

Sensory play

Sensory play is an excellent way to engage with your child and have fun while learning. It exposes them to concepts that they may not have explored and it allows them to experience different substances in a safe environment.

Below are some sensory activities that mostly comprise of regular household items. There are plenty more ideas to be found online but in order to make this accessible task we are only including activities that use ingredients commonly found in your kitchen or bathroom cupboards.

Wearing old clothes and working in the garden is a good idea while undertaking these activities as they can get messy! Be cautious with the use of food colouring too, as it may stain clothes or skin.

Kinetic sand

5lb / 2.2 kg of sand

¾ cup of corn starch

1 cup / 235 ml of soapy water

4 different colours of food dye/colouring (optional but improves experience)

Glitter (optional but improves experience)

Add the dry ingredients to a large bowl and mix together. Slowly stir in the soapy water. Separate into four bowls and add a few drops of food colouring and glitter into each bowl. While the food dye and glitter are optional, they are recommended if you have them. They give the activity more scope as you can learn about colours and talk about glitter being 'shiny'.

Kinetic sand is basically sand that sticks together in a more desirable way than it would with water. Give your child some moulds, cupcake cases, spoons, cookie cutter, empty yoghurt pots, etc to use to build castles or make shapes out of the sand. Talk to your child about the properties of the sand, is it soft or hard? is it wet or dry? is it hot or cold? Cut the sand into shapes, ask the child what shape you have made and challenge them to replicate it.



Snow

Approx' 2 cups Baking soda

½ cup White glitter

½ cup Water

Mix the dry ingredients together and slowly add the water. You want the mixture to only be a little bit wet and lumpy so add it slowly and mix. (It should hold its shape if you ball it up in your hand). Freeze the mixture for about 30 mins. Remove from freezer and let the fun begin! If you have polar bear, penguin, Elsa or Anna figurines they would be a great addition to use during this sensory activity.

Ask questions similar to those in the kinetic sand activity.



Sensory play

Fluffy, puffy slime

- 1 cup of shaving foam
- Food colouring
- 1 cup of white liquid glue (EG.PVA glue)
- 1 table spoon of baking soda
- 1 table spoon of saline solution

Combine the shaving foam and food colouring in a large bowl. Once mixed add in the glue and stir. Next stir in the baking powder, lastly add and mix in the saline solution. Combine with a spoon for a few minutes, then remove from the bowl and kneed the slime as if you were making bread. The fluffy, puffy slime is now ready to enjoy! You may hide small toys in the slime for your child to find if you wish.



Shaving foam play!

Shaving foam is an excellent resource for sensory play; you can talk about the smell, texture and sound of the foam as it comes out of the can. You can spread it on a table or in a tray and allow your children to draw shapes in it, drive cars through it or simply squash it between their hands! Food colouring and glitter are nice additions when working with shaving foam.



Spaghetti worms!

Place some spaghetti on a baking tray with a good dash of food colouring, add some hot water and allow to absorb. Once cool and coloured, remove from the tray, drain any remaining water. Place in a sand pit style tray – or the bath and let the fun begin! Glitter is a great addition to this activity. You can hide numbers or animals in the spaghetti too and ask your child to identify them as they find them.



Lentils, dry rice or pasta!

Dry lentils, rice, cereal and pasta are fun to play with or to make musical instruments with. Place the dry ingredients in a large bowl with some spoons and cups and let your child play! In the picture we have hidden lots of names amongst the lentils and each child got an opportunity to sift through the lentils to find their own name. If you want to make a musical instrument, simply find an old bottle or pringles carton and add some dry ingredients to it. Seal well with a lid and tape before shaking – try to shake your instrument to the beat of a nursery rhyme whilst singing! The nursery rhymes can be found on the most recent Nursery News Letter.



Sensory play

Oobleck!

1 box Corn flour

Water

Food colouring and glitter (optional but recommended)

Slowly mix a little water into the cornflour mixture, in a large bowl or tray. The mixture should be quite stiff, rather than watery. There is no exact measurement of water needed so add small amounts very slowly, if it gets too watery add some more cornflour!

Oobleck is a non-newtonian substance meaning that it has properties of both a liquid and a solid. If it is being handled gently or poured softly, it will act like a liquid and be fluid. However, if force is applied to it, it acts like a solid and gets hard... similar to quick sand! These properties make it especially fun to play with! As always, glitter and food colouring make this activity more visually appealing. The addition of spoons or hidden items is also great for this activity, especially if you wish to work on your child's fine motor skills... when the oobleck stiffens up it can be difficult to remove any items stuck in it, which provides your child with a fine motor work out!

Note: Do not leave this in the container over night, it gets incredibly smelly after approximately 6 hours!



After undertaking these activities encourage your child to participate in the clean up of them. They should be able to attempt washing any bowls, spoons or toys used in the activity and to store them in the cupboard. It is important for them to recognise that 'the clean up' is an important part of the activity.

Hands also get very dirty during the above activities, so take the time to practise good hand hygiene and ensure that your child is washing their hands in an effective manner.

Have fun! 😊

Ms Harding & Ms Bradley
Class Teachers