

# Play Based Learning at Loch Primary School



## A Guide for Parents/Carers



# What is Play Based Learning?



Playful Pedagogy is a way of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning, giving children flexibility to find their own solutions to both new and existing problems. It engages children in personally meaningful activities, learning about themselves and others, and encourages autonomy and their independent motivation to learn. (Play Scotland)

"We know how babies and children learn best. They learn best in an environment of quality interactions, interesting spaces and when the experiences on offer are set in meaningful contexts. They learn best in environments that inspire them to be curious and creative." (Realising the Ambition: Being Me, Education Scotland)



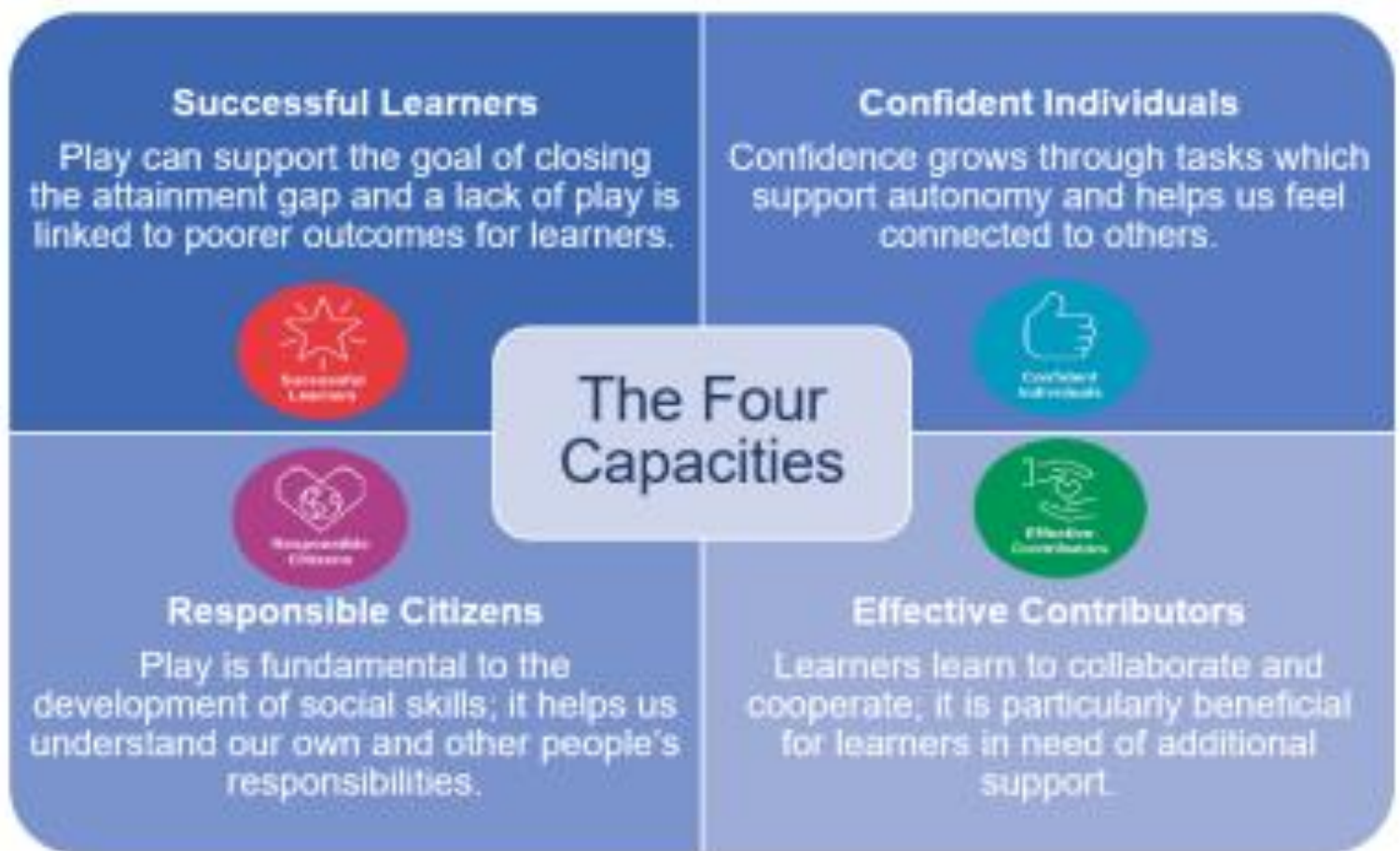
# Why Play Based Learning?



Key curriculum documents and legislation highlight the importance of play on building children's knowledge as well as their skills for learning, life and work:

- The 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' (UNCRC) recognises the right to play for all children (Article 31).
- The 'Curriculum for Excellence' promotes active play, with children being involved in fun learning activities as the best way to understand what is being taught.
- 'Being Me in SLC' discusses the importance of play in ensuring successful transitions for children. It states "the transition will likely be smoother for the child if play remains and continues as the main vehicle for their early learning in Primary 1 and beyond".
- 'Play Scotland' explains "Our education system must equip learners with the necessary skills for learning, life, and work and embracing play pedagogy allows practitioners to provide a developmentally appropriate provision for learners in the early stages of primary school whilst ensuring an appropriate balance of learner's play experiences with necessary curricular learning".
- 'Realising the Ambition' explains that play pedagogy meets the needs of learners and enables them to take forward their learning in a way which is developmentally appropriate. It also explains, "The experiences and spaces for play we facilitate for the children should reflect the children's ideas, aspirations, curiosities and next steps in their learning. It is through play that children learn about themselves and make sense of the world around them".

