

ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO LEARNING (ABLE)

Taking a Closer Look at Sensory Processing

Pupil's Name	
Date of Birth	
School	
Class	
Date	

Names of those involved in ABLe conversation

Key: Highlight statements using "traffic light" system

Red - area of concern/difficulty

Orange - emerging skill/some difficulty

Green - fine

Leave blank - not known/not relevant at this time

Comments

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	Date	Date	Date	Comments
Visual Processing (Hyper)				
• Dislikes bright lighting				
• Prefers dark environment				
• Is distracted by visual information e.g. pictures on wall, people moving				
• Avoids eye contact or looking directly in order to process auditory information				
• Gets upset when something is moved				
• Frequently loses place when reading / copying				
• Difficulty locating objects in a less organised / busy environment e.g. toy in a toy box				
• Squints, covers eyes or complains about brightness				
Visual Processing (Hypo)				
• Takes more visual information to react				
• Likes bright environment, reflective or spinning light				
• Spins own body to seek visual stim				
• Miss visual clues				
• Spins / flicks objects				

• Bumping into things				
• Misjudge spatial relationships				
• Can be startled when approached suddenly				
Auditory Processing (Hyper)				
• Noise levels feel magnified				
• Dislikes loud noises				
• Is easily startled				
• Likes to 'chew' to damp down noises				
• Is anxious or distressed before expected noise e.g. school bell				
• Is anxious or distressed before sudden noise e.g. something falling				
• Talks loudly				
• Distracted by background noise that others do not normally notice e.g. strip light buzzing				
• Avoids places where sounds can be heard				
• Struggles to cope with others' noise				
• Complains about noise but has limited awareness of their own noise				
• Hum, sing, make noises to mask background noise				
• Holds hands over ears to protect ears from sound				

Auditory Processing (Hypo)				
• Enjoys really loud noise				
• Fails to pick up verbal cues				
• Cannot determine location of sounds or voices				
• Talks to self				
• Bangs on surfaces to create noise				
• Difficulty understanding or recalling what has been said				
• Hum, sing or make noise for noises sake				
• Oblivious to sounds that others react to				
Vestibular Processing (Hyper)				
• Hates spinning, jumping				
• Becomes dizzy easily or not at all				
• Hates a busy place full of movement				
• Avoids feet off ground (e.g. avoids swings)				
• Dislikes activities where head is upside down e.g. somersaults, rough and tumble play				
• May appear clumsy and have poor balance				
• May have difficulty changing direction, bending or turning quickly				
• Cautious or hesitant to take risks and avoids movement				

• Prefers lying down to sitting				
• May lean on objects or use their hands / arms to support body rather than sit up				
• Suffer from motion sickness				
• May be anxious around or avoid stairs				
Vestibular Processing (Hypo)				
• Is always on the go				
• Has difficulty sitting still				
• Is constantly fidgeting / tapping				
• Runs rather than walks				
• Takes risks				
• Is fast but not always well co-ordinated				
• Needs movement to stay alert and focused				
• Runs back and forth				
• Rocks unconsciously (at desk/ chair/ on floor)				
• Fails to put hands out to save self when falling				
• Frequently twirls, spins self throughout day. Rarely becomes dizzy.				
• Has poor balance				
• Likes playground equipment. Swinging is a popular activity.				
• Seeks excitement and has no sense of danger				

• Enjoys being upside down and falling over				
Tactile Processing (Hyper)				
• Fussy				
• Avoids touch				
• Loves or hates hugs				
• Mouths objects				
• Only likes certain textures, clothes and avoids others				
• Doesn't like labels or restricting clothes				
• May insist on wearing the same clothes				
• Dislikes or really likes messy play				
• Can get distressed by another's touch				
• Feels pain and is very sensitive to temperature				
• Has difficulty standing in line with other children				
• Pulls away from touch				
• May not like skin exposed				
• Over reacts to minor injuries				
• Does not like their hand being held				
• Finds personal grooming stressful				
Tactile Processing (Hypo)				
• Takes firm touch to respond to stimulus				

• Is sometimes heavy handed				
• Over grips objects				
• Is sometimes too close to others				
• Has difficulty responding to pain /temperature				
• Has an unusually high tolerance to pain				
• Hits self or engages in other self-injurious behaviours				
• Unusual need to touch certain things				
• Not aware clothes are twisted or shoes are on wrong feet				
• Touches or leans on people to the point of irritating others				
• Doesn't seem to notice when hands / face are messy or covered in food				
Olafactory Processing (Hyper) <i>Taste and Smell</i>				
• Dislikes strong tastes				
• Likes only bland tastes				
• Tastes or smells objects, clothes etc.				
• Smells people				
• Over-reacts to new smells				
• Gags easily				
• Can get upset at break / lunchtimes				
• Has difficulty with certain textures and				

temperatures of food				
• Prefer not to mix food or food textures				
• May react or complain to smells that other people find pleasant				
• Refuses to eat certain food				
• Breathe through mouth instead of nose				
• Avoids strong smelling environments				
Olafactory Processing (Hypo) Taste and Smell				
• Eats non-food items				
• Has lots of hard, crunchy food in diet				
• Craves strong tastes				
• Under-reacts to strong, bad or good smell				
• Constantly mouths objects				
• Puts too much food in their mouth				
• Seeks scents				
• Unable to distinguish between pleasant and under scent				
• Actively seeks out strong odours which could include faeces and urine				
• Lick, taste or smell anything to gain sensation				
• Drools excessively				

Proprioception (Hyper)				
• Doesn't like others being too close				
• Creates own boundaries, sometimes inappropriately e.g. young person may always need to go to the end of the school line				
• Removes self from crowds				
• Lack of understanding of where their body is in relation to other things				
• May bump into objects				
• Can be seen as clumsy and/ or uncoordinated				
• Stands too close				
• May break items				
• May write very lightly or heavily. May rip the paper.				
Proprioception (Hypo)				
• Bumps into or trips over things / people				
• Stands too close to others				
• Puts self in too small spaces or pushes against corners of the room				
• Looks at feet when going down the stairs				
• Appears to enjoy falling				
• Places body in strange positons				
• Cracking joints to gain sensory input				

• Fear of falling / heights				
• In extreme cases, results in self-injurious behaviour to get the sensation they crave				
• Moves stiffly				
• Lack of awareness of body in space				
• Touches walks or stays at the edge of activities/ playground				
• Rocking				
• Spills / breaks things				
• Doesn't know how much force to use and frequently hurts other unintentionally				
• Likes bear hugs				
• Runs, hops or bounces instead of walking				
• Stamps feet or walks on toes				
• Prefers tight clothing				
• Twisting or chewing objects				
• May slouch, have poor posture and rest head in hands				