used for pupils who have a statement of PMLD or Complex learning needs.

Each pupil has their own profile set up on the Q Skills and Quest software. Through the pupils learning cycle key times will be evident to assess them on the skills they are working toward through the pupils PLP and also through the learning journey within key areas of learning within the class. This assessment information can be in the form of a completed activity, a photograph, a verbal response, a video, a typed observation and so on. These pieces of assessment information can then be uploaded onto the pupil's profile linked to the particular skill they have been working on.

For further guidance and training please see the Q Skills and Quest training available from the NI Curriculum website and also speak to the school assessment coordinator.

## Section 4: Writing PLP's

A PLP is designed to show the targets set for each pupil and the progress being made. These targets are created through using the baseline assessment, observations made of the pupil and in consultation with the parents/carers of the pupil. Currently the targets set fall under the following categories in the sensory classrooms:

- Communication
- Cognitive
- Social Interaction
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

PLP's are a collaborative approach which set realistic targets for pupils to help them progress.

How are targets made?

Targets are made by using teacher professional judgement through observations noted when carrying out baseline assessments, consultation with parents/carers and other interested professionals such as Speech and Language therapy, Physiotherapy and so on.

Teachers may also seek guidance from the Statutory assessment tools such as the Q Skills, Quest or the Levels of progression as way of helping identify steps in pupil learning. The Targets are broad statements. The detail of the targets will be defined in the success criteria.

How are success criteria made?

Success criteria are the SMART element of the target. They break down the broad target for the parents/carers, staff and pupils into smaller, measurable chunks. They are more specific and personalised to the pupils. They are the element which may be used and discussed with the pupil to help develop their understanding of the targets set for them where appropriate.

S- specific

M – measurable

A - attainable

R - relevant

T – time bound

## Section 5: Total Communication

In Castle Tower School, we work on a total communication approach. This means that we use a variety of methods to support the communication of our pupils. Therefore, we work closely with our pupils to find the best and most appropriate methods to use with individual pupils. We make close links with our colleagues in speech and language therapy who work alongside us to support our pupils learning and communication and are working with us to ensure communication is a high priority for all pupils in our school.

Communication involves the following methods:

- Non-verbal Communication – gesture, sign, eye pointing, facial expression, using symbols, communication books, pictures, switch toys and so on;
- Written Communication - written words or drawn pictures;
- Verbal Communication - vocalisations or spoken words.

It also involves creating the correct environment for communicating. This looks at both the classroom environment and opportunities provided to communicate within and outside of the classroom. To find out more about this please see our PowerPoint on “Creating an SEN Friendly Environment” within MS Teams>Training

When speaking we need to be aware of the language we are using and the amount of language we use. Some pupils are maybe only working at a one or two-word level and therefore may not understand all the other words we are using. Therefore, it is important to know your pupils well and gain advice on what they understand particularly from their speech and language therapist as they may have worked with your pupils before they have even entered the school setting. The speech and language therapist is your best asset in the understanding your pupil. If the pupil has been in the school for a while, notes regarding their levels of communication will be available through their pupil profile. You may wish to speak to their previous teacher on the communication strategies they have used in the previous class to ensure continuity of their programme.

Also, some of our pupils may have been discharged from the speech and language service but this does not mean you can't access advice and support for pupils within your class. Our Speech Therapy team are always available for you to talk about your pupils and if required you can refer a pupil back to work with speech and language therapy. You can speak directly to your class speech therapist to talk about this or speak to your line manager to discuss the process.

*What communication programmes are used in Castle Tower?*

As a school we use the following:

- Makaton
- Communication in Print
- Picture Exchange Communication – PECS
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication - AAC

Makaton is a language programme that uses symbols, signs and speech to enable our pupils to communicate. Within Castle Tower School, we only use the signing and speech. It supports the development of essential communication skills such as attention and listening, comprehension, memory, recall and organisation of language and expression.

Communication in Print is the programme used to make our symbols within school. Within MS Teams>Total Communication section, we have a wide variety of symbols ready to print and use as you

require them. We also have social stories which are also available which use the Communication in Print. Communication in Print is used to create our visual schedules as well within school.

PECS or Picture Exchange Communication is an approach that uses pictures to development communication. Our PECS books are created by our Speech and Language Therapists in conjunction with school and home.

AAC or Augmentative and Alternative Communication devices encompass a various methods of communication that can help pupils who are unable to use verbal speech to communicate e.g. picture boards and speech generating devices. Our speech and language therapists work through this process with school and home.

*What support is available to help me understand this?*

Our speech and language therapists are our main form of classroom support and are integral in the classroom practice.

As a school, we have also devised a training section on MS Teams which takes your through key communication training which will support you in your classroom. Please contact your head of department for access to the training area.

