# **Classroom Environmental Audit**

## **Visual Environment**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Colours in the environment are mostly muted and not over-stimulating |  |  |  | * Emphasis on pastel shades and muted colours * Limits use of stimulating colours such as red and orange in borders rather than background colours or to mount work * Visual displays on the wall in the line of the children’s direct vision is at the minimum |
|  | Consider placement of displays that hang from the ceiling or a washing line and try to limit them to one area to avoid unnecessary distraction. |  |  |  | * Hanging displays are in one/ two area of the classroom * No hanging displays near entry or exit points * Displays do not hang too low to affect children/ adults in the environment e.g. brushing them on the head |
|  | Try to avoid busy pattern in fabrics and soft furnishings |  |  |  | * Limited busy patterns in fabrics/ soft furnishings * Patterns when they occur are in muted colours and limited to one or two key areas of the classroom |
|  | A well-planned and organised environment, avoiding clutter where possible |  |  |  | * A de-cluttered classroom with labelled boxes/ drawers for storage and organisation * Limited clutter on a teacher’s desk * Limited clutter on pupil’s tables/ workstations e.g. pencil pots, storage basket in the middle of the table for stationery |
|  | Clearly defined walkways to allow flow and easy movement around the environment |  |  |  | * Spaces to be wide enough for teachers/ pupils to move around the classroom easily * Chairs tucked in where possible * Clear walkways to get easily to key areas e.g. to the carpet, from tables to the classroom door |
|  | Consider appropriate furniture for storage of equipment and personal belongings |  |  |  | * Trolleys, boxes, cupboards are labelled at an age appropriate level * Clearly defined areas for personal belongings such as coat hooks, lunch box trolleys etc |
|  | Define areas of the classroom and their purpose through labelling. |  |  |  | * Clear labels that are easy to read and visual * Clear classroom areas e.g. for role play, reading corner, focussed writing tasks etc |
|  | The use of adjustable blinds or curtains to minimise glare |  |  |  | * Ideally rooms to have vertical blinds that can be used on sunny days |
|  | Consider the use of lighting – fluorescent lighting and similar can be a challenge. Use natural lighting where possible |  |  |  | * Ideally rooms would have halogen lighting in warm white, not bright white * Lights only switched on when absolutely necessary and not at all times |
|  | Consider where the sunlight will fall at different times of the day and plan accordingly e.g. For seating positions/ glare on the interactive board |  |  |  | * Placement of seating/ tables is not in direct sunlight, where possible * Interactive whiteboard can be seen in all weathers * A white background colour on the interactive board is avoided |
|  | Well-planned display areas. Consider having limited displays that would distract the eye around the main class teaching area. |  |  |  | * Clearly defined display areas * No displays in direct teaching areas |
|  | Is there an opportunity to have/use individual workstations for children who need them? Consider how they are positioned for learning. |  |  |  | * Workstation is evident in the classroom, positioned against a blank wall in a clutter free area * Child can see the main teaching area from the workstation |
|  | Consider the use of adapted seating for children with sensory needs e.g. wobble stools |  |  |  | * Provision of adapted seating available as and when required |
|  | Consider felt pads under furniture legs to reduce dragging sounds |  |  |  | * Evidence of carpeted areas where chairs are located * Felt pads on furniture as and if required |

## **Smells**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Consider if there are there any nearby sources of smells (obvious and more discreet) such as school canteens, or toilets and how this may be managed. |  |  |  | * Consider routes to and from school areas that may be past the canteen- can they be avoided e.g. visit areas at different times of day, ensure classroom doors are shut to reduce smells entering the classroom at these times. |

