St.Thomas' Nursery Information Leaflet.

Introduction to
A Child's Brain and
How we can keep the brain happy

St.Thomas' Nursery

St.Thomas Nursery

St.Annes, FY8 1JN

Email:-stthomasnursery@btconnect.com

www.st-thomas-nursery.co.uk

01253789445

0743 6809782

'If you think you can, you can'

The Reptilian Brain

The Reptilian brain is the most primitive section of the brain. It controls all basic body functions, such as breathing, hunger, thirst, warmth and comfort. It is also responsible for basic survival instincts such as how we respond in the face of danger do we fight or flee. The Reptilian Brain can shut down and block thinking, both under stress and when basic needs are not met, which prevents brain messages travelling any further into the brain.

At nursery we try to ensure all basic needs are met

Giving them their own space, such as a drawer and a peg.

Ensure they are physically comfortable, not hungry or cold, etc

Ensure children are comfortable with the rhythm's and routines of the day so they know what to expect and confident with what will happen next.

Encourage a secure relationship with a key person.

The Limbic Brain

This is the middle part of the brain where are sense of identity is rooted .Our belief systems and emotions develop here, including our sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. Our long term memory is also held in this part of the brain.

Keeping it happy

- The limbic brain responds to the senses, so provide lots of sensory experiences.
- Sensory experiences are vital as a child's long term memory is more effective when an experience is linked to the senses or an emotion

- An effective key person will encourage the child to build a sense of identity as a learner so children can develop high motivation and self-esteem.
- Positive beliefs about themselves will allow messages through to the brain-positive emotions help to speed up children's thinking

The Neo Cortex Brain

This is the top part of the brain where learning and thinking take place. If messages have made it through all the other parts of the brain and the RAS filter our basic needs are being met our experiences are relevant and of interest. This means we are ready for, higher level learning and thinking to take place, as we are motivated and have the confidence and self-belief to engage.

Top Tips for getting the messages to the Neo-Cortex

Help children connect experiences

Make use of natural and sensory materials, unusual items as the neo- cortex responds to novelty.

Allow children to re-visit learning and experiences.

Encourage short bursts of learning as long sessions of enforced concentration is less effective.

Provide opportunities for choice and decision making, and open ended tasks

Encourage children to work alongside others as they learn from interactions

What we do at nursery to promote healthy brain development?

In order to satisfy all children's needs, their unique learning styles and their interests we need to offer continuous provision.

Continuous provision is available indoors and out and offers resources that constantly available so children can get completely absorbed and re-visit and develop their own ideas and learning over time.

The environment is organised so children can see equipment clearly and access it independently.

It should include well thought out, open ended resources that challenge and engage children, these are not always traditionally obvious toys but items that encourage creativity and pretend play.

The Reticular Activating System
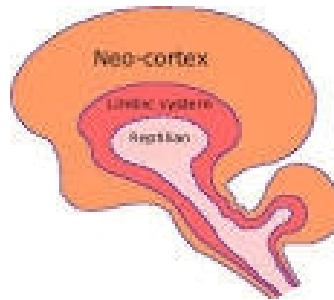
This is a filter in the brain that sits at the top of the reptilian system. It protects us from overloading. It will only let relevant information through to the next if it is of specific interest to the individual.

If you would like a paper copy, please see a member of staff in Nursery and they will beable to provide this. We are also able to provide copies with larger text if required.

Every Child Matters

5 Outcomes for children

Be Healthy

Stay Safe

Enjoy and Achieve

Make a positive contribution

Achieve Economic well being