

CORE PROVISION

The experiences and spaces for play we facilitate for children should reflect the children's ideas, aspirations, curiosities, and next steps in their learning. It is through play that child learn about themselves and make sense of the world around them.

Realising the Ambition page 49

Physical spaces both outside and indoors, should be constantly reviewed to incorporate a wide range of responsive, familiar and exciting new play opportunities.

Realising the Ambition page 47

All ELCC settings are unique and individual in terms of design, space and resources. Staff need to be creative and solution focused when providing a positive learning environment for their children. A neutral calm environment, free from visual clutter will offer children positive learning experience. Careful organisation and structure of the room will maximise the opportunities for rich interactions, creativity, inquiry and curiosity.

The defining feature of being a young active learner is the need to widen experiences and learning in all areas of development. The important role for the practitioner is to determine what the young child could learn through their own interests, balanced with learning across the areas of the curriculum.

Realising the Ambition page 21

There is an expectation that the full core provision is available every day for the full session

Ask yourself these questions when you are reviewing any of your core areas or adding something new. Remember to use natural and open-ended resources where possible.

- Is it attractive? Will it engage the children?
- Where is it? What is next to it? Why?
- How are resources organised to encourage independence?
- What resources will extend the learning?
- Where are the opportunities for differentiation?
- How does it provide literacy, maths and numeracy in context (with meaning and purpose)?
- In what ways do the experiences provide a breadth of learning outside as well as inside?
- How do the children know what to do here?
- What do the children want to learn? (And how do we know this?)
- What do the adults want the children to learn?
- What is the adult role?

Use the 7 key principles of curriculum design to evaluate the provision:

- Depth – where are the opportunities to develop different kinds of thinking and learning?
- Challenge and enjoyment – how do resources ensure challenge?
- Relevance – how do children relate their learning to aspects of their own lives?
- Coherence – what are the links between different areas of the provision?
- Breadth – how do the variety of contexts reflect a range of experiences?
- Progression – where are the opportunities to build on previous knowledge?
- Personalisation and choice – how are needs and interests of individual children catered for?

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table with chairs • Assorted paper • Sharpened pencils • Variety pens • A selection of resources, refreshed regularly e.g. notebooks, diaries, invitations relevant cards, envelopes • A simple alphabet line with both upper- and lower-case letters, at eye level • Use 'comic sans' or 'Sassoon primary' fonts if producing own line • A number line 0 - 10 • Relevant examples of environmental print in context • Resources which can easily be taken throughout the ELCC setting 	<p>Think about the stimulus to extend the learning and provide appropriate resources</p> <p>What opportunities are available throughout the nursery for mark making?</p> <p>Where do the children see and access examples of writing?</p>
Book Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelves to display and house books • Cosy area where adults and children can read comfortably • A varied selection of good quality books both fiction and non-fiction which are displayed attractively • Books reflecting a variety of languages and cultures • Always read books before using with the children • A range of reading materials reflecting different developmental stages and genre e.g. Big books, poetry, songs, rhymes, photo books, reference books and books made by the children 	<p>Think about using props to support and / or extend stories e.g. puppets, story stones</p> <p>How are the books chosen to reflect the current nursery interest(s) and individual needs of the child?</p> <p>Where else are books and reading materials available in context in the playroom?</p>
Listening centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosy area • C.D. player • Noise limiting headphones • Choice of high-quality books, stories and music C.D.s 	<p>How do the children exercise choice over the books / C.D.s on offer?</p> <p>How does the listening centre link with the book area?</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
Quiet space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small space for a child to choose to spend time in • Cushion / drape / tent 	Think about children's emotional well being
Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An area in which children can feel safe and secure • Rooms need to be defined by structuring furniture and screens (approx. 1m high) <p>It must represent a place to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cook – cooker, pots, kettle • eat – table, chairs, crockery, cutlery • wash up – sink, washing machine • sit – settee, armchair/s • sleep – child size bed with bedding, a cot for the baby <p>There should be: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant household items - mirror, rug, plants, phone, Hoover, TV., clock, money, scales etc. • reading materials – in context and linking with current interests e.g. newspapers, magazines, brochures, leaflets • writing opportunities in context e.g. diaries, calendar etc. • items to wear – sleepwear, hats, coats and bags • reflect different lifestyles e.g. travellers through pictures of trailers or artefacts • only one baby in the house unless there are twins in a family, or a visitor arrives with a baby 	<p>What reading and writing materials will be available to extend learning? How do they link with current interests throughout the playroom?</p> <p>Are there real-life resources?</p> <p>Are there opportunities for role play visitors to join the home corner play e.g. plumber, doctor, granny, friend with baby?</p> <p>How are resources developing purposeful, relevant maths concepts?</p>
Doll's House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quiet, cosy place to play, near the home corner • It should emulate a real house with a family • Reflect a variety of cultures and family make-up 	<p>How is cultural diversity addressed?</p> <p>In what ways has stereotyping cultures been avoided?</p> <p>Consider whether it would engage the children in play if the doll's house was set up or simply left in a basket</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
Small World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be available where / when an interest is shown for e.g. Garage/cars, trailers, caravans, vehicles, farm, sea animals, zoo, fire station, police station, puppets, space, train set, hospital, school, dinosaurs etc. • Relevant books and posters / photos • Natural and / or open-ended resources e.g. shells, buttons, sticks, beads etc. 	<p>How does the role play here enhance other areas of provision? Is it ok for children to transport creations to other areas?</p> <p>How are children supported to take responsibility for this area?</p> <p>Think about how many resources are available – less is more</p> <p>Think about where else in the nursery there are opportunities for children to engage in small world play</p>
Dressing up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage • Mirror • Clothes and accessories relevant to the role play should be available to children • Clothes from a range of cultures • Clothing and shoes which will fit the children 	<p>How is independence promoted?</p> <p>In what ways has stereotyping cultures and genders been avoided?</p> <p>Which props, clothes and accessories will develop high quality creative and imaginative learning?</p>
Role Play Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play areas should be in addition to the home area and not instead of • Involve the children in the set-up • Following the observation of the children’s interests 	<p>If space is tight – how will you ensure role play opportunities?</p> <p>How does the role play present opportunities for both real life experiences and imaginative play?</p>
Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Real musical instruments • Storage • Space to move • Writing materials • Musical notation • Songs and rhymes • Pictures 	<p>Where are the opportunities for children to move to music; sing spontaneously; develop beat and a sense of rhythm?</p> <p>Would a selection of floaty material, ribbons scarves etc. enhance the provision?</p> <p>Think about how the children can choose which instruments are available</p>

