



Merry Poppets Nursery

Treasure Basket & Heuristic Play Policy

Objective:

To provide new and interesting sensory, problem solving, sorting and investigation experiences which are suitable for all age groups.

Heuristic play is an enriching type of play where babies and young children interact with everyday objects, rather than toys.

The goal of heuristic play is to provide a wide range of sensory stimulation to help children discover and learn things for themselves. Unlike treasure basket play, which includes one or a few of each item, heuristic play involves building up multiple collections of the same objects.

A treasure basket can offer a baby many different learning experiences. The variety of objects within the basket enables them to develop their concentration skills and assists them in making simple choices. This in turn develops a child's confidence and self-esteem.

Treasure basket and heuristic play also help children's developing communication, language and literacy as they vocalise and make sounds, often using a range of communication with each other from the youngest ages including making eye-contact, using facial expression and gesture and using their whole bodies.

Treasure basket and heuristic play support personal, social and emotional development by providing the very youngest children with a play experience in which they can make choices and play autonomously, delighted in the exploration of very carefully chosen objects with all their senses and responding with excitement and interest to new items as well as remembering and returning to familiar objects.

Adults should set up the activity so that it is ready when the children arrive. During the activity the children should explore by themselves where they are confident enough to do so, without interference. However, the adult's role is to be close to the children as a support to those who need it and to observe the children whilst playing. The children can develop their manipulative skills, imagination, solve problems, sequence, anticipate and rearrange objects. There is no right or wrong way for the children to explore the materials. The activity also promotes the development of concentration skills, through the exploration of interesting objects.

It is important to ensure that all materials are safe and age appropriate.

Remember:

- Do not include small objects for babies that may cause a choking hazard • There may be some items, which you would need to remove for younger children.
- All objects must be checked for any obvious hazards.
- An adult should remain sitting close enough to observe.
- Only choose items you are comfortable with the children exploring.
- A risk assessment should be carried out and revisited each time new items are added to the basket.

