

Supporting Children with Sensory Differences in the Early Years



A Sensory Toolkit



Purpose of this Toolkit

It is estimated that up to 16.5% of the population display characteristics suggestive of sensory differences, equating to approximately 4 in every 30 people. For children with neurodevelopmental differences this percentage significantly increases (Miller, L.J. et al (2017), *Identification of Sensory Processing and Integration Symptom Clusters: A Preliminary Study*, Available at [Identification of Sensory Processing and Integration Symptom Clusters: A Preliminary Study - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#), Accessed 25/07/2023)

Sensory differences refer to a difference in the way an individual receives, processes, and interprets sensory stimuli from the environment around them. Unmet sensory needs can create a barrier to learning. It is therefore important that key adults supporting a child or young person are able to recognise possible signs of sensory differences and plan appropriate provision to meet the child or young person's needs; supporting them in feeling safe and secure within the learning environment and ready to learn.

This document is designed to support educational settings in meeting the needs of children and young people presenting with sensory differences through **adaptations to the universal provision** and then the implementation of more targeted and personalised provision. It is intended that suggested activities are implemented throughout the day in order to help the child or young person feel regulated, rather than used as a tool only when the child or young person is displaying signs of sensory dysregulation.

Please note that children grow and develop into their own bodies at different paces/rates. Sometimes there may be a disruption to physical and/or sensory development such as illness, trauma, and hospitalisation. These events may result in a presentation of a delay to their systems, and their bodies may need a little more time to practise and rehearse moving. For further information on supporting children who may be presenting as requiring a boost in these areas please see 'Noticing and responding to movement in the Early Years' ([Do | Leeds for Learning](#)).

In addition, for some children, it may be necessary to consider strategies that support emotional well-being and target anxiety as this can heighten the impact of sensory differences. For further information see 'Children's well-being and PSED' ([Do | Leeds for Learning](#)).

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What is sensory processing?

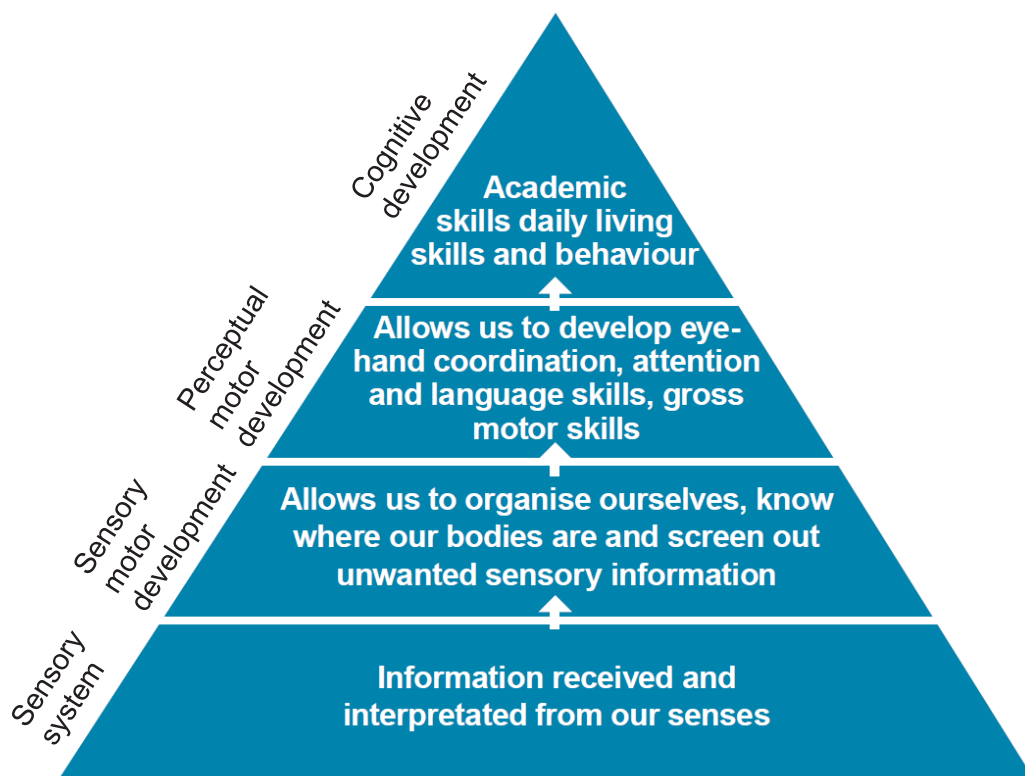
Our bodies continually receive sensory information from the world around us. There are eight different senses: Visual, auditory, tactile, smell, taste, vestibular, proprioception and interoception. Feedback from these eight senses allows us to understand and navigate the world we are in.

The term 'sensory processing' refers to the way in which an individual interprets sensory input from the environment which in turn allows us to, for example, feel that a bath is too hot to get into or be aware that the fire alarm is going off.

The way in which we experience sensory stimulation can differ from one person to the next. Some people may become aware of even the smallest sensory stimulation (we refer to this as being hypersensitive to sensory input) whereas others may need a high level of sensory feedback before they become aware or able to respond appropriately (referred to as being hyposensitive to sensory input).

How do sensory differences impact on learning and behaviour?

Sensory stimulation plays a key part in the development of neural pathways within the brain, allowing us to better understand the world around us.



Source adapted from:

Cumbria County Council, Supporting children with sensory processing needs, available at [Supporting children with sensory processing needs \(cumbria.gov.uk\)](https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/supporting-children-with-sensory-processing-needs), (accessed 28/02/2023).

Taylor, K. and Trott, M. (1991), The pyramid of learning, available at [Pyramid of Learning – Important Key to Academic Learning | Mind Story](#), (accessed 28/02/2023).

Our brains are typically able to filter out sensory input which is not wanted or needed, and make sense of the sensory information received, therefore allowing us to respond to the world around us.

For children with sensory differences however, the way in which their brain processes and responds to sensory input can differ. This can make it difficult for those children to understand and respond appropriately to the environment around them. For example, a child at pre-school may find it difficult to filter out background noises in order to focus on the teacher. Similarly, the brush of another child's arm as they walk past may feel intense or painful.

It is important that a child's individual sensory needs are met in order to allow them to feel safe and secure within their environment and ready to learn.

When considering your sensory offer it is important to think about your universal provision, making adaptations to create a sensory friendly environment before implementing more targeted and personalised strategies.

Universal provision

Consider the environment, taking into account ways in which to create a 'sensory friendly' environment. Please see Top Tips sheet for more information.



Complete an environmental sensory assessment, adapting provision accordingly.



