



**We do this because:**

<p>It develops fine motor skills.</p>	<p>Fine motor skills refer to how much control your child has of the small muscles in their arms and hands and how much practice they get at developing skills. It helps them to hold tools and equipment, control pencils, paint brushes, crayons, scissors, needles, tape etc. The more opportunities you can give your child to hold and control small items and tools the more skilled they become and pleased with what they have made. Children find controlling scissors quite hard at first and we as adults are worried about what they might cut. Start with snipping playdough sausages until your child gains control of the scissors, then move onto card (rather than paper) old birthday cards are ideal. Your child can then concentrate on controlling the scissors to 'snip', rather than controlling the card as well. Work your way around the edges of the card. Once your child has gained control of the scissors you can introduce a range of other things including material and start sewing. All fine motor activities in the longer term help your child to control crayons for mark making and leads on to writing letters and numbers.</p>
<p>It lets children express themselves and their feelings through art- (mark-making, sewing, model-making).</p>	<p>Access to colour, paint and paper give young children a blank canvass on which they can create and imagine. By providing crayons, and paint children can take themselves into an imaginary world using paint to express themselves. You are supporting them to make choices and experiment with colour/collage etc., the activity does not have to have an end/finished product, children love mixing paint and watching what happens to the colour. They can help you to clear away, wash brushes and look after the paint and eventually you will trust your child to get out the painting equipment all by themselves. Use masking tape to stick lengths of paper/wallpaper down so that your child only has to manage the brush/paint and the pot.</p>
<p>Builds relationships and helps your child to gain independence and make their own choices.</p>	<p>Many of the activities that can be included in art and craft require some input from you, in sewing, your child uses you as part of the process for things that they cannot do for themselves (threading a needle etc), cutting strong tape, filling up paint and cutting lengths of paper. Look out for the things that you do that your child joins in with and build on these interests. When you work together you are extending your child's word vocabulary and explaining what you are doing and why and this all helps your child to understand and have the confidence to try things out for themselves.</p>