

Warwick Nursery School



Parents Leaflet 2: Investigating and Exploring

Why is exploring and investigating important?

1. It allows children to make sense of the world around them because they experience it using all 5 of their senses.
2. It increases children's vocabulary as they talk about what they have experienced.
3. It supports children to notice detailed features and helps them to understand how and why things change.
4. It allows children to take controlled risks and problem solve.
5. It develops creative and thinking skills.

Follow your child's lead...

**“...for children.
play is serious
learning. Play is
really the work
of childhood.”**

Fred Rogers

**“Creativity is
intelligence
having fun.”**

Albert Einstein



**“The more risks you allow
a child to take, the better
they learn to take care of
themselves.”**

Roald Dahl

**“Play is the
highest form
of research.”**

Albert Einstein

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

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

1. Encourage them to have a go and persevere.
2. Ask open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking: "I wonder..." is a great phrase to use.
3. Provide lots of opportunities for them to explore the world using all of their senses - encourage them not just to look, but to listen, feel, smell and even taste.
4. Encourage them to help you out at home in the kitchen or the garden to help them understand how things work.
5. Encourage children to ask lots of questions. It's fine to say you don't know - find out together.

6. Join your child in their investigations and have fun!
7. Extend their vocabulary by using descriptive words, such as smooth, shiny, rough, prickly.
8. Provide a running commentary of what you or they are doing to support them to think through their ideas.
9. Be enthusiastic! If we, as adults, are enthusiastic about a child's investigations and experiments, then they will want to learn and understand about the world around them.
10. Allow them to take controlled risks, but ensure that you are supervising carefully - never leave them on their own with small items that they might swallow etc. Talk with them about ways that we can keep ourselves safe.

Ideas to try at home:

Give children a **variety of dried ingredients** (e.g. flour, rice, oats) in the kitchen and **tools that they can use to mix, sift and sort** (e.g. tongs, strainers, sieves, spoons).

Make **cornflour 'gloop'** in a tray by mixing cornflour and water. Allow your child to investigate what happens when they touch it and use spoons etc in it.

Experiment with floating and sinking in the bath: provide an assortment of objects, such as corks, a sponge, metal and wooden items.

Explore freezing and melting water. Make ice cubes or freeze water in large containers and see what happens when they begin to melt: how fast will each one melt?

Make a fruit salad together. Let your child have a really close look at the different fruits and explore the similarities and differences between them.

Cook together. Making cakes etc enables children to see how ingredients change, observe the effects of heat and use a range of tools.



Ideas to try out and about:

Make potions: find and mix together natural ingredients found in the garden (e.g. petals, soil, twigs) and see what happens. What does it look like/smell like?

Go on a treasure hunt: make collections of interesting objects found when you're in the garden or park. Spend time looking closely at them with your child and talking about them.

Make a bug hotel in the garden. Use twigs, logs, bamboo etc to make an environment that bugs will love. Lift up logs and see what's living underneath.

Play Pooh Sticks. Drop sticks into a river or stream and see how fast they move. Whose stick will win the race? I wonder why...

Plant seeds in the garden and watch them grow over time. Or you could plant cress seeds inside for a faster growing experience.

Take old electrical equipment apart together. This will need very close supervision, but children are fascinated by how things work and may come up with all sorts of interesting theories!



Useful information:

Visit the National Trust website (www.nationaltrust.org.uk) which has a list of '50 things to do before you're 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ '.

Nursery School planning boards (inside the cloakroom) give ideas for how to support your child's learning at home. Subscribe too to our app and follow us on Facebook for further ideas.

For safety reasons, always supervise your child during their play. Remember, small objects can be choking hazards. Ensure that they thoroughly wash their hands after playing outside or with 'messy' resources inside.

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