

Learning through Play at Home

Play is the work of children. It supports learning and development across all of the curriculum areas. This week we would like to offer suggestions about how learning is supported outdoors.

Developing balance and coordination:

First, read this blog post "Providing the curriculum outdoors" written by early years advisor Clare Devlin. The post clearly indicates the importance of balance and coordination and how it directly impacts concentration, the ability to sit, write, and remain focused. <http://www.claredevlin.org/blog-page/2020-05-14/providing-the-curriculum-outdoors-physical-development-gross-motor>

Examples of learning experiences in St Clare's Abbey which facilitate the development of balance and coordination. Think about how you could create similar opportunities for your child outdoors at home or at local parks/ woodland areas.

Refer to the blog post as mentioned for further context.



What can you do to support your child?

- **Wait and watch.** Sometimes we jump in too soon as the adult. Give your child a chance to explore.
- **Get involved and play:** Play along side your child. This does not mean directing the play, but modelling some skills in a way that children can learn from you. If coming down a hill, suggest they can squat down, use a stick for support, figure out ways of making this more manageable.
- **Build confidence:** Provide experiences for jumping down from objects close to the ground (e.g. an overturned box). Gradually build this up to eventually jumping from greater heights. (Always be aware of safety).
- **Tweak the environment:** Find places with steeper slopes or provide some more challenging resources e.g boxes, crates, planks. Give your child the opportunity to create their own obstacle course.
- **Extend thinking and language:** Make sure to give your child the names for equipment and have relaxed and casual conversations about what it is they are actually doing.

Look at all of the problem solving that happens in these experiences.

Notice:

1. Does your child immediately give up or do they persevere?
2. Are they afraid of "making a mistake"? Are they afraid of getting hurt?
3. Do they rely on a lot of help to solve problems? I.e. hill is too steep to come down whilst standing upright.
4. Is your child able to talk out loud about what they are doing?

Do lots of balancing this week!

Please send photographs of your child developing their **BALANCE** and **COORDINATION** this week to his/her class teacher via see-saw as the sample of work for the week.