Reflect on the child's presentation. If the child is still presenting with sensory needs which are not being met through the environment see below for targeted/personalised provision.

Targeted/Personalised provision

Spend time observing the child and complete a sensory profile assessment for them.



Use the child's sensory profile assessment to plan and implement appropriate provision, referring to the relevant sensory provision handouts for ideas.



Some children may need access to personalised sensory boxes throughout the day to support them in feeling regulated. Use the child's sensory profile assessment to select appropriate resources.



Complete a 'My Sensory Environment' summary sheet to allow all key adults working with the child to see what provision is needed in order to meet their individual sensory needs.



Following implementation of the above recommendations consider whether any further adjustments need to be made to the environment/provision. Complete the Sensory Audit Observation Chart if the child is still presenting with sensory difficulties.



Should further support be required following implementation of the above recommendations seek specialist advice from relevant professionals.

Creating a sensory-friendly environment

Differences in sensory perception can lead to challenges in understanding the internal messages being sent by the body to the brain; this can present challenges for the individual to achieve emotional regulation.

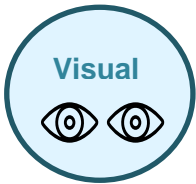



Why?



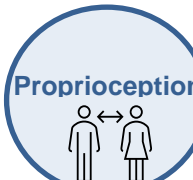

Creating a sensory friendly environment can support a child in feeling safe and secure, enabling them to be more ready to actively engage in play and learning.

How?


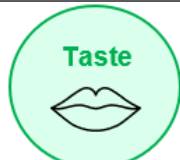

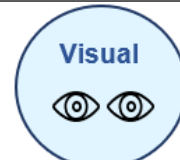


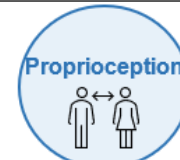

- Consider your learning environment from the child's perspective. It may be beneficial to do a sensory walk around the environment and complete an **Environmental Sensory Assessment**, focusing on the different sounds, visual stimulation, smells, organisation and busyness of the setting.
- Ensure the different areas of provision are **organised and clearly defined** to allow the child to be able to navigate their environment effectively.
- Aim to **limit the use of complex patterns or bright and highly stimulating colours** within the environment, in particular on the visual displays within the room. High levels of visual stimulation can be distracting and can lead to children feeling overwhelmed.
- Consider the lighting within the setting. **Bright or fluorescent lights can be overstimulating** for some children. Are there areas of provision where the lighting is softer?
- Aim to **limit the use of noisy equipment** where possible, for example fans. Consider the positioning of more focused workspaces – could these be placed away from more noisy areas of provision?
- **Limit the background noise** where possible. Consider the use of any background music you may have playing. Could this be distracting or overwhelming for some children? Could the volume be turned down or the music changed to calming music?
- It may be beneficial to **limit the resources displayed and presented** to children. Resources could still be accessible in **labelled boxes or baskets** to reduce the possibility of the child feeling overwhelmed.
- Aim to **reduce congestion or children crowding** within particular areas of your setting. Could the provision be arranged in a way as to limit busy walkways? During specific times of the day where areas of provision may get particularly busy, for example when washing hands before snack, aim to send the children in smaller groups.
- Ensure you have provision in place which offers a **range of sensory stimulation** focusing on the eight different senses: for example, movement play resources, sensory bottles, a range of tactile/messy play activities, fiddle toys, etc. Do the children have opportunities to do tummy time work: for example, drawing whilst laid on their tummies? Sensory stories are also a nice way to provide a safe environment for children to access multi-sensory experiences.
- Consider the carpet time environment. Limit visual distractions: for example, displays surrounding a smart board. Ensure any children who may be presenting with sensory differences around proprioceptive input are able to sit at the edge of the group if needed.
- Introduce a **low arousal, calm space** for children to access when needed in a quiet area of your setting. Consider providing comfy seating: for example, bean bags or soft cushions.
- Try to maintain a **comfortable temperature** within the room. If there are more draughty areas of your setting ensure carpet times, focused workspaces and low arousal spaces take place away from such areas.


Environmental sensory assessment

	Environmental Assessment	Reasonable Adjustments to be made
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom displays • Patterns • Lighting • Room organisation 		
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooking smells • Smells coming from outside • Perfumes 		
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baking activities • Edible messy play/tasting activities • Meal-time adaptations 		
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background music • Noisy equipment • Environmental sounds 		

 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating • Sensory activities • Congestion/busyness • Fiddle toys 		
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement breaks • Movement play resources • Tummy time activity opportunities 		
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed spaces • Carpet time positioning • Incorporation of 'heavy work' 		
 <p>Points to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room temperature • Calm spaces • Draughts • Snack timings 		

