



Physical Activity / Active Play Policy

Aim

Young children are active learners who enjoy learning through play and physical activities. There are many benefits of being physically active for children including: health and wellbeing, movement skills and physical, social and emotional development, communication and it can help to maintain a healthy weight. Evidence shows that children who are physically active have a better chance of becoming healthy adults. Key messages from guidelines issued by the four U.K. Chief Medical Officers include:

- Physical activity should be encouraged from birth, particularly through floor-based play and water-based activities in safe environments
- Children of pre-school age who are capable of walking unaided should be physically active daily for at least 3 hours, spread throughout the day
- All under 5's should minimize the amount of time spent being sedentary (being restrained or sitting) for extended periods (except time spent sleeping)

Here at Meithrinfa Seren aims to promote the physical wellbeing of our children by implementing this policy in the following ways:

- To support the guidelines mentioned above a large part of your child's day in nursery will be unstructured, active play which is freely chosen and child led. This will consist of many sessions spread throughout the day some lasting 10 minutes, some lasting longer.
- A wide variety of activities and experiences will be offered which are stimulating, fun, enabling and safe including: musical movement, dance, bats, balls, hoops, bean bags, bikes, trikes and other ride on toys, climbing equipment and balance boards.
- Babies will benefit from time spent away from high chairs, push chairs and other baby seats. 'Tummy time' helps them to develop large muscle movements like rolling, crawling, reaching, pushing and climbing.
- Our daily planning ensures that our children do not spend long periods of time being sedentary (sitting down). For example we will ensure that snack time or story time is followed by a period of activity or active play. Screen time is limited and only used in connection with educational goals.

- Children will be encouraged to play outside every day at least twice a day. This will help to ensure they have the opportunity to be exposed to sunlight, which helps their bodies to make vitamin D. Extreme weather conditions will be considered. Wet weather gear and wellingtons will be provided.
- At Meithrinfa Seren we will prioritise physical activity in and around the nursery day aiming to increase the level of activity by operating a walking bus to collect children receiving wraparound care and encouraging parents to walk to the setting where possible.
- We will ensure that information is provided to parents about their child's activities and will share information about how to maintain complementary support for physical activity and active play at home. Check out our healthy living notice board and displays for what activities are on at weekends and during the holidays. We also have a website and Facebook page which is regularly updated with lots of information about keeping healthy and active.
- Your child's physical achievements and interests will be noted in their Learning Stories and shared with parents/carers annually. Parents/carers are encouraged to share their own observations of their child's interests and progress with us.
- Meithrinfa Seren will use nearby facilities like the local park and playing fields to offer opportunities to be active beyond the setting environment.
- We would like to remind all our parents/carers that their children may get muddy and/or messy and would ask that children are sent in to the nursery in appropriate play clothes.
- Healthy growth and development also depends on the right balance of foods and sufficient water to drink. This policy links with our nutrition and oral health policy to ensure mixed messages are avoided.
- Staff will act as good role models for the children in their care. They will participate in physical activity during structured activity times demonstrating that being active is fun for everyone!
- Staff will use relevant vocabulary relating to movement to support your child's physical literacy development including words like jump, hop, skip, climb, kick, catch, roll, bend, stretch.
- All activities, equipment and outside play areas will be safe and accessible. Procedures are in place to ensure that the safety of everyone taking part is considered. Children are also encouraged to make their own risk assessments within a safe environment.

- All activities are inclusive and will be adapted if necessary to ensure all children are able to participate.
- Restriction or withdrawal of physical activity time or play will not be used as a form of punishment.

For maximum impact good physical activity provision requires a whole setting approach. Here at Meithrinfa Seren we will reinforce the value of physical activity across all areas of our setting. We would like to thank all our staff, parents and carers for their support in putting this policy into practice. We would love to hear your comments and suggestions and together we can give our wonderful children a healthy start in life.

Meithrinfa Seren May 2018 – Review Date May 2019