

## Specialist Teaching Team Sensory Sensitivities Checklist

### Visual (Sight)

#### *Hyper (over sensitive: sensory defensive)*

<i>Behaviour</i>	✓ or X
Squints or covers eyes when lights are bright	
Sensitive to fluorescent lights and flashes	
Frightened by sharp flashes of light	
Complains about particles flying in the air	
Notices the tiniest pieces of fluff on the carpet	
Looks down most of the time	
Avoids eye contact	
Difficulties keeping eyes focused on the task	
Easily distracted by other visual stimuli	
Has difficulty in bright or dimly lit rooms	

#### *Hypo (under sensitive: sensory seeking)*

<i>Behaviour</i>	✓ or X
May stare at the sun or bright lights	
Attracted to light sources	
Loves mirrors, shiny things	
Fascinated with brightly coloured objects and reflections	
Can fail to see some colours e.g. blue	
Experiences difficulties with clear things e.g. water in glass.	
Moves fingers and objects in front of eyes	
Rocks, finger twirls	
May circle an object to 'size' it up	
Run hands around edge of object to find out what it is	
Experiences poor depth perception	
Loves wheels, spinning, twirling objects	
Attracted to water – rainbow colours	
May be fascinated by stripes and patterns	
Stares – to create optical illusions	

## **Auditory (Hearing)**

### ***Hyper (over sensitive: sensory defensive)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Distracted by sounds not normally noticed by others e.g. humming of overhead projector, fans.	
Frightened by sounds e.g. fire bell, hand dryers	
Frequently asks people to be quiet	
Refuses to go to music lessons, assemblies	
Finds crowds, applause, laughter difficult	
Makes repetitive noises to block out other sounds	
Puts hands over ears	
Experiences sleep problems	
Grimaces with certain sounds	
Hears frequencies, sounds we cannot.	

### ***Hypo (under sensitive: sensory seeking)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Often does not respond to verbal cues or name	
Can ignore loud sounds	
Appears to make noises for noises sake	
May enjoy own noises, loud and rhythmic	
Difficulty understanding or remembering what was said	
Oblivious to certain sounds	
Talks self through a task, often out loud	
Attracted to noisy environments	
Fascinated with vehicles, engines, traffic	
Puts ear to vibratory surfaces (speakers, tumble / washing machine)	
Likes hoover, flushing toilets	

## **Tactile (Touch)**

### ***Hyper (over sensitive: sensory defensive)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Becomes frightened, anxious or aggressive with light or unexpected touch	
Appears frightened or avoids standing in close proximity to others	
Overreacts to minor cuts	
Avoids touching certain textures e.g. clay	
Refuses to wear new or stiff clothes	
Dislikes messy play/dirty hands	
Wears inappropriate clothing for time of year e.g. coat on hot day	
Only eats certain food textures / may have violent reaction to some food	
Overreacts to heat/cold / sensitive to extremes of temperature	
Generally resists touch	
Tip toe walks	
Finds showers / brushing hair too painful	
Experiences discomfort if sits too long	
Cannot tolerate pain	

### ***Hypo (under sensitive: sensory seeking)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Craves touch, needs to touch everything and everyone	
Not aware of being touched unless with extreme force	
Has a high pain threshold	
Doesn't notice when injured e.g. cut or bruised	
Not aware when hands or face are dirty/nose running	
May hurt themselves deliberately e.g. pinching, biting	
Mouths objects excessively	
Seeks out and touches certain textures	
Enjoys and seeks out messy play	
Likes pressure e.g. tight clothes	
Not aware when they are hot or cold	
Loves the resistance that water offers	

## **Gustatory (Taste)**

### ***Hyper (over sensitive: sensory defensive)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Picky eater, limited repertoire of food	
Only eats soft food	
Gags on textured foods	
Dislikes chewing	
Has a fear of choking	
Uses the tip of their tongue for tasting	
Very faddy, only likes bland food	

### ***Hypo (under sensitive: sensory seeking)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Lick, taste or chew inedible objects	
Licks other people (desire for salt)	
Prefers food with an intense flavour	
Frequently chews on hair, shirt or fingers	
Constantly putting objects in mouth	
Sucks on own tongue, cheeks	
Eats anything	
Regurgitates and re-swallows food / own spittle.	

## **Olfactory (Smell)**

### ***Hyper (over sensitive: sensory defensive)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Dislikes smells that do not bother other people	
Sensitive to smells i.e. perfumes, glue, mown grass etc	
Smells linger for them	
Tells other people how bad or funny they smell	
Refuses to eat certain food (due to smell) no matter how hungry they are	
Offended by environmental smells e.g. bathroom, cooking, perfumes	

## **Olfactory (Smell)**

***Hypo (under sensitive: sensory seeking)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Does not notice odours that others complain about	
Makes excessive use of smelling when introduced to objects, people, places	
Eats or drinks anything regardless of smell e.g. soap	
May smear, wets bed	
Dribbles to wet their skin, often hands - will then smell own skin	

## **Vestibular (Balance)**

***Hyper (over sensitive: sensory defensive)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
Frightened of ordinary movement activities e.g. spinning in PE activities	
Frightened of walking on uneven surfaces/walking up or down stairs	
Frightened of jumping, hopping, balancing on one foot	
Loses balance easily and may appear clumsy	
Moves slowly and cautiously	
Dislikes head being upside down i.e. forward rolls in PE	
Experiences difficulties in starting, stopping	
May suffer from travel sickness	
Does not like playing on playground equipment	
Can lose balance if sharp colour transition.	

***Hypo (under sensitive: sensory seeking)***

<b><i>Behaviour</i></b>	<b>✓ or X</b>
In constant motion, can't seem to sit still, always on the go	
Craves fast, spinning or intense movement experiences	
Takes excessive risks – i.e. no fear when jumping from a big height	
Runs round and round and spins without feeling dizzy	
Rocks body, shakes leg or head while sitting	
Need to jump, spin	

## **Proprioceptor (Position of body in space)**

<i>Behaviour</i>	✓ or X
Turns the whole body to look at something	
Places body in strange positions	
Poor body awareness	
Assumes odd positions	
Walks on tip toe ( recommend seek advice from GP)	
Low muscle tone e.g. sits on the floor with legs in a W position	
Weak grasp e.g. drops things	
Lack of awareness of body position in space e.g. bumps into objects and people / sprawls across desk.	
Appears floppy, often leans against people, furniture, walls	
Stumbles frequently and has a tendency to fall, tripping over	
Rocks back and forth	
Falling from chairs	
Self care/toileting (where are you wiping?)	
Head bangs	
Difficulties planning / executing motor tasks	
Enjoys rough and tumble	
Has poor fine motor skills – difficulties with precision movements	
Poor use of force / misjudge how much force to use i.e. closing a door, writing on paper	
Plays roughly, breaks toys	
Clumsy, appears uncoordinated	
Needs to be on the move in order to focus	
Paces the room	
Repetitive activities involve the whole body	
Displays hyperactive behaviour	