Sensory profile assessment

Over sensitivity to stimuli means a child will avoid / is oversensitive to.....							
<p>Dislikes messy play</p> <p>Distressed by hair brushing or having nails cut</p> <p>Dislikes certain textures of food</p> <p>Does not tolerate certain clothing</p> <p>Dislikes the touch of others. Does not like being hugged</p> <p>Does not tolerate children near by</p>	<p>Limited diet, very fussy eater</p> <p>Likes plain, bland food</p> <p>Dislikes chewy or crunchy food</p> <p>Reluctant to try new foods</p> <p>Does not like the food items to be touching</p>	<p>Fear of/distressed by everyday noises</p> <p>Covers ears with hands for loud noises</p> <p>Easily distracted by noises others aren't aware of</p> <p>May hum to themselves</p> <p>Finds it easier to listen if not looking at person</p>	<p>Dislikes bright/fluorescent lights</p> <p>Artificial light can give headaches</p> <p>Cannot tolerate certain colours</p> <p>Easily distracted by what's happening around them</p> <p>Covers/closes eyes in brilliant sunshine</p>	<p>Cannot tolerate certain smells- may refuse to go into some rooms</p> <p>Always complaining about the smell of things</p> <p>May gag at the smell of certain things</p>	<p>Dislikes swings, slides, lifts etc</p> <p>Dislikes walking on uneven surfaces</p> <p>Dislikes rough/ tumble games</p> <p>Feels anxious in large spaces</p> <p>Very cautious off the ground</p>	<p>Difficulty with fine motor skills</p> <p>May tire easily using a knife and fork or drawing/ writing</p> <p>Finds it hard to do buttons/zips up</p> <p>Moves whole body to look at something</p> <p>Prefers to sit at the edge of a group</p> <p>Difficulty riding bike etc</p>	<p>Has a low pain threshold</p> <p>Feels the urge to go for a wee or poo very often</p> <p>Feels constantly too hot/ cold, hungry/ thirsty</p> <p>May have good balance</p> <p>May struggle to regulate their emotions</p>
 <p>Tactile</p>	 <p>Taste</p>	 <p>Auditory</p>	 <p>Visual</p>	 <p>Smell</p>	 <p>Vestibular</p>	 <p>Proprioception</p>	 <p>Interoception</p>
Under sensitivity to stimuli means a child will seek / is under sensitive to.....							
<p>Mouths resources</p> <p>Little response to pain</p> <p>Only responds when a firm touch is used</p> <p>May bite themselves or their clothes</p> <p>Shows no response to wet clothes, the cold</p> <p>Always touching things/surfaces</p> <p>Banging doors</p>	<p>Like spicy and strong flavoured foods</p> <p>Will eat anything</p> <p>Will taste non- food items</p>	<p>Does not hear things/ respond to their name</p> <p>Need verbal instructions backing up with visuals</p> <p>Listens to TV/ music very loud</p> <p>Enjoys the noise from dropping/banging objects</p> <p>Makes self-stimulating noise</p>	<p>Does not seem to recognise people, places</p> <p>Cannot find things right in front of them</p> <p>Seek bright lights</p> <p>Move hands or objects in front of eyes</p> <p>Can fixate on a particular colour</p> <p>Attracted to shiny objects</p>	<p>May sniff inappropriate things e.g. people's hair</p> <p>Are unaware of the strong smells that others complain of</p>	<p>No fear</p> <p>Likes to spin/ things to be faster/higher</p> <p>Feel the need to climb, jump, bounce, be upside down</p> <p>Loves rough and tumble</p> <p>Constantly moving; struggle to focus if still</p> <p>Likes to lie down, sitting difficult</p>	<p>Bumps into objects/ people.</p> <p>Likes big squeezes/ pressure. Hugs others very tightly</p> <p>Feel anxious in open spaces - seek adults/squeezes into small space</p> <p>Leans against others/units/ on the floor</p> <p>Walks on tiptoes</p> <p>Not aware where body is in space</p>	<p>Have a high pain threshold</p> <p>Cannot tell when they need a wee or poo</p> <p>Cannot tell when they are too hot/ cold, thirsty or hungry</p> <p>May have poor balance</p> <p>May struggle to recognise emotions in others/themself</p>

<div><div>Tactile</div><div></div></div>	<h1>Tactile</h1> <p>Sensations: Helps us to process messages of pressure, vibration, movement, temperature, and pain primarily through receptors in the skin.</p>		
<p>General strategies to support children develop their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to sense the world around them through touch• Awareness and understanding of temperature• Awareness and understanding of pain• Awareness of different textures and tactile qualities	<p>Observable criteria:</p> <p>Children with an over-responsive tactile sense may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be reluctant to engage in messy play activities wear aprons, clothes or footwear, and may find certain fabrics uncomfortable• Find it difficult when other children are in their space• Find it difficult to sit still during group times• Walk on their tiptoes on certain surfaces• Avoid walking barefoot• Find hair brushing, nail cutting, teeth brushing distressing• Have extreme reactions to cuts or bumps	<p>Children with an under-responsive tactile sense may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Show little response to pain• Show no response to wet clothes• Only respond when a firm touch is used• Not respond to being squashed: e.g., when lining-up• May bite themselves or chew on their clothes• Wrap themselves up in a blanket• May like to have bare feet• Likes deep-pressure and may hug people tightly• May prefer tight fitting clothes	
<p>Universal Provision</p> <p><i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></p>	<p>Targeted Provision</p> <p><i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></p>	<p>Personalised Provision</p> <p><i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></p>	
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide a variety of tactile experiences• Experiment with a variety of touches: e.g., a firm touch or light touch• Provide pressure toys, for example squeezey / stress balls• Encourage messy play using hands and feet.• Explore warm and cold materials• Dough disco / finger gym• Walking / crawling on different surfaces• Lycra / scrunchie activities	<p>Universal provision plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dough disco / finger gym• Lycra / scrunchie activities• Messy play resources (see Stages of Sensory Play)• Sensory boards• Ball pool• Sensory stepping-stones• Place the child at the front or back of a line or at the edge of the carpet during group sessions• Sensory stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TAC-PAC• Sensory boxes• Deep pressure activities• Wobble cushion• Chewelry• Weighted blanket / lap pad• Bean bag chairs• Therabands to pull and stretch• Fiddle toys	
		<p>Specialist Provision</p> <p><i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT.</i></p> <p>Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</p>	

Sensory stories

Sensory stories are a great way to combine read-out-loud children's stories with a sensory experience, bringing the stories to life and creating an activity which is accessible and enjoyable to a wide range of children.

Why?

Sensory stimulation plays a key part in the development of neural pathways within the brain, allowing us to better understand the world around us.

The use of sensory stories creates a safe place for children to experience sensory stimuli, and can support the development of their listening and attention, anticipation, early communication, and turn taking skills.
















How?

- Choose a story which is appropriate for the child's developmental stage, taking into account their level of attention and understanding. It may be beneficial to start with a familiar story which is of interest to the child.
- Familiarise yourself with the story and consider the key elements within it. Decide on some resources or props to represent each key element, ensuring these are appropriate to the story. For example, if it is raining in the story you could plan to spray water over the child's hands.
- Try to include a range of resources to stimulate the different senses: i.e., touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing.
- It may be useful to develop a written plan for the session to which you can refer.
- Collect together your resources: these may be everyday objects which you can find within your setting. It may be useful to keep these together in a bag so they can be easily accessed in the future.
- Present the story to the child within an individually-supported session or as part of a small group session (a maximum of approximately 5 children). Ensure that you allow time for each child to experience and explore each sensory element of the story before moving on.
- Be aware of the child's response to the stimuli, being particularly sensitive to any sensory avoidant behaviour. Resources may need to be adapted according to the child's individual needs.
- Have fun and be animated, drawing the child into the story.
- Repeat and re-visit the sensory story over a number of sessions, allowing the child to become familiar with it and predict the actions and sequence of events.

‘Whatever Next!’ by Jill Murphy

Sensory Story

While the list of suggested resources appears lengthy, it is intended that they are collected and stored in a bag / box so they can be used repeatedly. In doing so, a familiar routine can be developed which allows each child to build a trusting relationship with the practitioner and experience sensory input in a safe and secure environment.

