

Activity ideas to try at home: Prime Areas

For all our pupils, it is important to help them develop within the three prime areas: -

- Communication skills
- Personal, social and emotional skills
- Physical skills

Here is a list of some possible ideas that support the development of those prime areas.

IDEAS TO DEVELOP COMMUNICATION

- **Sing traditional rhymes and songs**, especially those with repetitive phrases. Miss off the last word in a phrase so your child has to fill it in, e.g. 'Old MacDonald had', 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a'
- **Sing action songs** e.g. 'If you're happy and you know it.....' This can be used to teach body parts and actions, and encourages turn taking if different people make suggestions as to the action each time.
- **Play with soft toys/dolls/characters** e.g. pretend tea parties, dressing the toy, feeding the toy, talking about what you are doing, asking the child to give items to different toys or characters.
- **Looking at photos/pictures** of the children, family, friends. Naming who they see, what people are doing. Give your child some examples then give them time to make their own comments.
- **Talk in simple phrases about things you see.** When you are out and about make comments about what is happening. This models the language we want from the child. E.g 'I can see a big bus', 'Look it's a red car', 'The lady is crossing the road', 'I like eating sausages'.
- **Look at books together.** Make comments about what the characters are doing. Give your child time to comment. Books with repeated phrases are particularly good. Don't worry about reading the words, enjoy the story.

- **Make up stories.** Tell the children stories about people they know or tell a story about what you did today. E.g. ‘ One day a boy called..... got up and put on his clothes. He went to have his breakfast when the telephone rang / there was a knock at the door. (Get the children to suggest who is on the phone / at the door).

IDEAS TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENCE / SELF HELP SKILLS

- **Ask your child to find objects around the house to help you.**

Get your child to bring things that you or they need e.g. ‘Find your shoes / coat / slippers / pyjamas / plate / cup / book bag.

- **Get your child to help tidy up their things.** Make a game of it, ‘Who can tidy up the fastest / most things / biggest thing / all the blue things etc.

- **Give them plenty of time to put on shoes and coats themselves.** We work hard on this at school so please encourage them to be independent in this at home.

- **Get them to lay the table** giving out the right number of cups, knives and forks etc.

- **Help sort the washing** Sort for items of clothing, pair up the socks, who items belong to, etc.

IDEAS TO DEVELOP FLEXIBILITY / TRYING NEW THINGS

- **Do some baking** Encourage your child to touch the different ingredients, mix them up, roll them out, squeeze them in their hands, taste them.

- **Messy play** Do some digging in the garden, water the plants, wash the garden chairs, wash the car, sweep up the leaves, wash the toys.

- **Giving fixed choices of new activities / items** e.g Blue socks or green socks?

- **Put some new items in with their favourite toys and demonstrate how to play with them.** Modelling how to play with toys is really important so that children can begin to extend their play skills which develop their understanding of the world.

IDEAS TO DEVELOP INTERACTION

- **Turn-taking games** e.g. rolling or kicking a ball back and forth, posting toys down a shoot and collecting them to give to the next person, simple board games, building towers and knocking them down.
- **Putting things out of reach**, so your child has to ask for help to get them.
- **Giving choices of activities / items** so your child has to tell you which they want. Choices of toys, clothes to wear, food to eat, places to visit, videos to watch. Don't always give the favourite as an option. Try offering 2 new things at the same time so they have to try something new.

IDEAS TO DEVELOP PHYSICAL SKILLS

- **Go for walks** Try different surfaces, slopes, steps, etc.
- **Give your child time to do things themselves.** It is important they try to dress themselves, wash themselves, carry heavy objects, pick things up, climb on to things. Children learn by doing.
- **Mark making with different materials.** Painting with water in the garden, finger drawings in trays of rice or flour, printing with large and small objects.
- **Pasta necklaces** using penne pasta and shoe laces will develop hand eye co-ordination.
- **Make some Dough.** It's quick, cheap and easy to make at home with your child then can provide hours of fun. Make different shapes, squash it, squeeze it, roll it. Use different things to make patterns in it.

Play dough Ready in 1 hour

This is a recipe for home made play dough. It's not for eating though.

Ingredients

- 250g plain flour
- 50g salt
- 140ml water
- 1 to 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- few drops food colouring (optional)

Preparation method

1. Mix together the flour and salt in a large mixing bowl. Add the water and oil.
2. Knead well until mixture is smooth about 10 mins. You might need to add a bit more flour or water until the consistency is smooth but not sticky.
3. Add food colouring and knead until the colour is fully blended.
4. Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until chilled enough to use.