



Sand and Water Eco Kit (EY11677)

In this case study, Jane Grist (Nursery Manager) and Phoebe Whitehead (Deputy Manager and Baby Room Lead), from Growing Places @ Merryfields, discuss how the Sand and Water Eco Kit was used to support the children's interests in transporting, filling and emptying.



Background Information

Growing Places @ Merryfields is a 36-place nursery in Fareham, welcoming children from 6 months to 4 years. There are five nurseries in the Growing Places Family, which is a not-for-profit charity committed to providing high quality early years education within Hampshire.

The Baby Room team have been documenting the babies interest in transporting, emptying and filling, and cause & effect with sand in the garden. They identified that some of the non-walker babies were hesitant in exploring the sand outside in the garden, and therefore decided to offer an invitation to play with sand inside. The Sand & Water Eco Kit offers a variety of buckets, scoops and spoons that we knew would support the children's transporting schema whilst also allowing them opportunities to explore their curiosities around cause & effect.

Observations

The children were fascinated with the resources that were offered. Torvi, aged 1 year 9 months was scooping and transporting the sand from one cup to another and noticed the sand sifting through the bottom as she did this. "'inkle, 'inkle" she repeated as she watched the sand gently sprinkle through the bottom. Torvi caught some sand as it sifted through the cup and held her hand out to show the other children, saying "sand".

The team used their understanding of play schemas to support Eddie (aged 1 year 7 months) with his development. Eddie spent his time in the sand using the various resources to scoop, then watch as it tumbled back out again. Eddie said "scoop" as he manoeuvred the resources. Katie (1 year 6 months) preferred the ladle to empty sand from the tray to the floor. "Oh no...wow" she said excitedly as she watched the sand fall out.

Final thoughts

We will most certainly use the Sand & Eco Kit inside and out in the garden to develop the babies encounters and learning experiences. The resources are light and easy for small hands to grip and manoeuvre whilst still allowing them to scoop larger amounts of sand if they wish to. They are ideal for one or two hands and the larger containers were used collaboratively by the group of babies too. The neutral colours, quality and feel of the resources and combination of scoops, sieves, cups and buckets make this great value for money. This kit is supporting the babies with their schematic play, communication & language development, social interactions and also physical development. This is a resource we will offer to the older children also, both with sand and water and we look forward to seeing how they use this in their play.

With thanks to Jane Grist, Phoebe Whitehead and Carlie Powell from Growing Places @ Merryfields for writing and sharing this case study with us.