

Some useful notes on paper from nature artist, Sue van Coppenhagen, who is based near Cork City.

“Normal typing paper is 80 gsm, but I do find that too thin for most art purposes (other than when you are wanting to make rubbings). I'd recommend a paper weight of 100 gsm, which is what you find in most cheap sketch pads. I buy the A3 size when they have them at Lidl. Anything heavier than that is not necessary.

In terms of watercolour paper, for this age group and activity, any cheap watercolour paper is appropriate. The distinction between watercolour paper and writing/drawing papers is that it has sizing, in order to accept the wetness of the paint without immediately soaking it up.

I don't buy pads so cannot advise on those. I buy full sheets (around 55 x 75 cm) from Cork Art Supplies, and cut them down myself. If you were to go this route, I'd suggest Bockingford, or Fabriano (there's a bottom of the range one which sells for around €1.60 a sheet - out of this you can get five A4's.”