

Salt or fine sugar

Put in a tray can also provide picture, pattern making and writing opportunities for your child.

Paint

Sets at this age can be a little too small for very young children so if you want to try painting give them one or two colours of poster paint with a large brush and a large sheet of paper. An alternative is to wait for a fine day and give your child a large decorating brush and a bucket of water and let them “paint” the patio!

Shared Experiences

Don't forget to use everyday experiences to talk with your child; just a trip to the shops can provide opportunities for creative experiences. Looking at the displays, the colours and the patterns on the shelves can be interesting for children and make us more observant too!

If you have a long journey in the car use the time for listening to stories on CDs which you can share and enjoy together. Creative games collecting road sign shapes or playing “I spy” will widen children's use of language.

What expressive arts and design means for children

Exploring and using media and materials: children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour texture, form and function.

Being imaginative; children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, role-play and stories.

Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation stage 2012

Finally, did you know?....

Sir Ken Robinson (an internationally recognised leader in the development of creativity in education) discovered that at 3 to 5 years old, children spend 98% of their time being creative or thinking creatively; at 8 to 10 years that has gone down to 32% and at 13 to 15 years it is only 10% ! Given that adults too need to be creative thinkers and workers, we certainly have some catching up to do!



Wyndham Park
Nursery School

Expressive Arts and Design

Activities to help your child at home

Playing outside

Playing outdoors is a valuable resource if you are lucky enough to have a garden or access to other outside spaces. Let your child play with the soil with plant pots, small spades, spoons, scoops etc. If you do not have an outside space, then make good use of the park or any other open spaces. For example letting your child shuffle through leaves or jump in puddles (in their wellies!).

Children love to make collections e.g. conkers in the autumn or shells from the beach. Pebbles, feathers and twigs will all be “treasures” for your child.

Put up a tent or make a den by draping an old sheet or tablecloth over a table or chairs. Provide a picnic for your child to share with friends.

Imaginary Play

Your child will naturally want to play at having tea parties or dressing up as superman. They are practising the real life experiences that they witness around them. They will also escape into an imaginary world where they are making up stories and having adventures. Sometimes all your child needs is some basic play equipment and their own ideas and then they will explore on their own; at other times it is important that they have a partner for their play which could be either yourself or another child.

Examples of imaginary play materials...

Never throw away a large box! It can be used in hundreds of ways; becoming a space ship, a castle, a train, a car, a jack-in-the-box etc. Old dresses or jackets; necklaces, scarves, hats and caps all make good dressing up clothes. You don't need to invest in shop bought dressing up clothes.

Music and singing

All children love to make noises, clap their hands and sing. You do not have to be a “Pavarotti” but it is really important to enjoy rhymes, nonsense songs and interactive finger-play with your child. If you're not sure about singing, you could borrow a rhyme sack from Nursery to share with your child, or borrow a book of rhymes from our Book Library. You will soon recognise some rhymes from your childhood and be able to sing along together.

Using simple “instruments” such as saucepan lids and pans or spoons can be great fun for your child to experiment with making sounds. Old washing up bottles filled with dried peas or lentils make great shakers! Play your favourite music and dance along with your child.....go on.....feel the rhythm!!

Being creative with media and materials

You can use everyday household objects and materials to be creative with your child. There is no need to buy playdough – why not try making it? Easy to do, and lots of fun!

Playdough recipe

1 cup plain flour
Half cup of salt
Food colouring of choice
2 tea spoons cream of tartar
1 table spoon cooking oil

Stir all the above ingredients in a pan on a low heat until they form a solid ball in the middle of the pan. Allow time to cool and then knead to get a smooth consistency. (NB. Always take care with hot pans and never leave your child on their own whilst cooking).

Ideas for using playdough

You can have fun just using your hands to roll and shape the dough; see who can make the longest snake or the biggest cake. This can be developed into “pretend” baking with rolling pins, cutters of various shapes, plastic knives, bun trays etc. Some children may like to make dinosaurs, vehicles or people. See where their interests take them.

Cornflour

Mixed with water and colouring in a tray can also give your child an interesting pouring and filling activity. Just mix it to a smooth consistency and then provide spoons and little containers like yoghurt pots. Some could have holes punched in so that the liquid trickles through.