



Clare NNI & Schools Out

Process over product

### The importance of art in your child's development

Creativity flourishes when it is pursued for its own enjoyment.

Art allows each child to explore their own dynamic of creating and understanding that no two pieces of art work will look the same as each child's personality will come through his/her work.

Play is a vital part of children's learning, between the ages of birth to 5 years children are filled with imagination, creativity and exploration. More times than often we tend to forget the importance of allowing children to express themselves through art, dramatic play or exploring the outdoor environment. As Early Childhood educators and parents/carers we need to provide time and space for children to find themselves as they begin to explore their senses and master their developmental skills. It is important that we create a physical environment that encourages exploration and freedom of creative expression.

At Clare House we provide children with open-ended materials which give room for children to explore their imagination in many ways; painting, drawing and sculpting are all processes used to create true art. If you give a group of children paint, will their paintings all look identical?, of course not! Art, in its truest form, is an expression of our feelings, ideas and emotions, therefore art is unique to the individual and if the environment around them is flexible it encourages a level of creativity and imagination as they express their wonders.

OK...so what exactly does this mean to you? Well, think about the types of art you plan for the children - does the end result all look the same? If so...it is probably not art. In fact a great way to test to see if your art activities are focusing more on the process and less on the product is to look at the end result. If a parent whispers to you, "What is it?" then, guess what...it is process art.

This also brings up an important point about art... Try not to ask your child "What is it?" however hard! But

please next time you feel those words coming out, bite your tongue because your child will assume that because they put their heart and soul into it you already know what it is. Instead say something like, "Tell me about your creation" or ask "What do you like best about what you created?" This opens the door for them to share their ideas behind their art and is a wonderful way of building expressive language skills.



As a provider part of our job is to educate our parents and caregivers about the importance of process art. We hope that by putting this letter together that we have helped support your understanding of this subject. As you look around our nursery you will notice children's Art displayed proudly this is a great way for children to feel proud and for parents/caregivers to see their creations. (A photo of the child creating the art is also a wonderful thing to add.)After all, a picture is worth a thousand words!

**Art is beautiful. Art is unique and special. Make sure the art activities you plan for the children invite them to be free to express their ideas, thoughts and emotions in any way they desire!**