

Snoezelen Room

POLICY AND INFORMATION BOOKLET



Mudgeeraba Special School

WHAT IS A SNOEZELLEN ROOM?

The name Snoezelen originated from 2 Dutch words “Sniffen” to smell, and “Doozelen” to sleep or doze.

The Snoezelen Room concept originated in the 1970s for the purpose of providing relaxation and leisure activities for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities. The aim is to provide a range of sensory- based activities for the users to enjoy and experience the world around them, be they passive or active (Hirstwood & Gray, 1995).

Whilst other activities, therapies and teaching can continue, Snoezelen offers an additional opportunity for the student to relax, explore, and express themselves in an open atmosphere of trust and pleasure (Boyle, 1990).

Our senses tell us about the world in which we exist. Our sense of smell, taste, touch, sight and sound provide the foundation for our understanding and actions. It is only when one or a number of these senses are impaired that parts of the world are less accessible and understanding is diminished. Multi sensory environments support interaction, discovery and communication encouraging stimulation of the senses vital for those with some sensory impairment and for children at the very beginning of their learning and development.

These environments facilitate faster learning and development through increased awareness of the surroundings and stimulation of the senses - sight, sound, touch and smell. Such environments are challenging and stimulating for both children and adults, in particular for those with special needs. They provide interactivity for those developing cognitive and physical skills and encourage communication within a unique learning environment. Multi sensory environments can provide a calming and relaxed atmosphere where professionals are able to observe and assess clients and monitor and detect changes in ability or just simply promote relaxation for the agitated or stressed.

At the heart of any successful environment is its appropriateness to the users. It is the understanding of the users needs and appropriate application of the underlying principles of sensory to ensure the best possible environment (<http://www.sensoryplus.co.uk>).

The Snoezelen Room aims to provide an environment for relaxation through gentle stimulation. It offers the opportunity for stimulation of the following senses:

Touch **Sight**
Movement
Hearing **smell**

WHAT IS THE USE OF HAVING A DEDICATED SNOEZELEN ROOM IN OUR SCHOOL?

- It provides opportunities for students to access and stimulate the senses in ways not possible in a classroom setting.
- In the Snoezelen Room students can enjoy and focus on the targeted senses, through teacher directed activities or student initiated exploration.
- It enables us to have either group focus or individual focus in our sensory lessons
- It provides a safe environment for student led experiences
- It gives all children opportunities to enjoy both passive and interactive sensory experiences
- It is a place where students can move freely, explore and have fun
- It is an environment where we can release the pressure to perform or achieve
- It can be a room that student's easily identify as a safe place to be
- It provides a valuable recreational facility for our students compatible with their age, sensory status, physical ability, and cognitive function
- It enables them to make choices and explore their immediate environment which may be difficult in other settings
- It promotes positive communication between students and staff
- It is an established environment where equipment stimulates auditory, visual and tactile response from our students, necessary for functioning in everyday life. (It is very time consuming trying to assemble equipment, create space and find resources within our classroom environment).
- It allows for opportunities to withdraw distressed, unhappy, restless children into an environment that is soothing, private and safe where they can rest, relax and recuperate.
- As professionals, it allows us an opportunity to increase our knowledge of advances in technology in the area of disabilities and impairments.

WHO SHOULD USE THE SNOEZELEN ROOM?

It is up to the discretion of the class teacher to determine who and how many students in their class and will use the Snoezelen Room. (Depending on the chosen outcomes of the session, the teacher may choose to implement an individual or group program). **However, due to supervision, it is recommended that no more than 6 students use the room at any given time.**

Every student in our school would benefit from accessing the Snoezelen Room, whether it is for the purpose of sensory stimulation, recreation, or relaxation.

HOW TO USE THE ROOM

The Snoezelen Room can be used in a variety of methods. Your sessions may be described as being any, some or all of the following:

- Interactive
- Passive
- Teacher directed
- Student initiated/ centred
- Group focussed or individual focussed

Staff can facilitate and direct the student's experiences, or allow the student to initiate interactions with the equipment and explore the room independently. Both of these methods are valid and appropriate means of using the Snoezelen Room.

