

TIPS FOR SENSORY NEEDS

(VISUAL)

What are the implications of Visual Over-Responsiveness for the school setting?

These children can be sensitive to bright lights and glare. They are easily distracted by visual clutter (wall displays, books, toys) and struggle to locate specific items in busy backgrounds. They can easily lose their place when reading or copying information from the board. Some are reluctant to lie down in the PE hall due to overhead lights. Others are overwhelmed by movement in corridors or the playground.

How can we support Over-Responsiveness to Visual Input?

- Seating at the front of the classroom and close to peers whose movements are relatively settled.
- Turn off some overhead lights or seat the children away from strong light sources.
- Deliver/Reinforce instructions in front of a blank wall or canvass, as a means of reducing distraction.
- Work with the child at eye level, particularly if you are wearing colourful clothing.
- Reduce information on worksheets; use white space and frames to aid their focus on specific items.
- Establish a workstation in a less stimulating area of the classroom; identify and direct the child to less busy areas of the playground for relaxation.

What are the implications of Visual Under-Responsiveness for the school setting?

These children struggle to find objects which are right in front of them and may not easily recognise when a ball is heading towards them or judge distances well. Difficulties with perceiving lines on a page can lead to poor colouring and handwriting. They may not initially recognise facial expressions or hand signals and struggle to remember information on the board. Some children will crave time with bright and light-emitting toys and enjoy spinning objects repetitively.

How can we support Under-Responsiveness to Visual Input?

- Establish one area of the classroom or a nearby space which is bright and visually stimulating.
- Use picture cues, concrete objects and coloured tape to reinforce instructions and mark boundaries.
- Visual labelling, photographs and checklists will aid their ability to locate and organise materials.
- Make written information stand out using colour coding and highlighting.
- Provide multi-sensory practise with letter/number formation and model effective finger spacing.
- Provide sensory breaks with opportunities to play with bright, colourful and movable toys.

