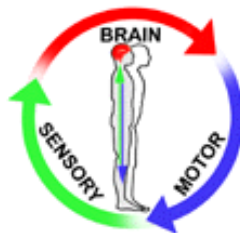


Orchard School Sensory Detective Screening Tool

<i>Name of Pupil</i>	
<i>Date of Birth</i>	
<i>Teacher</i>	
<i>Parent/carer</i>	
<i>Date</i>	

- Use only one activity at a time so that you can observe impact.
- Activities should be used for limited amounts of time in order to be effective.
- Activities should be easily accessible.
- The long term aim is for a child to move from co-regulating to self-regulating when their anxiety levels raise, in order for them to return to the feeling of safety and security.
- We all need sense of safety and security to focus on everyday tasks.



Sense of body awareness

Our sense of body awareness, also known as Proprioception, this is:

- Our sense of movement.
- Our ability to know how much force and pressure to use to move and manipulate objects.

Our body receives information from within our bodies, through our muscles and joints.

Proprioceptive input can have a relaxing effect enabling us to be calm and focused.

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
PROPRIOCEPTIVE SEEKING - UNDER SENSITIVE			
Heavy Handed or footed (stomps, jumps, breaks objects – squeezes too tightly, bangs objects down on surfaces, bangs doors)			
Not able to grade speed of their movement.			
Difficulty co-ordinating their limbs e.g. May trip or fall frequently, spoon to mouth, arms for dressing, riding a tricycle.			
Seeks and gives firm hugs, loves rough & tumble			
Kicks, bites and hits.			
Runs into things, attempts to squeeze into spaces too small for them.			
Rocks, Spins, moves, flaps, walk on toes for feedback.			
Prefers tight clothing or shoes			
Chews clothing, objects or fingers.			
Unaware of personal space e.g. stands too close to others, climbs over them.			

PROPRIOCEPTIVE AVOIDING: OVER SENSITIVE			
Dislikes eating chewy or crunchy foods.			
Does not like climbing, walking or physical activities – prefers to be still.			
Avoids climbing and walking activities			
Dislikes being close to, sharing a space with others – will move away, or dislikes being hoisted.			
Dislikes hugs or physical contact.			
Dislikes wearing shoes or tight fitting clothing.			
Lays on floor, appears lazy or lethargic.			

Activities to develop body perception:

- Activities may be used to provide a sense of calmness. Identify trigger points through observation and use before child becomes anxious or distressed.
- Activities may be used to develop 'a state of readiness for work'; use before & after quiet/independent work.
- Activities to be used in short bursts a few minutes at a time monitor your child to guide you.

Activities to develop body sense and for children who are under sensitive

Receptors for this system are located in muscles and joints and are stimulated by resistive activities, pushing or pulling against something.

- Pushing trolleys, pushchairs
- Carrying weighted loads – box of toys, books, drinking bottles
- Stacking chairs and tidying away toys
- Trampoline/therapy ball
- Obstacle course - Crawling through tunnels.
- Tug of war games
- Wheelbarrows
- Animal walks
- Stress ball
- Catching and throwing games-balls, bean bags
- Swimming, dancing, stamping, climbing,
- Riding trike or scooter.
- Pillow/mat crashing
- Thera bands.
- Sand and water play; pouring,
- Play dough, rolling, cutting, hand/foot prints
- Consider different positions for play; lying on tummy, kneeling at table
- Consider the use of equipment, beanbag chair, wobble cushion

- Bear Hugs, only if initiated by child.
- Massage
- Oral activities: crunchy foods, blowing bubbles, drinking through a straw or sports bottle thick liquids, bubble painting or blow football.

The following must be discussed with OT, ahead of using;

- Weighted snake, back pack, vests, and cap or lap pads.

For children who are over sensitive:

- Wear clothes that are baggy, sandals rather than shoes.
- Wave rather than shake hands or hug when greeting.
- When grouping stand at front of line or slightly away from others
- Sit child on end at table a slight distance from others.

Sense of Taste or oral sensations

This is our bodies ability to:

- Eat and drink, to differentiate flavors, textures and temperatures.
- Communicate verbally.
- Explore and learn about our environment through our mouths.

Mouthing is a normal stage of development and we will do this until our brains have enough tactile experience to know about objects.

Chewing, biting, and sucking can influence our level of alertness. E.g. sucking has a calming effect whilst crunching an apple has an alerting effect.

