

PLAY POLICY

Play is a fundamental aspect of a child's overall development; it is a critical factor in enriching

learning and development. The nursery acknowledges the importance of play within the Early Years

Foundation Stage (EYFS) and incorporates play as a key element of the learning experience.

The nursery environment is developed using natural resources such as wooden blocks, pine cones

and other open-ended resources avoiding too much plastic. This is purposeful to help develop and

inspire the children's creativity and imagination during their play.

The nursery is fully committed to improving the play experiences of those children in our care. The types of play that are promoted and are incorporated in our nursery include water play, sand play, messy play, malleable play, physical play, role and dramatic play and heuristic play.

These play opportunities can be structured, spontaneous, adult led or child initiated. All experiences of play/ activities will be made accessible to children with learning difficulties and disabilities to ensure all children are able to freely and independently use the different areas (indoor and outdoor) and physical play opportunities.

A variety of resources are provided in all rooms in order to promote play. Practitioners are encouraged to be creative and use household materials and natural resources to enhance learning and play experiences, such as cornflour, leaves and mud. Guidance on supporting high quality play with resources and activities includes:

- Access to materials is based on children's abilities
- Props provided to represent diversity
- Props for dramatic play - pictures, stories and trips can be used to enrich dramatic play
- Music is available as free choice and group activity daily. Although music provided is for a purpose e.g. soft music for relaxing and activities to encourage creativity
- Promote cultural awareness when offering activities
- Provide planned activities for children not sleeping as well as offering free choice
- Plan and allow the children to mix different resources together and from different areas, where appropriate.

The nursery aims to ensure that:

- Play activities are freely chosen and the nursery will help to ensure that play is fun and enjoyable for children.
- All children have access to a balanced range of play with access to both the indoor and outdoor areas for the majority of the day.
- The nursery listens to children and aims to meet their needs in an inclusive way.

- The nursery recognises the need for play opportunities to be challenging whilst free from unnecessary hazards.
- The nursery reviews practices and resources to establish how children can best be supported in their play.
- Staff create an environment that fosters opportunities for play.
- Play is used to support and develop our planning to extend children's learning experiences. It is important for us to recognise the diversity and complexity of children's play and use our skills and observations to extend children's learning.
- Our role as practitioners is to enable rather than direct the child in accordance with EYFS recommendations.
- The nursery helps and supports parents/carers to understand the value of play in the overall development of children.

Outdoor learning

- The nursery believes that outdoor learning is essential to children's health, development and well-being.
- Outdoor learning compliments indoor learning and is equally important. Play and learning that flow seamlessly between indoors and outdoors enables children to make the most of resources and materials available to them and develop their ideas without unnecessary interruption. Consequently, it is vital that as an early years setting the nursery maximises the children's opportunities outdoors.
- The outdoor learning environment is planned so that all seven areas of learning specified in the Early Years Foundation Stage can be met through play.
- The nursery aims to use our whole environment as an extension to our indoor classrooms so the children can freely use both indoors and outdoors. Statistics show that children are happiest when outside and thrive in the natural environment.
- Our outdoor areas are fully risk assessed and are checked on a daily basis. Staff follow correct procedures i.e. staff/child ratios, making sure areas are safe, monitoring play, etc.
- The nursery asks that all parents/carers be aware of our outdoor learning philosophy and address their children appropriately for the weather conditions.
- Observations are made on the children's learning developments whilst playing outside.
- The nursery encourages parents/carers to talk to their child's Key Person or Senior Early Years Educator if they have any concerns about outside play.