

# PLAY POLICY

## What is play?

- G.O. Kids believe play is a natural process where children can learn and develop skills, form friendships, have fun and explore.
- The Playwork Principles states "Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated."
- We fully support the Scottish Governments National Play Strategy 2013 which states the government's commitment to supporting and delivering play opportunities for children and young people in Scotland. The play strategy states that it wants Scotland to be "a nation which values play as a life-enhancing daily experience for all our children and young people; in their homes, nurseries and communities."

## What are the benefits of play?

- G.O. Kids believe play is important for child development where children can learn through play and is important to provide children with an avenue to express themselves freely.
- The Early Years Framework states "play is a fundamental part of children's quality of life"
- Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states "children have the right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities."

## Why is Play important to G.O. Kids?

- During a consultation with children in our clubs, we asked how children felt when they played, all replied "happy". This is exactly how we want our children to feel while in our care and endeavour to promote this.

## What is the role of the support worker?

- G.O. Kids believe Play should be self-directed by the child and we, the support workers should help facilitate this. The children's ideas and feedback are a fundamental part of our planning process.
- Support workers are trained to recognise the effect intervention has on a child's play experience and should use professional judgement to intervene sensitively when required. It is the support workers responsibility to recognise when intervention is positive and when it can have a negative impact on the child's play.
- The Playwork Principles 2005 states "the role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play". Another point states "playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play".

## What play opportunities are available?

- G.O. Kids provide a range of stimulating and restful activities for all children to access. These include creative, exploratory, active and imaginative and range from being located indoors and outdoors.
- G.O. Kids believe outdoor play is essential to each child every day; no matter the weather. Outdoor play gets children fitter and healthier as well as making them think therefore we really emphasise the importance of providing this valuable opportunity.
- G.O. Kids provide activities and play spaces that all children can access and take part in. Equal opportunities is promoted through the programme of play by using equipment and resources which are non-discriminatory and reflect the cultural diversity of society.

### **What are risk assessments/risk benefits?**

- G.O. Kids carry out risk assessments for all areas and activities accessed by children. Whilst carrying out the risk assessment we take into consideration the risk benefits of the area/activity. G.O. Kids believe risk and challenge is important to children as it provides an opportunity for children to develop and learn what their capabilities are within specific areas of play.
- The Playwork Principles 2005 state “playworkers intervention should balance the risk with the developmental benefit of the child”.
- The Governments Play Strategy 2013 states “Exposure to challenges, with support from parents and carers, play workers and youth workers, balancing their understanding of keeping children safe from harm while allowing them to learn and develop through sometimes risky activities will help build resilience into adult life. That is why we want to see parents, carers, professionals and volunteers adopt a risk-benefit approach to play.”

### **What level of training do staff require/have?**

- All members of staff are or will be registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. All registrations are subject to acquiring a level of training in childcare or Playwork according to the level of role within the company. Therefore, all our staff are fully qualified or will be working towards a relevant qualification. These qualifications include level 2, 3 and 4 in Playwork or Early Years and management will be working towards their BA in Childhood Practice.
- Mandatory training courses for all staff include first aid, child protection and food hygiene.
- Staff also have access to a range of other training opportunities relevant to their role including behaviour management, craft/active workshops and new activities such as fire play.

**“Ultimately, our main focus is to provide the resources and areas for children to explore, have fun and interact with their peers.”**