

Play Policy

Statement

We aim to ensure that every child in Bunnahone Bunnies Cross Community playgroup, irrespective of gender, background, cultural or racial origin, or individual ability, has equal access to good quality play opportunities within the curriculum and beyond. Our playgroup is committed to supporting the importance of play, both indoors and outdoors, and the value of risk taking. Play helps children to explore social, moral and imaginary worlds and their relationships with them, whilst developing a range of skills to deal with the challenges they meet.

Key Principles for Play

- Is a vehicle for children's learning and development
- Engages children with interest and enjoyment.
- Is explorative and purposeful, practical, and active, providing children with first-hand experiences.
- Empowers the learner and is inclusive.
- Non-threatening it encourages children to face challenges and take risks.
- Deepens understanding with opportunities to apply learnt knowledge and practice new skills.
- Develops language.
- Encompasses all areas of learning and development and encourages children to make links in their learning.

Procedure

Bunnahone Bunnies playgroup staff shall remain committed to and value the importance of play. Staff shall welcome each child as an individual, support, model, challenge, observe and assess their play, and reflect on their own skills and knowledge. Staff shall:

- Provide a range of play opportunities through planning and routines, encompassing a wide variety of learning styles and experiences that support the varied ages and stages of development of the children whilst also considering their likes and dislikes.
- Maintain a healthy and safe play environment, including opportunities for children to test boundaries, manage risks, make choices and become independent.
- Communicate regularly with parents/guardians sharing information on their child's development.
- Each Child's development shall be assessed during observations of them at play

Our playgroup shall provide a facility in which children can play in a safe and secure environment and adjust our schedule of play activities throughout the day to meet the individual needs of the children. Transitions between daily activities, where possible shall not

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interrupt the children's play experiences and routines will be kept flexible. Children are encouraged to make choices and think critically through independent play in one to one basis, in small group or larger group settings.

The playgroup is responsible for providing play opportunities, on location at the setting and when off site on visits e.g. Educational trips. Play time is integral to the play school curriculum and a fundamental part of a child's day at Bunnahone bunnies. Through play children can explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat 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.

Play in practice

The types of play to be incorporated at Bunnahone bunnies will include water, sand, 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 in the setting to promote play. The playgroup shall encourage children to be creative and use household materials and natural resources to enhance learning and play experiences, such as corn flour, shaving foam, leaf's and mud.

Although Bunnahone Bunnies playgroup emphasis the importance of child-initiated activities and free play, the playgroup leaders are encouraged to interact and support the children in their experiences, whether adult led or guided. This will be achieved by:

- Staff using books with children periodically throughout the stay
- Staff to join in and encourage clapping, singing along.
- Staff varying their involvement with activities.
- Staff encouraging social interaction during playtime
- Staff are encouraged to add materials to stimulate interest during free play. Children shall be given the opportunity to experience and explore three dimensional materials appropriate to the age and ability of the child.

Environment

Bunnahone Bunnies playgroup aim to provide space for children to explore and play in

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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 experiences e.g.- large, small, cozy, quiet, 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 for their own privacy.
- Provision to offer adequate resources for children to play and explore at a high standard.
- Sand and water play areas provided daily and for different resources to be available to use in the trays. This shall be applicable for both outdoors and indoors.
- Materials rotated to maintain interest.
- Resources accessible for free choice of play.

Outdoor play

Outdoor play is an integral part of the curriculum and play. It offers opportunities for children to develop their large and small muscles, experience an environment that is different to the inside of the playgroup and more importantly avail of sunlight to absorb vitamin D more effectively.

Guidance on supporting high quality play within the environment includes:

- The children have access to physical equipment such as, bikes, slides, ramps, climbing equipment, rope swings etc. alongside open-ended natural resources.
- The space outside should be structured so the children can access resources independently.
- Staff will ensure children are dressed appropriately for the climate and encourage older children to develop an understanding about dressing themselves appropriately.
- Like the inside space, it should offer workshop areas that reflect, not imitate the indoor space, so children are able to work alone or in groups.
- The outdoor space presents opportunities to do things on a much larger scale.
- Materials used daily stimulate a variety of large muscle skills and stimulates skills on different levels.
- Provide both stationary and portable gross motor equipment.
- Block play available outside.
- Props provided for outdoor dramatic play
- Sand and water to be available with a variety of resources to use with them.
- The playgroup will complete the necessary risk assessments and follow correct health and safety procedure for outdoor play

Risk taking

We shall endeavor to create an atmosphere where children can learn to take risks in a controlled environment. Risky play is encouraged at Bunnahone bunnies playgroup as children who take risks learn negotiating skills, understanding, judging and can make judgments about

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their own capabilities. Children who learn in their early years to make their own reasoned decisions, rather than simply doing what they are told by others, will be in a stronger position to resist pressures and make more informed decisions.

The playgroup staff shall make It safe by:

- supporting children to develop a sense of their own boundaries and manage personal risks.
- Inform the children about how to keep themselves safe.
- Establish and display expectations for behavior
- Observe the children and identify those who need greater challenge or specific support
- Talk to the children and support decisions
- Carry out health and safety checks.
- Distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable risks and remove any hazards

- Staff will be offered training, if necessary, to develop their knowledge and understanding of risky play

Food Play

Bunnahone Bunnies shall encourage activities which involve tasting different types of food, and activities which involve children in preparing and eating different food types bearing in mind an allergies' which children may have to certain food types.

We understand that learning experiences are provided through exploring different textures.

Food items can be incorporated into the role play area to enrich the learning experiences for children, such as:

- Fruits, vegetables, dried pasta, rice, bread

When children are participating in food play staff must supervise objects that are put in their mouths or dropped onto the floor. All toys and equipment used shall be sterilized afterward