

Sensory Circuits

A sensory circuit is a sequence of physical activities that are designed to alert, organise and calm a child. It helps children to regulate and organise their senses in order to achieve the 'just right' or optimum level of alertness for effective learning. The circuit should be active, physical and a fun activity that children enjoy doing. Mrs Karen Cullum has had training in how to set Sensory Circuits in school and supports teachers in the implementation of these.

How do sensory circuits work?

Sensory circuits should be completed regularly for 15-20 minutes. Ideally, they should be completed first thing in the morning and after lunch. They can also be completed at home. Sensory circuits start with an alerting stage, move to an organising stage and finish with a calming stage. An example of activities in each stage are:

Alerting - skipping, jumping, running,

Organising - balancing, climbing, log rolls, throwing to a target.

Calming - lying under a weighted blanket, crawling through a tunnel, massage of the arms and legs.

Circuits are developed depending on the needs of each child. Some children might need longer in the alerting stage and others in the calming stage.

Children who benefit from Sensory Circuits:

- A child who doesn't like to be touched by others.
- A child who refuses to engage in messy play.
- A child who appears constantly anxious.
- A child who is half asleep, needs to be prompted to engage in a task.
- A child who avoids moving, climbing, swinging or sliding.
- A child who puts their hands over their ears and complains of noise.
- A child who becomes easily overly excited.
- A rigid, stiff and tense child.
- A child who always has to touch objects, people, constantly fiddles.
- A child who can't sit still and constantly fidgets.
- A child who likes to run around.