



BRITISH & FOREIGN SCHOOL SOCIETY
Educational Opportunity for All

GRANT REPORT

Organisation Name	Sensory Trust
Address	Eden Project, Bodelva, Cornwall, PL24 2SG
Your Name	Claire Francis
Position or Job Title	Resource Development
Email	cfrancis@sensorytrust.org.uk
Telephone	01726 222900

YOUR GRANT

Amount of grant awarded	£3000
For what period	April 2016 – March 2017
Purpose of grant awarded (as per your grant offer letter)	To work with students with learning disabilities to develop Sensory Nature Tools for Schools, nature based resources that increase interaction with the natural world and extend learning outside the classroom.

Please note that the boxes on the form are expandable, so do not feel constrained by the space shown.

PROJECT OUTPUTS (ie the relevant activities, facilities, resources, services you delivered to help you achieve your outcomes)

Please note that the table is expandable if there are more than 4 outputs

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Registered Charity: No 314286

	Planned Project Output (eg number of teachers trained) as set out in your grant application	Project output as delivered
1.	40 students with learning disabilities will participate in a series of 12 workshops with 2 special schools to test and finalise resources.	60 students with learning disabilities participated in 12 workshops at 2 special schools.
2.	30 sets of 6 different resources produced and disseminated nationally	<p>30 sets of 6 different resources were produced and disseminated to special schools and SEN units from throughout the UK. The resources were listed on our online shop for free and advertised through our website and social media. The take up was swift with resources selling out in just a few weeks.</p> <p>Resources included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dressing for the weather – a card game to teach children how to dress according to the weather. Included within this resource is a weather board which includes a range of weather cards, a sliding scale for how hot it is and a thermometer. The activity aims to engage the children with what is happening outside, taking clues from temperature, how the trees are moving and the feel of the air on their face. 2. Nature postcards – a set of two different postcards each with 6 things to find. 3 are visual images and 3 are textures that you have to match in nature. The back can be used to write a postcard, make a hand print, draw a picture or leave blank. 3. Exploring plants – a series of activities around exploring how plants grow. Includes a card game on what plants need to grow and labels for getting hands on with plants and soil. 4. Nature spotting bingo – a series of different coloured nature based shapes made from foam that can be dotted around any outdoor space. Students get assigned a bingo style card and must cross off the ones they can find. Shapes are very tactile and in bright primary colours.

		<p>5. Sensory Story – A sensory story uses multi-sensory clues to tell a simple story. We have adapted our acorn to oak activity from Sensory Nature Hubs and developed it into a sensory story.</p> <p>6. Are all the leaves the same – we have created more sturdy tactile rings to help students grade different types of leaves by size. Originally the circles were on 10 A4 pieces of card and numbered 1-10 however we learnt that for many students getting the numbers lined up in the correct order was quite challenging. We decided to adapt this activity so that each ring is made of foam and in a different size with the number written onto it, this helps the students put the numbers in the correct order by seeing the rings ascend in size.</p>
3.	1800 students will use the resource kits at special schools	<p>We sent out 180 resources to 42 different special schools and SEN units from Scotland to the Channel Islands. In total these schools have over 3000 pupils between them. We have conservatively estimated that each resource will be used by a minimum of 10 pupils (some activities are suitable for up to 15 pupils at a time) therefore at least 1800 students will benefit from using our resources. One teacher initially fed back:</p> <p>“These resources will be a valuable addition to our sessions. They will be shared with the whole school and not just one individual class.”</p>
4.		

If there were any significant changes please outline and provide a brief explanation below

We are still evaluating the success of the resources with the 42 special schools and SEN units who ordered them. Initial feedback shows they are being used by different classes within each school but as questionnaires are returned we will have a more accurate picture of how many students are using the resource kits on a longer-term basis.

BENEFICIARIES

Direct beneficiaries of BFSS grant

Total number specifying over what time period and broken down by year where appropriate	1992 April 2016 to March 2017
Description of direct beneficiaries, with breakdown where appropriate, eg school pupils, teachers etc	<p>60 students with learning disabilities aged from 5 to 16 years, took part in our workshops which ran from April 2016 to July 2016. Many also experienced other sensory and/or physical difficulties; for example, this included children with autism, developmental delay, emotional and behavioural disorder, visual impairments and wheelchair users.</p> <p>6 teachers and teaching assistants of students with learning disabilities participated in workshops.</p> <p>42 teachers or teaching assistants ordered resources from our online store to use with special needs students.</p> <p>Based on feedback received we estimate that an additional 84 teachers or teaching assistants will have access to these resources.</p> <p>1800 students are estimated to be using the final resources over the next year or more.</p>
Female/male split within the above figures	40/60 Female/Male

Indirect beneficiaries of BFSS grant

Note: we appreciate that it may only be possible to give estimates, in which case please specify that the figures are estimates

Total number specifying over what time period and broken down by year where appropriate	
Description of indirect beneficiaries, with breakdown where appropriate, eg family members, local community members using facilities etc	
Female/male split within the above figures	

PROJECT OUTCOMES/BENEFITS (ie the changes, benefits or effects resulting from the project)