## **Noise**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Consider are there sources of noise nearby? (such as busy corridors, the school hall etc) that may cause anxiety |  |  |  | * Make reasonable adjustments in line with the graduated response document * Reduce volume of the school bell. Can it be adjusted to make a more subdued sound? |
|  | Consider all of the smaller ambient noises such as clocks ticking, humming from lights, interactive whiteboards, OHPS |  |  |  | * Switches off noisy equipment where possible * Have ear defenders available for individuals |
|  | Where possible use carpeted areas to reduce sounds, during focussed activities |  |  |  | * Carpeted areas are present * Felted disks are used on chair legs where possible |
|  | Consider different noise demands throughout the day and the school week, their impact and ways to minimise this e.g. transition times, maintenance of school grounds, school bell |  |  |  | * Make reasonable adjustments in line with the graduated response document * Close windows or doors as needed. |
|  | Do children have access to a quiet low arousal space when it is needed |  |  |  | * Consider quiet areas for each classroom * Possible use of dark dens or an alternative * Designated low arousal spaces that all staff are aware of and can use outside of the classroom where children can be monitored |
|  | Consider a sensory toolkit with age appropriate equipment to meet individual need |  |  |  | * Complete individual sensory audits where needed or follow occupational therapy advice * Consideration of sensory toolkits to address individual need and how they will be stored. Are they portable? |

## **Proprioception and Vestibular**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Is the environment free of unnecessary obstructions? |  |  |  | * Clear floor policy where possible * Storage is organised * No obvious trip hazards |
|  | Are the rooms easy to navigate? |  |  |  | * Consider room layout and accessibility- can you move round easily. Is there sufficient space around furniture and equipment? |
|  | Are accessibility arrangements resolved such as stairs and steps? |  |  |  | * Consider accessibility arrangements and what is needed to meet individual needs e.g. provision of ramps/ lift |
|  | Have adjustments been made for those with fine and gross motor difficulties? |  |  |  | * In addition to the above consider how drawers/doors/ cupboards are opened and closed. Do any adaptions need to be made? E.g soft close fittings. * Individualised seats/ tables etc in line with occupational therapy advice as deemed appropriate to meet need |
|  | Are there opportunities and space to complete sensory activities for those who seek movement and sensory breaks? |  |  |  | * Designated space,if possible, for those who need breaks with equipment within close proximity to use. * Consider impact on other classrooms/surrounding environment/ staffing * Possible risk assessment may be needed |

## **Communication**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Are areas and rooms clearly signed in a manner that is appropriate and understood by users? |  |  |  | * Visual signage to make navigation of the environment easier and that is age and stage appropriate |
|  | A communication friendly environment that makes use of symbols, photos, and objects as appropriate to label resources and equipment |  |  |  | * Refer to the graduated response document * Signs need to be clear, understood and uniform throughout the school/ classroom environment where possible * Clear evidence of a communication friendly environment- symbols, objects, photographs. |
|  | Photographs of staff and key adults for children to use |  |  |  | * Consider the use of signing in boards to indicate who is in/ out each day * Evidence of photographs of adults and children in classroom |
|  | Visual timetables/ now and next boards/objects of reference that are age appropriate and used to aid organisation and transition |  |  |  | * Visual timetables/ now and next boards present * Visual resources are age and stage appropriate |

## **Safe Space**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Is there a safe space available for children to be directed to and use both inside and outside of the classroom? |  |  |  | * Consider location, staffing and procedure |
|  | Measures in place for children to access a safe space as needed including pupil-initiated systems if they are able |  |  |  | * Evidence of pupil iniated systems such as time out cards * Provision of staffing/ supervision in ‘time out’ areas to support de-escalation and co-regulation of emotional responses |
|  | Is there an alternative to this safe space if more than one child needs to access it? |  |  |  | * Evidence of a written plan of designated time out areas/ staffing- who can use them and when * Named alterative spaces * Clear procedures in place if more than one child needs to access a given space |

## **Touch**

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|  | **Factor** | **Met** | **Partly met** | **Not met** | **Notes** |
|  | Are there a variety of appropriate graded (developmentally and age-wise) sensory activities that children can access both with and without support? |  |  |  | * Provision of a sensory toolkit * Access to sensory activity at all times of day even if this is in one given area |
|  | Do you have facilities to meet specific individual sensory needs such as a need for tight spaces to calm? |  |  |  | * Consider advice received from the Autism/CCN Team or occupational therapy service and adjust accordingly. |
|  | Seating is comfortable and padded to meet both comfort and sensory needs |  |  |  | * Provision of soft furnishings as required * Provision of specialist seating e.g. wedge/ wobble cushions. |