

St Luke's Primary School



Learning Through Play Policy 2023

Introduction

At St Luke's we know that young children's thinking is expanded through their development as well as their personal experiences.

"Children must explore, ask questions, and revise their thinking to accommodate new ideas".
(Mundry & Loucks-Horsley, 1999).

Through our practice we are continually analysing the different teaching styles debating which is better for the teacher, which is better for children in developing cognitive competence, and what curriculum models are best for developing the social-emotional development of young children.

"Instead of viewing these approaches as opposing camps, they could be conceptualized as complimentary opportunities for teachers to move between perspectives,"
(Fradd & Lee, 1999, p.16).

Processes/Procedures/Strategies

Learning through play involves the children constructing their knowledge by confronting and solving problems through direct experience and the use of manipulative objects. Our goal is to create environments in which children may explore, learn, and develop when involved with naturally interesting materials and events. In our Early Years, there are limited structured responses. The teacher's role is to serve as a facilitator for the children by providing them with the opportunities to engage in activities and interact with their peers.

We believe that a balanced approach, between explicit teaching and play based learning, provides opportunities for all our learners. And so, as the children develop, a more explicit teaching style is slowly introduced to ensure that the child is meeting our high expectations and that in each developmental stage there is rigor.

Through this balance we ensure that the acquisition of academic skills is balanced with a child-centred approach to learning which encourages social skills, language and communication, interpersonal skills and sustained shared thinking to develop.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Regular Key Stage meetings to discuss the principles, ethos and developments in early learning.
- Formal and informal observations through the year, ranging from 'pop-ins' to more formal lesson observations (at the request of the teacher, e.g. for advice, or from the SLT, DHT & HT)
- Annual moderation from the Jersey Early Years Moderation Team
- Visits from the Head of Early Years, Early Years Advisor and EYAT
- Jersey Review Framework – Approximately triennial School Reviews. Off Island Review Lead, Senior Advisors, Head teachers & Deputy Headteachers (approximately 4 team members in each Review).