

# COLLEGES NURSERY SCHOOL

## PLAY

**“Play is the highest form of learning in early childhood”**

*Tina Bruce    Learning Through Play    2001*

At Colleges Nursery School, we believe that play is the key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

It is the primary means through which children learn about themselves, about others and about the world around them. The QCA Guidance for the Foundation Stage states quite clearly that children of this age learn best through play.

**“Play is a child’s life and the means by which he comes to understand the world he lives in”**

*Susan Isaacs    ‘Social Development in Young Children’    1933*

**Article 44 in ‘The International Charter of Human Rights’ states that it is a child’s right to play**

**“For children it is their serious work, not an alternative activity”**

*A Framework for the Foundation Stage    Cambridgeshire County Council    2000*

It is crucial that children direct their own play and for this they need time and space in order to become deeply involved in their learning.

Members of staff work together to plan for indoor and outdoor play based on their ongoing observations of the children and their interests. A range of appropriate materials and equipment is freely available to enable independent and active learning.

Sometimes their play will be boisterous, sometimes quiet and reflective.

Staff work alongside children whilst they play, observing, supporting and extending the learning (See Appendix 1 - ‘The Adults Role’).

## Through their play, children :

- make informed choices and become confident autonomous learners
- work at their own pace in a non-competitive environment
- achieve success and acknowledge failure as part of the learning process
- learn how to express and deal with their emotions and behaviour appropriately, express fears, take risks and make mistakes in a controlled and safe environment
- develop their self esteem and develop a sense of personal identity
- grow, develop and change
- increase their ability to understand and use language effectively
- explore, develop and represent learning experiences which help them to make sense of the world
- practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills
- learn to understand the needs of others, beginning to develop ideas about fairness and justice
- be alone, alongside others or co-operate as they talk and play
- think and act creatively and imaginatively
- investigate and solve problems

## Play fosters positive attitudes so that children can:

Imagine	Be motivated	Concentrate
Show emotions	Practice	Persevere
Co-operate	Consolidate	Explore
Share	Extend	Experiment
Communicate	Reflect	Investigate
Negotiate	Draw conclusions	Question
		Predict
Have fun!		

“In play, under a table or up a tree, alone or in groups, expressing themselves in words or with blocks, or music or miniature world materials, children think and feel and act in ways of the utmost importance for their learning”

*Mary Jane Drummond*

*‘Play Learning and the National Curriculum – some possibilities’ 1996*

## Appendix 1

### The Role of the Adult

#### **Adults support children by becoming actively engaged in:**

- listening to children and responding to their needs
- extending and supporting children's learning through their own spontaneous play
- providing a wide variety of learning experiences including those from real life
- supporting and extending children's responses through an environment planned and resourced for rich, exciting and challenging play
- using encouragement and positive feedback to enable children's self confidence to grow and to enable them to develop ways of solving problems
- giving verbal feedback and using open-ended questions, thereby extending and developing children's language and communication in their play
- interacting with children, when appropriate, to stimulate their imagination and to extend their thinking, reasoning, problem-solving and understanding
- sharing and respecting children's creative thinking and feelings about their experiences and activities