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		<p>Would the addition of a C.D. player extend the learning? Think about the content of the music being shared with young children</p> <p>When is it appropriate to play music?</p>
Clay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clay of a neutral colour and left for the child to sculpt using their hands • A designated space for finished creation • Book or poster or artefact to inspire creations • Damp cloth 	How will clay tools be used to extend children’s interests?
Dough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ingredients easily accessible • Instructions to make the dough • Dough should be made with the children or independently by the children. • Only a small quantity should be made – fresh each session • It should be left natural and not coloured 	Consider how the use of open-ended resources will develop creativity and promote imaginative learning
Art Area Including: Painting, junk modelling and drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean easel • A flat surface • Damp cloths for spills • Variety of powder, poster and block paint • A variety of short handled brushes of different thicknesses • A selection of different sized, good quality paper • PVA glue and Pritt stick available • Scissors • Junk boxes - assorted • Wool and string • Accessible storage 	<p>Can daffodils be pink?</p> <p>When is it ok for children not to wear an apron?</p> <p>Would a stimulus extend or detract from the learning?</p> <p>Why do children have to name their work?</p> <p>What value has the mass production of cards?</p> <p>Think about how the children’s work is celebrated, valued and displayed</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhere for pictures to dry • Sellotape • Mix own paints with instructions • Surface for models • Drawing area and materials • Pen, pencils, crayons 	<p>Where are the opportunities for children to extend a project across a range of media? How is this supported?</p> <p>How easily can children access and tidy resources?</p>
Woodwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bench • Child sized tools suitable for purpose e.g. hammer, saw, screwdriver, spirit level, pliers, hand drill etc. • Variety of types, shapes and lengths of wood • Vice • Nails – of different lengths and thickness • Paper, pencil, clipboard • Ruler, measuring tape • Sandpaper and a block • Glue • Little loose parts to extend models e.g. bottle tops, elastic bands, washers, cogs etc. 	<p>Think about organisation of tools and materials for independence, safety and promoting learning</p> <p>Consider where it is placed – are children easily observed by staff? – would children be easily distracted?</p> <p>What are there opportunities to extend the learning? Can models be painted or glued? How will this happen?</p> <p>What opportunities are there for the de-construction of items?</p>
Science and Technology including Computer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resources are in working order and fully charged ready for use • Suitable storage for children to choose resources • Resources in context – microwave, camera, timers, clocks, torches, magnets, magnifiers etc. • Include posters and books • Computer • Software 	<p>Think about using technology across contexts and extending learning</p> <p>Is there more to be gained from letting child finish rather than stopping with a timer?</p> <p>Think about what is available at any one time and how children access the technology</p> <p>How will specific child interests be extended?</p> <p>Think about where different opportunities for science occur throughout the nursery</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
Sand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain square or rectangular tray • Sand should be deep enough for children to use • Wet and dry sand • Natural resources e.g. shells, sticks, stones • Child sized tools / utensils e.g. scoops, spoons, trowels • Different sized containers e.g. buckets, pots • A dustpan and brush 	<p>Think about the skills children are developing, how are the resources supporting this?</p> <p>Think about the variety of learning experiences by offering sand in different ways e.g. a thin layer in a tray for mark making</p> <p>How easily can children access and tidy the resources?</p>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain square or rectangular clear tray • A variety of resources including pipes, hoses, tubes, funnels, measuring containers • Mop and bucket • Wet floor sign 	<p>When is it ok for children always not to wear an apron?</p> <p>Why do we leave the water clear?</p> <p>How easily can children access and tidy resources?</p> <p>Think about opportunities to recycle</p> <p>Think about the learning involved when children transport water to the sand or sand to the water</p> <p>How would providing different levels extend the learning?</p>
