All About Playdough!

Why is playdough important?

• It helps develop fine motor skills. Whilst you squish, roll, flatten, squeeze the dough you are developing the muscles in your hands that are needed for fine motor skills – such as holding and controlling pencils.

• It enhances hand-eye co-ordination. Alongside the playdough you can use rolling pins, cutters tools etc.

• It's calming for children. Playing with playdough can help release excess energy, tension and improves focus.

• It encourages creativity. The possibilities for what you can make from playdough is endless!

• It aids communication skills. As you play together you talk about what you're doing, ask people to pass you things and just have a general chat!

• It helps develop maths skills. You can talk about length, weight, amount, size, what shapes you can make, what patterns you can make.

How can I support my child with playdough?

• Make playdough together – there are lots of opportunities to talk about maths when you're cooking together, ie – how many spoonfuls have you added? One recipe is attached, but there are several others available online.

• Make playdough different colours. You could make red, yellow and blue playdough and then see what happens when you mix the colours! It's important not to worry if the children mix the colours - playdough doesn't have to stay the colour it started as; it's about exploring and having fun rather than making things look 'real'!

• Make the playdough different scents – adding powdered spices or essence (vanilla, lemon, orange etc) to the playdough adds an interesting element.

• Cut up the playdough with a knife and fork to help teach children how to hold and use cutlery (playdough is softer than most foods so usually easier to cut with a knife).

• Make 3D animals or story characters and use to re-tell stories. Or make up your own stories – if you're feeling very adventurous you could make your own stop frame animation!

• Use biscuit cutters to make different shapes or make different patterns by pressing objects into the dough – ie lego, pine cones, pencils etc.