

# Sensory Profile

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

## Early Years – C & I Team

- Please print out this document in colour.
- **Red** statements indicate a hypersensitive, or over-sensitive, sensory profile in that area. This is when the body misinterprets sensory information as something unpleasant and will try and avoid such input wherever possible.
- **Blue** statements indicate a hyposensitive, or under-sensitive, sensory profile in that area. This is when the body is not processing sensory information effectively and therefore is constantly seeking more sensory input.
- A child can be hypersensitive in one area and hyposensitive in another. Their sensory needs may also fluctuate so it is important to complete sensory profiles regularly.

<b>Name of child:</b>	
<b>Date of completion:</b>	
<b>Name of person completing this profile:</b>	

# Sensory Profile



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**Tactile**

Sense of touch.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Is sensitive to the feel of certain fabrics e.g. certain clothes, school uniforms, bedsheets.				<p>Remove labels from the child's clothing.</p> <p>Allow the child to sit away from others (give space).</p> <p>Massage feet before putting on socks and shoes.</p> <p>Consider tactile element to activity and where possible modify, e.g. when painting or using playdough, allow use of tools and/or wearing gloves and allow the child to wash their hands if requested.</p> <p>If touch is necessary, give the child prior warning.</p> <p>Avoid light touch – use firm pressure when touching the child and always approach from the front (massage rather than tickling).</p>
Dislikes the feel of certain substances, e.g. water play, playdough, shaving foam etc.				
Seams or labels in clothes can be very uncomfortable or child doesn't like wearing new clothes/shoes.				
Finds it difficult to be in busy places e.g. classroom provision, carpet time, lining up close to others, pick-up/drop-off etc.				
Clear and strong reaction to unexpected touch – dislikes being touched, children bumping into them, being hugged etc.				
Hates having hair brushed and/or teeth brushed.				
Hates rough and tumble play.				

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<p>Likes a hug if chosen to do this and can hug/touch very tightly. Likes squeezing hands tightly etc.</p>			<p>Messy play – sand, water, finger paint, shaving foam, jelly, slime, mud box. Use different textures – lentils, rice, seeds, beans, pasta, cotton wool, sand paper. Include activities which involve strong pressure through the hands i.e. stiff dough play, baking with dough, magic sand, painting with hands and feet.</p>
<p>Enjoys feeling certain materials such as fabrics, water, paint, messy play and may seek out playing with certain substances (this may include smearing faeces).</p>			<p>Finger songs and games. Provision of tactile toys and objects e.g. pine cones. Encourage use of vibrating tooth brush. Encourage resistive sucking to increase oral stimulation by the use of sports bottles, crazy straws, thick milk shakes.</p>
<p>Sits too close to others during carpet time or when playing and shows no awareness of personal space.</p>			<p>Provide deep pressure. Weighted blankets. Foot massage, foot spa, barefoot activities e.g. bubble wrap, sand. Vibrating cushion. Monitor levels of arousal; self-harm can be a response to low environment stimulus (boredom) or an overload in stimulus, to calm the system down.</p>
<p>Craves input through self-harm eg head-banging, self-biting. Scratches excessively.</p>			<p>Engage the child in active movement. Place a barrier between the harmful act and body part i.e. a cushion on the table (head-banging), a cuff bandage to prevent biting the wrist. Provide an alternative to the harmful behaviour i.e. allow them to bite a chewy toy.</p>

