

# PLAY AND ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING POLICY



Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood,  
for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul.'

*Friedrich Froebel - German educationalist*

## **Policy Review**

Date agreed: September 2021

Next Review Date: September 2023

Signed by Chair of Governors:

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Rationale for Play

We recognise the importance of Activity and Play Based Learning as a fundamental part of the process of learning in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.

One of the most important aims of Education is to help each child to develop and achieve his/her fullest potential in all areas of life. Play Based Learning can be a very useful tool in the fulfilment of this aim. We believe that play or activity based learning is the best means of developing the 'whole' child, socially, emotionally, physically, aesthetically, intellectually, morally and culturally.

Through play activities, children can be encouraged to use their initiative, develop their confidence, explore, be imaginative, creative, socialise with peers, experience success and develop positive attitudes to learning.

The principles below underpin our Early Years Curriculum and guide our planning. Well planned and well-resourced play activities which allow for progression in a child's thinking and understanding can provide the context in which these principles become the reality for all of our children.

## 10 Common Principles of Early Years Education

1. The best way to prepare children for their adult life is to give them what they need as children.
2. Children are whole people who have feelings, ideas and relationships with others, and who need to be physically, mentally, morally and spiritually healthy.
3. Subjects such as mathematics and art cannot be separated; young children learn in an integrated way and not in neat, tidy compartments.
4. Children learn best when they are given appropriate responsibility, allowed to make errors, decisions and choices, and respected as autonomous learners.
5. Self-discipline is emphasised. Indeed, this is the only kind of discipline worth having. Reward systems are very short-term and do not work in the long-term. Children need their efforts to be valued.
6. There are times when children are especially able to learn particular things.
7. What children can do (rather than what they cannot do), is the starting point of a child's education.
8. Imagination, creativity and all kinds of symbolic behaviour (reading, writing, drawing, dancing, music, mathematical numbers, algebra, role play and talking), develop and emerge when conditions are favourable.
9. Relationships with other people (both adults and children), are of central importance in a child's life.
10. Quality education is about three things; the child, the context in which learning takes place, and the knowledge and understanding which the child develops and learns.

*Tina Bruce*  
*"Early Childhood Education"*

## Aims of Learning Through Play

The Northern Ireland Curriculum states that:-

- "Children learn best when learning is interactive, practical and enjoyable".
- "It is important that children have opportunities to be actively involved in practical, challenging Play Based Learning in a stimulating environment."
- "Have opportunities to initiate play which capitalises on intrinsic motivates and natural curiosity."
- "Are actively involved in planning, carrying out and reflecting their work."

Therefore, our aims are as follows:

### RECEPTION/FOUNDATION STAGE

- To provide quality play in a stimulating environment, which allows the children to develop and learn.
- To develop self-esteem, self-confidence, independence and a positive attitude to learning.
- To encourage creativity, self-expression and imaginative thinking.
- To develop children's gross and fine motor skills.
- To enhance language development.
- To foster social and emotional skills necessary for integration within the classroom and beyond.
- To stimulate curiosity and foster skills of observation, investigation, problem solving and planning in all areas of the curriculum.
- To allow time for careful observation of children's Play to facilitate assessment and planning for progression and continuity, recognising differing needs and attitudes.
- To reinforce or introduce topics from across the curriculum.
- To promote children's thinking skills and personal capabilities.
- To develop partnerships and community links.
- To involve children in planning their play experiences; progressing to organising and developing their own play spaces.
- To provide adequate planning, time and space for play.

## ACTIVITY BASED LEARNING AT KEY STAGE ONE

Activity Based Learning at Key Stage One builds on the active, hands-on learning that has taken place in the Foundation Stage. It is linked to topics/themes and allows children to engage in a variety of focused play activities and independent child initiated games and activities, e.g. role play, construction, table top, art and design.

