



## Sensory Strategies for School

### Tactile (touch) Sensitivity or tactile seeking:

#### School uniform:

Put uniform a few days before school starts to allow child to get used to the uniform

Remove tags if they bother them. Seamless socks if required.

Stretch new shoes: bend them so they are not so stiff, place balls of newspaper in them to stretch them.

If face masks become a new rule practice wearing them at home and find the type of mask they can tolerate. Watch how you put it on the child so that it does not cause intolerance. Eg: putting it on carefully where it doesn't touch the face or head until correctly in position and it all touches at the same time not touching the face first and then the straps.

#### Hand gels:

Find the hand gel they can tolerate and ensure you have ample supply of it at school.

#### Lines:

Allow them to line up before the rest of the class in the front, or they might prefer to be at the back of the class.

#### Groups:

Allow them to be on the edge of the group and join in as they relax, or leave if it gets too much for them

You might need to draw a specific space for them in circle time or standing in line.



### Noise Sensitivity:

Look at noise reducing headphones, practise wearing before school starts

Reduce noise of intercom system in the classroom.

During large group events such as assemblies, allow the child to sit on the edge and to leave the room if it gets too much for them. Give them a fidget while attending the event.

### Light sensitivity:

Look at where the child sits in the class, not near windows where the sun can shine directly on them or their work.

Avoid fluorescent lighting.

If they are battling to read black on white background: try different coloured overlays.

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Try glasses with slightly tinted lenses like sunglasses to reduce the glare of the light.  
When going outside allow sunglasses or peak hat.

### **Fidgets:**

Some children require something in their hands to fidget with in order to focus and concentrate or for transitioning times. It helps to regulate and calm them.

Velcro attached under the table for child to rub hands along

Have a bank of fidgets for the child to help them focus: eg: squeasy/ stretchy objects, blue tac, paper clips, pieces of string or wool, thera- putty:



### **Movement breaks:**

Children on the spectrum often require movement breaks at regular intervals throughout the day to help them settle. This can be in the classroom or out of the classroom and might involve another child.

Schedule it into the school day at times when the child will need it most. This only needs to be for a few minutes. Often beginning and end of the day and just after break time but can vary from child to child.

Some children also need these strategies within the classroom while sitting at the desk or participating in group time:

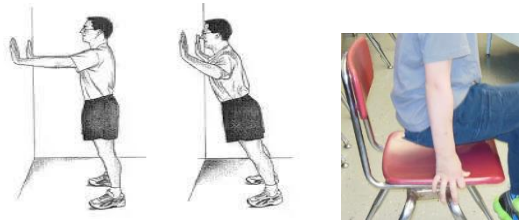
Thera- band attached around the leg of the chair for child to kick against:



Move and sit cushion: consider the disco sit or the move and sit cushion, which one suits child best, trial how much air to place in the cushion, allow child to decide whether to sit on smooth or rough side. Also trial if it works best to sit on the cushion or place at feet for foot movement.



Foot roller at feet for movement of feet while sitting at the desk:



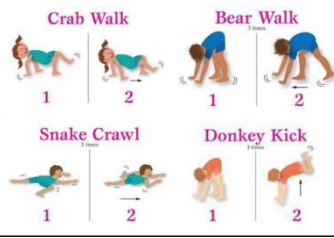
Chair or wall push ups:



Stretches before writing.



Movement breaks out of the class or as a class:



Animal walks:



Playground equipment: , swings

[www.gonoodle.com](http://www.gonoodle.com) has some great short movement break videos the class can do together.

Breaks out of the class can be going on a message, going to the toilet, walking around the school, if



possible time on trampoline or gymball.

Zoomball or ball games:



obstacle courses.

### **Sensory breaks:**

When the sensory demands become too much for a child in the classroom they often need a few minutes **out of the classroom** where no demands are put on them, usually on their own.

going for a walk, going to the toilet

Going to a sensory room with lights off and sitting on beanbag or rolling on gymball or having the gym ball rolled over them.



Sometimes going into a blackout tent with fidgets or a blanket and cushions



Swings if the school is able to hang them in a sensory room or swings in the play ground:



**Vibration:**

Fidgets for sensory breaks might include some vibration: such as min massager:



or the massage cushion.

**Seeking deep pressure:**

Doing the stretches

Chair and wall push ups

Using weights on their pencils:



Wearing second skins sports clothing under their school uniform

Weighted lap blanket or weighted beanie for around their shoulders.



Rolling the gym ball over them:



**Foods/drink:**

To help with concentration:

drinking water from the sports bottle.

Crunchy foods such as popcorn, toast, crackers, dry cereal, apples etc