



Messy play policy

Victoria Road Private Day Nursery are committed to supporting the importance of play, both indoors and outdoors, and the value of risk taking. We have adopted this messy play policy to reflect our commitment to ensuring that all the children in our care have quality play opportunities. For adults, messy play can be a lot of work and feel stressful. However, there are many benefits to messy play.

Early childhood education experts say that play is the work of the child. This is true for all children, but especially for babies and toddlers.

Practitioners support children's play throughout the session taking into account the age, interests and individual needs of the child. We provide provision in which children can play in a safe and secure environment and adjust schedule of play activities throughout the day to meet individual needs of the children. Transitions between daily activities, where possible should not interrupt the children's play experiences and routines are flexible. Children are encouraged to make choices and think critically through independent play in on a one to one, small group or larger group.. Play experiences should also promote understanding and acceptance of diversity and practitioners are to encourage children to experience spontaneous/ unplanned activities like snowfall.

Our setting uses the Birth to five matters curriculum.

Play is children's work. Free play, including outdoors as this is integral part of the curriculum, is a fundamental part of a child's day in our setting. Through play children can explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate knowledge already gained to help develop new skills for now and in the future. It is essential for keeping children healthy and reaching important social, emotional, and cognitive developmental milestones. It also helps children to manage anxiety and become resilient.



Victoria Road Private Day Nursery is fully committed to improving the play experiences of those children in our care and use tools, as well as regular observations of the children to identify resources needed and environmental developments, both indoors and outdoors.

Play in practice

The types of play to be incorporated in our setting includes water play, sand play, messy play, malleable play, physical play, role and dramatic play and heuristic play. These play opportunities can be structured, spontaneous, adult led or child initiated. All experiences of play/ activities will be made accessible to children with learning difficulties and disabilities to ensure all children are able to freely and independently use the different areas (indoor and outdoor) and physical play opportunities.

Resources and activities

A variety of resources are provided at each setting in order to promote play. Our nursery nurses and teachers encouraged to be creative and use household materials (see food play policy for further guidance) and natural resources to enhance learning and play experiences, such as cornflour, shaving foam, leaves mud and sand. We also explore with glitter, sequins, pom poms etc.. We ensure this is monitored at all times and all materials are child friendly.

Guidance on supporting high quality play with resources and activities includes:

- New materials added or displayed monthly e.g. example rotating book selection.
- A variety of materials for art is introduced as children become ready.
- Access to materials is based on children's abilities
- Props provided to represent diversity



- Props for dramatic play - pictures, stories and trips can be used to enrich dramatic play.
- Music is available as free choice and group activity daily. Although music provided is for a purpose e.g. soft music for relaxing and activities to encourage creativity.
- Promote non-sexist images and cultural awareness when offering activities.
- Provide planned activities for children not sleeping as well as offering free choice
- Plan and allow the children to mix different resources together and from different areas, where appropriate.

Practitioners

Although our setting emphasises the importance of child –initiated activities and free play, practitioners are encouraged to interact and support the children in their experiences, whether adult led or guided.

Guidance for practitioners supporting high quality play in settings includes:

- Practitioners are involved in using books with children periodically throughout the day
- Practitioners to join in and encourage clapping, singing along.
- Practitioners pretend with children.
- Practitioners vary their involvement with activities.
- Practitioners are to encourage and explain social interaction in play.
- Practitioners are encouraged to add materials to stimulate interest during free play.



- Concepts are introduced in response to children's interests or needs to solve problems.
- Children are asked opened ended questions.
- Some art activities are related to other experiences
- Children should have opportunity to experience the 7 areas of learning throughout all play opportunities and experiences such as Forest Schools, field trips and cooking activities.

Children are given the opportunity to experience and explore three dimensional materials appropriate to the age and ability of the child.

Environment

We aim to provide space for children to explore and play in, and have displays which are changed regularly.

Guidance on supporting high quality play within the environment includes:

- A suitable space to be provided for different kind of experiences – large space, small cosy space, quiet space, art, messy and a communication friendly space.
- Workshop areas to provide construction play, mark making, role play etc. providing a holistic approach to the curriculum.
- Variety of areas for children to access privacy.
- Provision to offer adequate resources for children to play and explore at a high standard. .
-



- Sand and water play provided daily and for different resources to be available to use in the trays. This is both outdoors and indoors. Children explore with sand as part of their learning and development, sometimes children will use their senses and will sometimes try and put this in their mouth, staff highly supervise this and encourage them not to do this however this can sometimes be unavoidable.
- Materials rotated to maintain interest.
- Resources accessible for free choice play.