The aims for Foundation Stage still remain, but in addition to these, for Activity Based Learning we aim to:

- To encourage children to learn in the company of others and provide opportunities for adults and children to plan learning together.
- To encourage independence by giving children a degree of control over their learning and create opportunities for children to make choices and decisions.
- To enable children to develop their own ideas and interests.
- To create opportunities for children to make choices and decisions.
- To encourage children to plan, do and review for themselves and reflect on practice.
- To encourage children to be inquisitive about their learning and be involved in the planning, performance and evaluation of an activity.
- To provide opportunities for sharing and demonstrating learning.

## THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES

"At the heart of the NI Curriculum lies an explicit emphasis on the development of pupils' skills and capabilities for lifelong learning and for operating effectively in society. By engaging pupils in active learning contexts across all areas of the Curriculum, your teachers can develop pupils' personal and interpersonal skills, capabilities and dispositions, and their ability to think both creatively and critically."

(ref: *Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities in Key Stages 1 and 2 - CCEA 2007*)

Play provides a wide variety of experiences which will help to develop the children's knowledge, skills and understanding. During Play children will be given opportunities to:

- Manage information
- Think, solve problems and make decisions
- Be creative
- Work with others
- Self management

In our school, through Play, we aim to provide opportunities for:

- Language development through experiences.
- Transfer learning to real-life situations
- Social skills
- Making informed and responsible decisions
- Involvement in group play or observation
- Developing curiosity and creativity
- Emotional development
- Promotion of self- esteem and confidence
- Self-motivation
- Developing the dispositions to learn
- Dealing with feelings
- Imaginative and imitative play
- Learning to listen to others and follow direction
- Reflection and self-evaluation of work
- Innovation using equipment

To enhance proper progression in learning we will promote the acquisition and

development of skills, concepts and attitudes associated with all areas of the curriculum. Regular monitoring and evaluation of these areas is essential as it enables the teacher to discover the children's level of knowledge and understanding, ways of thinking, attitudes, language and communication skills and ability to play in a group.

## **LINKS WITH AREAS OF LEARNING**

Children learn best when learning is connected. Our children will experience all areas of learning during play - arts, language and literacy, mathematics and numeracy, PDMU, PE, WAU and ICT.

We plan play through a topic-based approach because it provides opportunities to develop learning across the Curriculum. All topics will meet Curriculum requirements to ensure continuity and progression.

## **THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

We believe a well organised, stimulating and secure environment enables children to become confident, active learners.

We strive to ensure that materials and equipment are readily available so that children can select what is needed for their activity. This enables adults to spend more time interacting during play. Clear labelling allows the children to select and return equipment, further promoting independent learning.

Our learning environment reflects the learning taking place within the classrooms.

We consider:

### 1. The Physical Environment:

- Bright, stimulating
- Mixture of teachers'/children's work
- Print rich environment
- Flexibility with space and equipment

### 2. The Cognitive Environment:

- Active involvement and enjoyment
- Shared awareness of learning intentions and success criteria
- Thinking and problem solving



3. Social/Emotional Environment:

- Children feel happy, safe and secure
- Positive relationships and attitudes
- Successes celebrated and shared
- Everyone's efforts valued

4. Learning/Teaching Environment:

- Variety of strategies used
- Stimulating and challenging activities
- Activities linked to children's interests and experiences

The children have access to the following areas:

**Foundation Stage**

Indoor Play:

- ❖ Role play
- ❖ Creative/Music
- ❖ Construction
- ❖ Natural/ Manmade
- ❖ Water
- ❖ Writing Table
- ❖ Small world
- ❖ Dough/Clay
- ❖ Book Area
- ❖ ICT

- ❖ Games Play

Outdoor Play:

- ❖ Wheeled Vehicles
- ❖ Water
- ❖ Creative/ Music
- ❖ Large Construction
- ❖ Small World Play
- ❖ Sand
- ❖ Gardening
- ❖ Roleplay

**Key Stage One**

- ❖ ICT
- ❖ Library area
- ❖ Writing materials

- ❖ Joining materials
- ❖ Writing/drawing aids
- ❖ Recyclable materials
- ❖ Construction
- ❖ Table top games, eg Literacy/Numeracy activities
- ❖ Role play
- ❖ Water/sand if required
- ❖ Art and Design materials
- ❖ Small world

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The role of the School Governors**

To ensure the Play Based Learning policy is fully implemented throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage One.

