



Expressive Arts & Design Planned

Focus

Explore planned physical activities that can support learning of Expressive Arts & Design

On many accounts, children will develop their creativity, rhythm, self-expression and understanding of themselves, including their thoughts, feelings and ideas through movement and active play.

Activity Ideas

Large painting, design and mark making

- This is a good starting point for young children who have not yet refined their fine motor skills. Many children will respond positively to this rather than sitting down and focussing on a small area.
- Add music and you will not only make the experience more enjoyable but children will gain another level of creativity and expression.

Movement to Music

- Dance and movement to music should make up a large part of physical education lessons and daily activities in the early years.
- Develop dance sequences based on stories or on dance basics (travel, jump, turn, gesture, pause/still and fall). Initially led by adults but as children develop in their abilities and skill level they can be tasked to create their own dance sequences.

Rhythm

- Learning rhythm through movement to music, action songs and active rhymes will teach children about dance and song.
- Understand the changes in music through different movements, such as high for loud and low for soft, tip toe for high pitch and stomp for low pitch.

Colour and Space

- The use of colour and space in activities will teach children about design and use of media.

Musical Instruments

- Movement of instruments, creating sounds. Making own instruments from resources found around the house, the outdoors and recycling objects that would normally be discarded.

Building and construction

- Engages creativity and imagination as well as innovation and invention.
- Provide a wide variety of construction materials, textiles and other objects to allow children to use their imagination to create and build.

Active stories

- will encourage children to move in different ways whilst using their imagination.
- Giving children opportunities to make up stories, rhymes, movements to music will allow them to use their imagination and creativity.

Natural Art

- Children can create art and develop design techniques outdoors using natural materials or a combination of natural materials and resources provided.

Patterns & Shapes

- Children can create patterns and shapes with their bodies, as well as when they are drawing, painting, playing with mud and natural objects.

Open-ended resources

- Open-ended play and resources will help develop children's creativity, allowing and encouraging them to use their imagination, try something new, experiment and explore. When purchasing resources and toys always think about whether children can use the toy in different ways, just using a little imagination. Collecting recycled objects (obviously that are hygienic and safe) can be just as good, if not better, than some of those expensive resources that catch your eye.

Adult Role-modelling

Children copy movements role-modelled by adult during physical education lessons and activities led by adults.

Imitation of actions performed by adults, such as clapping, waving, etc., will lead to children learning to perform various actions themselves. Performing actions in a repetitive manner will teach children about rhythm and dance.

Children should receive opportunity to create images and move in ways they choose, allowing them to express themselves during adult-led activities.

Fine Motor Building Blocks

Not only does movement and active play underpin self-expression and imagination but gross motor development underpins fine motor skills. As discussed in the Language, Literacy and Communication section, the building blocks of fine motor skills are:

- **stability of the body**
- **sensation**
- **bilateral co-ordination**

which are developed through gross motor opportunities. It is important for those who work with young children to be aware of this as many children struggle with fine motor tasks due to lack of movement and active play opportunities.

The Process

The process and what children learn and discover through creative play is more valuable than the final product in early years. It might take a few attempts for children to achieve what they set out to do but the fact that they persevered, thinking critically, problem solved and confronted the task with a creative mind will be a huge learning process for that child.