## Section 6: A Sensory Day and Ways of Working

### The Sensory Team

The Sensory department work as a collaborative team to help with planning for the classrooms, addressing classroom issues, developing resources and strategies to support pupils and staff in the rooms and as a support mechanism for the teachers working in the department. The team meets on a regular basis with a set agenda. This is a valuable support mechanism for teachers and helps to develop the provision we provide for our pupils.

### Class File

Each class within the Primary and sensory departments have a white class file. This file contains important information for the smooth running of the classroom and information which ensures that all staff working in the room are kept informed of planning, pupil information and ongoing class information.

This file contains the following:

- Timetable
- Pupil Profiles and Sensory Profiles
- Curriculum overviews and planners
- Pupils Personal Learning Plans – currently known as Individual Progress Plan
- Medical
- Risk Assessments
- Pupil Information
- School Information
- Correspondence
- Permissions

Further information on the white class files can be found on MS Teams>Primary Department>Guidance.

### The Sensory Day

Each classroom will have their own set up for the day. The structure of the day will be dictated by the needs of the pupils you are catering for. Some rooms will have more pupils who require intimate/personal care needs while others have pupils who need additional movement breaks. Below we have provided examples of how the day could look.

### Sensory ASD Classroom

Session	Example Activities
Morning	Workstation – Session 1 Welcome Time
Break	Toileting and break Walk/Outdoor Play
Mid-Morning	Choice Time Attention Development Sensory Room
Lunch	Toileting and break Walk/Outdoor Play
Afternoon	Workstation – Session 2 IPad

## Sensory PMLD Classroom

Session	Example Activities
Morning	Welcome Time – “Say Hello” song, Singing the “Hello Song” to each pupil, weather song, topic related songs and music time.
Break	Including personal care needs and feeding Walk/Outdoor Play
Mid-Morning	Target work/Tabletop Activity Sensory Story
Lunch	Including personal care needs and feeding
Afternoon	TACPAC Sensory Art

**Section 6 of this document sets out all the resources available to support the Sensory Day.**

### *TEACCH and Workstations*

“The TEACCH Autism Programme aims to facilitate learning through a visual and structured teaching approach. The methods can be adapted to suit all ages and ability levels.” (Middletown Centre for Autism)

Within Castle Tower there are a variety of workstations which have been specifically designed to meet the needs of the pupils within our school. These workstations are used in both the sensory classes and the main classrooms as well to support pupil learning.

For more information, please refer to MS Teams>Training where you will find training PowerPoints and school guidance on this.

### *Circle Time*

Circle Time is used throughout the whole school and helps to develop positive relationships between children and staff. It aims to give them tools to engage with and listen to each other. The whole class takes part in Circle Time at the same time, led by their teacher, who sits in the circle with their pupils. During circle time we encourage all pupils to have their ‘voice’ heard whether this is verbally or by making a sound through an instrument or by using Makaton, we play games and whilst we are having fun we are developing the important skills of talking, listening, thinking, concentrating, thinking and the social skills of eye contact, turn taking and working together.



## **Section 7: Resources available within our school**

This is not an exhaustive list of the resources available to support the learning and teaching within your classroom. Each classroom has their own set of resources to support learning and teaching. These are mainly shared resources available for all pupil and targeted at the pupils most in need of the resources. As a school we try and ensure equal access for all but some of the resources are part of the Sensory Classroom and vital to supporting pupils in their access to education and learning.

### **Attention Autism / Attention Development**

Attention Autism is an intervention model designed by Gina Davies, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. It aims to develop natural and spontaneous communication through the use of visually based and highly motivating activities. The Attention Autism programme progresses through a series of stages, building on each skill level. Each new stage is introduced when the group is ready to expand attention skills.

For more information, please refer to the Training folder on Teams where you will find training PowerPoints and school guidance on this.

### **Cookery**

A sensory based activity that gives the pupils are opportunity to experience and try new tastes, smells etc. Cookery will be based upon the current class topic and skills such as pouring, mixing, stirring, measuring etc will be taught.

### **Hydrotherapy Pool**

The hydrotherapy pool in Castle Tower is used for both therapeutic and educational purposes. Our pool is a warm water graduated pool. Our therapeutic support is provided on a one-to-one basis from our physiotherapists who work with an individual to treat medical conditions. Our classes use the pool as an educational resource to provide sensory stimulation and regulation, swimming experiences, enhance and develop therapeutic practices and develop our physical development programmes within class.

### **Rebound Therapy**

Rebound Therapy is the therapeutic use of the trampoline to develop and promote motor skills, body awareness, balance, co-ordination and communication. It is designed to accommodate pupils' individual abilities and disabilities whilst drawing upon their previous experience and likes and dislikes. Improved health and fitness and greater independence are encouraged, whilst fun, enjoyment and the opportunity to succeed are of paramount importance.

