Project summary

Our aim is to provide specialist Sensory Integration programmes both in class and within our specialist base to ensure that pupils are supported to regulate themselves and to develop self-regulation techniques. The project included the development of a specialist base and teaching assistant to provide intensive sensory diets throughout the day, with sensory snacks being provided within the classroom and built into teachers’ planning.

Specific aspect of practice to be accredited

The development of a specialist base and teaching assistant to provide intensive input and advice on Sensory Integration programmes for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

What were you hoping to achieve?

- Increase in staff knowledge throughout the school to enable Sensory Integration practices to be included within the curriculum.
- The development of the skills and expertise of a teaching assistant level 3 in order for him to become the lead for this work in school.
- Assessment of pupils and the development of sensory profiles.
- Provision of sensory diets for pupil within the classroom.
- The development of a specialist base which pupils access on a planned basis throughout the day to enable the implementation of intensive sensory integration programmes with a specialist teaching assistant.
- Pupils access to the curriculum within class increasing as they learn to self-regulate.
• Pupils independently making requests for sensory input in order to support them when they are feeling unsettled, anxious or upset.
• Parents being supported to further understand the needs of their sons / daughters and to implement the programmes at home.

**How did you identify the need for this practice?**

• In 2010 we had a pupil in school who was finding it hard to access the curriculum within the classroom. We identified that he had difficulties in all areas of sensory processing and required a very specialist level of support and curriculum development.
• We developed a specialist base for him - 'Badgers' - and provided 2 members of staff to support this pupil.
• Over 2 years the pupil learned to self-regulate and started to join his peers for lessons with 1:1 support. This pupil successfully transferred to Pendle Community High School in 2012.
• Whole staff training as well as more intensive training and support for the TA3 was enabling sensory integration practices to be included in the classroom. The success of 'Badgers' demonstrated to us that there was a wider need within the school to provide this intensive work for other pupils.
• This was also supported by the increasing numbers of pupils with more complex Autistic Spectrum Conditions and sensory processing needs being on roll at Pendle View.

**Briefly describe the main characteristics of the school**

• Pendle View Primary School is a special school for pupils with a wide range of special educational needs - PMLD, SLD, MLD, ASC, HI, VI, SLCN and complex medical needs.
• There are currently 73 pupils on roll at Pendle View of which 34% have Autistic Spectrum Conditions. Of these 56% have significant sensory processing difficulties.
• The school is situated in Colne and pupils live in all areas of Pendle District with a few pupils living in Burnley.
• The school has 7 class bases (8 in January 2014) and 3 specialist bases for Sensory Integration, Communication/AAC and Physical Development. We also have a sensory room, soft play room and extensive outdoor play areas and woodland areas.

**What did you do?**

• January 2009 - pupil with complex ASD and Challenging behaviour started at Pendle View.
• Spring Term 2009 - identification that this pupil had complex sensory processing needs. Sensory Profile completed by class staff and analysed by Fran Clayton (DHT).
• February 2010 - Julia Dyer visited school to provide support and advice on programmes for the above pupil.
• July 2010 - whole school staff training provided by Julia Dyer - Sensory Integration Processing Difficulties.
• September 2010 - creation of 'Badgers' base for named pupil.
• January 2011 - Julie Dyer visited school to provide support and advice on a number of pupils presenting with Sensory Processing needs.
• September 2012 - Badgers base and specialist TA3 re-launched for pupils across the school with sensory processing needs. Sensory Profiles completed and analysed and programmes introduced.
• November 2012 - whole school staff training provided by Julia Dyer - Sensory Integration Processing Difficulties.
• May 2013 - Specialist TA completed further training on Sensory Processing and Autism.
• March 2013 - production of a comprehensive subject development plan for Sensory Integration work at Pendle View.
• October 2013 - Badgers base moved within school to a more suitable base with direct access to the soft play room and a planned development for an enclosed, covered outdoor play area.

Which members of the establishment and/or wider community have been involved and what was their role?

Fran Clayton, Deputy Headteacher Pendle View Primary School.
• planning and developing the sensory integration work and the establishment of Badgers.
• planning a relevant curriculum for the pupil who had Badgers as his base.
• line managing the TA3 in Badgers.
• organising relevant staff training.
• analysis of sensory profiles.
• liaison with other professionals.
• liaison with parents.
• production of subject development plan.
• report to Governors.

Stephen Lorimer, TA3 Pendle View Primary School.
• planning and developing the sensory integration work and the establishment of Badgers.
• delivery and modification of the curriculum for the pupil who had Badgers as his base.
• creation and delivery of sensory diets.
• responsible for the identification and ordering of appropriate resources.
• liaison with class staff about sensory diets within the classroom.
• liaison with other professionals.
• liaison with parents.
• supporting Fran Clayton to create the subject development plan.
How has the progress of the project been monitored and evaluated?

- The project has been monitored and evaluated on an on-going basis and reports have been made to Governors.
- Parental feedback at Annual Review and parents evening.
- Analysis of Sensory Profiles year on year to see progress in self-regulation and a de-escalation of sensory seeking behaviours.

How has the practice been modified or improved during development?

- Initially the work was with one pupil in an intensive support situation with 2 staff. During the 2 years that this was in place, the work being undertaken was modified to meet the needs of that pupil.
- During those 2 years staff became increasingly aware of how powerful sensory integration work could be in supporting other pupils to access the curriculum better within class by providing sensory snacks throughout the day.
- Stephen Lorimer and Fran Clayton became a source of support and advice for staff throughout school and sensory profiles were completed for a range of pupils.
- In September 2012, Badgers was re-organised to become a base for children to access throughout the day. This access was planned and was based around the pupil learning needs and regulation difficulties. A timetable was drawn up and Stephen Lorimer started to work with a range of individual pupils for between 20 - 30 minute sessions.
- The timetable was modified as required with some pupils having increased access and other having fewer sessions as they quickly learned to self-regulate.
- In October 2013 the base was moved to a newly created room in school which provides a more suitable environment.

What has been the impact of the project on pupils’ learning, achievement or enjoyment and how has this been measured?

- All of the pupils who have accessed the specialist facility and also had sensory diets provided within class have demonstrated progress both in terms of their sensory processing needs and progress against PIVATS / EYFS Profile. The children all enjoy their sessions in Badgers, which is demonstrated by their enjoyment of seeing Mr Lorimer coming to get them from class and also through observations of their reactions and responses within Badgers environment.

What are the next stages in the development process?

- The work will continue with individual pupils in school and guidance and support provided for class teams.
- We would like to develop our work with parents and provide advice and support for parents to introduce some of these strategies into the home.
- Share our practice with other schools by inviting them to spend time in school and discussing strategies with our specialist staff.

**What aspects of this practice may be useful for other establishments to consider?**

- We would suggest that the leadership and management of the school and those key staff involved in setting up sensory integration programmes are fully trained and have opportunities to spend time in settings that are using these programmes.
- Identifying 1 or 2 pupils in the first instance in order to explore how the project will work and embed some of the ideas will ensure that the project will grow successfully.
- A specialist base and member of staff is crucial to the success of work related to sensory integration.