

## Construction and Small World play at Rockwood Nursery School



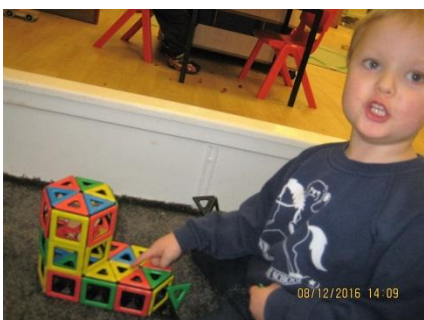
A wide range of open ended construction resources, both indoors and outdoors, have been combined with role play and small world resources to encourage the children to design and create structures using a range of materials varying in weight, size and shape. Combining the areas has enabled the children to enhance their construction projects easily as everything is to hand eg vehicles, animals, people, dinosaurs etc. to incorporate into the structures they build with large and small wooden blocks, ramps and tubes. This in turn encouraged them to introduce creative story lines and build for a purpose e.g. a castle for the princess, a house for the people, trucks to transport bricks, reinact roles they may be familiar with and retell familiar stories e.g. The 3 Little Pigs.

This offers vast opportunity for communicative and literate development as well as Personal and Social development as they work independently and with their peers and / or with adults.

The large community play blocks enable the children to engage physically with their creations, extending their learning, handling heavy equipment with care and precision and developing their physical strength and co-ordination.

The outdoor area offers the children even more opportunity to be creative within this field and develop their physical skills by offering even more opportunity to construct, dig and build on a very large scale

Working together is always encouraged and mark making tools, paper and whiteboards enabling the children to develop their emergent writing skills by making lists for things they need, drawing and planning designs then making their plans with the resources available.



## **Forest School**

Many construction skills are developed within our forest School sessions including the use of real tools and creating structures for nature e.g. hedgehogs, snails, birds etc. Children's tool sets are available in the areas as part of continuous provision to encourage the children to practice these skills safely such as wooden hammers, saws, screw drivers, drills etc. and enhancement activities are planned in to give them these experiences using real tools.



### **Overview - Intended Experiences offered through construction.**

Playing collaboratively and using the construction area appropriately, making choices, opportunities for talking through shared activities, following instructions, making plans, presenting ideas to others, using story and reference books, writing for different purposes e.g. lists, writing own name and other captions, develop mathematical language e.g. position, size, shape, comparisons, problem solving opportunities, creating and recreating patterns and models, matching and sorting shapes, ordering items by length or height, exploring a range of construction materials that fix together in a variety of ways e.g. by twisting, slotting, pushing, clipping, balancing construction pieces, designing and making their own models, manipulate a range of equipment and tools, create real-life and imaginary models, develop their own ideas over a period of time, representing own experiences through imaginative play.

### **Overview - Intended Experiences offered through small world play.**

Develop mathematical language e.g. position, shape, size, comparisons. Problem solving opportunities, Sort and count. Notice similarities, differences and pattern. Listen to others e.g. while playing with dolls in doll's house. Communicate for different purposes e.g. conversation or asking questions about the animals on the farm. Tell stories e.g. creating stories inspired by materials and equipment.

Re-tell familiar and shared stories. Use story and reference books linked to interest. Write for a range of purposes e.g. story writing, lists

Re-enact situations. Learn to care for materials and the environment. Work in co-operation e.g. in pairs, groups, working collaboratively. Through play contexts find out about the world in which they live and find out about past and Use natural and recycled resources to create their own environments eg miniature garden. Use small world equipment appropriate to stage of development to develop fine motor skills. Handle and transport large and small materials and equipment.

## Characteristics of Effective Learning that construction and small world offer

### Unique Child

#### Playing and Exploring (engagement)

- Showing curiosity
- Using senses to explore
- Pretending objects are things from their experience
- Representing their experiences in play
- Taking a role in their play
- Acting out experiences with other people
- Initiating activities

#### Active Learning (motivation)

- Maintaining focus on their activity for a period of time
- Showing high levels of energy, fascination
- Not easily distracted
- Paying attention to details
- Persisting when challenges occur

#### Creating & Thinking Critically (thinking)

- Thinking of ideas
- Making links and noticing patterns in their experience
- Making predictions
- Testing their ideas
- Developing ideas of cause and effect

### Positive Relationships

#### Playing and Exploring (engagement)

- Play with children. Encourage them to explore, and show your own interest in discovering new things.
- Join in play sensitively, fitting in with children's ideas.
- Model pretending an object is something else and help develop roles and stories. Pay attention to how children engage in activities – the challenges faced, the effort, thought, learning and enjoyment. Talk more about the process than products

#### Active Learning (motivation)

- Stimulate children's interest through shared attention, and calm over-stimulated children.
- Encourage children to learn together and from each other.

#### Creating & Thinking Critically (thinking)

- Use the language of thinking and learning (think, how, figure out, find out etc)
- Encourage open-ended questions
- Value questions, talk, and many possible responses, without rushing toward answers too quickly
- Support children's interests over time, reminding them of previous approaches and encouraging them to make connections between their experiences.
- Show and talk about strategies – including problem solving

### Enabling Environment

#### Playing and Exploring (engagement)

- Provide stimulating resources which are accessible and open-ended
- Make sure resources are relevant to children's interests
- Help children concentrate by limiting noise, and making spaces visually calm and orderly.
- Ensure children have uninterrupted time to play and explore

#### Active Learning (motivation)

- Ensure children have time and freedom to become deeply involved in activities
- Keep significant activities out instead of routinely tidying them away
- Notice what arouses children's curiosity
- Make space and time for all children to participate

#### Creating & Thinking Critically (thinking)

- Plan activities for children to develop their own ideas
- Plan play opportunities to solve problems with flexible resources
- Plan linked experiences that follow the ideas children are really thinking about