Elements of Story	Suggested Resources	Activity
Moon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torch Black card 	 Shine the torch on the black paper to represent the moon.
Bath time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tray filled with bubbles. 	 Allow the child to explore the bubbles / place, some on their hands.
Rocket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plastic bottle Glitter Red ribbons 	 Shake a clear plastic bottle filled with silver glitter and red ribbons attached. Allow the child to explore it.
Space helmet and boots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's wellies Colander 	 Let the child explore the wellies and colander.
Teddy and Food / Picnic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teddy Apple infused fabric / apple air freshener Small biscuit / snack 	   Let the child explore the teddy and smell the fabric / spray air freshener. Give the child a snack (picnic).
Whoosh!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black and gold ribbons Handheld fan 	 Blow the fan against the ribbons and the child's face. Allow the child to explore the ribbons.
Owl	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feathers Owl noise (on BigMac Switch) 	  Tickle the child's hands, arms and face with feathers. Make an owl noise; encourage the child to copy.
Aeroplane and clouds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bag of pebbles Cotton wool 	  Rub the bag of pebbles in your hands to create a rumbling sound. Let the child explore the cotton wool.
Stars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silver and gold sequins Torch 	 Put the sequins in a black tray. Let the child shine the torch on them.
Rain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water spray bottle 	 Spray mist on to the child's hands and in the air.
BUMP!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drum 	 Encourage the child to bang the drum.

Stages of sensory play

We learn about the world through our senses. If we cannot tolerate touching a variety of materials our learning opportunities are, by definition, reduced. As educational professionals, we therefore have a duty to sensitively seek to develop their ability to explore the sensory qualities of the world around them.

We have identified four key stages of sensory play, with the first stage being split into 2 parts:

Stages of Sensory Play		Objectives:
1a	Hard and dry materials	To confidently explore hard and dry materials
1b	Dry powdery materials	To confidently explore dry materials that leave residual dust / materials on the hands
2	Pliable materials	To confidently explore stretchy, flexible, malleable resources
3	Viscous materials	To confidently explore thick, sticky materials
4	Wet materials	To confidently explore wet materials

Within the stages of sensory play, there are varying levels of involvement. These have been listed below as they will be used to inform assessments:

Levels of sensory-engagement	
1	The child watches you find the toys in sensory materials
2	The child holds your arm while you find the toys in sensory materials
3	The child directs your hand or uses a tool to find the toys in sensory materials
4	The child takes a toy that you have found in sensory materials
5	The child takes toys out of the sensory materials that have been partly hidden.
6	The child looks for and takes toys out of the sensory materials that have been fully hidden.

We are looking to support pupils to be able to engage in all **stages of sensory play** (1-4) with their **Level of sensory-engagement** being 5 / 6 after a program of intervention. This may take many weeks and should not be rushed.



THE GRADUATED APPROACH SHOULD BE FOLLOWED WHEN INTRODUCING NEW MATERIALS

ASSESS:	Through observation, identify the Stage of sensory play that the child feels most at ease with and begin with that stage. Use the Levels of sensory-engagement to assess and then monitor the child's responses as you introduce new sensory play materials (see next page for example of a recording sheet).
PLAN / DO:	<p>SENIT Developmental Journal outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys the sensory experience of making marks in food, damp sand, water, mud, paste, or paint. (<i>Expressive Arts and Design: Creating with materials, Step 6b, p74 / Literacy: Writing, Step 6b, p53</i>) Explores and experiments with a range of media: for example, paint, dough, paper, music making objects etc. (<i>Literacy: Writing, Step 7a, p53</i>) Continues to explore and experiment with an increasing range of media and movement through multi-sensory exploration and expression: for example, exploring paint using fingers as well as brushes and other tools. (<i>Expressive Arts and Design: Creating with materials, Step 7b, p74 / Literacy: Writing, Step 7c, p53</i>) <p>Personalised strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hide high interest toys in the sensory materials – show the child the toys as you hide them. Search for each toy. Use simple language such as 'Where's car?' When you find the toy, use an excited voice to say what you found. Encourage your child to join in. Never force the child to touch the material. Go at the child's pace. Finish the activity before the child loses interest or gets distressed. <p>NOTE: Materials can be put into zip lock bags or covered with cling film to reduce the effect of the materials and make it easier for children who are sensitive to new textures to start handling them. Make sure these bags are sealed and do not leak.</p>
REVIEW:	<p>At what level of sensory-engagement is the child working? How many different materials within the stage of sensory play can the child confidently explore? (<i>The child should be able to explore a minimum of 3-5 different materials.</i>) What are these materials?</p> <p>Does the child need to continue at the current stage of sensory play, do they need to go back a stage, or do they need to move on to the next stage?</p>

Example of a sensory observation record

Date AND Material being explored	Observations	Stage of Sensory Play	Level of Involvement (1-6)	Review notes (see questions in the Review section above)
04/01/2023 Uncooked pasta	Jo used both hands to pick up the pasta and drop it from a height. He watched as I pushed a car through the pasta. Jo found a car hidden under the pasta and imitated my play.	1a	6	Continue at this stage to see if Jo is confidently exploring other materials at Stage 1a.
10/01/2023 Dry leaves	Jo enjoyed scrunching the leaves. As he did so, he notices the hidden toy worms. He found all of the worms hidden in the tray and lined them up.	1a	6	As above
26/01/2023 Uncooked Porridge oats	Jo used his hands to scoop porridge oats into a bowl. As he did, he found the hidden counting bears. Jo lined up the bears and then gave them oats to eat!	1a	6	Jo can confidently explore at Stage 1a. Move onto Stage 1b.
31/01/2023 Flour	Jo watched as I hid his favourite toy and then put my hands in the flour to retrieve it. He moved closer to see what I was doing.	1b	1	Continue at this stage. Perhaps place flour in a zip lock bag.

Sensory observation record

Date AND Material being explored	Observations	Stage of Sensory Play	Level of Involvement (1-6)	Review notes (see questions in the Review section above)

Stage 1a – Hard and dry materials

Sensory play ideas

When introducing food materials, and children are presenting with food avoidance / other food related conditions, seek advice from professionals such as a dietician.

