Sensory Integration

The use of sensory integration strategies is a fundamental approach to improve communication and behavioural challenges in autism.

Children with autism have difficulties processing sensory information, from the tactile [touch], vestibular [movement sense], proprioceptive [body position sense], visual [looking], auditory [hearing], olfactory [smell], & gustatory [taste] systems.

Therefore, at Acorns we work very hard at ensuring our children have support to help them to regulate their own sensory systems and process information to help them to remain calm and function.

All of our classrooms are set up to be low arousal allowing our children to not be overloaded with too much information and to remain calm. Each class has sensory equipment available for the children to use if they need sensory input. A sensory diet is implemented as a specifically designed daily activity plan. It aims to introduce sensory activities throughout the child's day to enhance focus, attention and ensure the child is feeling "just right" (regulated) throughout the day.

The occupational therapists (OT) work closely with all staff developing programmes that help focus on the individuals' deficits. These programmes are carried out daily by all class staff. We also have an occupational therapy room called "soft play" where direct therapy programmes are carried out by the occupational therapists and by Acorns' staff following the OT advice.