### **Secondary Movement Area**

In September 2021 a new movement area was installed by Black Box Gym in the secondary department. Swings and other movement equipment were provided by Southpaw. This new movement area has been very successful for many pupils with a range of needs such as severe learning difficulties, autism spectrum disorder and pupils who display challenging behaviour. It has allowed them to have their sensory/ proprioceptive needs met in a safe, secure environment. Many staff have been trained on the correct usage of the swings and other equipment on offer and this area has been best utilised when giving pupils a 'break' from their classroom. This has meant that pupils have returned to the classroom environment in a calmer, much more settled mood. It is hoped to continue to add new equipment and swings to this area to continue to meet the ever changing needs of the pupils that attending the school.

## **Five Funny Feelings**

Five Funny Feelings, a collective worship CD from Fishy Music Productions, is an audio CD of original material designed to bring collective Christian worship into the classroom on a daily basis. The CD consists of five 5-minute tracks which can be used on any day of the week, each containing two simple songs, a themed meditation and a repeated prayer. Each day is a different feeling (happy, sad etc) and has accompanying sensory input. 5 Funny Feelings is perfect for welcome time.

## **Jacuzzi Baths**

There are three Jacuzzi baths (two in primary, one in secondary) that are used to provide a sensory experience for pupils. When using the baths the pupils can experience the various jets and bubbles created, the cycle of lights and listen to relaxing music.

## **Reflexology**

Reflexology is a type of massage that focuses in on providing pressure on hands and feet. Pupils will be afforded a 6-week block of reflexology (delivered by a fully trained reflexologist) through the extended schools programme. Pupils are selected on the basis on who will benefit the most (as spaces are limited).

## **Sensory Circuits**

Sensory circuits provide short 'bursts' of sensory motor activities that help regulate and restore sensory balance. These sensory motor activities help children reach their optimum state; therefore, making them more ready to participate in guided class activities.

In order for children to get maximum benefit from sensory circuits, it is important to carry out the activities in the correct order as below:

- 1 x Starting Activity – providing stimulation in a controlled setting  
(Children sitting on therapy ball and bouncing for 2 minutes).
- 4/5 x Sensory Activities to be completed in a circuit
- 1 x Ending Calming Activity - ensuring children finish the circuits in a calm state

Further details on this can be found in the Sensory Team Folder on Teams.

## **Sensory Rooms**

There are three sensory rooms within the Castle Tower School building; one in the nursery department, one in the primary department and one in the secondary department. These rooms have various equipment in that are able to help settled and calm pupils. The length of time using these rooms will vary from class to class but usually between 15-20 minutes. These sensory rooms can be booked online.

## **Sensory Stories**

Sensory stories are taught as part of literacy and communication in the sensory classes. These stories are generally based upon a simple, engaging story with sensory input (touch, taste, sight, smell or hearing) at various parts of the story.

## **TACPAC**

TACPAC is a sensory communication resource based on touch and music. It helps with sensory impairment, developmental delay, complex learning difficulties, tactile defensiveness and limited or preverbal levels of communication. It is divided up into 5 sets and pupils will complete one or two sets

each year. The repetitive nature is important for the pupils, they should begin to remember/ communicate which item is next. A range of everyday/ household items are used in TACPAC.

### **Wize Floor**

Located in the secondary department the wize floor is an interactive experience for our pupils. There are a number of pre-set 'tiles' (games) for the children to play. Internet access is also enabled and able to be used.

### **Trips out in Community**

It is important for our pupils to experience being out in the local community. Some sensory classes will go on regular trips out each week to learn important life skills. These could be as simple as waiting in line in a café etc. Social stories and visuals can be used to help prepare pupils who may struggle with trips out. It is also essential that a risk assessment is carried out and that there is an appropriate number of staff on each outing.

## Section 8: Supporting websites, books and alternative resources

Resource	Information Contained
Hirstwood Training <a href="https://hirstwood.com/">https://hirstwood.com/</a>	Free and paid for training to support staff working with pupils with sensory needs.
Flo Longhorn <a href="https://sites.google.com/view/flolonghornsensorybooksfreedow/home">https://sites.google.com/view/flolonghornsensorybooksfreedow/home</a>	This link provides you with access to the Flo Longhorn books and resources for free. These are created specifically with Sensory Children in mind.
CCEA - PMLD Thematic Units <a href="https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/pml-d-sensory-thematic-units">https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/pml-d-sensory-thematic-units</a>	Thematic Planning units specifically designed for those with Complex Needs and PMLD providing information on incorporating all areas of learning.
Middletown Centre for Autism <a href="https://www.middletownautism.com/">https://www.middletownautism.com/</a>	Resources, training and information to support those working with pupils with Autism at all ages