



Bristol & Beyond  
Stronger Practice Hub

# Case Study: Sensory Processing *Immersion Morning at Springboard*

Amy Marsh, Head of Nurseries and Preschools at The Priory Learning Trust recently attended the **Sensory Processing Immersion Morning at Springboard Opportunity Group**, partner setting of the Bristol and Beyond Stronger Practice Hub and SEND network lead.



Amy's motivation to attend this event stemmed from a desire to move beyond 'surface-level' tips

and understand the biological 'why' behind children's behaviour. As a leader overseeing practice for children in Early Years, she was keen to shift her perspective from managing symptoms to exploring improving the supporting systems that are in place in their schools.

***“It was impressive to see the skilled practitioners support the children to feel calm, alert, and ready to learn though play.”***



## What did the immersion morning help you reflect upon?

“The immersion morning provided an opportunity to explore beyond the familiar five basic senses and spend time reflecting on the three critical systems that dictate children's internal regulation; proprioception, vestibular and interoception.

One of the many takeaways is the need to develop tangible solutions with the practitioners in our classrooms. I noticed the importance of the 'Sensory Diet' - considered in depth by the team at Springboard. The session helped me understand how to identify the sensory input 'bucket size' for the children - ensuring they are provided with a varied sensory diet within their preschool sessions.”

## What have you implemented since attending the immersion morning?

“We will certainly consider simple changes to support sensory needs, like adjusting lighting and considering how sound clouds could reduce the background noise in the classrooms. We will consider the transition information from families about the type of morning the child has had and adjust where possible to suit how the children arrive feeling.

After the immersion morning, the immediate action was to support setting leaders to walk through the child's primary environments at their height (classrooms, hall and shared learning spaces to

Identify "sensory triggers" that may cause dysregulation. This involved checking for flickering lights, humming appliances, or high-contrast visual clutter that may overstimulate a child. All five classrooms benefit from large indoor/outdoor spaces for children to explore (as freely as possible when weather allows) so we will aim to take a child's height route through these areas.”



## What difference has it made to the children and families?

### Children

“By creating ‘low-arousal’ zones (quiet corners, dimmed lighting), practitioners were able to provide opportunities for better emotional regulation. By creating clear ‘traffic lanes’ and predictable layouts we have noticed children feeling safer moving around, helping to develop their proprioception skills.”

### Families

“Ensuring feedback is framed appropriately such as instead of ‘Sophie had a rough day and has been hitting her friends today’ staff report ‘Sophie seemed to be Seeking a lot of proprioceptive input today; we noticed her bumping into friends, so we gave him some heavy-duty 'animal walks' to help her feel grounded.’ has helped to teach parents that we are understanding and note the sensory need behind the behaviour.”

## Would you like to further explore sensory processing?

- [Join our SEND Network](#)
- Watch [this video](#) about sensory processing
- [Read this blog](#) about sensory processing
- Explore this [Dingley's Promise Sensory Circuit Guide](#)
- Explore the [EEF Early Years Evidence Store: Self-regulation](#)

