

Block Play



Blocks are open-ended play materials; there is no right or wrong way to build with them. Sometimes children start with an idea of what they want to make, at other times, the three dimensional design grows as children place blocks together randomly or in patterns. The creations built in blocks are often reminiscent of things they have seen, and so they will begin to name what they build: a house, road or railway train.

In block area, children play together and share experiences. One child's idea of how to build something may differ from another's, so they learn to respect different ideas and learn from each other. As children build together they solve problems and enjoy the benefits of co-operation.

Benefits of Block Play

Through block play children learn about sizes, shapes, numbers, order, area, length and weight as they begin to construct and build with blocks. Listed below are some suggested learning objectives that supports a child's overall development.

- Enables children to share and co-operate with others.
- Facilitates development in spatial and mathematical realms, by helping children learn to understand concepts of length height weight and area.
- Forces children to predict cause and effect relationships (seeing how high they can build before the blocks fall).
- Involves solving problems related to construction (building a bridge).
- Leads children to make use of physical principles (making towers of blocks for balance, creating supported bridges).
- Involves children in making a sequence.
- Involves classifying and sorting objects by size, shape and function (placing blocks of the same size together).
- Leads children to utilize emergent reading and writing skills (making signs for building).
- Provides children to demonstrate pride in accomplishments and develop a positive self confidence.
- Involves the use of mathematical operations such as addition, subtractions and fractions (judging how many blocks are needed to fill a space).

Blocks are an essential interest area in the childcare setting. Although often thought as a resource for physical and social development, blocks also enable children to explore concepts across all developmental learning areas.

Linking to the Early Years Learning Framework

- **1.4** – Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.
- **2.3** – Children become aware of fairness.
- **3.2** – Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical well-being.
- **4.4** – Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technology and natural and processed materials.
- **5.1** – Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

QIAS Principle 4.4 – Staff promote each child's problem solving and mathematical abilities.