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### Visual

Sense of sight.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Prefers not to make eye contact.				Warn the child of any changes that you will make to the environment. Reduce the amount of clutter in the room.
Dislikes bright lights including fluorescent lights, bright natural light and sudden flashes of light.				Be aware of external visual distractions i.e. trees, roads, etc. Fit a blind to the window to reduce distractions. Reduce amount of visual information/material presented at one time.
Struggles to maintain concentration in cluttered and over stimulating environments e.g. busy wall displays, busy provision areas etc. (will flit from one object to another).				Use matt laminating pouches to reduce glare/reflection from light. Position the child near the front of the classroom preferably not facing the window.
Unable to recognise familiar people when seen out of context or given a slight change in physical appearance.				Create an individual workstation with built up sides – a pop up visual screen.
Has a hard time finding objects in competing backgrounds (for example, rake in sandpit, saucepan in kitchen area).				Consider the lighting in the classroom. Wear sunglasses and a hat when outside.
Becomes distressed by very small changes in the environment.				Use neutral colours.
Is attracted to lights and is fascinated by shiny objects, bright colours and flashing toys.				Offer dot to dots, mazes, word searches, Where's Wally, find it books, colour by numbers.
Enjoys certain patterns and movements of objects e.g. brickwork, stripes or spinning objects.				Place work on a bright piece of paper to draw attention to the task. Use stimulating visuals such as bubble tubes and fibre-optic lights to stimulate the visual field.
Uses peripheral vision when doing a task e.g. takes object to face and looks along it. Flaps hands in front of eyes.				Introduce interactive games that provide opportunities for eye movement eg <i>row row your boat</i> .
Extended eye gaze				
Focuses on a tiny part of an object rather than the bigger picture eg tiny threads or small patterns on the carpet.				

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### Auditory

Sense of hearing.

Observation	often	some-times	never	strategies
Dislikes loud sounds e.g. puts hands over ears, prefers to cover ears with hood, uses ear-defenders.				Respect their sensitivity it really does hurt! Try to forewarn the child of any loud noises before they occur. Minimise auditory distractions e.g. use a rug in a classroom to reduce excess noise.
Comments on things that s/he hears – can hear sounds which others do not hear which can make it difficult to concentrate.				Consider ear defenders or ear plugs. Provide a quiet safe area. At lunchtime allow the child to eat in a quieter room if required.
Repeats the same words/vocalisations as a way to soothe themselves in the face of intense and confusing sounds.				During assembly allow the child to sit at the end of the line to minimise noise. Allow them to go in first and the noise to build around them. Consider quieter spaces on the playground for the child to socialise or take part in quieter activities.
Intensely dislikes music time or other activities which create lots of noise e.g. accessing free provision.				Allow the child to leave classroom a couple of minutes early for transitions to avoid noisy environments.
Distressed by sudden unexplained noises (blender, vacuum, hand-dryer, toilet flushing, fire alarms, sirens etc).				Review the environment – consider the noise made by the TV, radio, outside traffic, heaters. Consider internal noises e.g. sniffing / coughing / chewing / rustling papers. Allow self-soothing through humming.
Finds it easier to listen when not looking at person.				Provide soothing sounds/music CDs.
Prefers quiet areas.				
Frequently asks people to be quiet e.g. stop making noise, talking, singing. May even place hand over people's mouths when they sing/talk.				

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Seeks out noise e.g. loves music time, noisy toys, activities on the IWB. Holds toys to ear and has volume on high.				<p>Wait for the child to process and respond to auditory information – remember this may take them longer.</p> <p>Encourage the child to focus on the task in hand.</p> <p>Use stimulating auditory toys/games.</p> <p>Provide stimulating music – CDs and instruments.</p> <p>Allow as much auditory input as possible during appropriate times of the day.</p>
Makes noises such as tapping, drumming, banging on doors, dropping objects.				
Appears to ignore verbal requests and may find it difficult to understand instructions given verbally.				
Speaks loudly or struggles to alter voice tone				
Talks to themselves while doing a task to gain auditory feedback.				

