

# Sensory Integration Policy (Learning Environment and Universal Provision)



**NANSTALLON SCHOOL**



#### **NANSTALLON VISION:**

*Everything we do is focused on giving every child the best teaching, environment, experiences and opportunities regardless of background and circumstance.*

Date for Review	Summer 2022
Signed Chair of Governors	(Sheena Morton)

This policy is aligned to the vision, motto, aims and values of Nanstallon School.

This policy complies with the Teachers' Standards

A teacher must:

1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
2. Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
3. Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
4. Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

\*QI skills are at the core of the approach to promote positive learning behaviours. They are underpinned in all aspects of school to achieve our aim of full inclusion.

### **\*QI skills**

In line with our school motto 'preparing for life', the following 7 \*QI skills form part of the learning language in our school.

**ME** – Self-management skills that include self-awareness, self-regulation, self-control, attention, focus. Also, decision-making skills which allow us to manage, regulate, and control our emotions and behaviour.

**WE** – These are the people skills that allow us to understand, share and “play well” with others, including the language, empathy, listening, and social-emotional skills necessary for effective communication, collaboration and teamwork.

**WHY** – Skills that include questioning, curiosity and inquisitiveness that allow us to always see the world as a question mark, and strive for a better understanding of how the world works.

**WILL** – Self-motivation and drive define these critically important skills, including a can-do attitude, conscientiousness, determination, gumption, persistence, perseverance, and focus put into action.

**WIGGLE** – Physical and intellectual restlessness make up the WIGGLE skills that play a key role in putting WHY and WILL into action. We recognise that children need to move and interact in order to learn well.

**WOBBLE** – Skills that allow for, build and foster agility, adaptability, resilience, and confer the ability to face, overcome, and learn from failure.

**WHAT IF?** – Encompassing curiosity, imagination, and creativity, these are the skills that ultimately allow us to understand not just how the world is, but envision how it could be.

*\*Dr Laura Jana - paediatrician, educator, author and health communicator*

### **Aim**

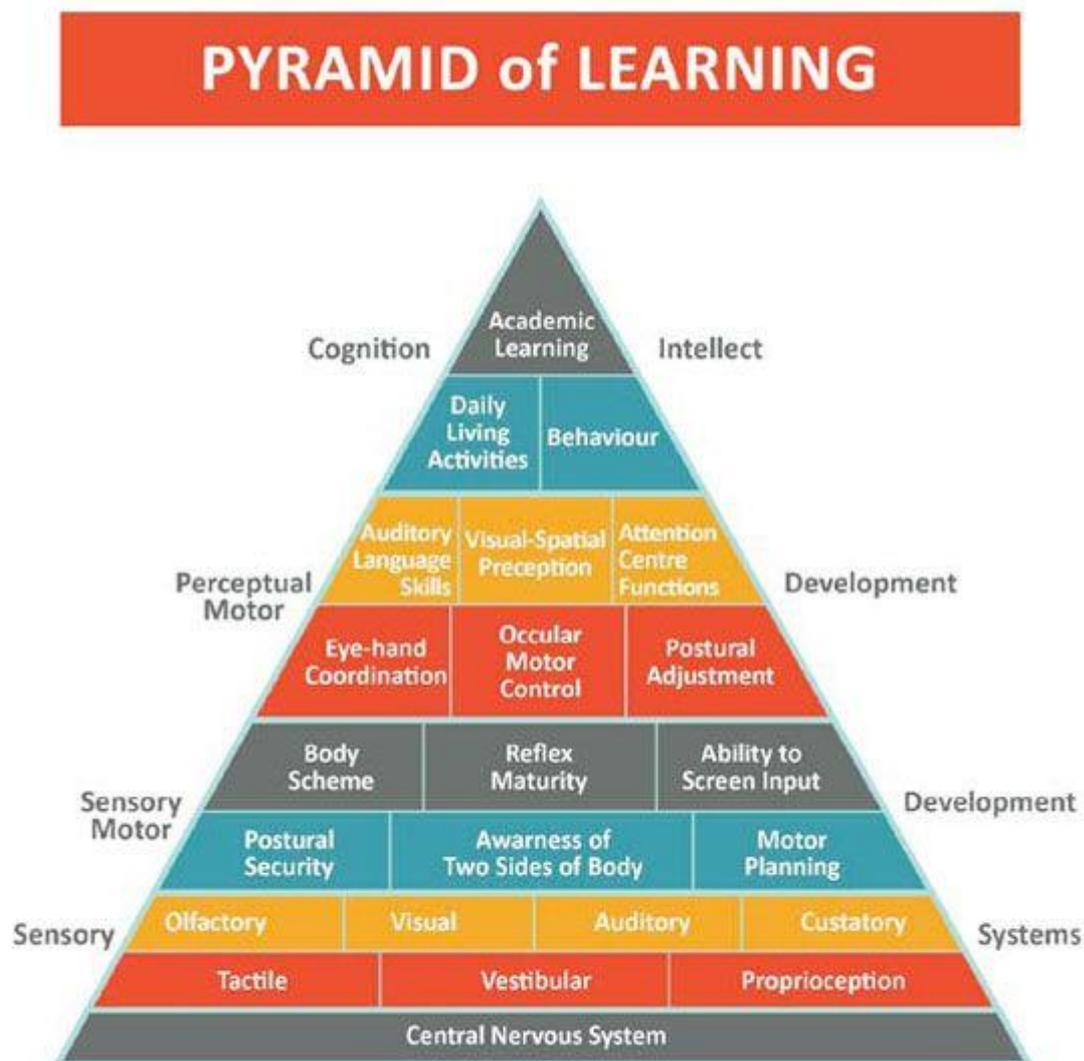
The overarching aim at Nanstallon School, is to take a universal approach to provide an environment and learning provision that meets the learning needs of all children, regardless of background or circumstance. We therefore make it part of our intent to use a trauma-informed and special needs 'lens' to design and deliver the curriculum.

