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**Sensory Room Policy**

Date: January 2024

Review Date: January 2027

Lead SLT: Michele Smith

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**Statement of intent**

Sallygate School understands that all pupils learn differently, and we endeavour to cater for these differences – that’s why we have established a sensory room to help ensure our curriculum is accessible to all our pupils. In the sensory room, pupils are provided with a safe and engaging space in which they can develop their sensory skills.

By adhering to this policy, we will aim to ensure the continuous development of our curriculum offering, so that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn in a stimulating and supportive learning environment.

# Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

* DfE (2015) ‘Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 15 years’
* DfE (2017) ‘Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions’
* DfE (2023) ‘Keeping children safe in education’
* DfE (2018) ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’
* DfE (2018) ‘Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools’
* Equality Act 2010
* The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

* Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
* Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
* Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
* Equal Opportunities Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* Relational (Pupil Support) Policy

# Roles and responsibilities

The Management Committee is responsible for:

* Monitoring the overall implementation of this policy.
* Ensuring that all staff have received training to deliver sessions in the sensory room.
* Ensuring the school offers equal opportunities for all.

The headteacher is responsible for:

* Appointing a sensory room coordinator, who understands their duties and has received sufficient training.
* Establishing how the sensory room links with the curriculum.
* Seeking parental consent for pupils to use the sensory room.
* Conducting, in liaison with the sensory room coordinator a thorough risk assessment of the sensory room.
* The day-to-day implementation of this policy.
* Ensuring the sensory room is safe and complies with all health and safety requirements, in line with the Health and Safety Policy.

The sensory room coordinator is responsible for:

* Conducting, in liaison with the SENCo, a thorough risk assessment of the sensory room.
* Maintaining an [equipment log,](#_Equipment_Log_1) which includes a full and up-to-date list of the equipment in the sensory room.
* Assessing how the needs of individual pupils can be met by using the sensory room.
* Delivering effective training on an annual basis to all staff who supervise the sensory room.
* Ensuring the sensory room is kept clean.
* Conducting visual electrical inspections in the sensory room, to ensure electrical equipment is safe.
* Establishing the access arrangements to the sensory room, including how long the sessions will last.
* Ensuring all equipment is fit for use and removing anything that is not.
* Liaising with parents to ensure pupils utilise the sensory room in a way that is beneficial to individual pupils.
* Liaising with the SENCO where necessary.
* Communicating with parents on how the school believes the sensory room can be used to benefit their child.

The SENCO is responsible for:

* Identifying pupils who may benefit from spending time in the sensory room and informing the sensory room coordinator.
* Liaising with the sensory room coordinator and teachers where necessary.
* Communicating with parents on use of the sensory room.
* Determining the frequency at which a pupil is permitted to access the sensory room.
* Training teaching staff on how to effectively work with pupils with SEND.

Teachers are responsible for:

* Identifying pupils who may benefit from spending time in the sensory room and informing the sensory room coordinator.
* Assisting with supervising the sensory room following training from the sensory room coordinator.
* Ensuring the sensory room is left tidy when they finish their supervision duties.
* Promoting positive behaviour when pupils are using the sensory room.
* Ensuring pupils are safe when they are supervising the sensory room.

Parents are responsible for:

* Providing consent for their children to use the sensory room.

Pupils are responsible for:

* Behaving appropriately when using the sensory room.
* Respecting the equipment in the sensory room and not causing damage to any resources.
* Listening to the supervising adult at all times.
* Providing feedback to the sensory room coordinator so that the school can continue to develop its usage and effectiveness.

# Aims and objectives of the sensory room

The sensory room will be used to:

* Create a calming environment where pupils can learn.
* Stimulate learning.
* Provide an uncluttered and engaging environment where pupils can develop their sensory and social skills.

Through using the sensory room as per the specific needs of pupils, the school will enable all pupils to access the curriculum, which will ensure they can reach their full potential.

The sensory room will be used to help stimulate and maintain pupils’ curiosity and enjoyment in their education.

By using the sensory room, the sensory room coordinator will aim to identify and assess pupils’ needs and provide the appropriate support.

The sensory room coordinator will ensure pupils and their parents are consulted during the delivery of the sensory room, to ensure the offering is effective and beneficial to the pupil.

The sensory room will aim to help pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties, in line with the school’s Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

The sensory room will focus primarily on the following senses:

* Touch
* Vision
* Sound
* Balance

To focus on these areas, the sensory room will include the following features:

* Bubble Tub
* Jellyfish
* Projector
* Sequin boards
* Sensory board
* UV Carpet
* Textured Tiles
* Mirror wall
* Music playing

# Curriculum

The sensory room will aid teachers in delivering a broad and balanced curriculum by:

* Helping to provide speech and language therapy.
* Providing a controlled area in which teachers can reduce or subdue conflicting sensations to enhance a pupil’s concentration capability.
* Providing a space that aims to cater for the individual needs of all pupils.

