Beavers Lodge Playgroup

Our practice in the setting

On Play

In our setting the children can access to a range of real objects as well as 'play materials', covering a range of textures, smells, sounds and different visual elements. Many children have limited play experience at home (electronic gadgets or all plastic toys). We consider it to be important to increase the range of play equipment used in the setting.

We follow the top tips for play as:

- Play is open ended; we do not make it a required outcome for everyone to achieve.
- Children's play always has a purpose for the child. The child who seems aimlessly pouring water may be practicing new skills, reliving experiences or calming himself. The practitioner takes into consideration the purpose of the play.
- The learning that takes place through play is often hidden. The practitioners are not swayed to do more paper based activities just because the learning is not taking place in an obvious way.

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Our top tips for observing and assessing play

- **The practitioners take a back seat: observe/ wait/ listen**
- **The practitioners do not take the lead in the play, let the child lead**
- **The practitioners watch what the child is naturally drawn to.**
- **The practitioners establish what level and type of play the child is at.**
- **The practitioners model different types of play.**
- **The practitioners encourage children to try different aspects of play.**
- **The practitioners find out what the play experience at home is like. This explains a lot about a child's play behaviour.**