FOOD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry rice / Rainbow rice • Dry pasta • Dry Rice noodles / Super noodles etc. • Dried beans dried peas, pulses or lentils • Cereal 	NATURAL PLAY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artificial grass • Dry leaves / hay / straw • Pinecones, acorns • Sticks / twigs / bark • Wooden logs • Pebbles • Sawdust 	ARTS AND CRAFTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cotton wool • Dry sponges • Tinsel • Pompoms, ribbons • Fluffy materials e.g., fur • Cushions • Tinfoil blanket • Sequins • Shredded paper
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Stage 1b – Dry, powdery materials

Sensory play ideas

FOOD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry Tapioca • Jelly powder • Flour / cornflour • Icing sugar • Salt 	NATURAL PLAY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sand • Dirt • Compost 	ARTS AND CRAFTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talcum powder • Glitter
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Stage 2 – Pliable materials

Sensory play ideas

<p>FOOD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread dough • Salt dough • Cornflour dough • Fruity putty • Marshmallows 	<p>ARTS AND CRAFTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play dough • Modelling dough • Sand dough • Cloud dough • Plasticine • Modelling foam
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Stage 3 – Viscous materials

Sensory play ideas

<p>FOOD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icing sugar painting • Mashed potato • Wet (not soggy) marshmallows • Very thick custard • Jelly cubes • Set Jelly • Blancmange • Edible slime 	<p>ARTS AND CRAFTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wet sand • Shaving foam • Finger paints • Vaseline • Hair wax • Flax / soap flakes • Papier Mache
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Stage 4 – Wet materials


Sensory play ideas


FOOD

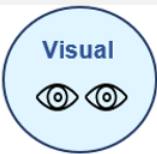
- Cornflour gloop
- Mousse
- Sloppy jelly
- Wet cereal
- Ice cubes


ARTS AND CRAFTS


- Paint
- Water
- Baby oil / lotion
- Wet clay
- Hair gel
- Wet mud
- Papier Mache
- PVA glue
- Bubbles

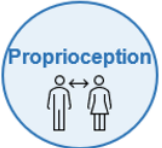
<div>  <h2>Taste</h2> <p>Linked to smell and texture: It enables us to perceive the flavour of something through our mouth.</p> </div>		
General strategies to support children develop their: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food preferences – likes and dislikes Awareness of what is safe to eat Tolerance of a range of different flavours/textures 	Observable criteria: Children whose sense of taste is over-responsive may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a limited diet, sticking to certain textures or flavours e.g., plain/bland food Be able to identify subtle differences in foods: e.g., different brand of chicken nuggets Gag when presented with new foods Only eat small mouthfuls at a time Become anxious at mealtimes and develop a rigid routine Dislike foods touching each other Dislike touching food with their hands Dislike having their teeth brushed Be sensitive to touch 	Children whose sense of taste is under-responsive may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not be very interested in food Seek out strong flavours: e.g., spicy or sour foods Over fill their mouths Eat/mouth inedible items: e.g., stones Chew clothing Enjoy teeth brushing or using an electric toothbrush
Universal Provision <i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i>	Targeted Provision <i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i>	Personalised Provision <i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i>
Examples may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities to eat a balanced diet Edible messy play activities without a pressure to taste the foods Provide real foods for children to play with away from mealtimes. Scratch and sniff books Smelly treasure baskets Provide a range of sweet, salty, sour and spicy foods Opportunities to brush teeth with a suitable toothpaste Bubbles or whistles to blow 	Universal provision plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities to be involved in the preparation of food Develop a consistent and calm routine to explore new foods before being presented to eat Develop a consistent and calm mealtime routine Chewelry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure foods are separated on the plate if needed Offer tiny portions of new or disliked food items. Specialist Provision <i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT, dietician.</i> Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.

	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Auditory</h2> <p style="text-align: center;">Hearing: It enables us to perceive sound by vibrations through the ears and interpreting them in the brain.</p>	
<p>General strategies to support children develop their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound location • Ability to discrimination environmental sounds • Ability to develop speech sounds in others • Ability to develop speech sounds in their own speech • Ability to link phoneme/grapheme correspondence <p>There is a difference between passive hearing and active listening: Listening is the ability to pay attention to sound.</p>	<p>Observable criteria: Children who have an over-responsive auditory system may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a fear of/Be distressed by everyday noises • Cover ears with hands for loud noises • Be easily distracted by noises others aren't aware of • Hum to themselves to block out other noises • Find it easier to listen if not looking at person • Prefer not to be in enclosed or echoic environments 	<p>Children who have an under-responsive auditory system may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not hear things/ respond to their name • Need verbal instructions backing up with visuals • Listen to TV/ music/radio very loud • Enjoy the noise from dropping/banging objects • Make self-stimulating noise • Have difficulty understanding or remembering verbal instructions
<p style="text-align: center;">Universal Provision <i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Targeted Provision <i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Personalised Provision <i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></p>
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities to develop listening skills and build attention control • Reading stories • Singing action songs/nursery rhymes • Sound walks • Sound lotto • Sound shakers • Provide warnings where possible prior to a loud or sudden sound: e.g., a practice fire alarm 	<p>Universal provision plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small group work (max 4 -6 children) • Quiet environment • Lego Therapy • Turn taking games • Allow extra time to process auditory information. • Activities can also be found online: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Essex Ultimate Guide to Phonological Awareness ○ Hertfordshire Phonological Awareness ○ Joining in with Sensory differences – Glasgow NHS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ear defenders • Ear buds/headphones to listen to stories • White noise during focused activities <p style="text-align: center;">Specialist Provision <i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT.</i></p> <p>Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</p>

<div>  <div> <h2>Visual</h2> <p>Sight: It enables us to see.</p> </div> </div>		
<p>General strategies to support children develop their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on an item • Tracking skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - up and down, - down and up, - right to left, and - left to right 	<p>Observable criteria: Children who have an over-responsive visual system may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislike bright/fluorescent lights • Artificial light can give headaches • Not tolerate certain colours • Be easily distracted by what's happening around them • Cover/close eyes in brilliant sunshine • Like wearing sunglasses even when inside 	<p>Children who have an under-responsive visual system may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not seem to recognise people or places • Not be able to find things right in front of them • Seek bright lights • Move hands or objects in front of eyes • Fixate on a particular colour • Be attracted to shiny objects • Watch spinning objects for extended periods • Spin themselves
<p>Universal Provision <i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></p>	<p>Targeted Provision <i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></p>	<p>Personalised Provision <i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></p>
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest periods from whiteboards • Adjust the brightness on large computer screens / Interactive White Boards / Monitors / iPads • Reduce visual stimulation on displays • Offer opportunities to explore light up toys • Offer patterned cards/fabrics to explore • Use natural light where possible • Offer hats / caps to provide shade for the eyes when in direct sun. • Colour code books / timetables. • Organise and label materials so children know where they belong. 	<p>Universal provision plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to play in sensory room / dark tent • Use reduced lighting / lamp lighting if required – this is less stressful on the eyes than overhead lighting • Seat children away from / closer to the source of light (depending on their need) • Use reduced lighting / lamp lighting if required – this is less stressful on the eyes than overhead lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 'low arousal' spaces • Use sunglasses / tinted lenses/overlays – DO NOT use sunglasses indoors as this can increase sensitivity long-term. • DO NOT insist on eye contact as child may find this uncomfortable <p>Specialist Provision <i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT.</i></p> <p>Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</p>