	Planned Project Outcome as set out in your grant application (<i>You were asked to identify 4 on your application</i>)	Project Outcome as delivered – or on track to be delivered
1.	40 children will benefit from increased confidence and social skills by taking part in our 6 week programme of testing, refining and developing our key resources. Students will benefit from the opportunity to work with new people and use new materials, thus gaining important life skills and enabling them to fulfill their potential. This is a unique opportunity for students to work in collaboration with an outside organisation and be part of a design technology project.	60 children with learning disabilities have improved their health and wellbeing through sensory engagement with nature and the outdoors. They also increased confidence through participating in workshops, advising on the development of resources for other children to use. For example, children were asked how they would improve activities, for the older more able children we asked them to think how this game could be used with younger children and they enjoyed being given a sense of responsibility.
2.	1800 students will gain health and wellbeing benefits from increased connection with nature and more time spent outdoors during lessons and playtime. This is based on an assumption of each resource being used by at least 10 children and there will be 180 resources available to order.	<p>1800 students with learning disabilities have improved their health and wellbeing through a deeper connection with nature and more time spent outdoors during lessons. The resources enable all students to engage with nature and range from a tactile treasure hunt to games which aid learning about the weather and how to dress accordingly. From initial feedback teachers have commented:</p> <p>“Really fantastic resources for my topic of weather. I was able to engage all my learners in one way or another. The sensory story was brilliant as were the dressing for the weather cards. They were really appropriate and functional for my learners”</p> <p>“Thank you so much for these free resources! My class have enjoyed everything in them and they have all fitted in with our current topic of plants! Thanks again”</p> <p>“Fab stuff and I am sure our pupils will get a great deal of use from it, and that goes for me as well. I didn’t really know of your web</p>

		site before, but I have just had a quick peek at it and I am sure it will be of great use to me.”
3.	180 teachers will gain confidence and skills in incorporating the outdoors into their lesson plans.	<p>6 teachers have gained confidence and skills in integrating nature and the outdoors into lesson plans. Feedback has included:</p> <p>“Thank you for a fantastic visit, the children really enjoyed it. The activities were ideal for the children - nice short bursts. They were really engaged throughout and it was aimed at their age group and level. We felt that it was a great success!”</p> <p>“Simple and well made resources, good size and easy to use / see. I loved the plant activity and will be using it again. A very hands-on way to learn the different elements of plants.”</p> <p>A further 42 teachers directly requested our resources and guidance and are now equipped to deliver sensory rich nature based lessons which incorporate spending meaningful time outdoors.</p> <p>We estimate that each school or SEN unit who received our resources has shared these with an additional 2 teachers or teaching assistants (this is currently being ascertained through feedback questionnaires). If this is the case then an additional 84 teachers will be gaining confidence and skills in incorporating the outdoors into their lesson plans making a total of 132 teachers.</p>
4.	Up to 180 sites supporting children with learning disabilities will gain new resources to enable them to deliver curriculum focused sessions outdoors.	42 sites have received one or more of our six different resources. We anticipated that teachers would choose one free resource to receive however a number of teachers ordered all six which meant that the overall numbers of sites we supplied was less than originally anticipated. Teachers commented that the resources all looked so beneficial and useful that they would like all six.

If there were any significant changes please outline and provide a brief explanation below

Were there any unexpected or wider outcomes/benefits arising from the project? Please give details.

We have seen an increase of orders on our website for some of the other resources which we sell. This is due to two factors:

- Several of the teachers that have ordered the free resources have also bought books and resources.
- People who didn't qualify for the free resources (because they don't teach special needs students or don't work in a school) have ordered our other resources and books.

We have had several outdoor education settings contact us to see if we can collaborate on future projects because they have seen our work through the publicity for the free nature resources.

LESSONS LEARNED

What were the main lessons learned, both positive and negative? Please be honest since learning from problems and challenges can be as important as learning from success.

One of the main lessons learned from this project was the huge demand for quality nature based educational resources not just from teachers but outdoor education centres, therapeutic gardening organisations and farms. We were overwhelmed by the response to our publicity and the demand far exceeded our supply. Unfortunately, we had to turn down requests from many mainstream teachers and outdoor education centres.

Originally, we envisaged that teachers would order one or two resources each however as the project evolved we realised how well the resources complemented each other. For example, we created one resource that focused on tactile exploration and one that was more visual which involved colour and shape matching. Some resources were more suited to one to one focused attention and some could be used in a class group setting.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

What future activities are planned and are there any significant changes likely to affect the funded work?

We are excited that this work has directly influenced a new project which has just secured £271k from the Big Lottery Fund over the next 4 years. This project, Sensory Nature Adventures & Play, will work with children with disabilities and their families to create sensory nature adventures - stories, treasure hunts and scavenger activities - designed to help children with disabilities to improve their health and build confidence, communication and social skills in their quest to explore and decipher the outdoor world. This takes our work with special schools and will focus on supporting children and their families outside of the school environment. We hope to continue working with special schools, their students and teachers through other opportunities.

SUSTAINABILITY

If the project is continuing beyond the life of this grant please explain how it will be funded and what steps are in place to make the project sustainable.

This funding has allowed us to consider the commercial development of some of the resources that have been created. We have taken one element of our weather resource, the Dressing for the weather card game and have launched this as a product in its own right. We are also developing our Sensory Story which tells the story of the growth of an acorn to the oak tree and hope to be able to make this available to buy later in the year.

We are looking to make these resources available for sale at reasonable prices ensuring that we can continue to reach those with limited personal or organisational budgets. The grant for Sensory Nature Tools for Schools has allowed us to research and develop these resources as well as test the manufacturing process.

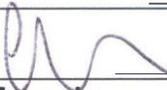
ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK ABOUT YOUR PROJECT

BFSS would welcome copies of any additional narrative reports, including beneficiary feedback, you may be preparing about the project. BFSS also welcomes photographs, video and audio material that illustrate the work we have supported. Please attach any such information to this report or provide links to other materials.

FEEDBACK ABOUT BFSS

We particularly welcome your comments about BFSS and your dealings with us. Please make any other comments that you feel are relevant, including any feedback to us on our

grant processes, which will help us to improve our practice and the way we work with project applicants.

Signature	
Name	Claire Francis
Date completed	3 rd April 2017

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