

Play Policy

Play is an essential part of a child's life. The 1-2-3 After School Club takes children's play seriously. It is the role of the staff to offer a wide range of play opportunities that enable children to play freely and be the masters of their own play.

All children need to play; the impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, a psychological and a social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.

The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate play.

To play is to allow one to freely explore and make sense of the world, experiment, and express things without fear of judgement.

To best facilitate children's play

1. The role of Staff is to support all children in the creation of a space in which they can play.

2. The environment will be set up prior to children arriving and will include a range of play opportunities.
3. Children will be confident in making requests for other equipment. Equipment may be used in conjunction with other equipment.
4. Children are not required to be occupied at all times.
5. Staff response to children playing is based on a sound and up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
6. Staff recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children's play on the playworker.
7. Staff choose an intervention style that enables children to extend their play. All Staff intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.
8. A record of activities and play opportunities will be kept and reviewed to ensure that appropriate ranges of play types are offered.
9. Staff recognise that children need to put their own creative style and ideas into their creation such as cooking, arts, crafts, sports and gardening.

10. Children will be involved in planning activities so that the programme reflects their opinions. Activities will be carefully planned to allow children to build on the natural curiosity, advance their thinking and use their imagination.
11. Children will be given notice when their play must come to an end. If a play request is refused an explanation will be given.

Outdoor Play

1. Children will be offered access to outdoor play every day, with the exception of severe weather conditions.
2. Any outdoor activities will take place in safe, appropriately supervised spaces.
3. Before any outdoor activities commence, safety checks are carried out.
4. The Club's equipment and resources reflect positive images with regard to culture, ethnicity, gender and disability.
5. Activities will be evaluated by staff and children regularly so play experiences and activities can be improved.