















Key resource: sensory strategies

System	Hypersensitivity	Hyposensitivity
 <p>Touch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warn the pupil if you are about to touch them Remember hugs may be painful rather than comforting! Gradually introduce different textures Allow individuals to complete activities themselves (e.g. hair brushing and hand washing) to allow them to regulate their sensitivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider tight clothing e.g. leotards underneath clothing Weighted blankets Sleeping bags Work with sand bag on lap
 <p>Vision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce fluorescent lighting Sunglasses Create a workstation Use blackout blinds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use resources which stimulate visual system e.g. light sticks
 <p>Hearing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shut windows and doors to reduce external sound Prepare the pupil for noisy places Ear plugs/ear defenders Walkman/iPod 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music therapy iPod/walkman Use visual cues to back up verbal information
 <p>Taste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow opportunities to taste lots of different things to aid sense development Encourage pupil to 'clean out' mouth with water between mouthfuls Puree foods Use ice pops to desensitise mouth Introduce very small bites of portions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow opportunities to taste lots of different things to aid sense development Provide oral stimulation throughout the day, crunchy foods Use vibration toys to stimulate the senses
 <p>Smell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use unscented detergents or shampoos Refrain from wearing perfume Make environment as fragrance free as possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use strong smelling objects as rewards Use strong smelling objects to distract from inappropriate strong smells (faeces) for example scented playdough Create a book of scents - match pictures to scented cotton wool for example lemon, coffee etc
 <p>Sense of body in space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threading activities Lace boards Allow the pupil to stand at end of line when lining up Allow the pupil to sit on a stool instead of carpet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position furniture around the edge of the room to make navigation easier Put coloured tape on floor to indicate boundaries Use arms length rule (you must be at least an arms length away from someone when speaking to them)
 <p>Balance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Break down activities into small steps Use visual clues for finish lines or stops in movement activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage activities which develop the vestibular system – swing, roundabout, rocking horse, see-saw, dancing

Key resource: sensory differences

System	Example of hyper (over-sensitive) behaviour	Examples of hypo (under-sensitive) behaviour
 <p>Touch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touch can be painful and uncomfortable and some pupils may withdraw from aspects of touch. This can have a profound effect on relationships • Only tolerates certain materials for clothing • Dislike of having anything on hands or feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds others tightly • Has high pain threshold (pain/temperature) • Self harming • Enjoys heavy objects on top of them • Prefers tight clothing
 <p>Vision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distorted vision occurs, objects and bright lights can jump around • Fragmentation of images, as a consequence of too many sources of visual stimuli • Focussing on particular details (sand grains) can be more pleasurable than looking at something as a whole • Distracted by certain lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May see things darker, lose features and lines • May concentrate on peripheral vision as central vision is blurred • Conversely, some say that a main object is magnified and things on the periphery are blurred • Poor depth perceptions – problems with catching or throwing • Flapping near eyes
 <p>Hearing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of noise can be magnified and surrounding sounds distorted and muddled • Inability to cut out particular sounds – difficulties concentrating • May have a lower hearing threshold which makes an individual particularly sensitive to auditory stimuli – hearing conversations in the distance • Fingers in ears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not acknowledge particular sounds • Enjoys crowded noisy places • Bangs doors and objects • Makes own noise e.g. humming
 <p>Taste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some flavours and foods are too strong and overpowering • Certain textures also cause discomfort, some pupils will only eat smooth foods such as mashed potatoes or ice cream • Only eats bland foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference for strong flavours – like very spicy foods • Eats everything e.g. grass, soil, materials. This is known as Pica
 <p>Smell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aversion to particular smells • Smells can be intensified and overpowering • Toileting problems • Dislike of individuals with distinctive perfumes or shampoos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smells objects • May have no sense of smell and fail to notice extreme odours • May lick objects
 <p>Sense of body in space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislikes close proximity of others • Has difficulty with fine motor skills and manipulating small objects • Moves whole body to look at objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity – stands too close to others not knowing about personal space etiquette • Little awareness of hunger/pain/cold/needing the toilet • Difficulties with navigating rooms and avoiding objects (bumps into things) • Bumps into people • Poor muscle tone • A preference for deep pressure for example tight shoelaces or pushing their chin into people
 <p>Balance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislikes playground equipment (swing/slide etc) • Difficulties in activities which include movement (sport) • Difficulties in stopping quickly or during an activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for rocking, spinning, swinging • Seeks opportunities for movement/constantly moving/fidgeting