

Newington Primary
'Play and Continuous
Provision'
Policy



Reviewed— August 2024

Introduction

‘The importance of play in children’s daily lives and healthy development has become increasingly recognised in recent years. A growing body of evidence supports the view that playing, throughout childhood, is not only an innate behaviour but also contributes to children’s quality of life, their well-being and their physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. The type of environment for play is also important, having an impact on children’s experience, choices and relationships, both with other people and with the environment itself. ‘

Play Scotland- Power of Play

Purpose of Policy

The first five years of life are crucial to a child’s development. High quality early years provision has been proven to help children achieve their potential and support parents and their families. The role of our provision in Primary One, Two and Three encompasses a wide range of aspects dedicated to enhance children’s experiences in a positive and supportive way through ‘play and continuous provision’. This Policy follows the guidelines of good practice as detailed in the ‘Realising the Ambition’ document and the Early Level within Curriculum for Excellence.

What do we mean by ‘play and continuous provision’?

Continuous provision is the resources and areas that we have set out to allow the children to explore freely. Our environment, both inside and outside, allows our children to ‘play’ safely and explore, as well as challenge and engage them. Although areas are planned we do aim to leave some ambiguity so that children can be creative with the way they approach the resources. Staff make changes to those areas and resources to follow closely the interests of children as well as their next steps in their development.

We feel our continuous provision gives children the freedom to be successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors and allows them to take control and have success in their own learning.

Play Scotland



Prime Areas of Learning

- Personal, Social & Emotional Well-being and Development
- Numerical and mathematical which includes problem solving
- Communication & Language
- Physical

These prime areas are what all children need to concentrate on in their early years. When they start school, we will continue to support their development from nursery or home in our caring and safe environment.

Personal, Social and Emotional Well-being and Development

When children are playing they are emotionally immersed in what they are doing, often expressing and working out the emotional aspects of their everyday lives. This helps them understand their own feelings and those of others. In addition, play helps children build resilience through supporting the development and understanding of relationships and through experiencing positive feelings and reactions. The pleasure and satisfaction children experience whilst playing encourages them to extend their interests and creativity, and the excitement and anxiety linked to trying new things helps children learn ways of reacting to other unknown situations.

Newington Primary understands, supports and promotes the social development of the children in its care. Through daily routine, encouragement, reward and the provision of positive role models, children should develop a well balanced, confident and happy disposition. Children will be encouraged, whenever possible to correct inappropriate behaviour and express feelings with the support and empathy of the staff deployed as they progress through the natural changes of their growing years. Children will be encouraged to build positive relationships with each other, across all age ranges, as well as with the staff in Primary One, Two and Three. Within our P1-3 classes, children are encouraged to play freely with others to see and hear other children's views and opinions and allows them to develop the skills of cooperating, sharing, helping and problem solving.

Communication and Language

Play enables children to practise the language skills they have already developed and build on their expanding vocabulary. Interacting with staff and peers within our P1-3 classes also enables children to refine their speech sounds through listening to others. Interaction is a vital factor in supporting language; children who have limited opportunities for interaction will often have immature speech development. It is important for us to ensure each child has play opportunities, promoting the opportunity for socialisation with others. Building social development is fundamental in acquiring and encouraging language development.

Imaginative play is a great way to support and enhance speech development; giving children the opportunity to recreate experiences and share ideas with peers. Language will often increase during role play as children can take on a role and pretend to be someone else. This gives them the confidence to use language that they have heard peers or adults use in everyday situations, without the pressure of getting it wrong. Children will develop ownership over their learning and this will support them to build on their language development.

Physical

Physical play such as running, skipping and riding a bicycle helps children develop:

- Good physical fitness
- Agility
- Stamina
- Co-ordination
- Balance

Specific Areas of Learning

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Health and Wellbeing

These specific areas include many essential skills and knowledge that children need to learn in order to access the curriculum and learn. We all play a vital role in helping children achieve and parent's involvement is a key factor in their success. All areas of the Curriculum for Excellence are used to promote the child's individual interests and unique learning needs. This also links nicely with our Wellbeing Indicators (SHANARRI) and our Rights Respecting School (Article 31—Children's Right to Play). Children are observed regularly to ensure their learning is effective; which can be seen by them investigating, concentrating and having their own ideas and thoughts.

