



Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup

Play Policy

Inclusive Play Policy

"All children need to play and have a right to play"

Article 31 is the section of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that sets out every child's right to play. Article 31 can be used to improve opportunities for children, campaign for action on play, challenge discrimination and inequality, promote children's participation and raise awareness on children's rights.

A Definition of Play

The Children's Play Council defines play in the following way:

- Play is an essential part of every child's life and is vital for their development. It is the way children explore the world around them and develop and practise skills. It is essential for physical, emotional and spiritual growth, for intellectual and educational development and for acquiring social and behavioural skills.
- Play is a generic term applied to a wide range of activities and behaviours that are satisfying to the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child. Children's play may or may not involve equipment or have an end product. Children play on their own and with others. Their play may be boisterous and energetic or quiet and contemplative, light-hearted or very serious.

The Benefits of Play

- Through play and interaction with others, children can develop a framework for their own attitudes and behaviour.
- Through play children can explore their world, learn about it and discover their own place in it.
- Play provides children with the opportunity to develop confidence, a positive sense of self and that they are valued for who they are now.
- Play provides children with the opportunity to explore, to express themselves and learn through the investigation of their environment.
- All children need a place to play - they need space, informality, freedom to move around, to make a noise, to experiment and investigate, to be themselves.



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Inclusion

Inclusion works on the belief that all children have a right to be part of their local community and to be welcomed and included on equal terms.

Children with additional needs also benefit from freedom to move around in surroundings that stimulate their imagination and challenge them. They require positive play opportunities that lead to an increase in self-confidence, autonomy and independence. Staff must work towards meeting these needs for all the children in their settings, this may be done with the help from external sources e.g. Speech therapist. For some children, staff may have to adjust the provision to ensure the needs are met, but the needs of children themselves remain the same.

Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup is committed to promoting inclusive play wherever possible and recognises the importance of including children with additional needs. Where possible, arrangements may be made to alter play session in order to promote inclusion.

To ensure inclusive play is successful, children, parents and carers, and staff must come together to meet individual children's needs. The Playgroup setting aims for an inclusive approach, drawing on all available resources to create an environment within which each child can progress to their full potential. An inclusive approach to play is not just a matter of making adjustments. If it is to be genuine it will impact on all aspects.

Staff must ensure that all children will experience an environment in which they have equality of opportunity for play. Children need to be presented with positive images that they all have a valuable contribution to make. When children attend an inclusive setting they are provided with the opportunity to share skills and learn from each other, thus promoting tolerance and understanding.



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This policy was adapted at a meeting of our playgroup held on the 30th May 2023

Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually by the management team to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

This policy was reviewed by the Ballygawley Early Years Management Committee on:

Date: 01/09/2025

Signed:
(on behalf of the Management Committee)

Name and Position: Iona Devine, Chairperson

Reviewed on:

Date: Signed:..... Position:.....

Date: Signed:..... Position:.....

Date: Signed:..... Position:.....

This policy links with the following policies;

- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policy
- Additional and Special Needs policy
- Consent for Observations policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Promoting Positive Behaviour policy