PROTOCOL FOR USE OF THE SENSORY ROOM

June 13, 2016

Access to the Sensory Room should be based on the student having specific sensory needs and not used as a “break room”. A dedicated Sensory Room should be used for students who have a sensory processing disorder that is mitigated by use of specific activities. For students who need general movement breaks to reduce excess energy, other arrangements should be made.

When a student is identified as someone who could possibly benefit from the use of the Sensory Room, the Resource Teacher in consultation with the Classroom teacher will make a referral to the Occupational Therapist for a sensory assessment. The OT will determine the students’ specific sensory needs and support the provision of a program which could include using the Sensory Room.

The OT will collaborate with school staff to determine a goal for the student using the Sensory Room. For example, “Student will be able to engage in classroom/academic work for 20 minutes following a 15 minute use of the sensory room.”

There will be equipment designed to calm the Central Nervous System as well as stimulate the Central Nervous System therefore, the OT will need to support the use of the equipment based on each students’ needs.

Use of the room should always be limited to a period of time agreed to by Resource teacher, classroom teacher and OT.

There should be only one student in the room at a time with their support person if appropriate.

The OT will give alternate ideas to the Resource Teacher for particular students if the Sensory Room is being used by another identified student.

Within the allotted times of students’ use of the Sensory Room, choices will be offered to the student as to which activities they would like to engage in and for what period of time. That is; if the student chooses to engage in one activity or several in their allotted time, that will be their choice. The format should be completely transparent and the student should understand that their time is limited. Use of a timer might be helpful. If the support staff find that it is a challenge to transition out of the Sensory Room, a consult with the OT is available.

Review of a sensory program should be carried out by the OT, Resource Teacher and Classroom teacher periodically throughout the year. Determining whether or not the goal has been met will dictate how the program needs to be adjusted.

(Following is a list of possible equipment choices and ordering information. More information is available at sd35ot.weebly.com)

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