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**Sensory needs environment assessment**

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| Sight / Visual question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Are the colours in the environment low arousal such as cream and pastel shades and not red or vibrant |  |  |  |
| Do any rooms /spaces need a change of paint or wallpaper |  |  |  |
| environment is cluttered with furniture people with Autism find it helpful if furniture is kept to the sides of a room and the central space is kept clear.” (Nguyen, 2006) |  |  |  |
| Does the environment have many patterns, shapes and surfaces that may be sensitive to the eye  Have you considered curtains, blinds and pictures etc |  |  |  |
| Have you considered whether staff clothing or jewellery could be sensitive |  |  |  |
| Does the environment have fluorescent or harsh lighting, rather than more subtle lighting alternatives |  |  |  |
| Have you considered the effect of sunlight from windows or skylights AND where the light is at different times of the day? AND reflective surfaces |  |  |  |

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| Smell / Olfactory question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Have you considered the toxicity/acute smells of paint or wallpaper pastes used to decorate the environment |  |  |  |
| Have you considered the smells of cleaning materials used? E.g. polish, air fresheners, bleach |  |  |  |
| Have you considered the smells of individuals (including pets) using the environment? (e.g. deodorants, perfumes and aftershaves |  |  |  |
| Do smells drift around the building from room to room |  |  |  |
| Have you considered how you might isolate them |  |  |  |

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| Hearing / Auditory question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Have you considered the general noise level in the environment |  |  |  |
| Have you considered hypersensitive hearing and looked at specific noises that may irritate such as clocks ticking, humming from lights, road noises or building/gardening work in the distance |  |  |  |
| Is there noise from flooring/ walls such as echo and can this be deadened if needed |  |  |  |
| Have you considered noise levels at different times of the day |  |  |  |
| When people are in the environment at the same, mix of sensory needs |  |  |  |
| Have you any specific quiet and louder areas that people can choose from |  |  |  |
| Have you considered the pitch of noises as well as the level |  |  |  |

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| Body Awareness / Proprioception question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Is the environment free of unnecessary obstructions |  |  |  |
| Have rooms been made easier to navigate e.g. using colours to distinguish floors, walls and furniture, as well as from room to room) |  |  |  |
| Have you considered differing Heights that individuals may need to navigate such as steps, stairs and kerbs |  |  |  |
| Have you considered adjustments for those people who have fine motor difficulties (e.g. locks, cutlery, door handles) |  |  |  |
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| Communication question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Does the environment have clear signs to indicate the use of each room. Have you considered ‘literal’ meanings when designing your environment |  |  |  |
| Are there directional signs to each area |  |  |  |
| Have you considered to what extent are communication systems supported by the use of symbols, pictures, photos or objects |  |  |  |
| Are rooms given one purpose only AND If not, can you indicate when it is used for different functions |  |  |  |
| Are there photographs used to aid recognition of people (staff/unfamiliar) if needed |  |  |  |
| Do you plan for changes to routines, staff leaving and building work |  |  |  |

Escape questions

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| checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Is there a system to know when a person with autism needs to escape from an environment |  |  |  |
| 2 Is there a space / room to escape to |  |  |  |
| Is this room /space used solely for this purpose If not why not |  |  |  |
| Have you considered to what extent is this room / space low stimuli and safe |  |  |  |
| Is there an alternative to the escape room / space (e.g. the garden |  |  |  |
| Are staff students clear on expectations in this area |  |  |  |

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| Sensory-Touch/tactile questions checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Are there sensory materials available for individuals to explore touch in the environment e.g. sand, water play, textiles AND Do you have a variety of materials and enough needed for each individual seeks sensory stimulation |  |  |  |
| 2 Are there opportunities for soft play/rough and tumble for individuals to access if needed Are the opportunities appropriate |  |  |  |
| Is there massage available to Individuals, if needed (Consider how often, by whom) |  |  |  |
| Is there a body map available where individuals can indicate places they like/dislike to be touched AND If no body map can you determine where someone likes/dislikes to be touched |  |  |  |
| Are there small spaces where individuals can squeeze into, if they wish Could you position furniture to facilitate this if needed |  |  |  |
| Are there indicators to point out where hot surfaces are |  |  |  |
| Have you considered safety for people who are hypo/ hyper sensitive to touch and how to manage this |  |  |  |

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| Taste / Gustatory questions checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Do you have a wide range of foods available of different textures and temperatures |  |  |  |
| Are there options to intensify the flavour of foods by adding seasoning or spices |  |  |  |
| Is there clear guidance on what to do when someone is mouthing or eating inedible food |  |  |  |
| Have you considered whether people prefer foodstuffs not to touch |  |  |  |
| Have you considered whether people prefer certain coloured foods or acute tastes |  |  |  |
| Have you consulted parents/ carers/ individual about eating sensitivities |  |  |  |
| If chew toys / items are required can you keep these clean and individual throughout the day |  |  |  |
| Have you investigated toileting and digestive issues with the parent/ carer / individual and are toilets as accessible as classrooms (e.g. hand dryers, privacy, noisy, smelly etc |  |  |  |
| Are pictures etc available to support independent and hygienic use of toilets |  |  |  |

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| Balance / Vestibular question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Is the environment geared for people who seek movement? (e.g. lots of space, soft play, swings, trampoline |  |  |  |
| Are there opportunities to move indoors and out? AND Have you considered how restrictions on movement effect Individuals |  |  |  |
| Is the environment geared for people who are oversensitive to movement? e.g. support equipment when moving to help with balance |  |  |  |
| Are routines flexible to those who struggle with movement disorders? For example enough time given for movement in the day |  |  |  |
| Are standing options available for task completion |  |  |  |

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| Flexibility of Thought question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Are you aware of the absorbing interests of people in the environment and how to facilitate and manage differences |  |  |  |
| Are you aware of the coping mechanisms for individuals in the school environment |  |  |  |
| Is the “hidden” curriculum overtly taught (no assumptions about what children know) |  |  |  |
| Do children know what is happening now and next and are you preparing them for transition between activities/ time periods/ people and energy state |  |  |  |
| Have you considered that people with Autism may have difficulty understanding or interpreting the behaviours and communications of others and people without autism may have trouble interpreting the behaviours and communications of people with autism. How will this affect your management of shared environments in school- what “interpretive” solutions are needed |  |  |  |

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| Awareness question checks | Y | N | Discussion points |
| Are you able to make changes to the Core sensory environment? (e.g. are there practical or financial restraints |  |  |  |
| Have you considered to what extent are you fully aware of each individuals sensory difficulties |  |  |  |
| Have you considered to what extent is the environment primarily ‘safe’ for people with autism |  |  |  |
| Are you up to date with Autism training to support this checklist |  |  |  |
| What does the child need to have available in every space- how will this be provided/ transported |  |  |  |
| How will shame and humiliation be avoided in providing environmental adaptations and access |  |  |  |