**Sensory Circuits**

Sensory circuits is a short physical activity that enables a child to reach the necessary level of alertness needed to prepare them to be ready to work, and so is a beneficial session for the beginning of the day.

It takes the child through three stages of alertness. It is important that the session runs through the stages in the correct order (alerting, organising and relaxing) in order for the child to become well regulated. The length of time spent during each stage can vary according to what is appropriate to the child.

1. Alerting – Provide vestibular integration. These activities should be ones that result in movement or cause the head to change direction.
2. Organising - These are activities that require motor control and co-ordination. For these activities, the child will have to organise their body, plan and then do more than one movement at a time in a sequential order.
3. Calming – These are activities that are calming such as massage, deep pressure, proprioceptive input or heavy work.

Music is played during the session and can be used as the marker for the beginning and the end of each activity within the session.

The session can take place in either the classroom or a larger space, wherever is felt to be the most appropriate. It can also either be whole class based or can be for just one individual. Activities could be varied within the circuit to make them more appropriate for each child (for example, in the alerting stage you may have one child jumping on the ground, one on the trampet or one hopping).

Some example activities for each stage are:

1. **Alerting**

* Bouncing – gym balls/trampette
* Skipping
* Spinning
* Step ups
* Jumping – star jumps, hopping, sequences of big and little jumps, changing direction when jumping
* Walking around the room
* Running
* Marching
* Jogging and hopping
* Moving with materials
* Moving with pompoms.

1. **Organising**

* Walking along benches
* Throwing bean bags haphazardly / throwing into a target
* Rolling balls
* Jumping side to side over a rope
* Commando crawling
* Obstacle course – going under and over objects, through objects, rolling
* Log rolls
* Throwing and catching
* Egg and spoon race
* Blowing bubbles
* Standing on a balance board and picking up surrounding beanbags.
* Walking over textured stepping stones

1. **Calming**

* Massage
* Deep pressure massage on back, hands, feet or shoulders.
* Press ups
* Parachute
* Vibrating resources such as massagers, vibrating snake, vibrating cushion.
* Weighted blankets

Quiet and calming music could be played for this section, with the volume turned down and lights dimmed.

Useful websites for sensory circuit ideas are:

<https://www.cambscommunityservices.nhs.uk/docs/default-source/leaflets---sensory-strategy-leaflets---april-2015/0218---sensory-circuits---info-for-teachers---april-2018.pdf?sfvrsn=8>

<https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/Documents/Miscellaneous/Sensory%20Motor%20Circuits.pdf>