



# Inclusion Newsletter

14<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Welcome to the final Inclusion newsletter for this year. I can't believe how quickly it has passed!

This term, we have had our annual Inclusion Quality Mark review and I am delighted to say that we have retained our status as a Flagship School. Our assessor was impressed by the way our strong inclusive practice continues to develop. Everyone she spoke to, including staff, pupils and parents, was overwhelmingly positive about how Riverside promotes inclusion and supports everyone to be the best they can be. I am extremely proud of this achievement and hugely grateful to everyone who contributes to our amazing school, working so hard to support the wide range of additional needs we cater for. You can read the full report by visiting our website and choosing the 'About Us' tab, followed by 'School Awards'.

At this time of year, transition is a big focus for us all. We want to ensure that our children feel prepared for the upcoming period of change – the differences in daily routine throughout the summer break and then getting ready to return to school in a new class with a new teacher, and for some children starting a new school. Coping with change is a life skill that we all have to learn to manage. We have had lots of transition activities in school over the last few weeks and we hope this has reduced any anxieties children may have had about next year, but some children may benefit from continued support over the holidays. If your child does find transition difficult, you may find it useful to look at the following link:

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-a-z-mental-health-guide/transitions-and-times-of-change/>

We would like to say 'Congratulations' to Charlotte White, our SEND Admin assistant. Her baby girl, Edith, was born at the end of June and mum and baby are doing well.

Finally, I would like to wish all the very best to the children who are leaving Riverside next week. We are very proud of you and know you will take your 'Riverside Attitude' with you as you all go on to achieve fantastic things in your new schools!

As always, if you have any queries related to SEND or Inclusion, or wish to discuss your child's needs further, please don't hesitate to contact me at the school.

I hope you all have a lovely summer and look forward to seeing most of you again in September.

**Mrs Z Huggett**  
Inclusion Manager



Spotlight on.....

# Sensory Processing



Sensory Processing Difficulties (SPD) are very common in children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, but can be seen to varying degrees in many other children as well.

'Sensory Processing' is the ability to organise and process incoming information, received by the body's sensory systems, from the surrounding environment. If the senses are not fully integrated, and the brain does not register or interpret the information properly, it can make daily tasks extremely difficult.

Some children with SPD are **over-responsive** - they are very sensitive to the information and can become overwhelmed by the sensations. These children may become **sensory avoiding**, trying to reduce the overload of sensory input. For example, they might want to wear ear defenders to help them filter out background noise; they may dislike touching certain textures or be fussy eaters; they may find labels in clothes unbearably irritating or may not want to wear underwear.

Others are **under-responsive** - their senses do not register enough information and therefore their bodies cannot act on it correctly. They may become **sensory seeking**, requiring extreme input to allow them to register it. These children can be constantly fidgeting, and might touch or chew everything. They may have a loud voice and/or make noises such as humming. They can seem clumsy or heavy handed, may have a high pain threshold and might even headbang, pinch or bite themselves.

As well as the 5 main senses (sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch) we also have the **Vestibular** (balance) sense, which tells us where we are in space, how fast we are moving and in what direction. In addition, we have the **Proprioceptive** sense - our awareness of body position and movement, where our body parts are and what force our muscles are exerting.

~ Plan ahead - be aware of things that can trigger a reaction in your child and make sure people know ways to work around them where possible. There are lots of resources that can be made available both in class and at home to help them manage their sensory needs.



~ Build 'sensory circuits' into your daily routine. These are a three-part set of activities which support sensory integration and help 'ground' your child by reducing the need for them to concentrate on processing sensory information. It is useful to do these just before any activity where the child will need to be focused and calm. The second of the 'Useful Websites' below will give you more information about these.

## Useful websites:

<http://www.sensory-processing-disorder.com>

<https://sendsuccess.org.uk/sensory-circuits-sensory-diets/>

<https://www.otforkids.co.uk/conditions/sensory-processing-disorder-spd.php>