

## **Disability Access Fund (DAF)**

### **Case Study # 6**

#### **A Setting in the South of England**

We have two children who received this funding. One child with Downs Syndrome and one child with Autism.

As a setting we are very lucky to have the support of the Nursery Owner when it comes to sourcing and providing new equipment to meet individual childrens needs, however this is obviously not unlimited and there is always more we can do to support children with specific needs.

Before spending the money the manager, the SENDCO, the child's 1:1 and the room Senior sat down with the parents at the SAPP meeting and discussed the equipment that would benefit the child. Each SAPP meeting and during meetings with other professionals such as the Speech and Language Therapist and the Educational Psychologist, we discussed the equipment needed at that time and how it would be best to spend the remaining money. It was a real benefit to have the money accessible as in the past outside agencies would come in and make suggestions of what we would need and it wasn't always realistic to request such big or expensive items from a setting. I feel that the parents also appreciated that we could get resources so quickly as although realistically money can be an issue when accessing resources, we don't want parents to feel we are putting costs above the care and learning we offer.

Child A – Autism Diagnosis:

We decided that he needed a quiet safe space to go and play or calm down. We luckily have a little room that used to be a small office that we regularly change into different areas for the children, so we decided to make this a sensory room. We have a sensory room onsite, but we wanted somewhere he could go at anytime and within the room.

We bought a mini projector and projector torches that showed dinosaurs, which was a favourite at the time. We bought light up gloves, spinning sensory wands, an Autism sensory kit, some fidget toys and some sensory balls. We then filled the room with cushions to make it cosy.

Next we bought magnetic maze games as this was something he enjoyed at home and taught colours, shapes, numbers and sizes.

In his last term before school he became more emotional and aggressive at times and unpredictable with his behaviour. Staff who were in a 1:8 ratio were spending more time with him each week so we decided to use the remaining budget (plus the nursery contribution) to allow more 1:1 time with a member of staff. He received funding which was the equivalent cost of a member of staff for 2 mornings term time only, but he attended 3 days all year round. We had a 1:1, 3 mornings a week in the final term.

Child B – Downs Syndrome Diagnosis:

We used the funding for Makaton training for the staff in the room and his parents joined us.

We ordered Numicon as this was being used by the parents at home.

We bought a range of sensory toys including water flutes, textured dominoes, blowing lotto, squidgy shapes, colour liquid timers, a space blanket, touch and match games and sandpaper letters. He is very sensory driven and the blowing activities are to help strengthen mouth muscles to support speech.

We then bought a Jolly puppet book and flash cards suggested by speech and language and button up toys to support fine motor development.

This child also receives funding, but it equates to two days term time only and he attends 3 days all year round. He is unsafe to be left alone due to exploring everything with his mouth, so Nursery fund the additional 1:1 support he requires to attend the setting.

We found having accessible money a massive benefit as it meant things we would like to put in place and equipment to support strategies was immediate and meant situations could be resolved quickly by putting support in place. This benefits these children enormously but also benefitted the whole group who could be offered a more stable learning environment.