

PLAY & EXPLORING POLICY

All children and young people need to play, the impulse to play is innate.

Children have a natural need to play that cannot be halted. It is how they make sense of the world around them. Play enables children to learn; it is crucial for developing their communication and language skills, as well as supporting their learning and wellbeing.

KLT's is committed to providing a safe, stimulating and inclusive environment where children are encouraged to explore, imagine, experiment, and express themselves through play.

The United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that children have the right to play and relax.

We recognise that:

- Children need access to safe quality play, both indoors and outdoors in a child centred environment.
- Children need to have choice and the opportunity to lead their own learning.
- Play activities need to be specific to the age and stage of development for all children.
- Play should enable children to develop confidence and empower them.

To achieve the above we ensure children have opportunities to play, which enable them to:

- Explore
- Get messy!!!
- Have fun
- Use all their senses
- Take safe risk
- Experience new things
- Share and take turns
- Observe and copy
- Repeat and revisit.

At KLT's staff use a mixture of child led and adult led activities; both support the 7 areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) some activities may be more adult led some may be more child led.

Types of play

Free play: child-led exploration and creative play, a child leads their play and explores their interests.

Structured play: Adult-led activities that support learning and skill development.

Indoor and outdoor play: Access to materials, environments and experiences both indoors and outdoors.

Sensory play- Activities that stimulate children's senses and support cognitive growth.

Outdoor Learning is:

- Essential to children's health, development and well being
- As important as indoor learning
- Supportive of the 7 areas of the EYFS

Forest School sessions offer the children the chance to take learning out of the classroom and into the great outdoors; it provides the children with opportunities to learn in new ways, exploring lots of new experiences.

Risk Management in Play: Our policy ensures that children are offered a variety of safe play opportunities that allow them to explore, take turns and develop confidence. We allow and encourage the children to run, jump, climb, balance, throw, all in a safe and secure way. Full supervision is given when outside, staff will always be engaged with the children and aware of their surroundings and goings on.

We have devised our own curriculum at KLT's that we all adhere to, we worked collectively to devise this and all talked about what is important to us when working with children; this is what we agreed on:

Togetherness

Rewarding

Exploring

Adventurous

Stimulating

Unforgettable

Risk taking

Exciting

Social

See the attached breakdown overleaf of how we meet and offer each area of our KLT Curriculum & Vision.

The Role of KLT staff within play

- To observe and support children's play without dominating it or directing it unnecessarily.
- To ensure play spaces are safe, engaging, and reflective of the children's needs and interests.
- Encourage turn-taking, cooperation, positive communication and problem solving.
- To provide resources and play prompts when needed to help facilitate further learning and engagement.

Safety and Supervision

- Staff will supervise play areas and spaces at all times.
- Equipment and toys will be regularly inspected and cleaned.
- Any hazards will be addressed promptly.
- Risk assessments will be conducted for indoor and outdoor activities.

Inclusion & Diversity:

We provide inclusive play by ensuring all children have the same access to play opportunities, regardless of their specific abilities, needs and backgrounds, sometimes adaptations may be needed to ensure this, but staff are fully aware of how to do this.

Inclusive play offers children a richer play environment and evolves according to their changing needs and interests.

KLT's will ensure that all children regardless of gender, have the same access to all activities e.g. girls exploring in the construction areas and boys wearing princess dresses; this can sometimes be difficult for parents/carers to accept and understand but something that we are very passionate about supporting.

Getting messy!

Whilst at KLT's children will be encouraged to explore, experiment and investigate; this usually involves some sort of mark making and what most would call 'mess!' be this paint, mud, chalks, water, flour, playdough etc. We ask that parents and carers do not send their children to nursery in their best clothes, new trainers, expensive outfits etc. We do have aprons but usually children 'opt out' of wearing them; staff will not enforce that a child wears an apron as it would deter some children from

