

## Clutton Playgroup

### Mathematics policy



**Aims:** We aim to create a rich enabling learning environment so that through activities children plan for themselves mathematical learning and problem solving takes place. For example, we set up a shop to introduce children to money. There are trolleys to fill with boxes and tins and plastic bottles filled with liquid that are so heavy they can only just be carried. Children are encouraged to make their own price labels and learn about the concept of exchange; you must give the shop keeper some money before taking the shopping to prepare dinner!

At The Cabin we believe children learn mathematical concepts best through practical first hand experiences. We believe their learning should be fun and that mathematical language develops most effectively when supported by interaction with adults. Children at The Cabin learn concepts through experiences that practitioners plan and experiences that they chose for themselves. It is the policy at The Cabin that practitioners plan experiences around children's interests wherever possible but also ensure that a balance of activities is planned over time. Children experience activities to develop their abilities in using number as labels and for counting and calculating as well as activities to develop concepts of shape space and measure.

Practitioners ensure that mathematical learning is drawn out of all experiences that are planned in all areas of learning. For instance a sandwich making activity may be planned to focus on development in the "Knowledge and Understanding of the World" area but the practitioner may offer children shape cutters to exploit the potential to develop understanding of shape. Cooking activities are frequently planned, giving many opportunities to use problem solving language for instance "how many more biscuits do we need to make?" or "Do we need a big spoon for the flour or a little one?" and also weighing opportunities. Printing with solid shapes gives opportunities to talk about the properties of shapes, such as surfaces, corners and lengths of sides and edges.

The Cabin is well resourced with attractive mathematical apparatus and games. For instance there are beads that can be threaded to make patterns, jigsaws that can be fitted together and compare bears to sort and count.

The Cabin's emphasis on developing children's independent learning also ensures there are opportunities to develop mathematical learning. For instance equipment is accessible to children, it is classified and labelled in boxes so that at tidy up time children are learning to sort and match. In other areas children are able to sort, match and share as they lay the table and eat pretend "dinner".

Through the rich enabling learning environment children are given opportunities to solve problems and work together. For instance children are able to build "castles" using large hollow blocks and discuss with the practitioner, how it can be arranged to keep the monster out. When a quantity of sand falls to the floor around the sand tray the children are expected to work together to solve the problem of getting it back in the sand tray.

Practitioners value children's own explorations. Children are encouraged to begin to record mathematical ideas in their own way.

The organisation of the session ensures children work individually and in groups. Every day the session ends in a group story time. This session often involves a story with a mathematical theme e.g. "The Three Bears" with story sack props. Practitioners also use a part of this session to sing number rhymes on a regular basis including props where possible e.g. Using the space men to sing '5 little men in their flying saucers'.

Key workers assess and record children's learning through observation, using photographs and also record children's progress in their learning diaries. Photographic assessment is shared with parents and they receive written reports of their child's progress throughout the year.

During the Monday, school group, sessions children complete a weekly maths activity which is differentiated to support and challenge all levels of mathematical ability and provide 1:1 opportunities to develop children's learning.

This policy was agreed and adopted at a meeting of the Clutton Playgroup management Committee on

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Signed ..... (Chair)

To be reviewed in January 2019