

## A sensory classroom

Using sensory aids can be helpful for children experiencing:

- A need to move around a lot
- Inability to sit for very long/low muscle tone
- Trouble with focus, easily distracted
- Problems with pencil grip/writing and drawing issues
- Struggles with self-regulation
- Auditory processing issues
- Hyperactivity

A sensory support classroom kit might include:

- Noise-cancelling headphones for auditory sensitivity
- Fidgets to support focus – Blu Tak is the easiest
- Hug seats to provide pressure around a child
- Wobble seats for those who need constant movement
- Calm jars to help with self-regulation
- Weighted vests or cushions
- Aromatherapy that provides comforting smells to aid calming (use a diffuser or a tissue) – or even fresh orange or lemon peel smells great
- Therabands wrapped around chair legs to allow something to kick and flick
- Egg chair to reduce sensory input (from Ikea!)

Of course, it is important to have some rules around these items – for example, we have the rule that sensory items can't be distracting to the student, teacher or other students. They can be used freely in the wellbeing space, and with more thought in the classroom.

Sensory aids encourage children to be present in their bodies and to feel more grounded; they tap in to our senses and a variety of items can be creatively used. There are a growing number of websites with ideas for sensory interventions, and there are many that you can make yourself, or with children.