



Treasure Play Policy

For some years now, we have been offering regular Treasure play sessions. These sessions are based upon the Treasure basket and Heuristic play ideas developed by Elinor Goldschmied, a renowned Early Years consultant.

In conjunction with THRIVE we focus upon Treasure Play as a Doing strategy.

Children learn by exploration and experience. Treasure Play brings many items within the reach of our younger children who may not have had the opportunity to handle them before. A child can feel items with their hands, feet, fingers and mouth. By having this opportunity a child discovers weight, texture and size. Does it have a smell? Can you taste it? Wave it, does it make a noise? Drop it and what happens? Can I put it inside another object? Can I join two items together? What happens when I bang one item against another? This play is extended as the child gains in developmental maturity through our Treasure Play at each stage allowing the child to interact with items dependent upon their own interests and enthusiasms.

1) For babies who are not yet sitting we may create a Treasure Box

The “treasure box” is a large cardboard box lined with interesting materials, and with items dangled within, which baby will be able to reach, feel and experience whilst lying down just inside the Treasure Box.

2) For babies who are sitting but not yet fully mobile we will be using a Treasure Basket

A Treasure Basket is a shallow sturdy basket containing a collection of everyday items, few of which are plastic. Most of the objects are in everyday use by adults and are made of natural materials. The items in the basket vary in weight, size, texture, colour, taste, temperature and sound and all the items are chosen to stimulate one or more of the five senses. The baby will explore the Treasure Basket using his/her senses to discover what an object is, what it is like and perhaps what it does when shaken or manipulated.

When preparing our Treasure Basket, we consider the suitability and safety of the basket and each object e.g. toxic materials, size, cleanliness. Practitioner close observation is encouraged and maintained throughout these sessions.

3) For babies and toddlers who are active crawlers or walkers but not yet with developed language skills we will be using

Treasure Play

In "Treasure play" toddlers will be able to explore many items in every day use which do not dictate to the child how they should be used i.e. baskets, chains, natural objects, materials, pans, containers, cardboard boxes. The children will be closely observed in their play to encourage our learning of the child's interests, schemas and ability to explore.

4) For our older children who have started to develop language skills and imaginative skills we will be using a Treasure Time

The Treasure Time will develop upon the Treasure Play above but language and imaginative use of the items will be encouraged.

The child's keyperson may sit alongside the child and using the techniques from 'SOLA' will observe the child's play and narrate upon it to the child but without guiding, leading or questioning the play so that the child is in complete control of their own play with affirmative acknowledgement from their keyperson.

We seek parental involvement with Treasure sessions by

1. Asking parents to provide us with any items from around their home that may extend and resource our Treasure sessions.
2. Parents giving us any information about their child's current interests using My Child's Early Years booklet.
3. Parents allowing us to take photographs of their child at play.
4. Parents joining us for a session to watch their own child, when they are able.
5. Parents asking us about the sessions and giving us continued feedback.

Items we use and need for Treasure sessions

The kinds of items we may use for treasure sessions could be easily found around the home.

The items need to be clean, safe from sharp edges / rust etc and in good enough condition to be handled by children.

We are keen to extend and develop our collection of items and we maintain a good selection of items by seeking donations from parents and staff.

Items may include.....

Zippered purses	Any sort of bag	Wooden boxes
Mug tree	Beads and baubles	Clean chains
Belts	Bakeware	Rolling pins
Pringle tubes with lids		Plastic bottles with tops
Very large cardboard boxes	Large pieces of material/	Bedding pillows/ duvets / covers
Cables	String / cord	sellotape
Basketware	Large spoons	Wooden utensils
Bath sponges	Wool	corks
Wallets	Ribbons	Wooden spoons
Sparkly things	Buttons	balls
Milk bottle lids	Cds	Net curtains
Metal tins	Pine cones	pebbles
Shells	Hats	scarves
Egg cups	Egg boxes	Wood off cuts
Tape measures		mirrors
Paper plates	Paper cups	Ping pong balls
Large cardboard tubes	Loofas	Pumice stone
Chamois leather	Leather offcuts	brushes

Frequency of sessions:

We will endeavor to integrate opportunities for Treasure sessions within our daily practice so each child is able to access this kind of play.

