



National Nanny Association

NNA Research Programme

**NNA Research
Partner Pack**

2026-2027



Our Contact:



Phone Number:
0207 060 5760



Website:
www.thenationalnannyassociation.co.uk



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The Start of Something Special

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in becoming an NNA Research Partner.

By taking part in this programme, you are contributing to something much bigger than a single project. Together, we are building the UK's first evidence library dedicated to professional home-based childcare.

Every observation, reflection and experience you share helps improve understanding of how children learn, develop and thrive through nanny care.

You don't need to be an academic or an experienced researcher.

You simply need to be curious.



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What is Practitioner Research?

Practitioner research is about noticing.

It means taking a little extra time to observe children's learning during everyday experiences, reflecting on what happened and considering why it matters.

Research doesn't always happen in laboratories or universities.
Sometimes it begins with someone asking,
"I wonder why that happened?"

As nannies, we ask those questions every day.

Our Research Principles

As an NNA Research Partner, we ask you to:

- ✓ Be curious
- ✓ Observe rather than judge
- ✓ Follow children's interests
- ✓ Respect confidentiality
- ✓ Reflect honestly
- ✓ Enjoy the process



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This Year's Research Theme

Creativity, Expression & Belonging in Home-Based Childcare

Choose one research project to complete.

Examples include:

- **Music & Movement**
- **Art as Emotional Expression**
- **Diverse Books**
- **Imaginative Play**
- **Everyday Maths**
- **Community Experiences**

Before You Begin

Think about:

What interests the child?

What makes them smile?

What captures their attention?

Where are they most curious?

Research works best when it follows children's interests rather than directing them.





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Setting Your Research Question

Examples



How does singing every day support confidence?

What happens when children revisit the same storybook over several weeks?

How do visits to the local library encourage communication?

How does imaginative play develop over a month?

Keep your question simple.

You're exploring—not trying to prove anything.

Planning your project



Research Project Title:

Research Partner Number:

Child Age:

Length of Project:

Why did you choose this topic?

What do you already think might happen?



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Observation Journal

Date:

Activity:

Where did it take place?

What happened?

What did the child notice?

What surprised you?

What learning did you observe?

How did you respond?

Would you do anything differently next time?

Looking for Learning

During your observations you may notice learning in areas such as:

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Language
- ☐ Physical Development
- ☐ Emotional Wellbeing
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Curiosity
- ☐ Problem Solving
- ☐ Confidence
- ☐ Independence
- ☐ Relationships

Remember...

Children often show several different types of learning during one activity.





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Reflection



Weekly Reflection

- What moments stood out this week?
- What surprised you?
- Did the child's interests change?
- Did your own thinking change?
- What would you like to explore next week?

End of Project Reflection

- Looking back...
- What have you learned about the child?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- How has this project influenced your practice?
- Would you continue using these activities?
- What advice would you give another nanny?

How long should my project take?

Mini Project (2–3 weeks)

- Exploring a new activity
- Trying a new book
- Music and movement
- Sensory play

Standard Project (4–6 weeks) - Recommended

- Most research topics
- Allows time to observe patterns and reflect on changes over time.

Extended Project (8–12 weeks)

- Longer-term observations
- Projects following children's interests over time
- Topics involving confidence, friendships or independence

Remember:

The quality of your observations is more important than the length of your project.



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Ethical Practice

Please Remember:

- Do not include children's names.
- Do not include identifying information.
- Obtain parental permission before participating.
- Respect children's wishes.
- Continue normal routines.

Research should never interrupt the child's experience.

Sharing your Findings

Once complete, submit:

- ✓ Your observation journal
- ✓ Weekly reflections
- ✓ Final reflection
- ✓ Parent comments (optional)

The NNA Research Team will anonymously review submissions, identify common themes and connect practitioner experiences with existing research.



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Thank You..

Every project completed strengthens the evidence base for professional nanny practice.

**Together we are building a profession that learns, reflects and grows.
Your curiosity today helps shape the future of home-based childcare as a Nanny.**

Building evidence. Inspiring practice. Supporting children.



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RESEARCH
PROGRAMME**



Phone Number:

0207 060 5740



Website:

www.thenationalnannyassociation.co.uk



Email Address:

info@thenationalnannyassociation.co.uk



Location:

London, United Kingdom