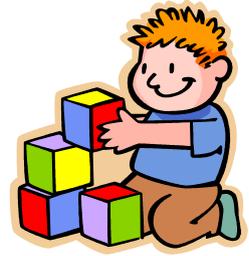


Construction

Learning

Learning across all areas of the Early Years Foundation can take place in the construction area. It is an area which offers opportunities for children to:

- Work as part of a group, taking turns and co-operating.
- Interact with others, negotiating and discussing plans.
- Use mathematical language to describe solid 3D shapes, position and size.
- Design and modify as they build and construct with a wide range of resources.
- Engage in role play and imaginative activities, such as building space ships for themselves or homes from Lego for play people.
- Develop their physical skills as they use a range of small and large construction equipment safely.



Location

- The designated area should have enough space for children to become involved in large construction activities.
- It should *not* be in a 'walk through' area for reaching other parts of the setting.
- Resources need to be presented in various ways, for example on a carpeted area, on a table top, on blankets, mats or textured fabric.
- There should be time and space for children to revisit and continue their constructions. (Use 'Work in progress' notices.)
- Create a display space nearby to show children's drawings, plans, ideas and photographs of their models.

Resources

- There should be a sufficient quantity so that children are not arguing over equipment (although they still need to learn it is fair to share.)
- Resources should be stored in a designated area and easily accessible to children so they can select what they need and make choices. Clear boxes labelled with words and pictures will encourage this. Children should learn they need to return items to the appropriate place.
- Encourage children to record their models with photographs. These can be laminated and used for future 'inspiration'.
- Laminated instruction cards will help develop children's language skills. They begin to understand sequences and visual instructions.
- Equipment should be age appropriate. Children need opportunities to continue to develop physical skills and their imagination.
- A large quantity of wooden blocks *should always be provided*.

- There should be a selection of both commercially produced materials such as Lego, Mobilo, Meccano, and also recycled resources. Using blankets, sheets, tyres, planks, pieces of fabric, milk crates, all sizes of cardboard boxes, tubes and so on will provide open ended experiences for children.
- Ensure there are opportunities for construction play outdoors as well as inside. Large scale materials, such as guttering, are especially good to use outside.
- A mixture of media can be used, for example Playmobil figures or animals along with wooden blocks.
- Small laminated photographs of the children themselves (and made 3D with small stands) can be incorporated into construction play.
- Provide children with opportunities for woodwork activities.

Adult Role

Adults need to:

- Ensure that all the materials and construction sets are clean and well maintained. Children enjoy helping to wash resources.
- Rotate the choices of materials so children have opportunities to try out different equipment.
- Allow children time for exploration. (The journey towards making a construction is more important than the product; what children will learn along the way is more important than the end result.)
- Encourage children to explore materials independently, but support their interests and development.
- Offer children real experiences as far as possible. For example, small bricks and wet sand can be provided to support role play of a building site.
- Allow children time and opportunity to revisit construction work.