The Child's Learning

The child is trying to work out what the sensations being experienced are. By feeling, seeing, mouthing and manipulating objects, babies begin to collect information that will later lead to identification and naming of objects. Mouths, eyes, ears and skin are the vehicles that babies use to learn with. The baby may therefore need to repeat what s/he is doing several times. For this reason, the concentration levels of the child may be much higher than would normally be expected and the child may not play with many objects. You should not confuse this concentration or low number of objects examined with a lack of learning or boredom. When a child is bored he s/he will stop doing whatever it is. At this age children are so ego-centric that they will not continue the activity out of politeness or because they think they ought to. They need to be getting something out of it.

“Babies given safe, stimulating and supportive opportunities will use their senses to learn about objects they encounter. In doing so they will enter into a world of discovery, puzzlement, social encounter and communication... As babies suck, grasp, touch and feel objects they rehearse behaviours which foster their earliest learning.” Goldschmied E (1989)

General Areas of learning

The areas of learning which could be covered during a treasure play session will vary according to the objects included and the learning outcomes you particularly wish to cover. However, any activity will help the child to develop:

Physical skills – the child will be developing strength and control of the arms by picking up the objects, hand / eye co-ordination as they position it so they can look at it, manipulative skills as they turn and examine it and fine motor skills as they examine the texture.

Intellectual skills – with careful choice of objects all of the senses could be used however, whichever objects are chosen, the senses of touch and sight are likely to be engaged.

Emotional – the child will be able to gain pleasure from looking at and examining the objects and the fact that the carer is nearby will provide the reassurance the child needs to feel safe to explore.

Links to the Early Years Foundation Stage - EYFS

The Four key principles

A Unique Child

Child Development Treasure Play will provide a strong platform for assessing a child's stage of development through close observation of the child's play

Keeping Safe Treasure Play provides an environment of controlled Risk which will enable children to make choices within a safe environment.

Health and Well-being Treasure Play supports children's physical well being as they learn to control their own bodies through exploratory manipulation of the items provided for play. It further supports emotional well-being as this kind of play is child-initiated and controlled enabling an increase in the child's personal self-esteem as their play is endorsed by significant carers.

Positive Relationships

Respecting each Other Treasure Play is initiated in a social environment and enables children to discover themselves and the presence of other children and to begin to learn about the needs of others and appropriate relationships with them.

Parents as partners Treasure Play depends on parental input and the loop of communication from observations made during the sessions being fed, in turn, back to the parents. Parental involvement at a number of levels is actively encouraged.

Supporting Learning Children are closely observed in their play to enable extension of their play from week to week.

Key Person The child's key worker will be closely involved in the child's play in these sessions and providing the security for the child to be able to explore and extend their play in a secure environment.

Enabling Environments

Observation, Assessment and Planning These practitioner skills will be key to the success of Treasure Play in extending each individual's learning and development through accurate observation, assessment of developmental stage and planning for play extension.

Supporting Every child This kind of play is specifically designed to enable each individual child to lead their own learning at their own developmental stage. Resources and environment may easily be adapted to children's individual needs.

The Learning Environment "A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in in secure and safe yet challenging indoor ... spaces" Treasure Play should always be facilitated to be rich and varied.

Learning and Development

Play and Expolration Treasure Play is designed to allow exploration through play and will allow each child to explore et their own level and following their own individual interests, yet in a social environment which will enable peer communication when this is led by the children themselves.

Active Learning children will be provided with an environment which will encourage sustained and uninterrupted interest which will allow the children to make their own decisions about their play through mental and physical involvemenmt with their play environment.

Creativity and Critical thinking "When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things."

Policy formulated on: July 2010
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Signed: *Judy Westacott*
15.05.17.