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
ORAL SEEKING,			
Prefers spicy or hot food			
Explores objects by mouthing or licking them. This is a normal stage of development and we will do this until we have enough tactile experience to know about objects			
Bites frequently			
Sensitive to brushing teeth			
Craves certain foods.			
ORAL AVOIDING,			
Gags easily and unable to tolerate certain texture of foods			
Prefers to eat bland/beige food.			
Avoids certain textures of food e.g. mushy foods			
Difficulties with trying new foods			
Frequently drools			

Activities to develop oral sensations:

- Chewable jewelry or chewies
- Vibrating toothbrush
- Drinking through a straw – this can help attention. – thick liquids
- Tasting bottles with different flavors
- Blowing bubbles. Blowing musical instruments
- Edible neckless
- Play 1 new taste per week
- Hard chewy sweets such as star burst
- Dry pasta
- Cereal
- Crackers
- Drink through water bottle with bite valve

Sense of smell

Our smell system:

- Is closely linked to our sense of taste and helps us to distinguish flavours
- Warns us of food/drink that it is dangerous to eat.
- Is the only sense directly linked to our memory and emotions, this means that smells can trigger memories.

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
SENSE OF SMELL: UNDER SENSITIVE			
Explores objects/people by smelling constantly.			
Does not respond to unpleasant odours.			
Craves certain smells or textures.			
Prone to eating dangerous objects/ does not notice dangerous smells.			
SENSE OF SMELL: OVER SENSITIVE			
Oversensitive to certain smells and avoids them – list if known.			
Holds their nose or becomes agitated around certain smells, even if you don't smell anything.			
Masks smells with other smells e.g. hand down nappy and then smells to mask other smells.			
Avoids food that typically children enjoy.			
Does not like to be hugged by others, avoids places like kitchens, swimming pool or toilets.			
Reverts to fight or flight to get away from smells			

Activities that may develop our sense of smell:

- Scented playdough, finger paint or felt tips.
- Scented stickers
- Creating smell bottles with various spices or items to introduce new smells.
- Scented bubbles
- Scented chewable items
- Herb garden
- Aromatherapy
- Scented Rice play
- Fruit play/smoothies

Sense of touch

Our sense of touch is the largest sensory systems in our body. It allows us to interpret our world through our hands, our feet, our skin, and our entire body. There are two touch systems

- Protective touch, responds to light and unexpected touch, it alerts us to potential danger; touching something hot or sharp.
- The discriminative touch system tells us what we are touching, our ability to find an object in our pocket.

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
TACTILE SEEKING, HYPOSENSITIVITY – UNDER SENSITIVE			
Squeezes self/body parts e.g. fingers/head tightly or into into small spaces.			
Seeks bear hugs, finds these calming.			
Likes tight clothing and shoes.			
Likes to be wrapped tightly in a blanket or sheet.			
Oblivious to injuries to self; may pinch, bite or rubs self excessively.			
Drooling or unawareness of mess on face			
Needs to touch everything e.g. brushing along wall whilst walking own the corridor, picking up everything.			

TACTILE AVOIDING, HYPERSENSITIVITY – OVER SENSITIVE			
Avoids or overreacts to light touch or physical contact.			
Appears anxious when in close proximity to others/crowds			
Strongly dislikes touch to the hair, teeth or face.			
Dislikes certain textures of food and may Gag			
Has difficulty with certain clothing tags in clothing, seams on clothing			
Dislikes stiff clothing or new shoes.			
Dislikes having hair or nails cut			
Avoids using or holding hands or tools.			
Dislikes messy play			
Gets upset if someone brushes past them or gets a small injury.			

Activities to develop the tactile sense:

- Sensory bins with various textures – wet and dry, hide items deep in them so they have to hunt for them.
- Fidget toys
- Wobble cushions
- Playdough/bread dough
- Finger paints
- Brushing using therapy brush
- Stress ball
- High fives
- Walking without shoes and socks on different textures.
- Drawing in sand, shaving foam, body lotion on the table.
- Wheelbarrow walking over different surfaces.

The following must be discussed with OT before using:

- Weighted lap packs and back pack.
- Compression clothing or vest

Adaptations to clothing:

- Compression clothing
- Tag less/seam free clothing

Squeezing hands/toes ([Adult directed](#))

Deep pressure massage/rolling with therapy ball ([Adult directed](#))

Sense of sight

Our sense of sight allows us to interpret what we see around us. This sense:

- Enables us to focus and follow moving objects within our environment.
- Enables us to determine variations in light, colour, shape, depth and distance.
- Works alongside proprioception to determine our location amongst our surroundings and how we move through time and space.