<div><div>Smell</div></div>	<h1>Smell</h1> <p>Olfactory: It enables us to perceive an odour or scent. Closely linked to taste.</p>		
<p>General strategies to support children develop their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sense of smell• Express their preference likes/dislikes• Ability to detect unsafe materials: e.g., smoke / unsafe food• Nasal: front and back smell (back smell is sensed as taste, front smell is sensed as smell when we sniff the air): e.g., pinch nose when eating a herb: no flavour until nose is released	<p>Observable criteria:</p> <p>Children whose sense of smell is over-responsive may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gag in response to certain smells which they find overwhelming: e.g., perfumes• Complain about smells which are not apparent to others• Breathe through their mouth rather than their nose• Avoid certain environments such as the toilets or a farm.	<p>Children whose sense of smell is under-responsive may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sniff objects, food, people• Actively seek strong smells• Lick items to gain more information: e.g., licks a carpet• Be unaware of strong smells that others complain of• Prefer strong tasting or spicy foods	
<p>Universal Provision</p> <p><i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></p>	<p>Targeted Provision</p> <p><i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></p>	<p>Personalised Provision</p> <p><i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></p>	
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to items containing a variety of scents: e.g., vanilla essence in playdough, bubble bath in water tray, scented soaps, aroma pots• Ensure access to lots of fresh air• Ask adults working with the child to refrain from wearing strong perfumes or aftershaves	<p>Universal provision plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reed diffusers• Scented air fresheners• Essential oil diffusers• Scented hand cream (check allergies first)• Preferred scent on wrist bands• Scratch and sniff stickers• Scented playdoh / sensory materials• Scented paint: e.g., using spices• Using scents during interventions: e.g. attention building activities• Sensory stories, using scent on materials, being sensitive to if the child says 'No'	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A quiet environment away from strong smells if the child finds it too overwhelming• Introduce smells in rooms that children can leave if they dislike the smell and NOT in a space that is deemed a 'calm' area	
		<p>Specialist Provision</p> <p><i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT.</i></p> <p>Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</p>	

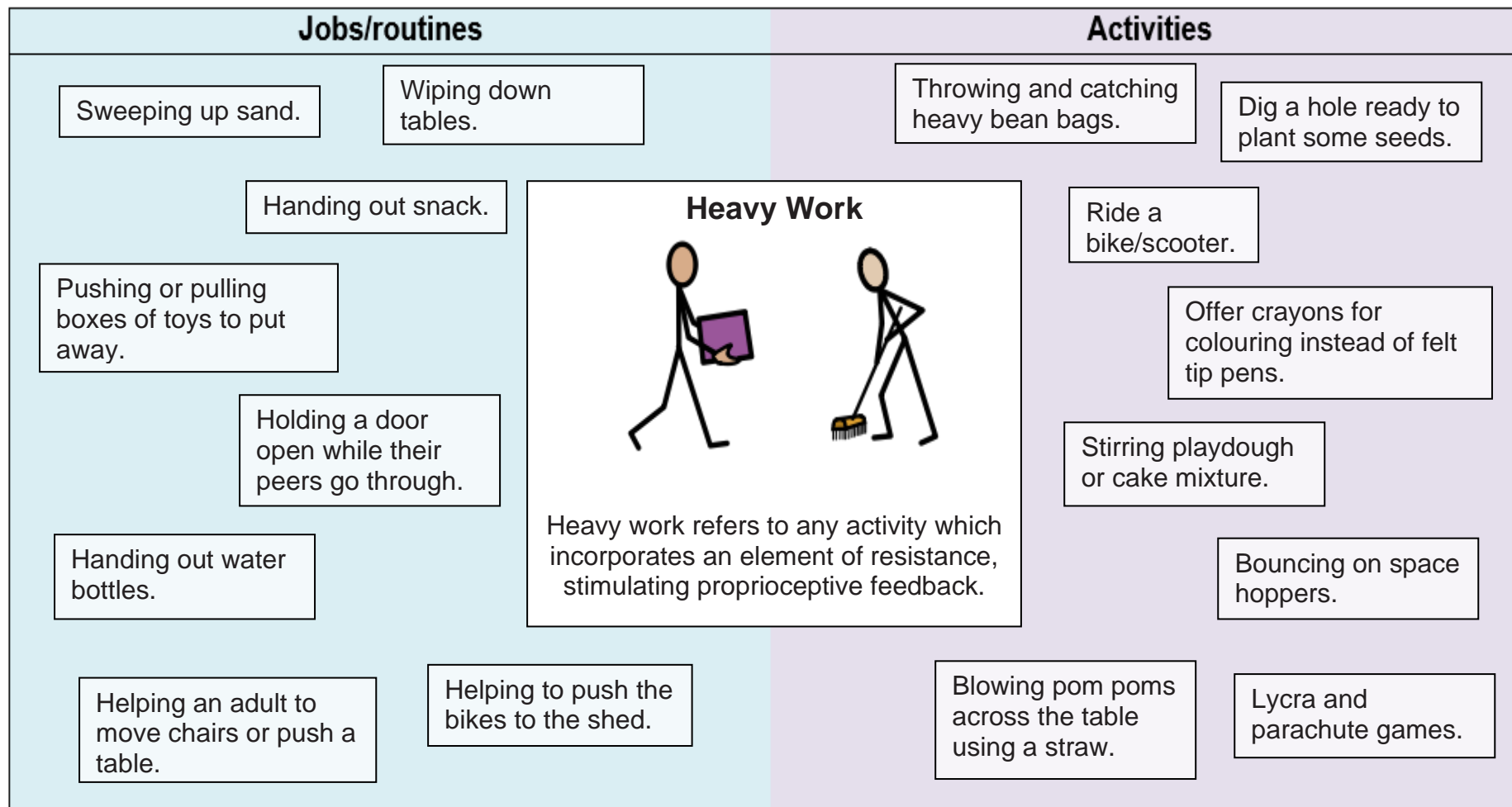
<div><div>Vestibular</div><div></div></div>	<h2>Vestibular</h2> <p>Movement and Balance Sense: It helps us to develop/maintain balance and allows us to move smoothly</p>		
<p>General strategies to support children develop their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sense of balance• Sense of body movement through space• Body posture and head control• Sense of direction and control of speed of movement <p><i>It is generally thought that linear movements are calming, and rotary movements are alerting</i></p>	<p>Observable criteria: Children who have an over-responsive vestibular system may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid playing on swings, slides, or roundabouts• Seek out adult support to engage in physical activities• Feel anxious in large open spaces	<p>Children who have an under-responsive vestibular system may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Often engage in spinning and do not appear to become dizzy• Often fall without attempting to protect themselves• Have the desire to keep moving and may struggle to focus if still• Prefer to lie down when completing activities as sitting up can be challenging.• Enjoy being upside down	
<p>Universal Provision</p> <p><i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></p>	<p>Targeted Provision</p> <p><i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></p>	<p>Personalised Provision</p> <p><i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></p>	
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balancing games, for example walking along benches; musical statues• Stepping-stones• Jumping between hoops• Climbing equipment• Lycra/scrunchie games• Dancing / marching / twirling• Wobble boards• Bikes, trikes, and scooters• Obstacle courses• See-saws/rockers• Log rolls	<p>Universal provision plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timetabled focused, small group sessions, for example incorporating:• Stop/start movement games, particularly with rhyme/song accompaniment• Movement games involving a change of direction• Movement games involving changes in speed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sitting on a gym ball and reaching for objects• Trampoline (small)• Prone / seated / standing swinging• Opportunities for upside down movements (monkey bars / laying on the back over a gym ball)• Opportunities for climbing (heights and lengths)	
		<p>Specialist Provision</p> <p><i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT.</i></p> <p>Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</p>	


