

Play Policy for EYFS

Play is a child's right enshrined in the UN Convention of the Right of the Child Article 31.

Aims of the EYFS department

We aim to give the children opportunities to develop as individuals through interactive play experiences.

We aim to provide exciting play activities which stimulate curiosity and imagination.

We aim to allow opportunities for social interaction, collaborative learning and the exploration, broadening and developing of relationships.

We aim to use play in supporting the gaining of skills in all curriculum areas.

Children learn by experimenting and exploring the relationships between themselves and everything else in the world. Play is the vehicle which enables these relationships to develop into understanding.

We use play as an effective tool for teaching young children. During a session, the children will have opportunities to engage in a variety of different types of play.

These play situations are planned and produced to give opportunities and space for the children to explore aspects of the curriculum and to broaden social skills. Each planned activity is backed with clear learning objectives.

Adult intervention and interaction within Play is important and essential to the process of helping children to deepen their understanding of difficult situations. Sometimes this is from a central role in the play situation, sometimes from a "visitor" role and sometimes from more distant intervention, such as providing resources.

Role play and imaginative play should be an every day activity. It should be well planned, well resourced, with key vocabulary and exciting stimuli.

Role play, including Small World play, gives opportunities for the children to interact with their peers in working through problems and trying out different roles.

Physical play in EYFS is well resourced, with many opportunities available for supervised, free and structured activity. We benefit from experienced and specialist PE teachers who take the children for PE once or twice a week. The department is equipped with various wheeled toys which are used to support learning as well as for free play. Physical play gives opportunities for exploring movement sharing equipment, maneuvering, steering, turning and experiencing speed. Whilst playing together, the children learn about acceptance of rules, cooperation and the need to be aware of others, developing skills in self control, negotiation and problem solving.

Creative play is included as Art, Craft, music and technology. The children have access to a variety of materials with which to explore and experiment in making patterns, mixing colour and investigating texture and shape. Physical development is encouraged with the development of hand/eye coordination and the strengthening of fine muscle control. Through creative activities children learn about listening and interpreting instructions, observing, assessing and copying. They are encouraged to use problem solving skills and to be aware of the need to look after resources.

Investigative play is encouraged by the provision of activities such as sand, water, construction apparatus and toys which require building skills. Through these activities children are able to develop skills in questioning and reasoning. Skills such as sorting, matching, counting and estimating are all critical in developing good mathematical and scientific thinking. In constructional situations, children learn about the joys of achieving success and how to accept failure as a tool for achieving success. They are able to develop skills in manipulating and responding to the demands and constraints of different materials. All activities which encourage investigative play require the children to select and sort appropriate tools and materials which will enable them to accomplish the task. As in many other types of play, investigative play develops concentration skills, fine muscle control and tactile awareness.

Social play is the core skill which all children need to develop to succeed throughout life. We encourage the children to sustain their play for a reasonable period, sharing toys, working space and resources. They are required to cooperate, interact with other children and adults, wait for turns, communicate ideas and be sensitive to the needs of others. Acceptance of failure is a fundamental skill.

We encourage the children to persevere with tasks, asking for adult help when necessary and learning to adapt and incorporate the ideas of others into their own alternative strategies. Skills developed in play situations become central and integral to the child as a social individual, accepting of rules and confident in the use of their skills.

Many of the skills learned during play are common to the child's developing skills.

We seek to provide opportunities for structured and unstructured play which extends across all curriculum areas, harnessing the child's natural curiosity and desire to learn and come to an understanding of the world.