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### Gustatory/Olfactory

Sense of taste and smell.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Limited diet/always eats the same food (for example, a beige diet).				Use unscented soaps. Avoid wearing perfume. Allow the child to have their favourite scent or object to block out the offensive smell e.g. sweat band with aromatherapy oil or Mum's perfume on. Adopt a graduated approach to introducing new foods. Be considerate of taste requirements – never force a child to eat something that makes them uncomfortable.
Dislikes crunchy or chewy food.				
Likes to have food presented in a certain way on the plate.				
Dislikes certain everyday smells e.g. perfumes, washing powder, fabric softeners, playdough, baking smells etc. Could be physically sick or wretch when smelling these aromas.				
Will try to avoid going in certain areas where there are certain smells (eg. Kitchen, dining room)				
Eats/licks materials which are not edible e.g. chews objects, pencils, clothes, grit, sand, glue sticks etc.				Encourage the child to have as many smell experiences as possible e.g. scratch and sniff stickers, aromatherapy oils, scented felt tips, scented candles. Encourage the child to try a variety of tastes e.g. spicy, sour, zing etc. Use sensory chew toys to allow the child to chew an object safely. Use scratch and sniff books during activity times. Encourage mark making using fragrant pens / crayons.
Seeks out certain foods or certain tastes.				
Tendency to seek out smells e.g. people – wanting to smell someone's hair or skin, clothes, food, harmful substances. May sniff a toy before playing with it.				
Unaware of reasonable hygiene issues e.g. smells own faeces, may play with faeces.				

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### Vestibular

Sense of balance.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Afraid of heights and is hesitant going up or down small thresholds such as steps or curbs.				<p>Use a firm supportive seat that will not tip to help the child feel stable and secure whilst sitting. Make sure their feet can stay flat on the ground.</p> <p>Make allowances in PE, e.g. reduce the amount of vestibular activity, i.e. forwards roll or activities where the feet are off the ground etc.</p> <p>Allow the child to be at the front or back of the line when negotiating stairs. When ascending and descending stairs, allow the child to use the handrail.</p> <p>Allow the child to leave class 5 minutes early to avoid busy corridors.</p> <p>Allow the child to sit in the middle seat when in the back of a vehicle so they are able to focus their vision forward.</p> <p>Gently introduce games and songs to build tolerance to rocking and spinning.</p>
Dislikes movement activities such as swings, slides, trampoline, going up and down stairs, spinning, moving backwards, being picked up.				
Difficulties with activities that require good balance.				
Finds it hard to look and change focus from one thing to another, eg, from IWB to teacher.				
Can be travel sick				
Spins for prolonged periods of time without ever getting dizzy.				
Seeks movement activities such as swings, slides, climbing frame, trampoline, going spinning, moving backwards etc.				
Rocks back and forth when sitting/standing/walking.				<p>Provide opportunity to use swings, both indoor and outdoor.</p> <p>Use a 'move and sit' cushion.</p> <p>Allow child to sit on a ball seat or a Yoga ball.</p>



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				<p>Engage child in interactive play e.g. row the boat, going to the seaside, roly poly song etc.</p> <p>Allow time spinning on a roundabout, office chair or rocking toy.</p> <p>Being pulled along on wheeled toys.</p> <p>Establish movement to music to develop more controlled motor skills.</p> <p>Introduce obstacle courses.</p>
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### Interoception

Understanding and organising messages from internal organs.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Feels the need to go to the toilet often.				Allow longer for toilet training and build timetabled slots for going to the toilet. Encourage clothing suitable for the weather conditions. Monitor food intake and share food diaries with home. (If you can't feel hungry or full how do you know when and how much to eat?)
Often feels too hot or too cold.				
Often feels hungry/thirsty and asks for food or drink.				
Feels pain easily, e.g. a small cut is really painful to them.				
Inappropriate responses to natural sensations e.g. may enjoy the sensation of hunger, heart racing after bursts of activities.				
Doesn't recognise their emotions, signals their body is giving e.g., 'butterflies in stomach' so not able to 'self-regulate.'				Keep a close eye for falls, accidents, as the child may not draw your attention to them. Monitor food intake and share food diaries with home. (If you can't feel hungry or full how do you know when and how much to eat?)
Doesn't recognise when hungry/thirsty – can feel 'hangry.'				
Don't recognise that they need to go to the toilet – holding on to bowel movements which lead to constipation, wetting the bed.				
Seems unaware of pain and has a high pain threshold so may be unaware when they have hurt themselves.				
Doesn't feel hot/cold, e.g. has jumper on when really hot, doesn't want to wear a coat when it is snowing.				

