NURTURING SUCCESS THROUGH LIFE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM

# **GROWING THE GROVE**

Heartlands Community Trust has a large amount of money to raise to ensure that the teachers at The Grove, specialist school for children with autism, have all the equipment they require to turn it into an outstanding school for children and young people with autism here in North London.

The building refurbishments are progressing but the statutory funding does not cover sensory rooms, soft play areas and all the other essential equipment that will make the school environment the best possible place for our students to achieve to their highest potential and to learn, through using these vital facilities, to cope with all the difficulties that life throws at them.

There are many ways we are doing this, applying to grant giving trusts and foundations, working with the parents, engaging with the local community and businesses, asking our **Heartlands High School** students to fundraise exclusively for **The Grove** and by approaching corporates and individuals, but to **succeed** we need help from them all and you.



Listed are the specific areas and amounts we are fundraising for:

Sensory Room	£28,000
Soft Play Area	£17,000
OT Room	£12,800
Outdoor Gym and Play Areas	
Sunken Trampolines	£32,000
Water Therapy Room	
Drama Lighting and Acoustic Equipment	£35,000
TOTAL	£

None of these are luxuries – all are **necessities** for our young people so please be part of making **The Grove** the best it can be.

### CONTACT

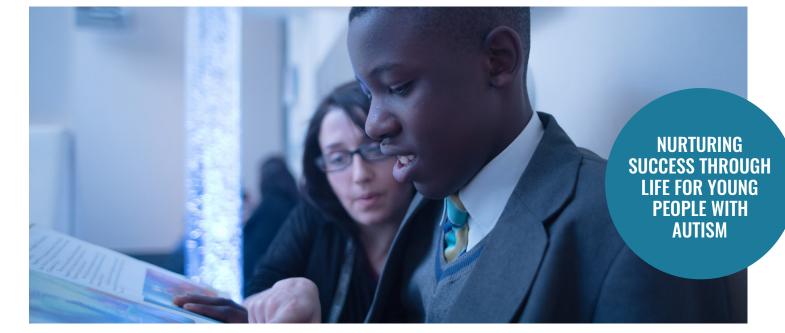
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#### **THE GROVE**



### **SENSORY ROOM** £23,500 BY MIKE AYRES





A Sensory Room is a specially designed room which combines a range of stimuli to help individuals develop and engage their senses. These can include lights, colours, sounds, sensory soft play objects, aromas all within a safe environment that allows the person using it to explore and interact without risk.

Sensory Rooms can help those who have learning difficulties, developmental disabilities or sensory impairments learn to interact with the world around them, but in a safe environment that builds up their confidence and ability. This freedom lets their teacher, therapist or carer see what calms them, rouses them and what they like or don't.

### **BENEFITS OF A SENSORY ROOM**

#### **Sensory Stimulation**

By encouraging the user to engage and explore the environment then it can have positive effects on their ability to react and interact with the larger world around them.

### **Enhance Learning Through Play**

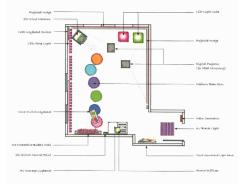
Following on from this, sensory stimulation can engage different areas of the brain, helping children absorb and retain more information and better meeting the needs of the individual.

### Improve Balance, Movement and Spatial Orientation

Sensory rooms can help develop users' visual processing abilities as well as their fine and gross motor skills, facilitating day-to-day living.

### Tackle Problems With Wellbeing and Behaviour

Sensory environments can be highly absorbing, providing a moment of comfort and calm for overactive and distressed individuals, and helping inactive individuals to feel better engaged. This improves focus and prevents users from getting the urge to 'act up'.



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## **SOFT PLAY ROOM** £17,500 BY MIKE AYRES





Sensory soft play refers to activities that stimulate our senses, including our sense of balance (vestibular) and our awareness of our own body and our surroundings (proprioception). For children with sensory difficulties, soft play areas can be tailored to their specific needs with the inclusion of either superactive or calming sensory equipment. Sensory soft play areas provide a safe and fun environment for young children to interact and develop essential life skills.

### **SOCIAL SKILLS**

Older kids often love to hang out on soft cushions and interact with one another. For some, social skills develop naturally, and for others, a motivator or safe place is needed.

### **SECURITY**

Security is another advantage of soft play for kids. When in a safe, sensory space, children can feel more secure within themselves. This can encourage movements and interactions which ordinarily might prove to be a challenge. As they become more confident, these skills can then be transferred into the outside world.

### **CREATIVITY**

One of the many benefits of soft play is how it can nurture and encourage creativity. Children can interact in a positive way, really engaging their brain.

### **MOTOR SKILLS**

Soft play encourages motor development such as stepping, climbing, crawling, jumping and rolling without fear of injury. With movement can come speech and language skills as well as education.



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## WATER PLAY ROOM £20,000 by Ocean Bathrooms





### **BALANCE AND STRENGTH**

Water play can help improve children's balance and strength. Playing in water allows for a whole new sensory experience. Water also adds resistance so water play activities work as strength training.

### **COORDINATION**

Play and practicing any movements using water helps to develop coordination.

### COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SKILLS

Water play allows children to explore and interact with each other offering a great opportunity to encourage communication and social development.

### **EXPLORATION AND LEARNING**

Bodies of water offer endless opportunity for physical experiments and discoveries and how it interacts with objects and our bodies.

### **CALMNESS**

Water is a calming activity that can reduce stress and anxiety. For many of our autistic learners, the chance to play in water can be built into their daily routines to offer much needed opportunities for 'therapeutic' work and interventions.

### **KEY FEATURES**

 Area at the entrance where towels can be hung. Shelves/ hooks for storing buckets

- Long troughs with quirky taps to play with
- Wall mounted tap by the window for filling buckets.
- Kneipp hose pipe on the wall with a limiter on it so water does not spray everywhere in an extreme way.
- Water fans, body jets, waterfall and water curve – controlled by the simple push buttons.



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### THE GROVE



### **SENSORY INTEGRATION AND OT** £12,500 BY MIKE AYRES





In the case of autism, an occupational therapist works to develop skills for handwriting, fine motor skills and daily living skills. Therefore, the aim of sensory integration therapy is to improve the ability of the brain to process sensory information so that the child will function better in his/ her daily activities.

Spending time in a **sensory room** helps children to develop **sensory** skills that they will **need** later in life. The stimulating and calm atmosphere, created in these specially equipped **rooms**, enhances coordination and helps children improve their ability to communicate and regulate their emotions and arousal levels.

Many people with autism are challenged by sensory processing,

that means they find it difficult to interpret the information they receive from their environment and make sense of it. Specialist equipment such as swings enable the OT to work with the child to integrate their senses and the way in which they interact and interpret the environment around them.





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### THE GROVE Station Road, Wo



### **OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT GYM** £26,000 BY OUTDOOR GYM COMPANY **TRAMPOLINES** £39,000 BY SUNKEN TRAMPOLINES **SWING AND SPINNERS** TBC BY OUTDOOR GYM COMPANY





Outdoor Gym, play equipment and Trampolines provide much needed experiences for children with autism to regulate their arousal levels and work on both their vestibular and proprioceptive senses. That is, their balance and body awareness.

Physical activity focuses on developing core strength as many of our young people may have dyspraxia or difficulties with both fine and gross motor skills. As well as enhancing opportunities to develop our PE curriculum and promote healthy living and well being, outdoor learning also provides valuable play skills and communication opportunities.







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