<div>  <h2>Proprioception</h2> <p>Body awareness: It enables us to know where our body is in space and where body parts are in relation to each other</p> </div>		
<p>General strategies to support children develop their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limb control • Sense of effort (push/pull) • Awareness of their body's position in space • Sense of force or of heaviness 	<p>Observable criteria: Children whose proprioception sense is over-responsive may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have difficulties with fine motor skills and tire easily doing these tasks • Have difficulty with dressing/doing up buttons, zips, etc. • Have difficulties with learning to balance and ride a bike, etc. • Move their whole body to look at something • Prefer to sit at the edge of the group or stand at the end of a line 	<p>Children whose proprioception sense is under-responsive may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have poor posture, leaning on the floor, units or other people • Be uncertain or anxious when moving around in a space - may seek out an adult to hold their hand in large open spaces • Movements can be floppy or jerky • Bump into objects and people and fall over more easily • May stand too close to people • Walk on tiptoes • Likes big squeezes / pressure and rough and tumble play • Pull or chew on objects
<p>Universal Provision <i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></p>	<p>Targeted Provision <i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></p>	<p>Personalised Provision <i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></p>
<p>Examples may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage opportunities for crawling: e.g., through a tunnel, under a parachute • Offer lots of floor-based play opportunities – a range of activities can be incorporated into floor-based play • Encourage the use of Stress balls 	<p>Universal provision plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage tummy time activities, such as drawing / jigsaws / messy play • Encourage children to lie on their back and pop bubbles or keep a balloon up in the air using their feet / hands. • Provide soft play opportunities • Encourage chair push ups • Offer a small, enclosed, quiet space. • Encourage children to participate in Heavy-work activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weighted lap pads, shoulder wraps, and toys. • Wobble cushions • Cushioned bean bag lap tray • Tie a resistance band across chair legs for the child to push against <p>Specialist Provision <i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies e.g., physio, OT.</i> Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</p>

Incorporating Heavy Work into the day

Activities which stimulate the proprioceptive system, including heavy work, can benefit a range of children, including those who may not be identified as displaying proprioceptive sensory needs. Proprioceptive input can support children in feeling regulated, organised, and focused, and can particularly benefit those children who present as constantly moving or who may display impulsive reactions to things.

It is suggested that activities like these below should be incorporated throughout the day, as a movement break, to support children in feeling regulated and reduce the risk of the child or young person becoming overwhelmed / dysregulated.



<div><div><div>Interoception</div><div></div></div><div>Interoception</div><div>The sense of the internal state of the body: this can be both conscious and unconscious</div></div>		
<div>General strategies to support children develop their:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Awareness of their body's internal status by speaking about the sensations of feeling hot / cold, hungry / full, thirsty / hydrated, tired / rested, stretch / relax, calm / anger, well / unwellChildren with good interoceptive processing skills are able to respond quickly to the input of their internal status: e.g., when they feel cold they put on a jumperAwareness and understanding of their own emotions.	<div>Observable criteria:</div> <div>Children whose interoception sense is over-responsive may:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A low pain thresholdFeels the urge to go for a wee or poo very oftenFeels constantly too hot / cold, hungry / thirstyMay have good balanceMay struggle to regulate their emotions	<div>Children whose interoception sense is under-responsive may:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Have a high pain thresholdCannot tell when they need a wee or pooCannot tell when they are too hot/ cold, hungry / thirstyMay have poor balanceMay struggle to recognise emotions in others/themself
<div>Universal Provision</div> <div><i>This should be available within general provision and accessible to all children</i></div>	<div>Targeted Provision</div> <div><i>Additional provision to target an identified need usually delivered within group activities</i></div>	<div>Personalised Provision</div> <div><i>Specific to the child and additional to targeted and universal provision</i></div>
<div>Examples may include:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Speaking about sensations as above and the importance of responding to them.Developing age-appropriate vocabulary to express emotions e.g., "having butterflies in your tummy" for anxiety, or recognising that your tummy hurting could be a signal that you're hungry.Support self-regulation skillsMindfulnessBreathing exercisesSchedule consistent snack/meal/toilet breaks.	<div>Universal provision plus:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">YogaHead to toe relaxation practiceEmotion card activitiesActivities to support breathing e.g., blowing pom poms through straws, sucking through a straw to lift pieces of paper into a cup.Movement / Heavy work activities to support awareness of feelings in the body.Temperature activities	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Social storiesActivities can also be found online:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Visual resources – Autism West MidlandsInteroception activities for kids – he's-extraordinaryInteroception strategies and resources – Humber NHS</div> <div><div>Specialist Provision</div><div><i>Settings should follow advice issued by outside agencies: e.g., physio, OT.</i></div><div>Please see LCH Occupational Therapy (ICAN) for further information and referral procedure. Schools can refer school-age children if they meet the criteria specified.</div></div>

Creating a Sensory Box

Sensory difficulties often lead to challenges in understanding the internal messages being sent by the body to the brain. This means that self-regulation and emotional regulation can be difficult to achieve. Some children presenting with sensory differences need carefully planned activities and provision in order to have their sensory needs met.




