

Policy on Active Play

Hyde n Seek Nurseries promote Active play as an important part of children's culture; it must be valued for its own sake and as an essential part of their development in learning, creativity and independence. Hyde n Seek acknowledges the children's need for at least 1 hour of active play each day.

Active play keeps children healthy and active, and also fosters socialization and social skills. When children independently conquer a difficult ascent onto a climbing frame or summon up the nerve to slide down that 'scary' slide, they will rejoice in their own personal achievement. Their success will lead them to challenge themselves again and again, achieving more and more, growing in confidence and self esteem. It can also be therapeutic, helping children to negotiate and cope with difficult and stressful situations.

Hyde n Seek Nurseries aim to:

- Provide opportunities for children to learn about the importance of being active and in developing healthy lifestyles
- Build on confidence, self esteem and creativity
- Improve the range and diversity of outdoor and indoor active play, by working in partnership with Children, Parents and External Agencies.
- Incorporate learning through active play into all other key aspects of development
- Develop problem solving and decision making skills and promote
- Promote opportunities for children to learn about the environment and themselves
- Nurture the fun and enjoyment of physical activity
- Further enhance the quality of provision
- Promote literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing throughout active play
- Challenge children and encourage them to challenge and push their own physical abilities
- Ensure children get at least 1 hour physical play each day

In active play children will learn to play with other children successfully, taking turns, learning to win and lose and learning a whole range of skills and other sensory experiences.

Health and Safety

Hyde n Seek nurseries understand the importance of Health and Safety in the garden, but well managed outdoor play, using the correct resources under appropriate supervision, does encourage children to assess and manage risk for themselves. This is a skill which they can use in all walks of life. Risk assessments are completed for all indoor and outdoor activities that may present a health and safety issue and are available to view in the office. Staff make necessary arrangements for varied weather conditions i.e. sun cream or waterproof clothing.

Active play in Babies

Parents and Staff can influence the quality of a baby's physical activity by;

- The way a child is held - gentle rolling, swaying, bouncing and turning can all help a baby develop muscle mass and motor skills
- Toys and how they use them - these can stimulate and challenge babies to reach out, sit up and move around

Motor skills (the skills that allow children to move) develop when parents and staff expose babies and children to supportive opportunities and stimulating environment.

'Outdoor play is not only an opportunity for learning in a different environment it also provides many health benefits. Exposure of the skin to sunlight (although protected with suncream) promotes the production of vitamin D that growing children require.' (taken from Physical activity and Health Alliance in Scotland)

Staff utilise the gardens, local area and physical rooms (where available) to provide a varied active play programme that stimulates and promotes challenge and enjoyment.