

Teach Me As I Am – Early Years Autism Training Programme

Sensory Environment Observation Based on AET Sensory Audit for Schools and Classrooms

Best Practice Guide	Current Observation	Possible Changes
<p>The room is well structured with minimal clutter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined areas of interest for specific play and learning opportunities. • The impact of wall displays is considered (not too busy or cluttered which may contribute to overstimulation) 		
<p>Lighting in the room is suitable for children with sensory processing challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluorescent lighting (if it cannot be replaced) is regularly checked and changed. Flickering of fluorescent lighting can be unpleasant for those with sensory issues. • There is as much natural lighting as possible in the room, with appropriate light shading equipment when needed (blinds, shutters etc.) 		
<p>Extraneous classroom sounds are kept to a minimum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Televisions, radios, speakers and computers are off when unused to avoid humming from equipment 		

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background music kept low or off if necessary. 		
<p>There is a sensory plan in place if noise becomes too much for a child in the classroom.</p> <p>There is a sensory room/environment or calming space available for children to regulate themselves.</p> <p>Children are forewarned if there is going to be a loud noise or fire drill (visual cues if necessary).</p>		
<p>Smells inside and outside the classroom are monitored and kept to a minimum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The smell of paint, glue and markers are monitored, with research into products with less scent. • Scentless cleaning fluids used if required. • Staff are aware that perfumes and sprays may be upsetting for children and not worn if necessary. • Children have use of sensory space if needed during or after lunch time. 		

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<p>Uniformed clothing is not a requirement if it is uncomfortable for those wearing it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large old tshirt or shirt can be worn instead of painting vest if needed. • If there is a school polo or tshirt that is uncomfortable for a child, they may wear their own clothes. 		
<p>Seating is comfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children spend as little time seated as possible, but when it is required there should be a cushion or wobble seat available. A yoga ball may be used as an alternative to sitting on a seat. • Children may sit or lie on the ground to do table top activities if it is more comfortable for them. 		
<p>Communication with children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the child is capable, encourage them to let their key worker or others know if there is something about the environment that they are finding uncomfortable. 		
<p>Room organisation takes into account the individual needs of the child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch seating plan takes into consideration the sensory concerns 		

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<p>the child may have eg. A child with light sensitivity does not sit by the window.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils who are anxious about the close proximity of others has enough personal space when sitting or eating lunch.		
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