



Parents and Carers Information Sheet 4: Investigating and Exploring

Why is exploring and investigating important?

- It allows children to make sense of the world around them.
- It allows children to use all of their senses.
- It helps us to think logically and critically.
- It increases their vocabulary as they begin to talk about their experiences.
- It enables children to notice details and helps them to understand that things change over time.
- It allows for controlled risk taking and problem solving.
- It promotes the development of creativity and thinking skills.

Follow your child's lead.

Your child will develop in their own way
and at their own pace.

“Play is the highest form of
research.”

Albert Einstein

How can you support your child's learning through exploration and investigation?

- Encourage your child to have a go and persevere.
- Ask open ended questions to encourage critical thinking. Try to use; “I wonder ...”, “This reminds me of...” or “I’m thinking of...”
- Provide lots of opportunities to explore the world using all of their senses. Encourage them to look, feel, smell, listen and, where appropriate to taste.
- Encourage them to help you in the garden or around the house.
- Encourage them to ask lots of questions and if you are unsure of the answers then find them out together.
- Use descriptive words whilst exploring (prickly, rough, smooth etc) to increase their vocabulary.
- Talk through ideas and comment on what you and they are doing. This will help them to think through their own ideas.
- Be an enthusiastic explorer and investigator - this will encourage your child to have the confidence to find things out.
- Allow for controlled risk - **making sure you supervise your child at all times.**
- Talk about ways we can keep ourselves safe.

Ideas to try at home:

Use a variety of **dry ingredients** (flour, oats, rice) and tools that they can use to mix, stir, sort and pour.

Play dominoes
Children will begin to recognise the number of spots without counting. This is called **subitising**.

Cook together
Observe how the dry ingredients change when they are mixed and cooked.

Cornflour Gloop
In a tray mix cornflour and water. Let your child investigate it with their hands, spoons or whisks.

Floating and Sinking
Use a range of items (corks, wooden items, spoons, sponges) in the baths and talk about what happens.

Investigate fruit
Have a close look at the outside and inside of different fruits before tasting them.

Ideas to try at out and about:

Use fresh herbs.
Look at them in detail, use them in role play kitchen activities.

Go on a Treasure Hunt or Scavenger Hunt
Look closely at the objects you have found and talk about them.

Make a bug hotel in the garden.
You could use leaves, sticks, logs to make the environment.

Plant seeds in the garden or outside.
Care for the seeds and observe what happens over time.

Play Pooch Sticks
Drop sticks in a stream or river. Which one moves the fastest?

Go on a walk and spot different items made from a range of materials e.g. metal, glass or wood. Is it 'man made' or natural?

Please supervise your child during their play.

Remember small objects can be choking hazards.
Ensure that hands are thoroughly washed after playing outside and with messy resources inside.

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