Learning through play

Information for teachers

This resource supports teachers in their planning and interactions with children to align characteristics of young learners with a range and balance of age-appropriate pedagogies for teaching, learning and assessment. It can be used to develop a common language and understanding for teachers to use as part of their curriculum decision-making process.

Learning through play	Examples	Qualities of age-appropriate pedagogies
Learning through play is a way of describing how children and teachers actively engage in 'playful' interactions linked to curriculum learning, organised around a concept, event, interest or socio-cultural situation. These interactions are balanced between child-led and teacher-led activity. They provide opportunities for each child to interact with adults, other children, materials and varied environments as they learn. The purpose of these interactions is to provide opportunities for practising learning, reinforcing curriculum concepts and for sustained shared thinking. Starting points for learning through play can include: • children's own interactions and ideas • teacher-directed ideas • teacher and child collaboration. Learning through play is documented to identify the curriculum focus and the learning that has taken place. The evidence teachers gather may be used to inform assessment.	Examples of learning through play include: • socio-dramatic • fantasy • miniature worlds play • games with rules • self-directed play • individual, small groups • teacher-led play. Learning through play opportunities include: • children contextualising curriculum content through playful and purposeful learning • play that is dynamic, flexible and responsive to characteristics of young learners • children being actively engaged in learning, with time and space to explore new ideas, concepts and interests and practise new learning • collaboratively reflecting on learning • shared planning for the next step in learning.	Age-appropriate pedagogical approaches are active, language rich, collaborative and playful. Qualities of age-appropriate pedagogical approaches include: • high-quality interactions, such as language modelling • sustained shared thinking • scaffolding • feedback • higher-order thinking.