**TACPAC**

**What is it?**

TACPAC is a sensory strategy that helps children with severe to profound learning needs to develop eye contact, communication and social interaction between the child and the care giver.

It is a strategy based around music, touch and then a selection of different objects, with the principle being for the child to listen to the music and to feel of touch of the objects on their body. This gives child opportunity to make contact with their environment, own bodies and their caregivers.

Tacpac is based upon sensory alignment – the child hears what they see and what they feel on their skin, reinforcing the senses of seeing, hearing and touching. It is then through linking the familiar music with the objects, touch and adult that the child is then able to develop their communication with the caregiver.

**How it benefits:**

I love TACPAC sessions with all the children as it gives you the time to spend on a 1:1 basis with each and to engage in interaction with the child. They are all often very relaxed during the sessions and will give some lovely eye contact. It can often be a very special time between the adult and the child.

Tacpac also develops the children’s ability to anticipate what is going to happen next as they begin to associate the music that they hear to the different objects and what they are about to experience.

**What I need:**

TACPAC was created by Hilary Wainer who wanted a simple but effective way to develop communication between children with severe to profound learning needs and their parents. She created it with the purpose of using resources that were easy to find in the house, or cheap and easy to get in shops. The resources could be anything from wooden spoons, to dish scourers, to tinsel!

You can buy the CD’s and resource guides from the official TACPAC website, however they are expensive and you can easily create your own TACPAC sets. You could use music or resources that your child particularly likes or finds relaxing – it can be whatever you think is best for the child and so doesn’t need to be expensive. We have created our own TACPAC sets for Christmas and Halloween just by using popular music and resources that we have in the classroom. You can choose music from youtube or buy CDs – whichever is easier.

The tacpac sets have 6 songs on each CD, but you can use as many songs as you think your child can cope with or would enjoy (it really doesn’t matter).

**When using TACPAC, it is important to:**

Keep distractions around the room at a minimal.

Always test what the child will feel on yourself before using it with the child – so you know what they are experiencing and can make sure that it is a comfortable sensation for the child.

Make sure that you move the objects on the child’s body to the beat of the music – will often find that children lose eye contact if the touch does not match the beat of the music or will disengage from the session – this is due to them not feeling and hearing the same things.

Tacpac is often really lovely with all the lights dimmed and any sensory lights that are available are put on (but you do not have to do it like this).