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### Proprioception

Understanding where our body is in space and how our different body parts are moving (it is rare for someone to be oversensitive to proprioception).

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Likes deep pressure e.g. seeks pressure by crawling under heavy objects or prefers clothes to be tight.				<p>Offer the following activities/equipment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jumping on a trampoline.</li> <li>• Games - pillow fights, playing tug of war, wheelbarrow walks, animal walks – crab walk, bear walk, duck walk, kangaroo jumps.</li> <li>• Chair push ups - Place palms on each side of the seat, push down and lift your bottom off chair. Hold position for as long as you can; make sure feet are off the floor as this means you will put more weight through your arms.</li> <li>• Floor push-ups or wall pushes (stand arm's length away from the wall, with hands at shoulder height, keep back and legs straight and bend your arms to do push ups).</li> <li>• Rolling games e.g. roll the child up tightly in a blanket or rug leaving their face exposed.</li> <li>• Any leisure/sports activities such as swimming, climbing, ball games, crawling through tunnels.</li> <li>• Weights – Carry a backpack with a bit of weight in (no more than 10% of the child's body weight). Wear leg weights during P.E or when walking to and from school (no more than 10% of the child's body weight).</li> <li>• Massage – using firm pressure touch on arms, legs, palms of hands and feet.</li> <li>• Lap pads (or wheat bags) for increased proprioceptive input when seated.</li> </ul> <p>Allow for regular movement breaks during lessons.</p> <p>Playdough or <i>Theraputty</i> use – can be used to warm up the hands ready for handwriting tasks.</p> <p>Allocate the child jobs to provide movement breaks, e.g. library book collector/monitor, taking messages to the office.</p> <p>Try tying <i>Theraband</i> around the legs of a chair for the child to push their legs against for resistance.</p>
Takes risks during play which might compromise personal safety e.g. climbing high into trees, climbing on and jumping from high furniture.				
Appear to enjoy falling and will seek opportunities to fall without regard for personal safety.				
Seeks movement – swings on chair, wriggles on seat, tapping, banging objects, not being able to sit still, likes action-movement songs.				
Taps/feels the edges of walls, desks. Walks/runs round edges of classroom or playground.				
Is unaware of their own strength so can play boisterously which can sometimes be unsafe e.g. pushing, hitting, bumping into or biting other children.				
Leans against things.				
Walks on tip-toes.				
Sits on legs/feet.				

# Sensory Profile



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**Multi-sensory Processing**

Taking in information in busy environments.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Difficulty paying attention. May be easily distracted.				
Tunes out when in a busy environment.				
Can't do two things at once.				
Gets lost easily, even in a familiar environment.				
Learns best when visuals are used, eg. Big books, concrete objects, whiteboards, objects of reference etc.				

**Motor Skills Differences**

Difficulty with co-ordination and fine and gross motor skills.

Observation	often	some-times	never	Strategies
Finds holding an implement such as a paintbrush/drawing/ using scissors difficult.				
Finds using cutlery difficult.				
Struggles with whole body coordination, e.g. sports, bike/trikes, movement games including running.				
Finds it difficult to get dressed/tie shoe lace/buttons on coat, zips.				

# Sensory Profile



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### Things to note:

This resource sheet is part of the Sensory Profile Toolkit.

- How to Complete a Sensory Profile Help Sheet
- [Early Years Sensory Profile](#)
- Primary Sensory Profile
- Secondary Sensory Profile

### Reference / Evidence base – informed by:

Olga Bogdashina- Sensory perceptual issues in autism and Asperger syndrome 2016

<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/sensory-differences/sensory-differences/all-audiences>