

**Play Dough**

**EXPLORE:** allow your child to explore the play dough, give them time to do this without intervening at first, then as time goes on look for the following:

* **Do they squash, squeeze and pull the play dough?** if so, follow their lead and mirror their play using simple vocabulary to describe what they are doing *squeeze, squeeze* etc.
* **Can they roll the play dough?** model how to roll it into a long worm, support them to do this using hand over hand, using simple language to describe what you are doing *roll, roll, roll it out*
* **Can they make balls of play dough?** model how to make a big ball in the palm of your hand and a small ball with your fingers and thumb.
* **Can they push cutters into the play dough?** Using play dough cutters can they push them into the play dough to make shapes? They may need you to roll it out for them. Support them to push the cutter into the play dough using hand over hand if you need to again use simple language to describe what you are doing *push, push push* etc

If your child **eats the play dough**, this is a normal stage of development, discourage and distract them from doing this, if you are concerned there are many edible recipes on the internet.

**EXTEND:** now that your child has had time to explore the play dough, support and extend their play, here are some ideas:

* **Cutting:** can they use children’s scissors to cut up the worms they have rolled out? *Snip, snip, snip!*
* **Measure:** can they make you a long worm? A short worm? A wide worm? A narrow worm? Can they make a small, medium and large ball? etc.
* **Counting:** can they make three dogs? Can they count the wiggly worms you have made? Can they cut the long worm you have made into 3? etc
* **Using the cutters:** can they select a named cutter from a selection on the table? *Can you make a dog? Where is the dog?* You could extend this by using different coloured play dough: *Can you make me a green dog? A yellow cat? Etc.*
* **Dough Disco:** this is a great way to support the development of gross and fine motor skills with music and movement. Search for dough disco on Youtube.
* **Introduce other resources to use with the play dough:** feathers, googly eyes, sequins, lolly sticks, buttons, candles, cake cases etc. Can they make an alien? A bird? A birthday cake? Etc.
* **Role play:** use a tea set with the play dough, can they make biscuits with the cutters, sandwiches, cakes etc?