

Interoception

Interoception is a sense, just like smell, sight, sounds, taste, touch, vestibular and proprioception. The job of our interoceptive sense is to enable us to feel and recognise the internal body signals.

When we notice and understand these body signals, it helps us identify how we feel. For example, when we are going to speak to a room full of people, we may notice our heartbeat increase, our muscles may tense and our stomach may gurgle.

At Grange Park we are using the Interoception Curriculum (devised by Kelly Mahler, OT) to work on noticing body signals. We focus on a different body part each week, working from outside in.

This week our focus *is hands and fingers*. Here are the descriptor words we have been targeting:

COLD 	WARM 	TIGHT 	LOOSE 
SQUEEZING 	FAST 	SLOW 	SWEATY 
DRY 	MESSY 	CLEAN 	SORE 

During the interoception lessons we do simple experiments to help us to focus on a specific body part.

Noticing body signals gives us clues to our emotions and helps us to develop self-awareness, self-regulation, problem solving and social awareness. *Practice during everyday life is very important as this focus can be unfamiliar and hard for many of us.*

How can you help at home?

- *Make observations and draw your child's attention to their hands and fingers.* For example; "I see your hands are wiggly. Look at your hands. Do you see them wiggling?" or "Your hands feel sweaty. Put your hand right here. Do you feel the sweat?"
- *Offer choices if your child is struggling to identify descriptors.* For example; "Are your hands wiggling or still?" or "Are your hands sweaty or dry?"

- **There is no right or wrong answer. The aim is to draw attention to the body part and for pupils to start to be able to 'read' the signals they may/may not be feeling.**

- **Daily activities to draw attention to the hands and fingers:**
- Hand washing
- Eating finger foods
- Playing with clay or playdough
- Going outside in hot/cold weather
- Hanging on monkey bars or climbing on playground equipment
- Catching a ball
- Writing
- Typing
- Washing up
- Holding a warm/cold drink
- Carrying a heavy load
- Putting on hand lotion

The whole family can join in with these activities!

Please let us know if you have any queries, interesting observations or feedback. We look forward to hearing from you!