

ST. PATRICK'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

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Sensory Room

Policy and Procedures

(including Operation of Equipment)

2020

Introduction

The Sensory Room in St. Patrick's National School has been specifically designed to cater for all students sensory and well-being needs within a nurturing, safe, nonthreatening and supportive environment in such a way that allows them to increase their chances of success in the mainstream classroom.

Purpose

The sensory room is a calm and comforting interdisciplinary space with specialized equipment. It is used to facilitate empowerment, self-organization, relaxation, sensory awareness, activity tolerance and general awareness of self, peers and the environment

This policy applies to all staff and students making use of the sensory room facilities

Usage

As Saint Patrick's is a fully inclusive school and as such, all students are entitled to have access to the room for meaningful activities when appropriate. As those accessing the room have different needs, we recognize that one size does not fit all. Some students will have sensory time built into their individual timetable. Equipment will be used in line with students OT report recommendations and where this is not provided, we will use the room for relaxation purposes only.











SNA's, support teachers and class teachers will liaise to devise and plan the best use of equipment for the individual student.

Training

All staff using the Sensory Room must be adequately trained in both the use and care of the equipment. Please see Heather Jordan for any training requirements.

Equipment

The room is equipped with the following:

 Bubble Tube	 Fibre-optic Strands	 Laser Star Projector
 LED Strip Lighting	 Sensory Mirrors	 Bumpas
 Lava Tiles	 Jelly Fish Tank	 LED Ball & Speaker
 Interactive Panels	 Tactile Objects	

Access

- Identified students should have sensory time built into their individual timetable
- no more than two students should access the sensory room at anytime
- Under no circumstances should students be left alone in the sensory room at anytime
- A "Check-in sheet" will be kept on the door and must be signed after each use
- The sensory room will be monitored to ensure it is not abused or overused

Management of Equipment

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff and charged student's hands must be sanitized before use.
- Two pieces of sensory equipment can be used at the same time. However, please relate use to the student to ensure that he/she is not over stimulated. (SNA/SET)

- Equipment must be turned off after each use. (SNA/SET)
- Reset controls before leaving to avoid overstimulating the next visitor. (SNA/SET)
- The room must be returned to its original state after each session. (SNA/SET)
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the equipment must be cleaned with disinfectant immediately after use by staff member. (SNA/SET)
- All equipment electrical and other must be checked on a daily basis for damage and cleanliness. (SNA/SET)
- Damaged equipment is removed, repaired or replaced ASAP (SNA team to notify Heather Jordan)

Child Protection

- Where staff are working 1:1 with students, they should be seated away from the student.
- Currently, the door must remain opened during all sessions. (***A non-recording camera with visual aid on wall outside room and /or a window placed in the room's door are being investigated. This policy will be amended accordingly in line with whatever is implemented).*
- Parents will be informed of our Sensory Room Policy and must give written consent to their child's supervised access of the Sensory Room.

Related Polices

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies of St Patrick's:

- Code of Behaviour Policy
- SEN Policy
- Child Safeguarding Statement

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 2023 or as the need arises.

Ratification

The policy has been reviewed by staff and ratified by the Board of Management. It will be made available on the school website for parents and a copy has been made available to staff.

Signed: _____

Canon David Mungavin

Chairperson Board of Management

Signed: _____

Rachel Harper

Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1: - Operating Instructions

Jellyfish Tank (behind door): Overall power button at plug on RHS. Tank should be switched ON first as it takes a few minutes for the jellyfish to begin moving. On top of unit, button on left-hand side is ON/OFF, button on right to select the background colours.

Rainbow Vibration Bumpas: Switch ON/OFF at the wall on the right-hand side of the Rainbow Vibration Bumpas. Press the bumpas at either the top or bottom locations where indicated to activate vibration.

*The white remote is the Master Remote and can be used to switch on all the other equipment (SEE TABLE BELOW), the individual remotes can be used for LED Strip Lighting, LED Ball and Speaker, Laser Star Projector, Fibre-Optic Strands, Bubble Tube. ALL REMOTES ARE LABELLED ON BACK.

