

# SEND Newsletter

This half-term's focus is...Sensory Processing disorders (Autumn 1 2023)



## Useful Websites for further Reading

<https://www.understood.org/en/articles/a-day-in-the-life-of-a-child-with-sensory-processing-issues>

<https://www.camhsnorthderbyshire.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities-sensory-processing>

## What do you need to know?

We use our sensory systems to understand the world around us. We process information through our senses and decide on how to respond to the things we are experiencing. Sensory systems that absorb information about the world around us are:

- Sight
- Taste (gustatory)
- Smell (olfactory)
- Hearing (auditory)
- Touch (tactile)
- Proprioception (using our muscles to understand where our body is in space)
- Vestibular (the sense of how the body moves against gravity)

The last 3 sensory systems – touch, proprioception and vestibular – help us to feel in tune with our world and to feel grounded as a person.

Learning how to process sensory-based information as it is received can be challenging for all of us at times, but more challenging for a child with a learning disability. We have to filter out what things are important and what things to ignore. For instance, if we hear our name being called, we respond to this, even though there may be other sounds in the room that could distract us. Some children have difficulty with this filtering process.





# A Day in the Life of a Child with Sensory Processing Disorder:



Meet Olivia, a Y3 with sensory processing issues. She's a bright child, but her sensory differences are often misunderstood by teachers and family members.

Her brain — like everyone else's — gets a nonstop stream of information from the senses. Many people can tune out some of this, like the way their socks are touching their toes. But Olivia has trouble filtering it out.

People with sensory processing issues can be much more sensitive to what they hear, see, smell, taste, or touch. They can be much less sensitive, too, like not feeling cold or pain.

To see how these challenges can affect kids, take a look at a typical day in Olivia's life:

10 a.m.

Olivia loves writing stories in school. But she keeps getting distracted when she sees other students walking down the hallway. She's also feeling out of sorts and is having trouble staying in her seat. She asks her teacher if she can move to a desk away from the classroom door and put a wiggle cushion on her chair.

Noon

At lunchtime, the teacher doesn't understand why Olivia won't go into the cafeteria. The smell of meatball sandwiches doesn't bother the teacher or the other kids. But Olivia gets overwhelmed by it — and by trying to explain why she can't go in, he has a meltdown and ends up eating in the school office after she calms down.

3.30pm

Olivia gets home from school and rips off her shoes and clothes, drops to the floor and cries and cannot stop. When her dad tries to speak to her, she shouts and screams. This continues most of the night.



8 p.m.

Olivia eventually falls asleep without a bath or brushing her teeth.

## Can you think of a child you know in school that may suffer from sensory processing issues, but who we may not be aware of?





# Celebrating our Successes

Autumn 1



## Charlie (Y6RM)

Charlie has had a fantastic term so far. What his teacher is most proud of him for is how he has concentrated very well on his handwriting, that you can now read every word! Well done Charlie!

## Amelia (Rec RD)

During outside time, Amelia held the hand of another child to help her across the play equipment.

What a lovely thing to do Amelia. Well done!



## All children and staff

Well done to everyone for their hard work this - long - half term! Enjoy your break, you deserve it.