### **The role of the Principal**

- ❖ To provide the funding for adequate resources.
- ❖ To ensure all staff are provided with suitable training.
- ❖ To ensure sufficient time is given for planning, provision and evaluation of play based learning experiences.

### **The role of the Adult**

The quality of adult intervention is crucial to the quality of learning which is experienced by the child. Therefore Early Years Staff should strive to:-

- ❖ Be the role of Provider, Facilitator, Participant, Observer and Evaluator during play based learning experiences.
- ❖ Support children's learning through planned play activities and spontaneous play.
- ❖ To plan and resource a challenging and stimulating environment which facilitates high quality play and to be aware of potential learning.
- ❖ To ensure that play provision and practice reflects the differing needs, interests and cultural backgrounds of individual children.
- ❖ To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play.
- ❖ To be a participant who initiates, encourages, models, joins in, stimulates and extends learning.
- ❖ To observe children carefully, assess their progress, evaluate the learning taking place and use information to inform future planning.

- ❖ To inform the Principal when resources need replacing and updating.

## **PLANNING**

Planning underpins effective learning and teaching and takes account of the developmental stage of the children as well as their previous experiences. Our planners are flexible and can be changed or added to as the children's responses and outcomes of activities are observed. Children are involved in the Planning process. Planners are evaluated to ensure effective assessment.

### **Medium term planners**

Teachers use a topic based medium term planner indicating learning intentions and activities/experiences for each learning area. Teachers also consider the adult role, any action required for specific children and an evaluation.

## **MANAGEMENT OF ACTIVITY/PLAY BASED LEARNING**

### **Foundation Stage**

- Whole class introduction and planning time with adults.
- Mix of activities-Freedom of choice: children choose where they want to play and focus activities the teacher will want every child to experience.
- Children may change places during play sessions.
- Children are informed when they have only five minutes left.
- When possible, children are allowed to keep unfinished pieces of work to the following day.
- Before or after tidying up, children are brought together to review their play.
- Records are kept of play activities, e.g. photographs, wall displays etc.
- Children tidy up the play areas with assistance when needed.

### **Key Stage One**

- Whole class introduction, i.e. at the beginning of topic, to plan and explain activities on offer and potential learning.
- Teachers will have focus activities for the children and a selection of independent tasks.
- Involve children with the setting up of activities.
- Children are informed when they have only five minutes left.
- Children tidy up materials with assistance when required.
- Children demonstrate/discuss the learning (plenary).
- Children display their learning.

## **Time Allocated to Play/Activity Based Learning in the resource areas**

### **Reception/Foundation Stage**

The children in Reception/ Foundation Stage participate in an hour of Play each day.

### **Key Stage One**

Year 3 children have two sessions of ABL per week. Primary Four have one session.

## **MANAGING SPACE AND RESOURCES**

The organisation will encourage independence. By giving children this responsibility adults can spend longer periods of time interacting with children during their play session. The following points are considered.

1. Clearly defined areas are created using a variety of furniture and equipment eg sand tray, water tray, builders' tray, small world grass area, writing table, roleplay furniture, table top Play.
2. Clear labelling enables children to select and return their own equipment.
3. The classroom and outdoor area are both used sometimes, maximising the use of available space.
4. An audit of resources will occur and ongoing involvement of requests for various resources to supplement our Play Based Learning.
5. The resources reflect the needs of the learners and change to accommodate current topics and progression.