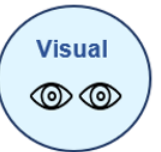


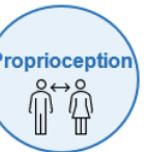



Why?

Sensory boxes can provide a safe environment for a child to experience a range of sensory input carefully planned to meet their individual sensory needs. This can support a child in feeling safe and secure, enabling them to be more ready to actively engage in play and learning.

How?

- Prior to introducing a sensory box spend some time observing the child and getting to know them. **Complete a sensory profile assessment in order to gain a better understanding of the child's individual sensory needs.**
- Select activities or resources to place in the sensory box appropriate for the child's individual needs. When planning activities or resources take into account whether the sensory box will be used to support the child in feeling calm and regulated or whether the box will be used to support the child in feeling more alert and focused.
- A trusted adult should introduce the sensory box on a 1:1 basis in a quiet space. Together with the child explore the resources, modelling ways in which they could be used. Observe the child's responses to the resources, taking note of any which the child gravitates towards or responds particularly positively to, as well as any they may be more resistant towards exploring, using this to adapt the contents of the sensory box accordingly.
- Access to sensory boxes should be planned into the child's day, with the aim to be to **limit and reduce occasions in which the child may become dysregulated.**
- Should a child become dysregulated then access to the sensory box to support them in feeling more calm and regulated is essential. Initially a child may need to be supported in recognising when they may need to access their sensory box; however, over time they may begin to do this more independently.


Ideas for Creating a Personalised Sensory Box								
Calming Activities <i>These support the child in feeling regulated. Suitable for children who present as being oversensitive or under-sensitive to stimuli.</i>	Stress balls / dough Feathers Soft materials / toy Smooth objects / shells Hand cream or coconut oil Bubble wrap Lycra body sock / wrap in blanket Craft pom-poms	Chew toy / necklace Chewy snacks Toothbrush Thick drinks to drink with a straw	Ear defenders Relaxing music White noise Bubble wrap to pop Rainmaker White noise	Eye mask Sensory bottles Sunglasses Sensory bubble tube Lava lamp Projection light Sand timers	Calming essential oil on fabrics or flannel Fan to disperse strong smells Scented hand cream Warmed scented wheat bag (calming scent)	Colour while laying on the floor Weighted lap cushion Weighted teddy Weighted blanket	Weighted lap cushion Weighted teddy Weighted blanket Mini massager Textured balls to roll on skin Lycra body sock Tight fitting items e.g., vests Heavy work activities	Windmills to blow Blanket to snuggle in Fan to cool down Bubbles to blow Hand warmers Heavy work activities Warmed wheat bag
	 Tactile	 Taste	 Auditory	 Visual	 Smell	 Vestibular	 Proprioception	 Interoception
Alerting Activities <i>These support the child in becoming focused. Suitable only for children who present as being under-sensitive to stimuli.</i>	Rough materials Loofahs Velcro strips Playdough Bag of tissue paper to rip Pipe cleaners Fidget toys Rubik's cube	Crunchy snacks Sour snacks Toothbrush and children's minty toothpaste (with adult supervision)	Musical toys – bells, rattles, etc. Whistles Foil blankets to shake / scrunch Upbeat / fast paced music	Light up toys Spinning toys Patterned cards Brightly coloured objects / materials Torch Kaleidoscope	Scented pens / pencils Smelling bottles Scratch and sniff stickers / books	Stepping-stones Skipping ropes Vibrating cushions Wobble cushions Bubble wrap to step on Pillows or cushions to walk on	Resistance bands Heavy work activities Stretchy / squeazy toys	Craft pom-poms to blow with a straw Heavy work activities

My sensory-friendly environment

Tactile




Taste

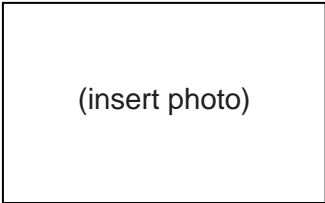


Auditory




Interoception






Name:


Proprioception




Visual









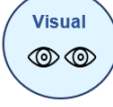


Smell



Vestibular



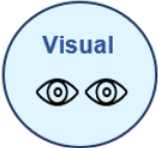


My sensory-friendly environment – Example




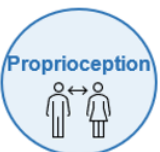

 <p>Tactile</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can be resistant towards exploring new materials and textures. When introducing new messy play resources, I like to first explore them through a clear zippy wallet. 	 <p>Taste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need to be able to access crunchy snacks throughout the day. 	 <p>Auditory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I need access to my ear defenders throughout the day.
 <p>Interoception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	 <p>Name: Joel</p>	 <p>Proprioception</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I like to sit at the edge of the carpet
 <p>Visual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can become distracted by visual input within the environment. I need a low arousal workspace away from classroom displays. 	 <p>Smell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	 <p>Vestibular</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It helps me to focus if I sit on a wobble cushion at carpet time. I need to access the trampoline for 3 minutes then a calming activity before a focused activity.

Sensory Audit Observation Chart

Child's initials:

Date:

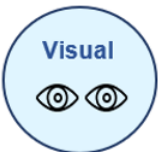


Setting (time/place)		Observation
	Environmental Audit	Reasonable Adjustments to be made
		
		
		




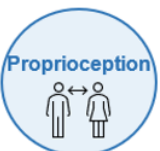

		
		
		
		
		

Sensory Audit Observation Chart

Child's initials: A

Date: 06/09/22

Setting (time/place)		Observation
In the school hall at lunch time.		A became very distressed as he entered the lunch hall. He began to cover his ears and appeared anxious. Although he initially sat down at the table he quickly got back up and moved to the edge of the room, visibly upset.
	Environmental Audit	Reasonable Adjustments to be made
	Lots of bright displays around the room. Busy room with lots of people moving around.	Create a low arousal space in an area of the hall – limited visual stimulation in terms of displays. Seat A away from the walkways to limit people passing.
	Strong smell of lunch cooking.	Seat A away from the kitchen to limit smells coming from cooking.
		

	Noisy in the hall due to the busyness as well as the noise echoing.	Offer ear defenders. Allow A to go to the hall 5 minutes before the other children, possibly with a small group of children.
	Seating is hard.	Allow A to take a cushion to the hall to place on the chair when sitting down.
		
	Other children sat either side of A and in front and behind him as we walked in a line to the hall.	Seat A on the end of the table where he does not have a child sat either side of him and towards the edge of the room. Allow A to walk at the front of the line when entering the hall.
	Possibly hungry due to time of day. Cold in the hall.	Mid-morning snack to be offered. Fleece to be put on before accessing the hall.