Block Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storage • A plentiful supply of unit blocks, large hollow blocks, small bricks and logs • Plenty space to play and expand into • Clip board, paper and pencils 	<p>Are there opportunities for children to add other resources if required e.g. vehicles, people, natural resources?</p> <p>Think about enhancing the area with books, posters, building plans, measuring resources if the children's interests allow</p> <p>How are children supported to take responsibility for this area?</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
Small construction sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small defined area separate from the block area. • Limit to one (or two) good quality construction kits • A place for finished models 	<p>How are completed models valued / displayed?</p> <p>Can models be transported to enhance play at other areas e.g. bricks, doll's house?</p> <p>What opportunities are there for challenge?</p>
Tabletop Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table and chairs • A small selection of puzzles and games • Organised for children to choose and use 	<p>How are different developmental stages catered for all?</p> <p>Where is there challenge?</p> <p>Think about the best place for completing puzzles</p> <p>How do the children exercise choice over the game / puzzle on offer?</p> <p>How are children supported to take responsibility for this area?</p>
Horse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horse • Step 	<p>Think about where the horse is in relation to other areas and how easily children can access it</p> <p>Consider the importance of the experience</p>
Displays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At children's level • Use real objects which stimulate discussion • Near a wall or a table with a back to display pictures • Reflecting current interests, be interactive and in context • Covering a diverse range of backgrounds, cultures and ethnicities in a positive, non-stereotypical way • High quality books, pictures, photographs, posters and 	<p>Are they attractive / interactive?</p> <p>How do they engage / stimulate / extend learning?</p> <p>In what way do they reflect current learning / interests?</p> <p>How are children involved in the display?</p> <p>Think about how many resources are available – less is more</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
	objects etc.	
Snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table and chairs • High quality cups, plates, bowls, forks, spoons • Sharp colour-coded child sized knives • Tongs, serving plates • Small jugs for water and milk • Menu • Relevant to the children’s interest 	<p>Think about grouping of tables and chairs relevant to number of children attending each session – smaller is better</p> <p>What are the benefits to using real china and cutlery?</p> <p>How do you promote independence, responsibility and learning in this area?</p> <p>Would you want to eat in the ‘café’?</p> <p>How are children’s individual needs taken into account, in particular the full time, extended day or early start children?</p> <p>What value is gained from gathering all the children together for snack?</p>
Baking and cooking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baking and cooking as a regular activity • Resources appropriate to the child and the activity e.g. scales, bowls, utensils, pots and pans • Board maker recipe(s) or cookbooks • Opportunities for a variety of independent baking and cooking activities 	<p>In what ways are you providing baking and cooking as a regular activity considering individual and cultural aspects?</p> <p>Remember to think about balanced healthy eating and to refer to current guidelines, for example Setting the Table</p> <p>Think about alternative ways to celebrate birthdays reflecting all cultures</p> <p>How are children encouraged to be independent and involved?</p> <p>Consider the rich, scientific and mathematical learning baking and cooking provide</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
		<p>Think about providing something to taste or take home rather than a rushed activity to provide snack</p> <p>In what ways has the learning been planned to ensure rich learning opportunities for the children who take part?</p> <p>How many children is it appropriate to involve?</p> <p>How are you encouraging participation?</p> <p>How do adults support the learning rather than manage the procedure?</p>
Gross Motor Activity	<p>There should be opportunities for: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crawling e.g. tunnel • climbing e.g. climbing frame • balancing e.g. beams • moving to music e.g. scarves, ribbons etc. 	<p>If space is tight – how will you ensure physical play?</p> <p>Consider safety and risk assessments when positioning physical play</p> <p>Think about space for dance, action rhymes and ring games</p> <p>Most gross motor development will occur outside, how is this accessible every day?</p>
Outdoor Learning	<p>See outdoor core provision for resources to promote opportunities for: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating, • building • imagination • discovery • journeys • physical play 	<p>Think about how the loose parts e.g. crates, tyres are used</p> <p>How many wheeled vehicles are appropriate for the space and the number of children?</p> <p>Consider how the natural world is used e.g. sticks, weather</p> <p>Where is there literacy and numeracy in context and with</p>

