



Learning Through Play

In Primary 1 at Aviemore we encourage a play-based approach to learning. This is based on a variety of research and is now the recommended approach for P1 by the Scottish Government. It also helps to ensure a smooth transition from nursery by making the experience across [Early Level](#) very similar.

This approach to Primary One is in line with recent national practice guidance called, 'Realising the Ambition, Being Me.' Please follow this [link](#) if you are interested in reading more about this national approach to Early Years.



WHY play in P1 at Aviemore?

Theory suggests that children learn best when given opportunities to explore their environment while being scaffolded by a supporting adult who interacts to further develop learning.

A play-based curriculum offers rich opportunities to equip our young learners with the skills, attributes and dispositions necessary for them to thrive in an ever-changing world. Play also promotes physical health and mental wellbeing. Play encourages and develops essential skills, imagination, speech and co-operation, as well as enhancing social skills as children play together. Pupils work through real life and imaginary situations to practise skills, to develop knowledge and understanding across all areas of the curriculum, to think, to make things, to test out their ideas and to try and solve problems. It is a practical and relevant, enjoyable and interactive way to learn.

Through play, children learn to answer their own questions, learn new skills and learn to work collaboratively with other children or adults. Children are encouraged to choose for themselves how they want to play and what they want to play with. The ownership of learning that this fosters allows them to become deeply engaged in the planning and reviewing of their play and enables the staff

to observe their interests. Through careful observations and high quality interactions the staff then find ways to support each child and 'teach in the moment' to help develop their knowledge and skills.

According to Education Scotland's Play Pedagogy Toolkit, play supports the four capacities of the curriculum for excellence as follows:

- Successful learners - through the use of imagination and creativity, tackling new experiences and learning from them, and developing important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigating while following their own interests.
- Responsible Citizens - through encountering different ways of seeing the world, learning to share and give and take, learning to respect themselves and others, and taking part in making decisions.
- Confident Individuals - through succeeding in their activities, having the sense of satisfaction of a task accomplished, learning about bouncing back from setbacks, dealing safely with risks.
- Effective Contributors - through playing together in leading or supporting roles, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking, and respecting the opinions of others.



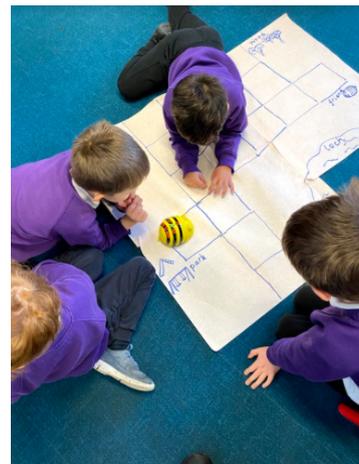
HOW does play work in P1 at Aviemore?

At Aviemore there is a mixture of child led learning and adult initiated learning. What happens throughout each day and week is mostly guided by the interests of the children. This child-centred approach allows us to get it right for every child and meet their individual needs. But each day there are also some elements

that are taught explicitly during 'together time' in small learning groups with the teacher, such as some aspects of literacy and numeracy.

- Child led

Children have opportunities for free play using multiple indoor and outdoor spaces along with a wide range of resources and open-ended materials. Children are encouraged to lead their own learning through play. This child-led learning is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated and is supported by the environment and adults. Children are invited to wonder about things which interest them. Areas are resourced with items which are intended to spark interest and provoke learning and are usually linked to children's interests. There is always an adult available to observe, scaffold and extend the children's learning through their play. This may result in the adult provoking the children with new vocabulary, questions, challenges or support as appropriate. Adults may join in and scaffold or model skills. It can also result in the adult helping to change/add to areas of the classroom depending on children's interests and/or developing needs.



- Adult Led

There are several teacher-led sessions each day with more direct adult initiated learning. These might be for the whole class or in small groups, with specific learning outcomes.



There are different tasks that children are required to complete throughout the day. These are linked to the teacher led sessions so are adult initiated and children can choose when to complete these around their play to encourage independence. These tasks are usually interactive and play based as well.



WHAT do our P1 play spaces look like at Aviemore?

We offer several spaces in P1 indoors and outdoors, where children can play and learn such as a construction area, creative area, role play area, numeracy area, library area and much more. Across spaces, the levels of provocation might change, the interactions might be variable, and the experiences on offer might be different, but the P1 environments are conducive to learning through play throughout the year.



- Resources and opportunities are planned to encourage literacy and numeracy skills development both indoors and out in all areas.
- Fine/gross motor skills development are encouraged throughout every space.
- Health and well-being are promoted through positive social interactions, physical activity and the development of self-confidence through choices in child-led learning.
- A wide variety of 'open-ended' loose parts are available for the children to develop and use to create their own play experiences.
- Different environments encourage different opportunities for learning and play and link to different areas of the curriculum.
- Resources are available to all to encourage independence and promote inclusion through self-selection.



How do we know play works in P1 at Aviemore?

- tracking and monitoring to check progress of individuals against benchmarks and expected levels
- individual and group observations noted by teacher
- parent feedback - open events, parents evenings, profile folder comments
- learner feedback - learning wall with photos and children's comments on their learning, profile folder comments, weekly learning reflections
- formal national assessment of children's knowledge and skills - SNSAs
- Key Assessment Tasks throughout the year covering all areas of the curriculum and skills
- use of HIGIOS & HGIOELC to adapt and change practice
- self-evaluations, peer observation, SMT classroom and teaching monitoring
- evidence from other schools
- national evidence/guidance such as 'Realising the Ambition'

