

Oversensitivity

Children who have sensory oversensitivity may avoid some activities and experiences. They often have trouble suppressing the information that they receive from everyday activities and may feel overloaded, which can cause distress.

Children with oversensitivity or hypersensitivity may:

- Dislike of touch / texture experiences, e.g. messy play, physical contact
- Dislike of loud sudden noises
- Dislike of bright lights
- Avoid playground equipment (e.g. swings and slides)
- Avoidance of certain foods and food texture, colours, temperatures, etc.
- Dislike or avoidance of certain smells.

This could be displayed in behaviours such as:

- A low pain threshold
- Clumsy, uncoordinated movements
- Withdrawal from activities
- Discomfort and confusion
- Fleeing a situation without regard to safety
- Covering of eyes or ears frequently
- Restricted food preferences

Strategies / Interventions.

- Provide an area that meets a child's sensory need, that is easily accessible, such as a dark den or cardboard boxes.
- Have resources such as ear defenders, fidget boxes and calm down toys easily accessible.
- Support children to recognise their individual sensory needs and to identify the sensory input they require.
- Provide predictable structures and routines to support the child's emotional well-being.
- Stay calm, patient, and positive and support the child to access the sensory input they need.
- Considered resources such as spinning or rocking chairs or gym balls.



Links to EYFS. Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, social and emotional development.

SEND Code of Practice – Social, emotional and mental health and Physical and sensory.

Parental Section: Using strategies at home.

- Identify any triggers that lead to oversensitivity and minimise these. Try keeping a diary to help with this.
- Try ear defenders in loud places.
- Use sensory support aids. This includes chewing or fidget toys, weighted blankets, playdough or calming boxes. You can also buy clothes without seams or labels.
- Explain to friends and family. Make plans and involve them so that they can also make changes to support your child.