

## Ideas to support your child's learning over the Easter Break

### Fine and Gross Motor - Construction Challenges:

Make sure there is a large space for children to build with some blocks. If you have other props to use e.g. small world characters, you can also have these nearby for children to access. You could link this activity to a particular book or topic that they are interested in e.g. 'Can you build a bridge for the three billy goats to cross the river?' or 'Can you make a castle for a princess?' Questions to ask: Can you build a tower? How can you make sure it doesn't fall down? Can they build a tower as tall as they are? Help and support your child by helping them to think of ways to stop the tower from falling down. You could ask them to add extra details to their tower e.g. 'Can you make a door?' Another challenge could be to build a bridge. Can they make a bridge that will hold the weight of a toy or book? How can they make their bridge stronger?



### The Wonder of Salt Dough

Salt dough is budget-friendly, versatile and sure to keep everyone busy and entertained. To make salt dough Easter decorations, simply follow the salt dough recipe below, roll it out and create Easter shapes using a blunt knife or cookie cutters. You will then need to bake them in the oven until dry before jazzing them up with colourful paint.

Ingredients: Plain flour - 4 cups Salt - 1 cup Warm water - 1.5 cups

1. Preheat the oven to 120C 2. Mix all the ingredients to form a stiff dough, then knead for around 10 minutes. 3. Add a little more water if the dough is too dry. Knead until the dough is smooth and free of lumps. 4. Roll out the dough to ½ inch thickness. 5. Use a blunt knife or cookie cutter to cut your salt dough into shapes. 6. Place the salt dough shapes onto a lined baking sheet and bake in the oven for 1 - 2 hours, or until dry. 7. Once cool, paint your salt dough shapes.



Top Tip: If you'd like to hang your decorations around your house or on an Easter tree, remember to punch a hole in the top of your decorations before you bake them.

## Phonics

- Display letter sounds or 2/3 letter words (such as cat, sat, mat, pin, pig) somewhere obvious – maybe in your child's bedroom or on the fridge.
- Use magnetic letters to make words together.
- Match letter sounds and pictures together and play pairs.
- Encourage your child to spot letter sounds and simple CVC words they recognise in the books you read at bedtime.

**Have a look at the following website, for some lovely educational activities:**

<https://www.jollylearning.co.uk/resource-bank/easter-activities/>

## Maths

- Play skittles and work out each player's score or how many are left after each roll (empty water bottles are great for this). Have a go at tallying to keep score.
- -Play mathematical games such as snakes and ladders and any game involving a dice.
- -In your garden or a local outside space where it's safe to play, find an area with hard ground e.g. patio or pavement. Create your own number line by writing numbers from 0 to 10 or 0 to 20 on the ground. These can be written in squares or other shapes, along a line or just by themselves. Ask your child to walk along the number line and count the numbers in order. You can then ask them to find a specific number, e.g. 5. Ask them to stand on the number 5 on the number line. Practise using the number line to find one more or one less than a given number, e.g. 'What is one more than 5?'
- Try painting some easter eggs with repeating patterns or use some easter decorations to sort and count. Hobby craft has some lovely little pocket money friendly bits.



## Egg Bean Bag Toss

Cut some egg shapes out of paper and write numbers on each one - these are the points. Place the eggs out on the lawn with the higher numbers further away as they will be more difficult to reach. Take it in turns to throw bean bags, attempting to make them land on the cut-out egg shapes. If you land on an egg you score the points written on the egg. At the end count up how many points you have won - the winner is the player with the most points.

## Get Green Fingered

- For an ongoing activity, invite children to set up their own gardening project. Allow them to have a small section of the garden or a planting area or they can plant pot of their own. They should be responsible for digging, weeding, lifting soil, planting seeds, watering, weeding and pruning (unconsciously working on gross and fine motor skills as they go!)

Starting off with a little herb garden is a great place to start and can easily be done in a pot or window box.

Top Tips:

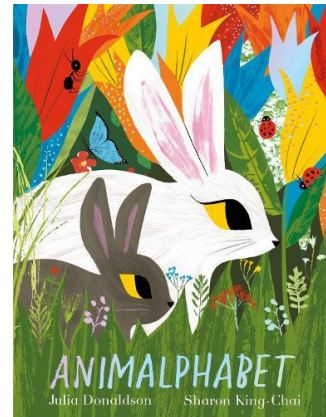
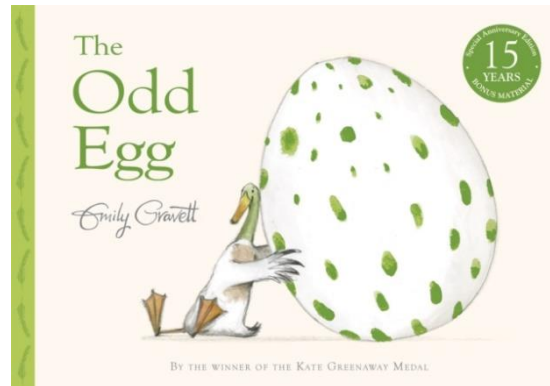
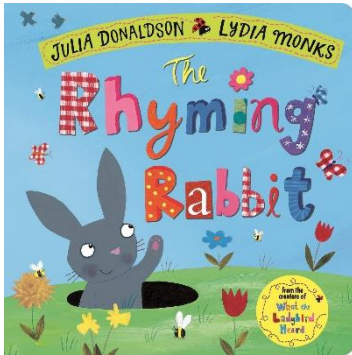
- **Use child-sized, real tools** - Children can use smaller child-size tools with greater accuracy and less frustration. Think of what the adult size tool would look and feel like, perhaps wooden handle with the metal fork or spade. Not only will this enhance the experience, but it also validates the child's work and real tools are much less likely to break compared with plastic versions.
- **Use child-sized watering cans** – There are many smaller mini size watering cans that are perfect for children to hold, fill, carry and use with success.
- **Provide freedom within limits** - determine what the limits are around exploration, for example, they are allowed to dig but not to throw dirt, they can hold bugs but not hurt them, they can pour water but it must be on the ground or on a plant, they can take a leaf to smell or cook but are not allowed to destroy a plant (intentionally).
- **Set the child up for success** - only put out as much potting mix and seeds as you need, make the materials manageable, have water accessible or nearby.
- **Visit and explore other gardens** - it can be inspiring to visit special garden exhibitions and exploring botanical gardens. Wisely Gardens have a Giant Egg Hunt exhibition all through the Easter Break.
- **Consider incorporating numeracy and literacy** - gardening can provide real-life applications of mathematics and language, from counting and measuring to writing labels.

As the weather starts to get warmer why not head outside? With chunky chalk and paint, help your child to create hopscotch tracks, a road for their toy cars, a beautiful large scale picture and more. Practise tracing one another and then draw faces and clothing on the empty forms. Without the worry of a mess to clean up, let them paint, colour and create to their heart's content.

Some stories you may like to purchase or borrow from a library:

- Peter Rabbit Great Big Easter Egg Hunt by Beatrix Potter
- The Rhyming Rabbit by Julia Donaldson
- Animal alphabet by Julia Donaldson
- The Duck Who Didn't Like Water by Steve Small
- A Dress with Pockets by Lily Murray

- The Odd Egg by Emily Gravett
- Grandad's Camper by Harry Woodgate
- Little Bears Spring- By Ellie Woolard



Have a wonderful break and enjoy the lighter, warmer days!

Nursery Team x

