

## **Open Access Statement**

### **Aim**

To promote the importance of play for all children within our settings.

To recognise that all children have the right to play (stated in the 1989 United Nations Convention of the Rights of a Child).

To enable children from the local community to have equal access to good quality play opportunities.

### **What is Play?**

‘Play is an essential part of every child’s life and vital to their development. It is the way children explore the world around them and develop and practise skills. It is essential for physical, emotional and spiritual growth, for intellectual and educational development and for acquiring social and behavioural skills. Play is a generic term applied to a wide range of activities and behaviours that are satisfying to the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child. Children play on their own and with others.’

*(Children’s Play Council’s definition of Play)*

### **Benefits of Play**

- Play promotes children’s development, learning, creativity and independence
- Play keeps children healthy and active – active children become active adults
- Play fosters social inclusion, it helps children understand the people and places in their lives, learn about their environment and develop their sense of community
- Play allows children to find out about themselves, their abilities and their interests • Play is therapeutic; it helps children deal with difficult or painful circumstances, such as emotional stress and medical treatment
- Play gives children the chance to let off steam and have fun

### **Play Policy Objectives**

- Promote the development of inclusive play opportunities which take into account and respond to children’s abilities and needs, their age, gender, cultural and religious backgrounds, social, family, economic and environmental situations
- Plan and develop play opportunities in consultation with the children to meet their needs and make best use of available resources

- Ensure that all children are respected and valued so they can play free from racial or other types of discrimination or abuse

**To support the development of play opportunities and child care services that are safe, stimulating and appropriate for children's ages and stages of development we as a provider will;**

- Operate by the national standards under the Children Act 1989 and recognise good practise with clearly defined policies and procedures within our setting
  - Ensure all staff and volunteers working with children have appropriate training, knowledge and experience for their duties and responsibilities
  - Develop varied play opportunities which will challenge and stimulate children's abilities but not threaten their survival or well-being
  - Ensure that children and young people have the opportunity to play and take part in a range of activities where they can gain self-confidence and learn their own terms
  - Support and encourage children's own ideas and decisions about what they do and how they do it
  - Ensure children are given opportunities to make choices within play to support their development
  - Support the development of good quality services through a range of flexible training opportunities for new and existing workers

**Last reviewed:** August 2024

**Date of next review:** August 2025

Signed by: B. Stanley