

Curiosity Programmes at Our Day Nursery



A strategy that aims to create curiosity about the world, nurture communication and foster interaction through shared joyful times together and the teaching of shared attention, founded by the Attention Autism company.

An approach used for children under the age of 2 and a half or can be used for older children or children with additional needs who are struggling to attend or focus within group activities.

The theory is that in order to play and learn children need to develop the skill of being curious. We want them to form positive relationships with others and learn to engage with a wider range of stimuli so we can build on this as they grow and develop.



Anywhere! The approach should be used within all areas and can be initiated at any time by a child.

The approach when used as a specific intervention suggests prescriptive ways to implement but we will be applying much more fluidly, expecting children to access the 4 key elements daily

4 key elements and how we implement them

- 1 Get connected** Intensive Interaction
- 2 Signature songs** Embedded all day, including music cues such as transition songs or tidy up songs
- 3 Create curiosity** Curiosity containers
- 4 Playing together** Practitioners actively engaging with and joining in with a child's idea of play whenever an opportunity presents itself

Curiosity containers

Containers can include all shapes and sizes of: Bags, boxes, tins, tupperware. Contents can include: any items that may spark interest from a child – use knowledge of your children but also you can try new things to widen their repertoire of favoured items.

- Staff should model excitement, awe and wonder when discovering what is inside a curiosity container.
- Children may not be initially interested so we want to encourage them to become interested and later on, excited!
- Copy ways that the child interacts with the contents (this is likely to be very simple actions) and most importantly show that you are enjoying the interaction
- These simple actions might include: sprinkling, pouring, scooping, shaking, banging or just moving the item around in their hands
- Once the child is interested you could model ways to play and interact such as 'ready, steady... sprinkle, splat, go etc.



1. Curiosity

The intention is to get the child to engage & show interest in the items presented

Adults role:

- Choose interesting items & bring them to the attention of the child
- Pay attention to the child & engage yourself in the exploration
- Exciting containers

2. Exploration

Build this through:

- The adult engaging & demonstrating their exploration through involvement
- Letting the child touch it/ move it/ hold it etc.

3. Experience

This can be built by:

- Use the materials again but make sure they are still interested in them
- Keep the materials the same but change the containers
- Keep the containers the same but change the contents
- Move to a smaller container but a variation on the contents e.g. swap tapioca to lentils

4. Imagination

Imagination is a wonderful thing, it can be tricky when it doesn't work the way we expect it to.

You can create the best chance for imagination by feeding the child's curiosity, exploration & experience

You cannot force this element or make it happen but you can create the very best environment, we must be patient as this is the hardest bit & last to develop.

Curiosity Cubes

Curiosity cubes are a great way to promote curiosity, communication and exploration. These are clear cubes that contains items for children to observe and the idea behind them is to start conversations – they can be linked to themes and can be a great way to introduce a new theme such as a season or to ‘hook’ children’s interests in something new such as a book.



Anything can go inside a curiosity cube – there are no limits. You can include natural resources or everyday items as well as books or photos. You can use a light to spotlight the box or lights within the box to create extra excitement and interest.

Curiosity cube ideas:

- For older children you might want to include some prompt words linked to what’s in the cube to spark their curiosity
- You could provide pens and paper for children to draw what they can see inside.
- You could ask children to collect items to create their own curiosity cube to then discuss with their friends or with their parents if they want to bring items from home or their journey through the park to nursery.
- You could set up a simple science experiment for children to watch within the box.