## **OBSERVATION, ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND RECORDING**

### **Foundation Stage**

Observations will be a regular feature of classroom practice. They provide information about the children and the quality of play provision. Careful observations help teachers to:-

- Assess the development of the child's physical, social and cognitive skills
- Monitor the child's progress
- Plan to meet the needs, interests and ability of the children
- Assess the appropriateness of the activities provided and the learning that is taking place
- Ensure that the child is experiencing a wide variety of experiences and not confining his/her play to a limited number of areas
- Know when extra materials are required to supplement or extend the play
- Assess the suitability of the equipment and materials being used
- Provide information for parents and other agencies involved in meeting a child's needs

A flexible approach will be adopted which allows for both planned and spontaneous observations. Observations are used to inform planning.

Observations should include information about the child's:-

- Physical, social, emotional and cognitive development
- Thinking skills and Personal Capabilities
- Use of language in a range of situations
- Understanding of Mathematical concepts in their areas of learning.
- Level of involvement and concentration

All adults in the FS classroom will be responsible for recording spontaneous observations in all aspects of the curriculum on sticky 'post it notes'. These will be placed on the classroom success display board entitled 'Look at our Super Work' where each child has a space to display their work. These observations will be stored long term in their 'My Learning Booklets'. There is a page in each booklet for all of the nine areas of the Curriculum. The class teacher will include at least ten planned observations for each of these nine areas throughout each academic year.

### **Key Stage 1**

Learning is assessed during play in a variety of ways:-

- The teacher
- Peers
- Self-assessment
- Observation
- Discussion and reflection

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. It enables teachers to:-

- Monitor progress
- Plan future work
- Set tasks to use certain skills
- Assess the appropriateness of the activities provided and the learning that is taking place
- Know when extra materials are required to supplement or extend the play
- Assess the suitability of the equipment and materials being used
- Self-assessment
- Self-evaluation

### OBSERVATION AT KS1

This is primarily based on:-

- The learning intentions
- The agreed success criteria
- Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities

Observations can be planned or spontaneous and should take account of the child's cognitive, social and emotional development

### Providing Equality of Opportunity and Access for all Children

We are aware that pupils have different experiences, interests and strengths, which will influence the way in which they learn. In planning Play/Activity Based Learning, we are aware of the requirements of the Equal Opportunities legislation and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order. We endeavour to have high expectations for all pupils and will aim to provide suitably challenging opportunities for them to participate in activities fully and effectively.



## Teaching strategies

### Staff intervenes when:-

- Children have a problem they cannot solve
- He/She can lead them to reaching a logical conclusion
- Children are disrupting the play
- Children are at risk because materials or equipment are being abused
- The play is interfering with the activities of other children

### Staff do not intervene:-

- Until children have been given time to work out the solution to their problem or resolved their disagreement
- Where the repetitive play is serving a purpose

### Recording Play

- By taking photographs to illustrate play.
- By continuous assessment.
- By spot checks, e.g. during a set period of time while continuing with other classroom activities, the staff observe what is happening in the play.
- By planning for a specific time to assess children's language/involvement/leadership, etc in play.
- By concentrating on each area of play in turn and, if possible, covering all of these during the course of a term.

# Role Play



## **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Co-operate, take turns and initiate role-play
- Develop confidence, self-esteem and self-control
- Learn to work independently and access resources they need
- Learn to work as part of a group
- Express individuality through imaginative play
- Use language of social interaction
- Learn to have respect for others' ideas and accommodate these
- Help to tidy up at the end of the play session
- Show initiative when developing ideas in the role play area
- Reflect on feelings as part of role play

## **Creative/Aesthetic Development**

- Use imagination to develop stories in the role play area
- Introduce the language of colour and texture
- Encourage children to create and design their own menus, posters, leaflets, cards etc
- Make items for role-play

## **Physical Development**

- Develop fine motor skills and co-ordination through manipulating real tools
- Develop co-ordination through fastenings on clothes
- Develop awareness of space and how to share it with others