Setting on Master Switch Corresponding Equipment:

1. Bubble Tube
2. Fibre-optic Strands
3. LED Strip lighting on left side
4. LED Strip lighting on right side (on same side of door)
5. Laser Star Projector

LED Strip Lighting: Use the remote to change colours and light settings; Smooth rotates through the colours, Fade fades from one colour into another, Strobe and Flash settings are also available.

**Important note: The Strobe lighting flashes brightly and should not be used for those with epilepsy.

LED Ball and Speaker: Use remote to connect and pair your Android or iPhone via Bluetooth and music/ musical sounds can be played through the Speaker via Spotify for example. An audible command will indicate when the unit has paired with your device. The controls for this are found on the top half of the remote. The device name is ZTV 10E. Switch ON to pair. Volume is adjustable, and a mute button is available. The bottom half of the remote (Buttons on a white background) has a power button for the ball projector. The "Auto" button modulates automatically through the coloured projections. "Motor Stop" button halts the movement of the projections but not the flashing. "Motor Speed" buttons increase or decrease the flashing frequency of the projections. Colours of the projected lights can be changed and adjusted by pressing the individual colour buttons.

Laser Star Projector: This projector is adjustable by swinging the star unit up and down, it can project on the floor, ceiling or on the opposite wall. A blue cloud indicates that it is ON and a dial switch on the back of the projector controls the intensity of this cloud. An ON /OFF button on the side of the projector switches on the Star projections (single green coloured stars that move very slowly. The green colour cannot be changed). Important: Do not point the Projector into someone's face/look directly into the lens.

Fibre-Optic Strands and Bubble Tube: The strands are durable and phthalate, glass and latex free, both are very safe to touch and hold, the tube is attached to the wall. Colours of each can be changed using the colour buttons on remotes, the light can be modulated by pressing the mod+ or mod- buttons on the remote.

****IT IS IMPERATIVE TO BE AWARE OF THE SMELL IN THE ROOM. HARSH SMELLS FROM CLEANING CHEMICALS CAN BE DISTRESSING TO SOME WITH OLFACTORY SENSORY ISSUES. VENT THE ROOM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE**

BUBBLE TUBE: They can be used to create a calming effect and also to encourage interaction through creating constantly moving, colour changing bubbles that will both soothe and catch the eye and can be controlled using a wide range of controllers to suit any age or ability. In a sensory room these tubes filled with coloured bubbles will grab the attention of the student due to its mesmerising and colourful bubble effect. Those who suffer from sensory disorders can benefit from our tubes as they are a great way to stimulate and encourage visual development and communication skills.

The Jelly Fish Tank would have a similar effect. The Bubble Tube can be held/hugged if necessary, and it is securely attached to the back wall. The vibration of the tank will also be a calming influence on students.

SENSORY MIRRORS: the sensory mirrors encourage self-awareness and develop movement. Using the sensory mirrors alongside other sensory equipment creates exciting visual effects, and helps to create a stimulating interactive experience that captures attention and imagination. All these coloured sensory mirrors are beneficial in creating their own sensory effect.

*Coloured lenses are used to reduce the intensity of sensory overload in patients with autism and other brain disorders where sensory overload and visual/perceptual impairment was a significant symptom.

FIBRE OPTICS: Fibre Optic products such as fibre optic strands create a fabulous visual effect whilst being tactile and safe to touch. Calming or interactive fibre optics appeal to all.

PROJECTOR: A sensory projector brings a choice of striking visuals. Sensory projectors are perfect for theming and storytelling, can promote relaxation as well as encouraging social interaction skills. The combined Speaker provides calming music/ gentle sounds to help relaxation.

Bumpas: Vibration is a deep sensation that can calm or waken even the most agitated or low functioning individual. Vibration can act as an alert to someone who may be withdrawn but can also be used to relax or soothe. With vibrations you can create a room that wakens and organises its users. Individuals who would otherwise not notice are able to orient, touch and respond.

Lava Tiles Watching the swirling colours move around as the liquid bubbles move and change under your hands and feet. It stimulates sensory and perceptual development. Tiles are leak proof – non toxic cosmetic liquid inside. Lava tiles are scratch resistant, chemical resistant and totally leak proof. They are easy to clean. They will withstand any amount of jumping on and strenuous use by children. They can also be used on a table top or any flat surface. It only needs a little pressure to create a dramatic visual effect.