

Playing and Exploring



- Play with children, encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things.
- Help children to do what they are trying to do without taking over or directing.
- Join in play sensitively, fitting in with children's ideas.
- Model pretending an object is something else, and help develop roles and stories.
- Encourage children to try new activities and to judge risks for themselves.
- Pay attention to how children engage with activities – challenges faced, effort, thought, learning and enjoyment. Talk about process rather than products.
- Talk about how you get better through effort and practice, and what we can learn when things go wrong.

Active Learning



- Support children to choose their activities – what they want to do and how they will do it.
- Stimulate children's interest through shared attention, and calm over-stimulated children.
- Help children to become aware of their own goals, make plans, and to review their own progress and successes.
- Describe what you see them trying to do, and encourage children to talk about their own processes and successes.
- Be specific when you praise, especially noting effort such as how the child concentrates, tries different approaches, persists, solves problems, and has new ideas.
- Encourage children to learn together and from each other.
- Children develop their own motivations when you give reasons and talk about learning, rather than just directing.

Creating and Thinking Critically



- Use the language of thinking and learning, model being a thinker and encourage open-ended thinking.
- Always respect children's efforts and ideas, so they feel safe to take a risk with a new idea.
- Model self-talk, describing your actions in play and give children time to talk and think.
- Value questions, talk, and many possible responses, without rushing toward answers too quickly.
- Support children's interests over time, reminding them of previous approaches and encouraging them to make connections between their experiences.
- Model the creative process, showing your thinking about some of the many possible ways forward.
- Sustained shared thinking helps children to explore ideas and make links. Follow children's lead in conversation, and think about things together.
- Encourage children to describe problems they encounter, and to suggest ways to solve the problem.
- Show and talk about strategies – how to do things – including problem-solving, thinking and learning.
- Give feedback and help children to review their own progress and learning. Talk with children about what they are doing, how they plan to do it, what worked well and what they would change next time.
- Model the plan-do-review process yourself.