## **The World Around Us**

- Create role-play areas based on their knowledge of their local environment, homes and cultures
- Talk about their families in relation to events
- Re-enact special occasions
- Re-enact the work of people in the local community to role-play

- Explore and recognise features of living things
- Explore and recognise features of how things work
- Explore and select materials and equipment appropriate to the role-play
- Develop scientific skills, knowledge and concepts through role-play
- Use technology
- Select appropriate materials to make models
- Develop skills of cutting, folding and joining

#### **Early mathematical experiences**

- Explore various mathematical concepts
- Use mathematical language
- Problem solve through imaginative play Develop concepts of time
- Order, sort and match in role-play area

#### **Language Development**

- Talk about what different people do in role-play situations
- Use language to plan and create real life or imaginary situations
- Develop the language of dialogue
- Extend vocabulary associated with imaginary play
- Have access to books
- Develop writing skills
- Develop ICT skills

# Sand Play



Children seem to be instinctively attracted to sand and water. These materials offer rich learning opportunities for children but the learning would not take place without the children's own delight in the substances themselves - it is the pleasure which provides the motivation for their play.

## **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Learn how to work independently and select equipment
- Co-operate, take turns and share equipment as part of a group
- Learn to respect others' ideas
- Extend imagination when developing ideas in the sand
- Learn to use the sand safely and with consideration for others
- Talk about what they have done in the sand with confidence and a sense of achievement
- Develop self esteem through their achievements
- Experience the therapeutic value of working with wet/dry sand

## **Physical development**

- Develop fine motor skills through manipulating tools
- Develop hand/eye co-ordination
- Use a range of equipment with increasing skill
- Be aware of the space at the sand tray and share it with others

## **Creative/Aesthetic Development**

- Explore 3D forms using a range of moulds
- Explore shapes and textures associated with wet/dry sand
- Experience different colours and textures of wet/dry sand
- Use sand for line drawing and pattern making
- Create and explore sound using shakers of sand. Gravel, pasta

## **The World Around Us**

- Talk about their local environment
- Relate features of their play environment to their own environment

- Make physical features
- Change the sensory nature of sand
- Explore the properties of wet/dry sand and compare
- Look at similarities, differences and patterns in dry/wet sand
- Use their senses to observe changes in the sand
- Select appropriate equipment for different types of sand play
- Use building skills

### **Early mathematical experiences**

- Explore various mathematical concepts
- Understand and use mathematical language
- Make shapes and patterns in the sand
- Solve problems associated with sand

### **Language Development**

- Describe the properties of sand
- Extend vocabulary associated with sand play
- Describe their actions and the actions of others
- Ask and answer questions
- Recall and report back to the group
- Make up stories using additional props
- Talk about their experiences in the sand from displays of photographs
- Have access to a variety of books

# Water Play



## **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Work independently
- Co-operate, take turns and share equipment
- Respect the ideas of others
- Experience the therapeutic value of water play
- Learn how to use water safely
- Enjoy the sensory nature of adding colours and other items to water
- Learn how to work as part of a group
- Extend imagination through the addition of other resources
- Become confident at carrying out a range of activities in the water - blowing bubbles, pouring
- Explore personal hygiene

## **Physical development**

- Develop fine motor skills
- Developing hand-eye co-ordination
- Be aware of the space at the water tray and share it with others
- Use tools, water and objects with increasing safety

## **Creative/Aesthetic Development**

- Observe colour change through adding paint or food dye
- Explore the effects on water by adding natural and man-made materials
- Create underwater world to encourage imaginative play
- Create sounds in the water
- Make musical instruments - fill bottles to different levels

## **The World Around Us**

- Talk about water in the local environment
- Add beach objects to stimulate imaginative water play
- Talk about occupations where water plays a significant role
- Talk about animals and creatures that live in the water
- Understand the importance of hygiene using the water tray
- Explore the properties of water
- Ask questions about how things work and why they happen

