



# **Binspired**

## **Expressive Arts & Design**

### **Natural Development**

#### **Focus**

Look at how children developing Expressive Arts & Design naturally when moving and playing

#### **The Importance of Creativity**

When children are creative they:

- can think about and communicate ideas symbolically.
- learn what they can and cannot do.
- set challenges for themselves, problem-solve and try new things.
- build on previous experiences.
- develop a better understanding of materials and objects in their environment.
- discover how to make things out of basic material and media.
- take chances and discover new things.
- learn about the world around them.
- will be able to express their opinions, thoughts and ideas.
- will learn to persevere. When children aim to create something new, they will, no doubt, make some mistakes. If they really want to achieve what they set out to do they will need to think critically, problem-solve and try again. If they do persevere, they will be more likely to continue to try new things and be open to new experiences.
- will be developing their language and communication skills, especially through active stories, rhymes and songs and engaging in role-play and other cooperative play.
- will develop their social skills and confidence, as well as improve their reading and mathematical skills.
- will develop creative thinking which is necessary for other areas of learning such as science and mathematics.
- they are developing intellectual processes that allow them to develop or understand ideas and concepts in many areas of life.

#### **Aspects of Expressive Arts and Design**

Expressive Arts, Design and Creative Development can be divided into three sections:

##### **Art, Craft and Design**

Children will explore different media, resources, colours and patterns, using their memory, senses, observational skills, critical thinking, invention and imagination to create two-dimensional images and three-dimensional structures.

When people think of arts and crafts they usually associate it with sitting at a table or on the ground, drawing, sticking, painting, cutting and marking. However, so much can be done on a large scale, inside and outside, can be achieved using different body parts and can require gross motor skills, not only fine motor skills.

## Stories and Imaginative Play

So much of what children do naturally involves their imagination and imaginative play. Taking the lead from children in understand how they learn will help them to engage and develop in the ways they should.

Active stories are not only engaging and enjoyable for young children but can encourage them to create their own stories and storylines. This, along with role play, is the start of drama, teaching children to act out various roles and subject matter.

It is also a lot easier for a child to grasp a concept or new idea if they learn through use of their imagination. Children will be able to explore different feelings and emotions and other areas of their lives through many activities that incorporate imagination.

## Music, Dance and Movement to Music

Even before babies can stand, when music is played you will find them moving to it.

Making music, singing action songs and reciting active rhymes will positively impact children's physical and language. They are also important for building sequencing skills.

Allowing children to freely move to music allows them to express themselves with their whole body. Some children, and adults, will find this difficult and will respond better to structured movement to music activities, where they follow instructions or mimic movements. Children they learn to combine various movements to create movement patterns and also learn to work in pairs and groups and as they get older should be given the opportunity to create their own movement patterns, using the dance basic skills of travel, turn, jump, gesture, still and fall.

**Top Tip** – As young children enjoy stories and imaginative play, stories and activities can also be extended into movement to music activities. Involving children in determining moves or the storyline to allow the use of their creative thinking.

## Natural Development

Examples of how children will learn about expressive arts, design and develop creatively through self-directed movement and active play in the early years:

- Children will discover different patterns and marks in the **outdoor environment** and they will discover marks and patterns that they make themselves in mud and sand.
- Children will **build structures and dens**, using their imagination and creativity to turn them into castles, dragon's dens, towers, ships, etc. They will learn how to use different materials to build, how malleable and inflexible materials fit together and use of materials and objects to decorate their den.
- Using **natural objects**, such as leaves, feathers, sticks and flowers, children might be inclined to create beautiful pictures and patterns.
- You might find children running around the outdoor area in strange outfits pretending to be a superhero, a butterfly or an aeroplane, expressing themselves through **imaginative play**. They might also be dressing up like a mummy or daddy and running around pushing baby in a pushchair.

- **Rhymes and songs** with actions and movements are always favourites for young children. The repetition of rhymes and songs help children to master new skills and also explore the world.
- If children have access to spray bottles, paint brushes, rollers and a source of water, you will often find them **painting** just about anything outside. This will help them develop their creativity whilst developing fine and gross motor skills.
- When children have access to **recycled objects** they really get to use their imagination and creativity, as these objects provide great open-ended activities. You will find them making space ships, their superhero lair or a bridge over the magic lake, allowing them to play with their interests in mind.
- Children will create and build when they have access to **real world tools**, sawing, nailing and whittling wood.
- **Mud** is wonderfully open-ended, easy to manipulate, change and work with and children can be really creative with this messy substance. Team a child up with mud and those brain cells of theirs will spark. You will find them creating mud cakes, patterns and building castles.

## Resources or Not?

Provide children with the opportunities to play with no resources or equipment, especially when outdoors. This will encourage them to use their imagination and creativity, to use what is in the environment and turn it into anything they wish. Be careful not to prompt them as they could then be steered away from critical thinking, creativity and innovation.