

## HOW TO SUPPORT A CHILD WHO IS SENSITIVE TO THEIR ENVIRONMENT

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**Helpful for:** Children who are sensitive to things such as noise, textures, fabric, messy play.

### **Classroom / environment modifications**

- ❖ Ensure the child is positioned away from area of through traffic to minimise incidental touch.
- ❖ Be aware of any background noise e.g. building works, ticking clock, lawn mowing.
- ❖ Pre – warn the child for any expected loud noises such as fire alarms, classroom bells, Hoover etc.
- ❖ Provide access to a 'chill out' space and monitor use of this. This space should be positioned away from others and contain comfortable cushions, muted sounds (ear defenders/white noise), dimmed lighting (within a tent/draped fabric), access to fidget toys, soothing music.
- ❖ Use firm pressure when touching the child. Never use light touch. Pats on the head, back or shoulder are not reinforcing for a child with tactile defensiveness

### **Calming activities should be implemented throughout the day**

- ❖ Play while lying on tummy on the floor or with elbows propped up
- ❖ Do resistive exercises such as push-ups, pulling stretchy bands, small weights, using a foot or hand pump
- ❖ Drink from a straw or sports bottle
- ❖ Ambient lighting e.g. lamp or fibre optic lights / wands
- ❖ Access to 'chill out' space