The following factors will be considered to ensure the sensory room is used effectively for delivering the curriculum:

* Acoustics
* Lighting
* Temperature
* Seating and space
* Curriculum content will be meaningful
* The skills that are being built upon

# Access

The sensory room is located in The Grove.

The headteacher will seek parental permission before any pupil is permitted to use the sensory room.

Once consent has been obtained from parents, the sensory room coordinator will keep a record of all pupils permitted to use the sensory room. All pupils will be permitted access to the sensory room, provided that parental consent is obtained, as sensory learning can have benefits to all pupils, e.g. pupils who are experiencing trauma.

Using the record of pupils who can use the sensory room, the sensory room coordinator will develop a timetable that ensures the following:

* The sensory room is utilised by no more than one pupil at a time
* There is at least one member of staff with each pupil in the sensory room
* The sensory room is used in 30-minute slots
* Pupils are allocated enough time using each piece of equipment so that they can benefit from its use
* There is a 10-minute slot available between sessions for the supervising adult to ensure the room is tidy before the room is used again

The sensory room will be accessible to all.

The frequency at which a pupil attends a sensory room session will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the sensory room coordinator and SENCO, if appropriate. Some pupils may require a daily session, whereas others may require more or less frequent visits.

The sensory room will be large enough that it is not likely to cause claustrophobic distress to pupils.

Where the sensory room is used for one-to-one tuition, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be adhered to at all times.

Doors will not be locked when the sensory room is in use.

All sessions will be recorded in a log book, which details how pupils responded to the activities. The sensory room’s usage will be in accordance with the school’s Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.

# Risk management

The sensory room coordinator will conduct a thorough risk assessment in liaison with the headteacher.

As the sensory room’s use will be adapted depending on pupils’ needs, the risk assessment will be reviewed termly and updated following any changes to the use of the sensory room, e.g. new equipment and Provision plan

The sensory room coordinator will ensure the room is clean and safe following each session. The cleaning staff will clean the sensory room after pupils have left the school.

An [equipment log](#_Equipment_log) will be maintained to ensure the risk assessment can account for any risks that may be apparent from specific equipment, e.g. swallowing building blocks.

The sensory room coordinator will conduct daily visual electrical inspections to ensure wires are not a trip hazard and all electrical equipment is being used safely. At the start of each day, the sensory room coordinator checks all equipment to ensure it is safe to use. If faulty or damaged equipment is found, it is removed immediately, and the sensory room coordinator is responsible for getting it repaired or replacing it.

All supervising staff will receive annual training from the sensory room coordinator to ensure they understand how to use the sensory room effectively.

To ensure pupils are safe, no session in the sensory room will have more than onepupil present and one member of staff will be always in the room.

If pupils with medical conditions are using the sensory room, supervising staff will be aware of how their conditions may affect their usage of the room. Staff will always act in line with the school’s Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be always adhered to.

# Principles of use

The sensory room will not be used as a method of behaviour modification, e.g. an isolation room. All access arrangements, as outlined in the [Access](#_Access) section of this policy, will be adhered to at all times.

Pupils will be permitted to use the ‘stations’ in the sensory room in a way that will benefit their individual needs. In the slot, pupils will select the stations that they wish to use and for how long, where appropriate.

Teachers will give advice as to where pupils would benefit from spending more time. The supervising staff will ensure that pupils spend enough time at the relevant stations to make sure pupils are benefiting from the activity.

The sensory room coordinator in conjunction with school admin, will maintain a list of parental consent forms, which can be found in the school office. The sensory room coordinator will communicate with parents as applicable to ensure they are satisfied with how pupils are using the sensory room. If parents wish to raise complaints, they will follow the protocols in the Complaints Procedures Policy.

Pupils will be informed that, while the sensory room provides an engaging and stimulating place for learning, they are expected to behave in accordance with the school’s Relational Policy.

# Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis by the headteacher, in conjunction with the sensory room coordinator.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is January 2027.

# Equipment Log

The table below indicates what equipment can be found in the sensory room, what its function is and any further comments regarding the equipment. This log is maintained so that health and safety checks can be made effectively, and the school can identify how a new pupil may benefit from the resources.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Equipment/stations** | **Function** | **Comments** |
| * Jellyfish |  |  |
| * Bubble Tub |  |  |
| * Projector |  |  |
| * Sequin Boards |  |  |
| * Sensory boards |  |  |
| * UV Carpet |  |  |
| * Textured Tiles |  |  |
| * Mirror Wall |  |  |
| * Music |  |  |