



*Cranmore Integrated  
Primary School  
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*Principal: Ms H Farrimond*

## **Report for Integrated Education Fund on the Development of a Sensory Room at Cranmore Integrated Primary School**

### **Reasons for Application for Grant**

Much needed additional teaching/learning accommodation given the following factors:

- 35 of pupils are on the Special Educational Needs Register
- 9 pupils have full Statements of Special Educational Needs
- 10 pupils are deemed to have fairly severe Emotional and Behavioural difficulties
- 8 peripatetic staff support pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties in the school and 1.50 teachers are employed for learning support by the school
- There is only 1 teaching area over the designated number of classrooms
- SENDO will substantially impact on the number of pupils accessing mainstream schools
- Provide early intervention strategies for the most disadvantaged pupils entering our school
- Cranmore has a recognised inclusive ethos and quality of provision for children with Special Educational Needs and this will be further nurtured
- The enhancement of our integrated status within the community and hopefully increased/sustained pupil numbers

### **Rationale for the Curley Family Sensory Room**

Integration and inclusion of children with special educational needs are values at the heart of our school ethos and so over the years we have attracted an increasing number of children with significant behavioural difficulties related to Asperger's Syndrome. This has presented a huge challenge for us, as in the past, lack of understanding and knowledge often made life more uncomfortable for these children.

### **How is the room used and by whom?**

**The room is used currently by 18 pupils twice daily for periods of 15 minutes only.**

### **What are the benefits so far to the pupils?**

The Sensory room provides activities that focus on specific senses such as vision and touch. It nurtures the well-being and sense of togetherness in the children who use the room. It enables them to engage in physical play and exploration and provides them with opportunities for

relaxing, stimulation, communication and release of stress. It also provides respite for their class teachers and peers who are benefiting from calmer classrooms.

Detailed observations, children's comments and anecdotal evidence leads us to believe that each child benefits differently. It is evident that the children are less stressed by school and that they are more controlled, motivated and engaged in their learning. We have not witnessed an outburst of challenging behaviour for some time.

In developing the Sensory Room our children are able to participate in the world around them and to respond to its challenges appropriately. We are embracing the spirit of the proposals for Special Needs and Inclusion by providing equality of opportunity for all our pupils and a more personalised learning approach for those whose needs require it. **Classroom Assistants have commented to the Principal about the pupils who use the Sensory room:**

**“They particularly like going on imaginary journeys using the projection images of space.”**

**Teachers have said**

**“The change in one of my pupils is amazing, he's talkative and it brings him out of himself – his face lights up.”**

**“Children watch the clock and count the time down until they go to the Sensory room.”**

### **What are the benefits so far for staff development?**

Achieving good practice is not easy and the levels of one-to-one support is quite labour intensive but giving the Classroom Assistants autonomy and responsibility for designing the activities, reviewing and evaluating the children's experiences has brought about huge professional development for them. They continually review and evaluate children's learning and make decisions about how this can be complemented by classroom learning activities. All children go to the Sensory room twice daily for fifteen minutes each time with two Classroom Assistants. These sessions are not used as a reward strategy for completing work or for appropriate behaviour but an entitlement of the child.

The last word on the benefits to the pupils should go to the P5 pupil who said: **“I am so happy to have a magnificent sensory room, it really calms me down.”**

Helen Hamilton  
Principal