- Play supports children to develop across the Four Capacities of a Curriculum for Excellence which is evidenced in the diagram below (Play Scotland)



# What does Play Based Learning look like at Loch PS?



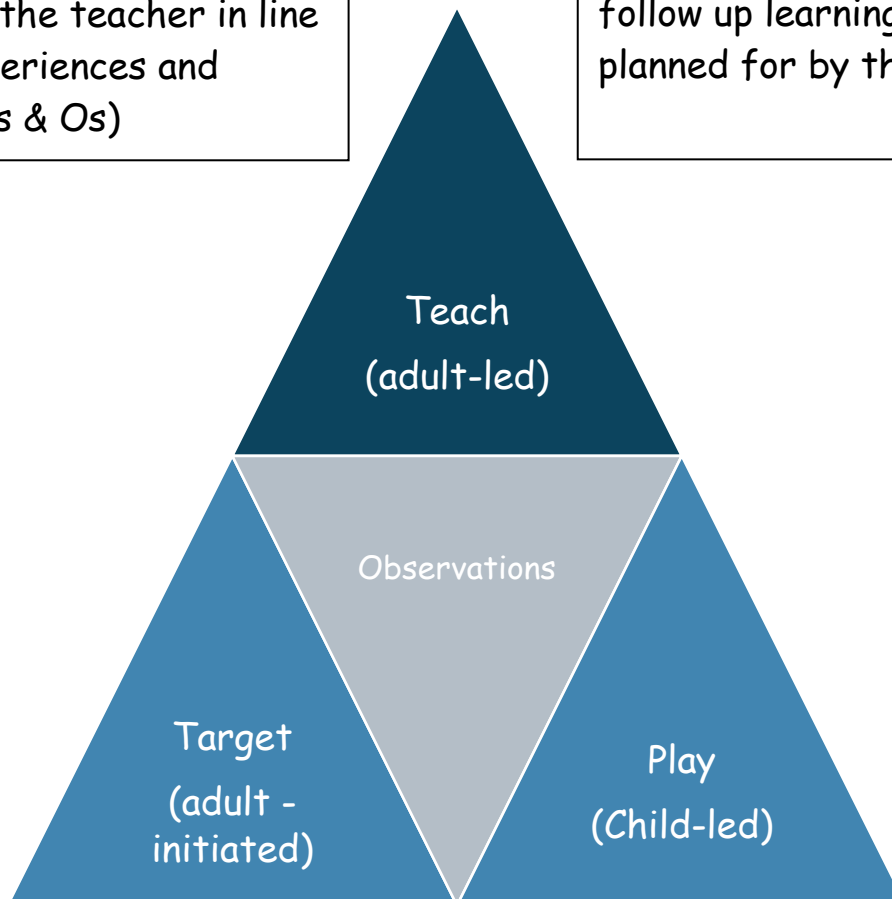
At Loch PS we follow 'Being Me in SLC' which promotes the 'Teach, Target, Play' model for high quality play pedagogy. This ensures equal weight is given to adult-led, adult-initiated and child-led provision and that all three are underpinned by observations which inform teaching and learning. This model promotes short, sharp teaching inputs, a high-quality follow-up task, which most learners can complete independently, and significant time to enter deep play.

## **TEACH (adult-led):**

Knowledge, skills or understanding planned for and delivered by the teacher in line with CfE Experiences and Outcomes (Es & Os)

## **TARGET (adult-initiated):**

Opportunity for learners to engage in high-quality follow up learning experiences planned for by the teacher.



## **PLAY (child-led):**

Opportunity for learners to engage in child led play.

## **TEACH - direct instruction - adult-led**

- This is the 'Intended Learning'.
- Planned for on a weekly basis, differentiated to the needs of learners.
- Led from the Benchmarks/Experiences and Outcomes.
- Opportunity to use school/authority programmes eg. Active Literacy, Maths Recovery, Talk for Writing, Heinemann, Jolly Phonics etc.
- Individual, small group or whole class input.
- Short, sharp input covering the key teaching points.
- May take place at the teaching table/area or teacher may join play eg. input on 3D objects in the construction area.

## **TARGET - guided - adult-initiated**

- This is the 'Potential Learning'.
- High quality follow-up tasks (1-2 tasks for Literacy/Numeracy, optional IDL task each day - learner dependent), planned by the teacher and linked to the current focus in learning.
- Opportunity to use school/authority programmes eg. Active Literacy, Maths Recovery, Talk for Writing, Heinemann, Jolly Phonics etc.
- Differentiated to meet the needs for learners.
- Mixture of written, practical, games/activities and ICT.
- Individual, pair, or small group task.
- Designed to be as independent as possible, using differentiation to support learners.

## **PLAY - self-directed - child-led**

- This is the 'Spontaneous Learning'.
- Experiences are in learner's control in terms of resources, time and outcome.
- Play may support knowledge/understanding/skills in relation to Experiences and Outcomes or develop skills across the four capacities.
- No fixed outcome/challenge set by an adult.
- Learners choose play which follows their interest or consolidates/extends prior learning.

# What are the benefits of Play Based Learning?



Through play and active learning, children can:

- Communicate in different ways and for different purposes.
- Engage with others through participation, collaboration and decision making.
- Make connections across learning.
- Develop their problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- Build on their own interests and ideas.
- Take a lead in their learning by making choices about their learning.
- Develop their creativity skills and use their imagination.
- Develop their independence and resilience.
- Further develop their social skills - turn-taking and sharing.
- Develop their self-confidence.
- Follow safety procedures.
- Increase their attention span and their ability to concentrate and persevere.
- Develop their physical skills and coordination.

