

SENDIS Sensory Sensitivities Strategies

Visual (Sight)

Hyper (over sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Consider the seating position e.g. away from the bright light of the window or put down the blind. Be aware of shafts of light, shadows etc.	
Provide sunglasses	
Keep the working space uncluttered and organised	
A workstation approach with little decoration on the walls	
Use of coloured overlays for reading, pastel coloured paper for writing	
Change the background colour and the font colour on the computer screen. Remember to change the settings on the interactive whiteboard	
Turn off lights during quiet breaks	
Don't insist on eye contact. Ask questions to check listening and attention	
Use low wattage bulbs/fluorescent strip lights with faster flickering time/darker coloured bulbs	
Highlight relevant information. Differentiate worksheets etc. and put minimal visual information on page	
Cover other areas of the page not currently working on	
Be aware of the colours and patterns of clothes that you are wearing	
Consider lighting in the room (no fluorescent lights)	

Hypo (under sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Provide times to look at brightly coloured objects. Link this into a work schedule	
Keep the room brightly lit with blinds open	
Provide a desk light if the room is too dim	
Highlight the edge of surfaces with tape	
Maintain constant physical environment and specifically teach any changes	

Auditory (Hearing)

Hyper (over sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Have earplugs or sound blocking headphones to block out the noise	
Use headphones with gentle music to block out unpleasant sounds	
Provide verbal warnings e.g. class, the hall will be noisy	
Warn pupil of loud noises before they occur when possible	
Allow the pupil to cover their ears	
Allow the pupil to take part in music lessons initially outside the closed door of the music room. Gradually open the door wider until the pupil can enter the room. Use ear plugs to reduce the level of noise heard	
Use rugs where possible to muffle the noise	
Try and provide a less noisy place to sit e.g. away from an open window when there is noise outside	
Close window and door to reduce external noises	
Put pads on chair/table legs to reduce scrapping noises	
Consider acoustics of the room	
Involve the rest of the class in understanding difficulties e.g. teach not to shout, keep noise level low in classroom	

Hypo (under sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Cue pupil in by using his name	
Take into consideration the pupil's need to make noises whenever possible	
Give instructions one at a time and allow time to process	
Provide tick lists and pictorial support if pupil does not remember	
Allow pupil to talk through a task, often out loud	
Allow opportunity to work in noisy environments	
Play lively music	
Provide visual cues to support response to auditory signals	

Tactile (Touch)

Hyper (over sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Allow the pupil to wear gloves	
Introduce different textures slowly, allowing the pupil to build up tolerance at their own pace	
Let the pupil stand at the beginning or the end of the line	
Avoid aisle seats	
Remove labels that may be uncomfortable	
Allow the pupil to pat cool water on their face if needed	
Allow pupil to drink iced water	
Allow pupil to wear warm clothing when needed	
Allow pupil to use paper towels instead of hand dryers	
Allow pupil to leave the lesson early to avoid crowds when moving around school	
Approach pupil from the front	
Warn pupil before touching them	
Don't insist that they wear clothes that hurt them	
Use pencil grips to experiment with comfortable textures when holding a pencil	
Social story to support response to minor cuts	
Provide a cushion to sit on	

Hypo (under sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Use social stories to : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of appropriate ways and times of touching others • find an adult if they are bleeding • What is the weather today? What do I need to wear my coat? 	
Use a hula hoop, for example, to establish personal boundaries	
Provide carpet square during on carpet sessions	
Teach to stand an arms length away from people	
Provide a 'fidget' toy to hold and squeeze across the school day	
Provide appropriate objects to chew on e.g. chewy necklace	
Provide crunchy foods to eat e.g. carrot, apple, celery	
Provide opportunities within their schedule to touch desirable textures	
Watch for bruises and injuries	
Prompt verbally or visually to wash hands or blow noise.	
Teach routines for personal hygiene e.g. look in the mirror to see if your face is dirty	
Provide vigorous activity to enable the child to 'feel' their body	
Weighted lap mat	

Gustatory (Taste)

