

Expressive Arts and Design



Expressive arts and design

involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology. In order to reach their full potential, children need a stimulating environment which inspires them to engage in meaningful challenges and which provides motivating opportunities to investigate and take risks.

Each area of learning and development must be implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. **Play** is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems, and relate to others. Practitioners should use assessment information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for all children, guiding their development through warm, positive interaction.

Children must have access to a **rich learning environment** where opportunities and conditions allow them to **flourish** in all aspects of their development. The learning environment should provide balance across the areas of learning. Integral to this is an ethos which respects each child as an individual and values children's efforts, interests and purposes as instrumental to successful learning.

Reference:

2014 EYFS Statutory Framework
2015 EYFS Profile Handbook



“Creativity brings into existence new ideas, original ways of doing things and new creations of all kinds.” Tina Bruce



Develop a ‘creation station’ offering children independent access to a wide range of quality tools and resources within the continuous provision. Have you thought about lolly sticks, sequins, pipe cleaners, mini pom poms, paper in a variety of colours and textures? Try using sponges, stamps, rollers, toothbrushes...

Adding unusual extras to playdough e.g. sawdust / porridge oats for texture, food flavouring (coffee, lemon, peppermint, rose), glitter / sequins, food colouring...

The process is more important than the outcome - use photos of the process to document the child’s learning experience.

Get messy! Explore and investigate with trays of corn flour, baked beans, shaving foam, porridge, baby lotion, coloured rice, spaghetti (add some scissors for physical development)... Try adding a range of small scoops, tools, tubs and containers.



Think green: ask parents to collect coloured bottle tops, sweet wrappers and different size and shape boxes, pots and tubs that can be offered to children to reuse.

Provision opportunities to support Exploring and Using Media and Materials

Think large scale: provide 3D resources in the outdoor environment to encourage children to create transient art, e.g. in the style of Andy Goldsworthy.

Develop a construction corner with a carousel of tools and joining materials including split pins, treasury tags, staplers, paperclips, glue sticks, PVA glue, masking tape, sticky tape dispensers, hole punchers, scissors... Place a large box under the table to hold junk modelling materials – ask parents to bring in boxes, tubes, pots...

Go outdoors! Make frames using sticks for children’s outdoor creations. Provide a wide range of natural resources including leaves, pebbles, mud, grass, flowers, acorns, conkers, shells, cones...



Value children's own work: use low level displays indoors and outdoors so that children can share their own work. If there are no low level display boards, try hanging string like a washing line at the bottom of the board to enable children to peg up their creations.



"Imagination is more important than knowledge." Albert Einstein

Do you get useful information from **home**?

- Dance lessons
- Music tuition
- Favourite stories, songs, characters...

Adding scenarios to the home corner – there's been a power cut, a flood, a burglary, to stop play becoming stale or repetitive. Follow the children's lead in how they respond - e.g. become detectives and establish a Police station.

Children learn through movement and engaging all their senses. Provide a wealth of **multisensory** experiences – including dance ribbons, stage area (outdoors), music tent.

Provision opportunities to support Being Imaginative

Children need time to develop their own **original** creative ideas rather than re-producing adult determined end products.



Stimulate children's senses by using **real objects** in role play. For example adding vegetables to the shop, flowers to the home corner, pots and pans to the Chinese restaurant, real post labels and stampers to the post office...

Media based learning: using children's current interests from popular culture as a starting point for developing role play opportunities.

Establish a **mud kitchen** outdoors using reclaimed materials – take a look at www.muddyfaces.co.uk for inspiration.

Use children's literature to fuel their imagination – receive a letter from Stick Man, discover flour footprints on the carpet / mud footprints outdoors, leave underpants outdoors (Aliens Love Underpants)...

Adult child interaction – what messages are you sending out to children by where adults are and what they do? Will children find you on the floor / outdoors / getting messy?!

Using open ended resources stimulates children's curiosity. Have you tried:
Natural materials, loose parts, guttering, tubing, tyres, branches, log slices, boxes, rocks, stones, bricks...

Share the work of artists including Matisse, Miro, Pollock, Kandinsky to inspire children.

Other areas to consider



Do you offer the opportunity for children to:

- Combine resources e.g. paint / collage materials
- Mix construction kits e.g. lego / wooden bricks / small world
- Follow their own agenda
- Dress up with no theme

Be inspired: take a look at this collection of ideas at http://www.leics.gov.uk/ais_curriculummaterials.htm

Do children have time to explore ideas and interests in depth?

Can children return to their creations later in the day / week?

Creative and imaginative play activities promote the development and use of language.

Do children have opportunities to revisit skills and experiences in order that they can apply what they have learnt?

Did you know...

Some elements of expressive arts and design depend on a child's physical ability to explore and manipulate media with confidence, including construction materials.

Advice and support available online at:
www.leics.gov.uk/earlylearning
0 - 5 Learning Service, Leicestershire County Council