- Use their senses to investigate water
- Recognise the importance of water in personal hygiene
- Observe how objects behave in the water
- Make predictions
- Explore ice in the water
- Make boats for water play using cutting, folding, joining and building skills

#### **Early mathematical experiences**

- Compare the amount in different containers by pouring from one to another
- Understand and use mathematical language
- Compare the size of containers
- Understand and use positional words

#### **Language Development**

- Describe the properties of water
- Describe their actions and the actions of others
- Extend vocabulary associated with water play
- Describe similarities, differences and changes
- Engage in role play as a fireman, plumber
- Have access to books and rhymes connected to water

# Table Top/ Games Play



## **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Learn to work independently
- Learn to work as part of a group
- Learn to work collaboratively
- Develop concentration and perseverance
- Enjoy the satisfaction of completing a puzzle or winning a game

## **Physical development and Movement**

- Develop fine motor skills and co-ordination through manipulating a range of materials
- Develop hand-eye co-ordination

## **The Arts**

- Create designs using peg board

## **The World Around Us**

- Develop an understanding of the jobs people do, seasonal change and their local environment through appropriate puzzles and games
- Learn how things join
- Explore materials
- Explore physical processes

## **Mathematics**

- Explore mathematical concepts
- Understand and use language related to ordinal number
- Describe the position of people and objects

## **Language for Communication and Thinking**

- Extend vocabulary as they engage in table top play
- Develop visual discrimination
- Describe the rules of a game



## Small World Play



Small world play is a type of imaginative/role play, which enables children to be creative and spontaneous in dramatic as well as mundane life situations which interest them

### Importance of small world play

- It encourages talking and listening
- It allows children to create stories around things they know
- It also allows children to imagine experiences they haven't had
- It allows children to communicate feelings in a safe way
- Children can communicate their observations, findings and knowledge about life
- It gives children control, allowing them to enter and leave a fictional world at will
- It encourages children to play together, to self-regulate and to exchange ideas
- It develops an awareness of the feelings and needs of others, as well as the consequences of their actions.

# Construction



## **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Co-operate, take turns and share equipment as part of a group
- Respect and value others ideas
- Take care of equipment
- Use the language of negotiation
- Develop confidence in using a variety of construction materials
- Develop independence in constructing with different materials
- Extend imagination
- Talk about what they have done with confidence and a sense of achievement
- Take responsibility for their own play

## **Physical development**

- Develop fine motor skills through manipulating a range of construction equipment
- Develop gross motor skills
- Learn to fit together and take apart construction materials with increasing confidence
- Develop hand-eye co-ordination
- Develop spatial awareness

## **Creative/Aesthetic Development**

- Explore the shapes, forms, colours and patterns of a variety of construction material
- Encourage children to talk about rough and smooth textures
- Make simple models
- Encourage creative ideas through mixing/combining different construction kits
- Value their own work and the work of others

## **The World Around Us**

- Talk about the features of their local environment
- Talk about the work of a builder, architect, plumber, etc
- Talk about their own experiences with construction
- Become aware of the purpose of some features of their environment

- Explore objects related to construction
- Select appropriate equipment for different types of construction play - natural/man-made
- Compare different materials and their properties
- Ask questions about how things work and why
- Use variety of tools to make models
- Explore joining materials together with glue, tape, blu tac
- Build for a variety of purposes

### **Early mathematical experiences**

- Explore mathematical concepts
- Recognise and name shapes in objects
- Understand and use positional words
- Solve problems
- Order blocks by size
- Compare the height, width and length of objects
- Estimate and predict

### **Language Development**

- Talk and listen with peers and adults about their work with construction materials
- Listen to instructions
- Explain the process of construction
- Follow plans
- Describe their actions and the actions of others
- Extend their vocabulary associated with construction
- Use books as a source of ideas
- Explain cause and effect
- Talk in detail about what they have made
- Label models

# Creative Play



## **Art and Design**

In creating, designing and making, opportunities should be provided for children to investigate and use a variety of materials and techniques. They should have a chance to explore colour, line, shape, form, texture and pattern in two and three dimensions. This leads to the development of visual, spatial and tactile awareness. They should be encouraged to use marks, picture drawings, paintings and constructions to create their personal view in response to what they see and experience.

