

MINI CASE STUDY: SENSORY PLAY

Sensory play is a big part of our nursery day at Childhaven. Sensory can cover so many developmental areas.

Our nursery is lit using standing lamps, natural light and twinkly lights all around. We do not use harsh overhead lights as we prefer a reassuring warm glow which can help us with our focus and attention.

There are so many ways in which you can encourage sensory play. It can be through the use of lighting, textures, dry and wet sensory play.

Any type of sensory play is a great way to strengthen fine motor skills, language skills, gross motor skills, problem solving and hand eye coordination. It encourages finger dexterity, hand and shoulder strength; building on skills that will help with handwriting in the future.

Some children need additional encouragement to become involved in sensory play; watching you demonstrate how to use the resources can really help them to think about having a go themselves.

We can use some fantastic language ourselves, talking about the senses of smell and touch. By explaining what we can feel, we are providing new words and modelling language.

Some children will watch you, and others play quite a few times before having a try themselves. Building up their confidence slowly allows them to go at their own pace.

“Oh no we are getting messy”

The mess we make on our hands and clothes can be washed away, but the memories will last forever.



what does the evidence say?

There is strong evidence that teaching and modelling vocabulary to children in the early years can have a positive effect on their oral language skills.

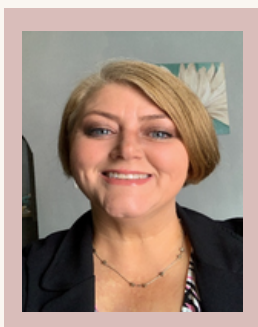
Sensory play provides many opportunities to teach and model language.

When referring to teaching and modelling language, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) Evidence Store approach encourages practitioners to use their own vocabulary to introduce new words to children and show how words are used together to form sentences. This could be achieved when engaging with children during sensory play.

The Evidence Store provides example of practices that can be used to implement approaches to teaching and modelling language. For example through questioning, explaining and showing, and repetition.

You can read more about teaching and modelling language, and other approaches for supporting communication language development, on the EEF Evidence Store website:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/early-years/evidence-store/communication-and-language?approach=teaching-modelling-language>



THANK YOU FOR READING.

MRS CLOUGH, SENIOR ADVANCED TEACHING ASSISTANT AT
CHILDHAVEN NURSERY SCHOOL, SCARBOROUGH.