	Y S	N O	COMMENT S
VISUAL SEEKING, HYPOSENSITIVITY – UNDER SENSITIVE			
Attracted to lights, reflective or high contrasting objects; black/white/red/yellow			
Attracted to sinning objects, enjoys watching visually stimulating items or shakes items in front of eyes			
Given opportunity flick lights on and off			
Watches repetitive movements such as flipping pages of a book or automatic door opening and closing for extended periods of time.			
Manipulates objects or moves hands and fingers close to face; flapping fingers or hands near eyes			
Intense focus on person or object.			
Likes watching sand and falling water, can't move away			
Rubs eyes hard			
VISUAL AVOIDING, HYPERSENSITIVITY – OVER SENSITIVE			
Sensitive to light/chooses dark environments. – e.g. may sit under the desk, put blanket over head			
Becomes over stimulated/distracted in a cluttered or busy environment e.g. walls too busy/ too much movement of people a room.			
Frequently covers eyes, squints or rubs eyes.			
Avoids direct eye focus/squints in the absence of a known eye condition (check with VI)			

Activities to develop visual sense:

- Sensory stimulating toys; bubble tubes, flashing lights on toys, glitter sticks, water and oil bottles with glitter, kaleidoscope.
- Ocular motor control; balloon volley ball, push and go windup toys, target games, skittles, balls, torch games hide and seek with spot light, spot light along a track.

Considerations for children who may be oversensitive:

- Do not have busy decorations on wall
- Use a work station
- Adjust lighting in room.
- Wear cap or glasses when outside.
- Sensory retreats – tent, blankets.

Sense of hearing

Our sense of hearing enables us to:

- Make sense of where we are by localizing sound
- Hear and interpret sounds to distinguish what/ who and where the sound is coming from.
- Filter out unnecessary background noise to be able to focus on relevant auditory information

Sounds can either be alerting or calming. Loud, quick unpredictable sounds tend to be more alerting; slow rhythmic noises tend to be calming.

Sound can be used to help maintain attention and a sense of calm needed for learning or doing.

	YES		
Covers ears with hands often to block out sounds			
Creates own noise to screen out environment auditory input.			
Overlay distracted by background noise.			
Behaviour problems are significantly reduced in quiet environments.			
Hides under tables, in cupboards or in quiet spaces			
Avoids everyday noises such as toilet flushing or water flowing.			

Activities that may develop our sense of sound:

- Play matching sound games
- Sound machines
- Sound books/toys
- Musical instruments

Considerations for children who may be oversensitive to sound:

- Ear defenders/ear plugs
- Quiet room or space to retreat.
- Calming music

Sense of movement and balance

Sense of movement and balance is also known as the vestibular system. The nerves are located in the inner ear which, communicate with the brain to enable this sense:

- To act as our 'internal spirit level,' it allows us to be straight and upright against gravity.
- Provide information about direction and speed of movement.
- Provide a sense of balance and bilateral integration.

Accurate processing of vestibular development is crucial to effective vision, posture, balance, and self-regulation.

Fast unpredictable movement is alerting, whilst slower rhythmic movement is calming.

- *Excessive or inappropriate stimulation of the vestibular system can cause undesired side effects: increased distractibility, disorientation, nausea, breathing changes, tiredness, suddenly pale or flushed skin.*

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
VESTIBULAR SEEKING, HYPOSENSITIVITY – UNDER SENSITIVE			
Needs to rock, spin, sway or swing to self soothe/calm			
Seeks opportunities for movement/constantly moving/fidgeting			
Prefers to be upside down or will hang off chair, sports equipment.			
Runs everywhere instead of walking			
Likes fast movement – merry go round, swing, scoot boards			
Difficulty with sitting balance/sitting still			
Needs movement, frequently stands up and sits down. Unable to adjust posture to match task.			
Bumps into objects/people			

VESTIBULAR AVOIDING, HYPERSENSITIVE – OVER SENSITIVE			
Difficulty in walking, crawling on uneven surfaces			
Can become clumsy and presents with a wide gait			
Dislikes positions during which feet are off the ground or when upside down; fearful of heights			
Dislikes head being tipped back (washing hair)			
Dislikes playground equipment such as swings, slides			
Fearful of being on moving equipment such as escalators, sea-saws, swings.			
Gets motion sickness, or has difficulties in stopping quickly or during an activity. Fear of sudden movement			
Resists or becomes disorientated after change in head position/movement.			
Turns whole body to look at you; resists change in head position			
Tires and loses balance easily			

Activities to develop the vestibular sense:

It is important not to overdo these, observe child closely and stop if signs of pallor or dis-orientation.

- Monkey bars
- Riding on trikes and bikes
- Scoot board and roundabouts
- seesaw
- Jumping on trampoline
- Hanging upside down
- Games like freeze dance
- Wobble cushion
- Climbing wall and monkey bar hanging
- Swimming
- Lying on stomach to complete activities

Discuss with OT ahead of using:

- Swinging- seat swings, platform swings

Areas of possible concern: