



Heuristic Play – Trash or Treasure?

Following recent training, staff will be developing the nursery's provision for Heuristic Play to support your child's learning and development.

What is Heuristic Play and why is it important?

Heuristic play (Goldsmeid 1986) (from the Greek, heuriskein meaning 'to discover') allows a child to **explore** open ended, everyday materials at their own pace under the close supervision of their play partner.

Heuristic play provides children with opportunities to use all **five senses** to learn about mathematics, develop language for communication and thinking as well as supporting their creativity. They learn about different media and materials and how things work and develop personal and social skills. All areas of learning are supported by a heuristic play session, which lasts for about 30 minutes a day, and children of **all ages** are able to benefit from the activity.



What are they learning?

- ✓ Sorting and categorising
- ✓ Comparing objects
- ✓ Problem-solving (slotting, posting, balancing, weight, forces)
- ✓ Piling
- ✓ Rolling (force, trajectory)
- ✓ Selecting independently
- ✓ Developing schema

If you are the parent of a baby, you will have already seen treasure baskets in the baby room. These are a form of heuristic play that allows babies to explore interesting materials under the supervision of their play partner. They develop their understanding of their world and extend their attention examining natural materials, such as wood, leather, metal and interesting fabrics that are furry or sparkly or smooth.



What can you do to help?

We would like your help to increase the range of heuristic play materials in the nursery to expand our existing collection of resources that we use for this valuable form of play and learning.

Please **can you help us** by collecting everyday items and 'free and found materials' that will enhance our collection?

We need at least lots and lots of each of the items below. Please help us by bringing these items (clean and good condition) into the nursery and dropping them into the collection boxes in the entrance or giving to your child's play partner.

Many thanks,

Caroline and Mim

Early Years Team

- Plastic and metal caps and lids (detergent, milk containers, jam jar, face cream etc.)
- Corks – natural and plastic
- Fir cones & conkers
- Tubes – toilet rolls, kitchen rolls, parcel rolls
- Plastic bottles – all sizes/colours
- Tins and boxes with lids – biscuit tins, tea caddies, small tins, gift boxes, ring/jewellery boxes etc
- Old curtain rings – wooden and plastic
- Ribbons, scarves
- Necklaces with coloured beads (plastic, wood), bracelets,
- door- keys or large keys from locks (not the very small ones please as they are a choke hazard)