

# THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Parent meeting  
4<sup>th</sup> October 2023



**HUJJAT SCHOOL**

# Aims of the session

- ▶ Find out about the key ways young children learn
- ▶ Why outdoor play is important
- ▶ The adult's role in support play
- ▶ How you can support your child's play

# What is play?

- ▶ Play can be any activity, imaginary or with toys, that is
  - ▶ Interesting for them
  - ▶ Chosen by them
  - ▶ Fun for them
  - ▶ Something they want to do



# Why is play important?

- ▶ Play underpins the Early Years Foundation Stage and all aspects of children's development.
- ▶ Through play, children:
  - ▶ develop language skills, their emotions, creativity, social and intellectual skills.
  - ▶ learn essential skills such as problem solving, teamwork, sharing and much more.
  - ▶ learn at the highest level.



# Why is play important?

- ▶ Play is essential for development.
- ▶ Young children naturally explore and learn through play. Play is a fun, motivating and meaningful way to learn. It enables children to learn at their own level and pace while making connections.
- ▶ Learning through play can also provide continuity across early level between nursery and Year 1 and help to support transitions.



# Child Initiated Play at Hujjat

- ▶ Child initiated play makes up most of our day in EYFS.
- ▶ Play takes place indoors and outdoors and it is these different environments that children explore and discover their immediate world.
- ▶ It is with both they practice new ideas and skills, they take risks, show imagination and solve problems on their own or with others



# Why is learning outdoors special and unique?

- ▶ Outdoor play supports all round wellbeing and development
- ▶ Many children learn best outdoor
- ▶ It offers children the freedom and space to be adventurous, noisy and messy
- ▶ It gives them access to the natural world, fresh air and direct experience of the weather
- ▶ The multi-sensory experience allows children to develop the body as well as the brain
- ▶ It provides endless opportunities for discovery play and talk, a place to be with others and develop relationships
- ▶ It presents them with endless problems to solve
- ▶ It allows them to take risks



# Types of Learning Through Play

## Free Play or Child-Lead Play

Free play or child-led play is entirely initiated and directed by the child. The adult's role is to observe and interact if the opportunity arises to extend learning, following the child's interests.

## Adult-Led or Active Learning

Adult-led play, sometimes called Active Learning, is initiated and directed by the adult. Specific learning intentions are planned for by the adult.



# The role of the adult...

- ▶ The adult has a crucial role:
  - ▶ To provide high-quality experiences that are enjoyable and challenging.
  - ▶ To provide time, space and appropriate resources.
  - ▶ To observe play and join in when invited, watching and listening before intervening.



# How do we do this?

The adult will

- ▶ Observe the child playing;
- ▶ Interact with the child and participate in their play when appropriate;
- ▶ Challenge the child's thinking by commenting, modelling, pondering and questioning;
- ▶ Add resources to extend and deepen learning;
- ▶ Plan activities, next steps and evaluate learning.



# How Can I support My Child's Learning through Play?

- ▶ Value play as a valid form of learning.
- ▶ Talk to your child about what they enjoy playing with at school.
- ▶ Spend time playing with your child at home following their interests.
- ▶ Extend your child's learning through quality interactions (questions, comments, wondering out loud, modelling language).

# Examples of learning through play...

- ▶ Sand and water play can be an early introduction to science and Maths. For example, learning that water is fluid, not solid, and that it can be measured in different sized containers.
- ▶ Playing with dough or clay, drawing and painting pictures, dressing up, playing with dolls can encourage creativity, imagination and expression of feelings.
- ▶ Building blocks, jigsaws and shape sorters can help with recognising different shapes and sizes, putting things in order and developing logic.
- ▶ Playing ball games, dancing, running, climbing all help to develop body movement, strength, flexibility and co-ordination skills.
- ▶ Games help with turn taking, sharing and mixing with others.
- ▶ Singing, playing simple music instruments help to develop rhythm, listening and hearing.



# Final thoughts...

- ▶ It's important that learning is fun at this age. It needs to be about doing things that the children enjoy.
- ▶ Children find different ways of doing things - building blocks aren't just for making towers, and paint can be used without a brush! Show them how things work, but if they want to experiment, let them.
- ▶ Children learn through all their senses (taste, touch, vision, hearing and smelling).
- ▶ They will watch those around them and copy language and behaviour.
- ▶ Don't push your child too hard. Children develop in their own ways and in their own time.
- ▶ It's good to talk to them a lot, about everyday things. This will give you a chance to teach them how things work and they will be able to ask you questions.

# Any questions?

Thank you for coming!

The next meeting will  
be 'Maths in EYFS'

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup>  
October, 5pm