Staff directed

With this method staff may decide which of the student's senses are going to be stimulated (using certain equipment), how long they are going to participate in a particular activity, and what learning outcomes will be targeted.

Student initiated

With this method the staff member's role is to provide opportunities in the Snoezelen Room for the students to explore the room without any demands, time limits and expectations. Here the students are provided with opportunities to discover relationships, solve problems and construct meaning for themselves.

Staff should be responsive to the students, and focus on what the students are doing during the session. Observe how they are interacting with the equipment, how they are communicating, what are their reactions to the experiences they are involved in.

EQUIPMENT IN THE SNOEZELEN ROOM

<i>ITEM</i>	<i>PURPOSE OF USE</i>
Projector coloured ceiling lights	Through clapping or loud sounds, the lights change colours and shapes. This provides a good opportunity for students to understand the relationship of cause and effect. Useful to encourage colour and shape recognition and visual stimulation.
Fibre Optics in the dark area	Provide a visual experience. N.B Ensure the bottom switch is on for it to work.
Sensory boxes	These items are kept locked in the cupboard. There are many boxes to explore depending on the purpose of the lesson. For example, concepts to develop such as hard/ soft, rough/ smooth etc. N.B Please use, and then put the box and contents back in the cupboard.
Bubble Tubes	Press the coloured buttons (red, green, blue, yellow) to change the colours of the bubbles. Press the switch to make the bubbles move up the tube. Useful to develop colour recognition, cause and effect through use of switch, visual tracking of bubbles moving up the tube. Focus on language such as “go/ stop,” “on/off,” “up,” “find the(colour) one.”
Musical Floor	Open the lid of the keyboard unit using the key. Switch the keyboard on by pressing the ON button on the lower left hand side. Students can now walk/roll/press the shapes on the mat and sound will be emitted from the keyboard unit. Useful to develop colour/ shape recognition, cause and effect (i.e., walk on the shape and sound is emitted), movement skills, turn taking with peers.
Musical Floor adaptive switches	On the keyboard unit students are able to press the adaptive switches (Blue, red and white) to produce sounds without touching the shapes on the Musical Floor Mat. Using the MODE switch on the far right hand side of the adaptive switches, you are able to change the sounds that are emitted.
Fibre Optic Curtain	Fibre optics provide a stunning, visual and tactile experience. They are safe to stroke, hold, wrap around the body and lie among. The constantly changing colours along the length of the fibres focuses attention whilst having a calming effect.
Tactile and UV wall	Exploration of individual pieces of equipment based on the entire structure. Balls can be fed down the tubes and retrieved at the bottom. Students gain feedback through moving the objects/ equipment and observing the resulting effect. Useful to develop tactile awareness, visual stimulation, cause and effect relationship. N.B For best use of UV wall, ensure the main lights are off and the UV lights are on.

RULES OF THE SNOELEZEN ROOM

1. Remove shoes prior to entering the room.
2. No food to be consumed in the Snoezelen Room.
3. Students should go to the toilet prior to entering the room, to avoid any accidents.
4. No Gross Motor or 'running around' type activities in the room.
Due to the expensive equipment
5. Please put everything back in its proper place when finished.
This enables everyone to find what they need for their session quickly.
6. Report broken/ damaged equipment by writing it in the maintenance book (located at the front office- Janitor/ Groundsman's book).

Please note: The approximate total cost of the equipment in the Snoezelen Room is \$100 000. Whilst we have tried to ensure that equipment is hardy and strongly secured in the room, there needs to be care taken with accessing the equipment. Students must always be supervised with each piece of equipment. Please do not let students pull on leads/ cords etc. Thanks in advance for caring for our Snoezelen Room!!!

REFERENCES:

Gail, Kentia & Boyle (1990). Multisensory 'Snoezelen' Workshops.
Workshop Material.

Hirstwood & Gray (1995).

<http://www.sensoryplus.co.uk/documents/sensoryplus/userinstructions/21112007105435.pdf>