

Reflexology supports pupils with their preparation for activities

Functional Reflex Therapy – designed by Lorraine Senior, a qualified teacher and reflexologist, is a well designed supportive framework using the complementary therapy of reflexology.

Its approach is used as a base to support 1:1 therapy sessions delivered by qualified reflexologists where the therapist can also address further wellbeing issues and the 'similar yet different' Functional Reflex Therapy rainbow relaxation routine is being used by the multi-disciplinary in the classroom. Both are beginning to be successfully timetabled in special schools throughout the UK.

So often children with SEND, special educational needs and disabilities and CLDD, complex learning difficulties and disabilities, find the world around them very challenging, sometimes frightening and stressful and find it very difficult to relax and be calm.

It is a scientific fact that the nervous system and endocrine systems are influenced by long term stress, anxiety, anger and tension and that the receptiveness of individuals to learning situations and coping generally with everyday personal challenges and situations around them may be hindered when such states manifest themselves. Functional Reflex Therapy is working to address and support these issues.

"Attending reflexology therapy gives pupils a chance to relax in a deeper way than perhaps they have ever known and experience a relationship through positive touch. I am impressed with the way pupils with the most challenging behaviours have responded, and willingly choose to attend the sessions and willingly choose to engage" – headteacher 2014 Harlow Fields

To deliver a successful therapy session in school the 'method of operation' is important.

In the classroom Functional Reflex Therapy provides a structured activity that can be used in so many ways. The primary intention of the respectful positive touch therapy session is relaxation, to encourage calm and some quiet time 'in the moment'. Regular sessions may reduce stress and anxiety, help improve mood, encourage social



interaction, increase receptiveness and help pupils to prepare for ongoing activities and learning throughout the school day.

"We use Functional Reflex Therapy relaxation sessions as a timetabled activity, it is good fun, some of the children follow the order of the routine and are learning about the colours, the children often take turns with the staff and want to deliver some techniques, the tabard works really well as an object of reference and the children enjoy using the FRT kit bags." – Teacher Harlow Fields 2015

Functional Reflex Therapy provides training days for staff to feel confident to introduce the structured relaxation sessions into the classroom supported by the FRT tool kit to help with communication and preparation for the session. The training days encourage you to think about the links to individual targets and to curriculum areas that can be accessed through the FRT rainbow relaxation sessions and how you can tailor it to meet the needs of the methods of assessment used in your school including developing the 'tool kit' for a very sensory based curriculum for children with PMLD profound and multiple disabilities.

"We would just like to say a big thank you to Lorraine for delivering fantastic training on our two day course this week. We are all now so enthusiastic about FRT. We can't wait to make a start with our wonderful pupils who I am sure are going to get so much out of

it" – Ysgol Hoel Goffa Llanelli, a special needs school for children who have learning difficulties, September 2015.

To find out more about the many benefits of reflexology and how to introduce reflexology therapy into the school timetable, with a qualified reflexologist using the Functional Reflex Therapy approach, visit www.functionalreflextherapy.co.uk.

The website has more details to help anyone interested in supporting the wellbeing of their staff and pupils with inset training days tailored to meet the needs of individual schools, with the Functional Reflex Therapy rainbow relaxation routine, as well as a short video of FRT at work in the classroom, www.functionalreflextherapy.co.uk.

For more information about reflexology see the Association of Reflexologists website www.aor.org.uk



Functional Reflex Therapy

The FRT logo which can be used on the visual timetable and FRT tool kit are both valuable objects of reference supporting communication and preparation and the tool kit brings some fun and responsibility where appropriate for some pupils.