



## Therapeutic Drawing Activity

### "My Ideal Classroom vs My Less Ideal Classroom"

#### Aim of the Activity

To help children explore and communicate their feelings about their learning environment.

This activity supports children to:

- Express their emotions and feelings.
- Increase their awareness of how they feel in the classroom environment.
- Communicate what things they find difficult (for example, noise, size of the classroom or where they sit) and what things may help.

This activity supports teachers to:

- Understand the sensory and environmental preferences of their pupils.
- Have a greater insight into their pupils' needs, particularly for children who are sensitive and anxious.
- Be able to action plan and make small changes to help.

#### Step-by-Step Instructions

##### 1. 🗣️ Introduce the Activity

Explain to the child/children: "Today we're going to do some drawing. First, I'd like you to draw your *perfect classroom* – what it would look like, feel like, and include. Then, we'll draw a classroom that you *wouldn't like as much*. There are no right or wrong answers!"

Use simple language and reassure them that it's okay to be imaginative.



## 2. Drawing the Ideal Classroom

Give the child/children paper, pencils, crayons or markers. Prompt with gentle questions:

- "What size would your classroom be?"
- "What colours would your classroom have?"
- "Who would be there?"
- "What would it sound like?"
- "What furniture or spaces would help you feel calm or excited to learn?"
- "What activities would you do?"

Allow 10–15 minutes and encourage creativity.

## 3. Drawing the Less Ideal Classroom

Repeat the process, asking:

- "What size would your classroom be?"
- "What would make a classroom feel uncomfortable or distracting?"
- "What would it sound like?"
- "What furniture or spaces would it have?"
- "What activities would you do?"
- "Are there things that would make it hard to learn or feel safe?"

Again, allow 10–15 minutes and avoid judgment or correction.

## 4. Reflection and Discussion

Once both drawings are completed, gently ask each child to talk about each one.

Use open-ended questions:



- "Can you tell me about your drawing?"
- "Tell me about this part..."
- "How would you feel in this classroom?"
- "What makes this classroom feel good/not good for you?"
- "What's different between the two?"
- "What things in the other classroom might make it hard/easier to learn or feel safe?"
- "Are there any sounds, colours, or people that help you feel better?"
- "If you could redesign your 'real' classroom, what would you add or take away?"

Take notes on key themes (for example, noise, lighting, space, people, sensory items).

Drawing Feature	Possible Meaning
Bright colours and soft textures	Comfort and need for sensory regulation
Quiet zones and reading corners	Need for calm and focus
Large groups and loud elements	Feeling overwhelmed or anxious
Quiet or empty spaces	Need for low social demands
Inclusion of sensory tools	Self-awareness of regulation needs