Provision	Essential Resources	Reflective Questions
		purpose?
<p>Forest / Beach Kindergarten Blocks of time i.e. 4/6 week block each term to enable children to revisit their experiences with a familiar group. Sessions should take place in the same woodland/beach site to allow children continuity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable clothing and footwear • First Aid Kit • Suggestions for kit bag – • Tarps • Rope • Binoculars • Magnifiers • Identification books • Clipboards • Paper • Pens • Pegs • Fire bowl • These are suggestions and resources taken would depend on the children’s interests at the time 	<p>Are all children included in regular visits over the course of the year?</p> <p>Are children offered regular opportunities to experience seasonal changes?</p> <p>Think about the stimulus you provide to extend the learning and provide appropriate resources</p>

Core Outdoor Provision

ELC settings need to consider the quality and frequency of outdoor play provision. This is not only an important part of a holistic curriculum to meet the child's immediate development and learning needs but ensures a wider cultural change to improve the physical and mental health of our children and families in the future.

Realising the Ambition page 55

The learning cycle of observation and planning needs to also take place outside with appropriate responses made to children's developing interests.

- Staff need to be responsive to children's choice of accessing play experiences outdoors. Observing and interacting to support inquiry learning.
- Outdoor provision should always be available to all children.
- Outdoor provision should offer experiences across the curriculum and space needs to be planned to accommodate the breadth of learning experiences - this won't necessarily look the same as the opportunities offered inside.
- Literacy and numeracy should be woven throughout the learning experiences with
- purpose, meaning and within context—sticking up letters and numbers is not meaningful unless within a real context.
- Resources should be organised to encourage independence.
- Children should be supported to link indoor/outdoor learning—where possible with natural resources.
- Staff and children should have appropriate outdoor clothing- waterproofs, wellies, sunhats.

"Play is great for children's well-being and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool"

Health and Safety Executive.

Discovery /Investigation

Ideas

natural materials, spades, trowels, buckets, pulley's, pipes, guttering, compasses, material, binoculars, magnifying glasses, metal detector, camera, microscope, reference books, paper, pencils



Building

Ideas

Blocks (large and small), wood, bricks, different length planks, pipes, hoses, guttering, bread crates, ropes, tyres (different sizes), recycled seats / wheels, couple of registration plates, clipboard, pencil, measuring tape



Transport

Ideas

2 or 3 wheeled vehicles, trugs / pails / buckets, wheelbarrow, pram / buggy, watering can, bread crates, ropes, tyres (different sizes), recycled seats / wheels, couple of registration plates.

Nature

Ideas

Weather / seasons, water, ice, sticks, leaves, mud, stones, puddles, birds, bugs, plants, seeds, sand / mud, bench,



'Daily outdoor experiences throughout the year help develop my sense of wellbeing and learn about my wider world' - Realising the Ambition page 27

Shelter

Ideas

Dens, tarpaulin, pegs, tent, wigwam, hut, tree, willow, pallets, bread crates, material, big boxes.



Creativity

Ideas

Leaves, sticks, brushes, mud, materials, scarves, paper, music, natural sounds, pots, pans



Physical

Ideas

Space for running, climbing, wheeled vehicles, trees, tyres, barrels, ropes, boxes, hills/slopes, balls, cones, traditional games

"Outdoor learning offers many opportunities for learners to deepen and contextualise their understanding within curriculum areas and for linking learning across the curriculum.."
Curriculum For Excellence

Every outdoor space is different, so the resources available will differ but each of the experiences should be on offer.

Resources can be added to expand on ideas through consultation with children.