Teaching children to be self-regulated and use metacognitive skills is a long term aim; a sensory integrated curriculum approach is essential to meet this end.

Promoting Sensory integration is a vital aspect of our work in helping our pupils to be ready to learn – it has grown out of our belief that the physical and emotional well-being of our pupils is the foundation for their ability to make sense of the cognitive demands of the educational curriculum.

## What is Sensory Integration?

Sensory Integration is the ability to process, interpret and use appropriately, information received through the senses – tactile, auditory, visual, olfactory, gustatory, vestibular and proprioception. Processing is via the central nervous system and organised by the brain. Sensory integration – a balanced nervous system - develops through the normal childhood activities and experiences; it is the foundation for later more complex learning and behaviour.



For some children sensory integration development is atypical, these children may experience difficulties in learning, motor skills and behaviour. This is often applicable to a child with:

- Sensory processing difficulties
- Early Childhood Trauma or Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Autistic Spectrum

These children often experience sensory information in a different way, this may cause them to be in a heightened 'fright / flight' mode for much of their day and this may be a barrier to learning.

Additionally, children are often bombarded with stimulation that is multi-faceted, including and not exhaustive of: overly processed food in their diet, access to online material for regular and extended periods of time, a chaotic home environment.

Therefore, children's responses to sensory input may be inconsistent and show variations on a daily basis. Some of the children appear unresponsive to sensory input because their nervous system has gone into 'shutdown' mode to protect them from sensory stimulation – as they are actually highly responsive to sensory stimulation they cannot regulate except by 'shutting down'.

### **Strategies to Promote Sensory Integration**

#### Environment:

The low arousal and calm, ordered classroom environment assists pupils in maintaining a calm, organised frame of mind.

The use of visual supports and timetables reduce the anxiety felt by many pupils who may be overwhelmed by noise and chatter (auditory sensitivities).

The consistent application of classroom routines helps pupils to organise themselves – so that in time they are able to sort out their belongings for themselves.

Children have access to manipulatives, regular movement breaks, daily opportunities to develop core strength and deep pressure.

#### Posture:

Stability on the chairs for working at the tables is crucial to assist the children in an awareness of body space and preparing them for using fine motor skills e.g. writing, scissor work, handling tools.

'Good sitting' is promoted at all times.

There are sensory cushions available to support identified children.

Writing slopes are available to support identified children.

#### Fine Motor:

Difficulties with handwriting, cutting and handling tools may be due to tactile difficulties or lack of awareness regarding use of pressure. Funky fingers, threading, sewing and fine motor challenges form part of the provision from early years.

#### Visual:

The classroom environment is low arousal, calm colours, tidy surfaces and minimalist.

There are resources to support children who may find it helpful to use coloured overlays when reading. (see Dyslexia Guide for further detail <https://nanstallonschool.co.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/How-we-teach-dyslexia-a-guide-for-parents-staff-governors.pdf>)

### Auditory:

A calm, quiet working atmosphere permeates school.

During transition times the following strategies may be used: playing quiet/meditative music, use of Tai Chi or Yoga, breathing and meditation exercises, movement activities such as 'Simon Says', and activities that prepare children for noisier activities/environments e.g. throwing and catching a medicine ball

### Physical:

Frequent Movement breaks

- Funfit 3-4 times weekly
- Running errands- delivering the register, handing books out, pushing lunch trolley
- Taking a short walk between lessons
- Whole-class movement breaks e.g. 'Go Noodle', 'Jump Start Jonny' online programme
- Stretching- encourage all children to stretch when transitioning from one activity to the next, after sitting for long periods of time and at the end of the day
- Chair push-ups
- Wall push-ups
- Yoga
- Tai Chi