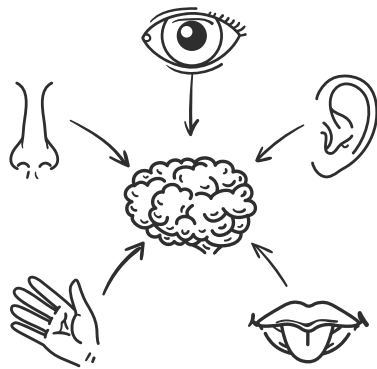


Regulate to LEARN



The Rotherham
NHS Foundation Trust



Strategies guide (Primary School)

A resource created by Sadie Charlton, Occupational Therapist

With special thanks to Jo Marriot - Educational Psychologist, Chris Dawson - Educational Psychologist, Tamara Leon - Educational Psychologist, Ellie Warren - Speech & Language Therapist, Rebecca Parsons - Speech & Language Therapist



INTRODUCTION



The idea for the Regulate to Learn Toolkit first developed within Virtual School Rotherham as part of their Sensory Occupational Therapy pilot initiative. During this work, it became clear that many children looked after were struggling with school engagement and learning due to unmet sensory needs linked to early adversity and trauma. Schools were often unsure how to recognise these needs or what practical strategies might help, and the toolkit was created in response to this gap.

Developed in collaboration with Virtual School Rotherham (Early Years & Primary), with thanks to Head Teacher Tina Hohn and the Virtual School Education Advisors, whose advocacy and commitment to meeting the sensory needs of children looked after helped shape this work, the Regulate to Learn Guidance offers a clear and practical framework for support.

Written and designed by Sadie Charlton, Sensory Occupational Therapist, it combines trauma-informed practice with sensory approaches, helping professionals and caregivers better understand how early experiences can shape behaviour, regulation, and engagement in the classroom. Inside, readers will find practical, evidence-based strategies to reduce barriers to learning and help children feel safer, calmer, and more included.

Special thanks are extended to colleagues whose expertise directly supported the creation of this resource: Jo Marriot, Educational Psychologist; Chris Dawson, Educational Psychologist; Tamara Leon, Educational Psychologist; Ellie Warren, Speech & Language Therapist; and Rebecca Parsons, Speech & Language Therapist.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide has been created for schools, caregivers, and professionals to help identify strategies and supports that may benefit a child showing sensory differences linked to developmental trauma. It is designed to be used alongside the Regulate to Learn Toolkit as part of a resource package, supporting the creation of a bespoke Readiness to Learn Passport for each individual child. You can find the [Regulate to Learn](#) toolkit on the Rotherham Local Offer website.

1



To begin with, complete the Trauma-informed Sensory checklist. This should be completed by school key worker and main caregiver, but we would encourage as many views and input as possible. Don't forget the voice of the child!

2



After completing the sensory checklist, you will have identified the child's sensory preferences & challenges.

Using this information, identify the sensory systems which highlight the main concerns impacting on the child. Use the contents page of this document to choose a sensory system to access strategies/recommendations.

	Typically presents calm	Typically finds this challenging	Signs of over-responsive behaviours	Signs of sensory-seeking behaviours
Visual				
Auditory				
Tactile				
Vestibular				
Smell				
Taste				

3



Within this document you will find strategies for children who are typically find the sensory input challenging are highlighted with a pale red background and this symbol:  which signals these are **SENSORY HACKS** - strategies to lower sensory arousal and adapt the environment.

4



For children who seek sensory soothing input you will find strategies with a pale blue background and this symbol:  which signals these are **SENSORY SNACKS** - generally sensory soothing input, to feed the child's sensory need!

5



Choose the appropriate strategies which are holistic to the child's specific needs, age and developmental level. Use these strategies to complete the bespoke Regulate to Learn passport document, included in the toolkit.

CONTENTS

The strategies and recommendations can be found
under the individual sensory systems below.

