 

**THE WONDERS OF ICE PLAY**

According to the recent forecast, we are due to have a spell of warm, sunny weather, so what better reason do we need to take our learning outdoors? ☺

Children are fascinated with ice. We noticed at nursery, during the winter, that they were particularly interested when they found thin sheets of ice in the garden, admittedly they most enjoyed breaking it into small pieces, but there are lots of learning opportunities in ice play. Ice play doesn’t have to be just in winter, here are some ideas you might like to try this week. Have fun!

ACTIVITIES TO TRY

1. Ice painting

* pour coloured water (use food colouring or juice or paint) into ice cube tray
* add lolly stick (or sticks from the garden) into each cube
* freeze until solid. When ready, use as paint sticks

You can adapt this activity by freezing non-coloured water and giving your child paint and brushes to ‘decorate’ the ice cubes.

1. Frozen toy rescue

* Select a few favourite toys (plastic is best) and freeze these in cups or trays of water. If you have a small sand castle mould this works brilliantly!
* Encourage your child to find ways to ‘rescue’ the toys. TIP: try pouring on water (cold or warm) or sprinkle salt. Using water in a spray bottle will support muscle strength in your child’s hands (important for writing)

You can adapt this activity by hiding letters or numbers in the ice.

1. Ice fishing

* You will need: ice cubes; glass or cup or bucket; string; table salt
* Put the ice cubes into the glass, notice how the ice cubes float.
* Use the string to ‘fish’ for the ice cubes (but you won’t catch any! Why?)
* Sprinkle a pinch of salt over the ice cubes and then lay the string on top. How many ice cubes did you catch this time?

1. Sun catcher

* Collect flowers, leaves, petals from your garden
* Lay them in your chosen design in a tray or cup or shaped mould.
* Add a piece of string near the top, but leave a long length out of the water. You will need this to hang up your ice sun catcher later.
* When it is ready, hang the frozen flowers (or whatever you have used) in the garden. Notice how the sun shines through: what happens to the light? How long does it take to melt?

You can adapt this activity by making different sized sun catchers. Which one melts first….have a race ☺

1. Ice cream cake (or soup!)

* You will need: water; cornflour; cocoa (optional); ice cube tray; bowls
* Mix 2 cups of cornflour with 2 cups of water. Pour into ice cube tray and freeze
* Repeat process adding cocoa if you want ‘chocolate’ ice cubes too!
* When ready, use the ice cubes to design and build an ice cream cake (or tower, or castle, or train…..)
* You will need the bowls for when your ‘ice cream’ melts….and now you have soup ☺

Story-telling, language development and new vocabulary:

Cold, wet, solid, freezing, melting, evaporating, dripping, floating, sinking

Letter and number recognition

Different properties of water

Measuring, sorting, counting, sequencing

What is my child learning through ice play?