Free Flow Play

Free flow play provides the children with the opportunity to have an open choice for what they wish to play with. They can move freely from room to room which encourages and promotes independence. A range of learning material is present in all areas for the children and each area has links to Numeracy, Literacy, Health and Wellbeing and other areas of the curriculum to enhance each child's learning.

Playing 'safely' in our Infant Environment

Newington Primary will endeavour to provide an environment that is both physically stimulating and exciting whilst retaining stringent procedures to safeguard the security and safety of the children in the school. We aim to keep our areas of learning similar to the natural environment but also challenging to give children the opportunity to take new risks. Children will be encouraged to take on their responsibilities to promote and enhance their learning whilst understanding how to keep safe within the guidelines and direction of the staff and setting rules.

We acknowledge that risk is an inherent and important aspect of play. Children will naturally create and/or seek out challenging situations. We recognise that any potential risk of harm to children needs to be balanced with the potential for good that may come from them taking part in a particular form of play. Through risk, children learn their limitations and deal with hazards.

We encourage children to be involved in assessing potential risks within our areas and being involved in developing risk assessments to mitigate that risk.

What is the role of the General Assistant, Learning Assistant and class teacher during 'play'?

Staff should:-

- Provide a high quality environment both indoors and out, this should support children's emotional wellbeing and help them to be motivated to learn.
- Evaluate children's observations to determine how the environment can be enhanced.
- Respect children and create a safe environment for them to try out new skills without being outlined as a failure.
- Establish rules, boundaries and behaviour expectations.
- Spend quality time supporting children in accessing equipment and learning routines
- Recognise the importance of each area of continuous provision and ensure these areas to offer children maximum learning opportunities as well as self initiated play.
- Play alongside children. Listen and respond to the child, modelling ideas and language.
- Ask questions and make suggestions, this will help to encourage children's learning.
- Offer children additional resources to enable them to extend their ideas further.

What is the role of the child during 'play'?

Children should:

- Report any broken or damaged equipment.
- Report any other child not playing safely.
- Follow instructions by the lead adult.
- Walk within the play areas and to be mindful of other people when moving around.
- Manage their own risk safely.
- Enjoy and work hard to develop skills within this area.
- Tidy up materials and the area before they leave.

Observation and Assessment During 'Play'

Effective assessment involves analysing and reviewing what is known about each child's development and learning so that next steps to learning can be planned to meet their individual needs.

It is envisaged that on-going individual observations will be achieved for each child but it is intended that a more formal written assessment will be made periodically. Specific achievements will also be tracked using the Early and First Level Experiences and Outcomes. These achievements will be tracked twice a year on our school tracking and monitoring system. All observation and assessment documentation will be transferred to the new class teacher at the end of the year.

Formative Assessment - is assessment based on observations, photos, video, things children make or draw, information from parents etc.

Summative Assessment – is a summary of all the formative assessments done over a longer period and makes a statement about a child's achievements.

Newington Primary fully understands, supports and endeavours to comply with the ethos devised through "Getting it Right for Every Child". It aims to have regard to the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs (SEN), English as an Additional Language (EAL) and Talented and Gifted children in order to provide a welcome and appropriate learning environment for all children. It is our aim to help all children reach their potential.

Parents as Partners

Newington Primary understands and promotes the statement "Parents are children's first and most enduring educators." and ensures that the parent's involvement as part of the shared learning process plays a significant part in the welfare of children attending our school. The continuing contribution from children's parents is regarded as a special relationship in terms of shared educational aims so that the best developmental outcomes may be achieved for the children.

We try to encourage parents to contribute to our school by attending 'Primary One Information Evenings, 'PEEP', concerts, stay, play and learn sessions, parental consultations and offering assistance with various activities. These sessions help parents to understand the importance of 'play' so that they can replicate this learning at home.