

PLAY POLICY – April 2016

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Marble Hill Playcentres (“MHPC”) Play Policy is to establish a clear understanding of the intentions and motivations of the committee members, staff and volunteers at the Playcentres.

We believe that play is an essential part of every child’s life and we take children’s play very seriously. To play is to allow one to freely explore and make sense of the world, experiment, and express oneself without fear of judgement.

We advocate play as integral to children’s enjoyment of their lives, their health and their development. Children and young people – disabled and non disabled – whatever their age, culture, ethnicity or social and economic background, need and want to play, indoors and out, in whatever way they can and for their own reasons. Through playing, children are creating their own culture, developing their abilities, exploring their creativity and learning about themselves, other people and the world around them.

Furthermore, we operate in accordance with the Playwork Principles, those being:

- All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities.
- Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
- The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
- For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
- The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of space in which they can play.
- The playworkers response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of play process and reflective practice.
- Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people’s play on the playworker.
- Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.

In addition, we recognise children’s right to play as contained in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1991 and endorse the Charter for Children’s Play.

Updated on 14.04.2016	By Kevin Stinton Playcentres Manager
Reviewed on 26.4.16	By Barbara Morton Marble Hill Playcentres Committee