



Supporting outdoor play at home

- Painting with water on the pavement – A dry day is the perfect time to get creative using nothing but a paint brush and water. Try different techniques (flicking, painting splashing, splashing). Talk through what you are doing whilst introducing new words and increasing your children’s vocabulary.
- Treasure hunt – Hide some brightly coloured toys around the garden and ask your children to find them. Introduce new colours to help with colour recognition, ask them how many to find to help with maths. Don’t make it too tricky or your children will lose interest.
- Draw shapes in the mud with sticks – a fun and great way to encourage and develop early writing skills.
- Hunt for mini beasts – which mini beasts can you find in your environment? Look under logs and stones and discover how many mini beasts you can find.
- Hide and seek – Take the opportunity to practice counting together before the search begins
- Making fairy/superhero soup – collect leaves, petals, seeds and grass from outside. Add mud and water to a bowl and mix. What colours can your children see? What shapes and sizes are they?
- Planting and gardening – plant seeds and bulbs, keep them watered and watch them grow. Watch your children’s delight when they start to see them grow.
- Retell the story of the Gruffalo – The story is of an adventurous mouse who outsmarts many different creatures who are hoping to eat him for tea – *a mouse took a stroll through the deep dark wood. A fox saw the mouse and the mouse looked good.* Use the story during your own woodland adventure.
- Bubble play – make your own bubble mixture (6 cups of water to one cup of washing up liquid/soap). Chase the bubbles around the garden popping as many as you can. Count how many bubbles you pop. Look at the different shapes and sizes.
- Puddle jumping – Embrace any wet days by putting on your wellington boots and jumping into puddles. Use words such as splash, splosh, splish to develop vocabulary.
- Playdoh – add natural resources to playdoh such as stones, herbs, petals, grass. What happens to the texture? What differing smells are there?
- Make nature ice – collect leaves, seeds, flowers, pebbles. Fill a tub with water and place the items in the water and then freeze. What has happened to the items? What does the ice feel like? Leave the ice outside – what happens?
- Shadow play – look at different shadows, look at your own shadow, draw around shadows. Talk about sizes, shapes and differences.

What can you do to promote children’s enjoyment of outdoor play?

- Ask questions such as how many can you find? What shape is it? Which one is bigger/smaller?
- Promote outdoor play whatever the weather.
- Dress for the weather.
- Do not worry about children getting dirty – they are learning through play.