



**Childminder Natasha Cook
used the Ecology and Sustainability chapter
in the Outdoor Reflective Framework to reflect on her practice.**



Natasha reflected on the impact on the children and how they had benefitted from their experiences of exploring and making natural paints.

'Making natural paints with children offered a multitude of benefits, including fostering creativity, exploring the natural world, and developing fine motor skills. It also encouraged mindful engagement, environmental awareness, and provided a unique artistic experience.'



Natural paint making encouraged each child to explore colours, textures, and techniques using a variety of materials found in nature and home grown produce. This process sparked their imagination and allowed them to express themselves creatively in unique ways. Using natural ingredients like flowers, fruits, and vegetables for paint connected the child with the natural world. This firsthand experience fosters an appreciation for nature and its resources. Activities like grinding, mixing, and applying natural paints with brushes or fingers helped children develop their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.





The process of creating natural paints was a mindful activity, encouraging each child to focus on the present moment with the textures and colours they were working with. Working with natural materials lead to discussions about sustainability and how these resources are used and replenished. Making natural paints became a collaborative activity, fostering teamwork and communication skills with the sensory experience.



'By planting our colourful fruits and vegetables for paint making from seeds, the children have extended their learning and experiences even further. The only down fall is that planted fruits and vegetables are seasonal, patience is needed for them to grow, but this then allows for a yearly project and visits to local greengrocers. And there's always mud to paint with every day of the year which is widely available.'

Using a Bristol Standard Outdoor Reflective Framework question like the one below could help you begin your reflective, quality improvement journey...

What materials, both natural and made, could we use to create an ecologically rich outdoor space?

Chapter; Ecology and Sustainability