

## **The Power of Play**

### **Play is learning**

Play is the natural work of a child. A child's play has purpose, it is how they engage with and master the world around them.

*'Play is the work of childhood' – Jean Piaget.*

### **Play is communicating**

As adults, we have built up a bank of actions and words to communicate and articulate our feelings and desires. Our children haven't got there yet. Play allows children to express themselves at their own level.

### **Play is development**

Playing fosters creativity, self-belief, positive mental growth and self-confidence. Refining these skills equips children to be socially competent.

### **Play is understanding**

Play allows children to practice at being in the wider world. Interactions give sustenance to the how and why, the do's and don'ts of society's rules. Through play children encounter turn taking, conversation and co-operation, giving opportunities to develop negotiation and empathy.

### **Play is enjoyment**

Enjoyment plays a crucial role in motivating children as it stimulates positive emotions. When learning is enjoyable, we play to learn.

*'Play takes many forms, but the heart of play is pleasure – an important component in learning' – Bruce Perry.*

### **Play is discovering**

Playing with no 'goal' is a liberating experience for children. Studies show that children are far more likely to take in more of their surroundings when they themselves are leading the play. Free play allows the child to focus on whatever they want to, and doesn't restrict their curiosity with an end goal.

*'Play is the highest form of research' - Albert Einstein.*

### **Play is problem solving**

Problem solving builds the skills needed to confidently and responsibly deal with everyday situations. Developing such skills as patience, perseverance, tolerance, endurance and self-control all contribute to a child's ability to learn and be successful. Having self-belief allows us to take a chance on the undiscovered and unknown.