

Planning and Reflection as part of the Nursery Day

As we all know, young children learn best through play. When they play they are actively engaged in activities which they have freely chosen; that is, they are self-directed and motivated from within. When a child is well supported by adults in their play they engage in many important tasks, such as developing and practising newly acquired skills, using language, taking turns, making friends, and regulating emotions and behaviour according to the demands of the situation. This is why 'play to learn' time is such a significant part of your child's nursery day.

As you may be aware, there have been slight changes to the rhythm of the nursery day over the last half term to include a time for planning and reflection within family groups before and after each 'play to learn' session.

At 'planning time', children are encouraged to make decisions and discuss where they would like to 'play to learn', what they would like to do when they get there, which resources they will need and how they are going to use these resources. Because the nursery has the same equipment available in the same place each day, the children know which resources they can use, where they can be located and they are able to access them independently.

By planning their own play children are learning to make choices and decisions, explore ideas, ask and answer questions, solve problems and interact with adults and other children.

At 'reflection time', children recall what they have done and learned. The adult will ask questions to encourage the children to detail what they did and how they did it. If they have faced any difficulties the adult can support the child to reflect on how we could overcome these problems at the next 'play to learn' time.

An Example of a Child's Plan and Reflection

Layla: 11.12.12

Plan: "I am going to play to learn in the imagination area with the blocks. I'm going to make a bridge, put a big one on the top and it needs a hole in the middle".

Reflection: "I used the round blocks on the bricks, a big one, this big. I put the cars under the bridge. Then I made a book. I got paper and I draw in it. It was a story about a princess. They're dead, that's what happened in the story".

How can you be involved in your child's planning time?

Children will often make their plans before they even walk through the nursery doors. Sometimes it can be something you see on the way to nursery that triggers the initial ideas for a plan for example, noticing a bird's nest in a tree on the walk to nursery then planning to be a bird watcher, making a bird watching den complete with binoculars made in the creative studio, books about birds and clipboards for recording their findings.

Ask your child on the way to nursery what their plan for today is? What will they need to use?

There are slips available in the entrance for you to write on and share with your child's key person.

We would LOVE you to be involved in your child's exciting journey of learning!