## **Music**

Through music children experience pleasure, joy and creative expression. Music is one of the acceptable avenues for the release and expression of feelings and moods and emotions. Children should have opportunities to enjoy music in all its forms, playing instruments, singing, moving rhythmically and expressively. Opportunities should be provided for them to listen to sounds, rhythms and nursery rhymes.

## **Movement, dance and drama**

Drama gives children opportunities to express themselves imaginatively and to recreate roles and experiences.

## **Personal Development and Mutual Understanding**

- Learn how to work independently
- Learn how to work as part of a group
- Learn to share resources and equipment
- Express emotions, ideas and values through art and design, dance and music
- Learn to have respect for others ideas
- Enhance self-esteem and confidence by valuing child's own work
- Develop co-ordination by using a variety of tools and equipment
- Use tools safely and with consideration for others
- Develop creativity through using a range of materials
- Persevere with the task at hand
- Talk about what they have done with confidence and a sense of achievement

### **Physical development**

- Develop fine motor skills through using a wide range of tools and materials
- Develop hand-eye co-ordination
- Become increasingly accurate in making patterns, pictures and models
- Develop co-ordination and skill in using a variety of instruments - plucking, hitting, shaking, blowing
- Begin to move in the rhythm of the music
- Move confidently with increasing control and co-ordination

### **Creative/Aesthetic Development**

- Experience working with a range of materials and objects
- Explore colour, shape and texture
- Make simple representations and pictures
- Create and design 3D models using a range of materials and equipment
- Experience the sensory nature of different materials
- Explore the properties of malleable materials
- Participate in simple musical activities
- Draw to fast/slow music
- Respond freely to music through movement and mime

### **The World Around Us**

- Make representations of their own environment
- Make pictures and talk about their own family
- Learn the names of materials and equipment
- Tidy equipment and resources
- Talk and work in the style of artists, designers and crafts people
- Use equipment from local environment to stimulate creativity
- Explore the properties of different materials
- Use their senses to explore textures and sounds
- Look at similarities, differences, patterns and change
- Select appropriate materials for the task
- Ask questions about how and why things work
- Explore and select materials and equipment to make different sounds
- Use painting, drawing and modelling to record their observations

### **Early mathematical experiences**

- Develop various mathematical concepts related to painting, drawing, cutting, joining and modelling
- Understand and use language related to pattern, shape, area, number and size
- Compare size and quantity
- Solve problems
- Develop mathematical skills - sorting, matching, comparing and ordering

### **Language Development**

- Describe their experiences and actions and those of others
- Develop descriptive language to talk about their work
- Evaluate their work and discuss how to improve it
- Use stories, rhymes and books as a stimulus
- Listen to and follow instructions
- Develop pre-writing skills through manipulating tools, drawing and modelling
- Recall and report back at group time
- Describe the properties of materials
- Listen attentively to a variety of music

## Dough/ Clay Play



Children love dough. Playing with dough is relaxing and creative and there is no right answer. It encourages the development of fine motor skills, concentration, and creativity. It offers opportunity for the development of language and social skills.

Notes for use of dough

- Give children a large piece of dough, plenty of time and space
- Check if the children are allergic to additives used
- Make material accessible so they can choose what they want to explore and add to the dough
- Remove accessories at times and allow the dough to be 'natural'
- Introduce tools sensitively following careful observation

Clay can be used to provide similar learning experiences as dough. It also promotes sensory experiences, imagination, gross motor control, emotional and language development.

Allow children to handle clay and explore its properties and compare and contrast it with dough. Talk about its properties - how it sticks to your hands, how it dries out and leaves a colouring on your hands.

Make marks on the clay using tools, rolling pins, sponges or finger prints.