Hyper (over sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Slowly introduce new tastes, perhaps starting with a sniff, leading to a lick, leading to putting on the lips before putting it in the mouth	
Separate food on the plate	
Address fear of choking/gagging with small stepped approach to develop coping strategies	

Hypo (under sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Provide opportunities during the day that would allow tasting of appropriate foods that may prevent the need to taste more inappropriate tastes. Link to schedule.	
Provide suitable alternatives to chewing inedible objects e.g. chewing toys/necklaces	
Provide strongly flavoured foods for lunch	

Olfactory (Smell)

Hyper (over sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Request that adults do not use perfume or strongly smelling shower gels, deodorants etc.	
Match the scents of shower gel and shampoo so that you are not giving off a mix of smells	
Try and get unscented classroom equipment/tools	
Try and reduce an unpleasant smell that is wafting into the room by closing the door, positioning the pupil by an open window, providing the pupil with a small fan and place a scent that the pupil likes to offset the unpleasant one	
Consider seating position for lunchtimes	
Use social stories to teach pupil appropriate social rules	
Use nose plugs that are available for swimmers (parental consent required)	



Strategy	✓ or X
Allow opportunities to use smells as part of the curriculum	
Provide a 'sensory diet' of smells with time that could be built into the timetable	
Use strong smelling products as rewards to distract from inappropriate smelling behaviours	
Provide visual prompts for recognising smells that denote danger e.g. gas	
Social story to address inappropriate 'smelling' behaviours	
Teach signs on bleach bottles etc.	
Consider labelling items in the classroom with an agreed sign that means it is unfit for eating/drinking e.g. paints	

Vestibular (Balance)

Hyper (over sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Provide Therabands around chair legs to give something to kick against.	
Don't expect child to carry out activities in PE that may be difficult i.e. forward rolls, rope work etc.	
Be aware of difficulties and provide coping strategies such as allowing extra time, using a buddy or aid such as holding onto a wall.	

Hypo (under sensitive)

Strategy	✓ or X
Use electric toothbrush	
Provide opportunities for swinging, spinning, running, jumping on a trampoline	
Have a rocking chair, or hammock/swing chair outside the classroom	
Encourage spinning, rolling, swinging, twirling in PE lessons	
Provide objects to hold, squeeze.	

Proprioceptor (Position of body in space)

Strategy	✓ or X
Provide appropriate seating equipment	
Use a non slip mat to prevent sliding out of chair or to hold piece of paper on table	
Give the pupil jobs that involve moving or pushing chairs, wiping down tables etc	
Consider seating position in the classroom to ensure the pupil is facing what he/she needs to look at	
Approach pupil from the front	
Weighted lap mat	
Use carpet squares to give the pupil their own space	
Use alternative seating such as bean bags, wobble cushion	
Ensure the chair and table are the correct size so that the pupil's feet are flat on the floor	
Provide furniture that supports the pupils body e.g. a chair with arms	
Use Therabands to do arm pulls while sitting on chair	
Use visual prompts to demarcate space e.g. coloured tape around desk space	
Heavy exercise workout	
Self massage in Yoga exercises	
Provide a buddy to support when walking, encourage pupil to use the wall, banister rail and furniture to aid stability	
Keep the furniture in the room constant and teach the pupil explicitly when rearranging the room	
Use wet wipes to support self care	
Allow movement breaks	

Planning a Sensory Diet.

Over stimulated

Strategy	✓ or X
Provide a small tent/play hut with soft pillows/beanbag	
Provide a range of activities involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weight bearing e.g. wheelbarrow walks, chair push ups • Pushing • Heavy work • Carrying 	

Under stimulated

Strategy	✓ or X
Provide a range of activities involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement • Jumping • Climbing • Swinging Schedule these activities before carpet/work time to allow the student to be more focus. This may form part of a sensory diet.	

Other considerations

Strategy	✓ or X
Allow pleasurable sensory activities within the structure of the day	
Use a sensory room to regulate sensory stimulation	
Encourage activities that desensitise or provide stimulation e.g. blowing whistles, straw painting	
Use time out cards to support sensory overload	