

Auchinairn Early Years Centre



Supporting Children with Sensory Needs Policy Staff Policy & Practice Guide

Our Vision

At Auchinairn Early Years Centre, we believe every child has the right to feel safe, included and able to achieve their full potential.

We recognise that children experience the world in different ways. Our role is to remove barriers to learning by creating an environment where every child can participate, communicate and thrive.

This guidance supports staff to identify needs early, provide the right support and work in partnership with families and professionals.

Our Principles

At Auchinairn we will:

- Have high expectations for every child.
- Focus on children's strengths.
- Adapt the environment before expecting children to adapt.
- Listen to children and families.
- Provide support based on individual need, not diagnosis.
- Promote independence wherever possible.
- Work collaboratively with partner agencies.
- Review support regularly to ensure it continues to meet the child's needs.

What are Sensory Needs?

Sensory needs may affect how a child:

- hears
- sees
- communicates
- accesses learning
- participates in play

Some children may have an identified hearing or vision impairment, while others may simply require additional adaptations to access learning successfully.

Every child is unique and support should always be personalised.

What Should I Do?

1. Notice

Observe children during everyday play and routines.

Consider:

- What is working well?
 - What barriers are they experiencing?
 - What helps them participate?
- Small observations build the bigger picture.

2. Record

Record factual observations.

Include:

- what happened
- when it happened
- what support was provided
- the impact of the strategy

3. Share

Discuss observations with:

- Senior Leadership
- Keyworker
- Head of Centre

Early discussion leads to early support.

4. Continue Supporting

Do not wait for specialist involvement before making reasonable adjustments.

Simple changes today may have a significant impact.

Assess → Plan → Do → Review

Assess

Gather information through:

- observations
- Learning Journals
- family discussions
- child voice
- previous information
- professional advice

Plan

Identify:

- strengths
- barriers
- outcomes
- strategies
- responsibilities
- review date

Do

Use agreed strategies consistently across the nursery.

Support should become part of everyday practice.

Review

Regularly ask:

- Is the child making progress?
- Are the strategies effective?

- What should continue?
- What should change?

Everyday Inclusive Practice

Support should develop alongside the child.
Small adaptations make a big difference.

Practitioners should:

- ✓ Reduce unnecessary background noise.
- ✓ Gain the child's attention before speaking.
- ✓ Face the child when communicating.
- ✓ Use visual supports.
- ✓ Allow extra processing time.
- ✓ Keep routines predictable.
- ✓ Ensure resources are accessible.
- ✓ Encourage independence.
- ✓ Celebrate achievements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Promote inclusive practice.
- Ensure staff receive training.
- Coordinate specialist support.
- Monitor implementation.

Senior Leadership

- Support practitioners.
- Coordinate planning and reviews.
- Liaise with partner agencies.
- Monitor children's progress.

Early Years Practitioners

- Observe.
- Adapt.
- Record.
- Share.
- Implement agreed strategies.
- Review progress.

Keyworkers

- Build positive relationships.
- Communicate with families.
- Coordinate information.
- Support transitions.

Families

Families are valued partners and are involved in planning, reviewing and celebrating progress.

Transition Support

Transitions should be carefully planned.

This includes:

- starting nursery
- moving between rooms
- moving to school

Good transition planning includes:

- ✓ sharing information early
- ✓ additional visits where appropriate
- ✓ visual supports
- ✓ transition meetings
- ✓ partnership with families
- ✓ sharing successful strategies

Remember

Supporting children with sensory needs is everyone's responsibility.

We don't wait for children to fit into our environment.

We adapt our environment so every child can participate, communicate and belong.

When we:

👁️ Notice

📝 Record

🤝 Share

🔧 Adapt

★ Review

Signed : April 2026