



Sensory circuits and breaks

A sensory circuit is a sequence of activities designed to alert, organise and calm children. This facilitates sensory processing to help children regulate and organise their senses to achieve the level of alertness required for effective learning.

As well as the sensory circuits which take place in a hall or open space, we are able to provide sensory breaks throughout the day which follow the same process. These do not need a lot of space so can be done wherever and whenever they are required.

There are three sections to a sensory circuit or break. It is important that these sections be done in order. The amount of activities or time spent on each section is tailored to the child.



Alerting Section

These activities involve movement, preparing the brain for learning. They provide vestibular and proprioceptive stimulation. The vestibular system is our sense of balance and proprioception is our sense of where our body is in space.

Examples of alerting activities include step-ups, jumping jacks, eating a crunchy snack and bouncing on a gym ball.





Organising Section

These activities use motor skills, balance and timing. The children need to organise their body, plan their approach and do more than one thing at a time in a set order. This helps to increase focus and attention and organise the nervous system.

Examples of organising activities include balancing, throwing, completing a sorting activity and crawling through a tunnel.



Calming Section

These focus on proprioception and deep pressure activities so the children complete the circuit feeling calm and focussed. The activities use slow and controlled movements. Deep pressure works by applying weight or pressure to provide proprioceptive input, calming the nervous system.

Examples of calming activities include rolling an exercise ball on their back, breathing exercises, wrapping up in a weighted blanket or hanging on bars.

