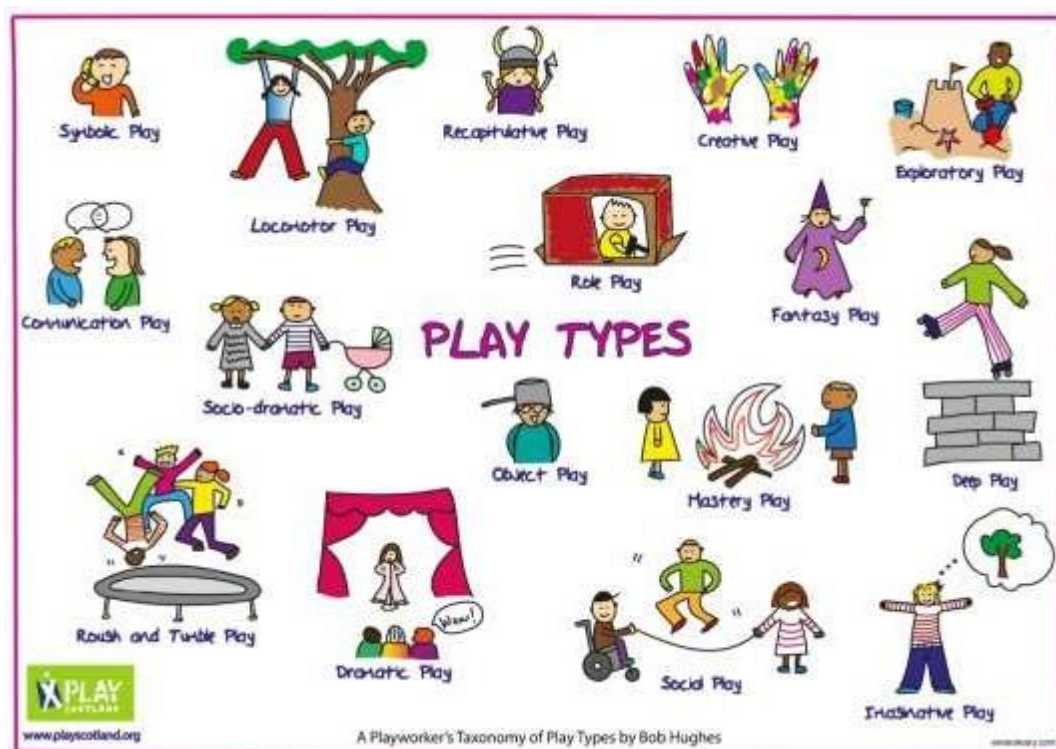




# Play Pedagogy at Quarter Primary School



*Play in all its rich variety is one of the highest achievements of the human species, alongside language, culture and technology. Indeed, without play, none of these other achievements would be possible. The value of play is increasingly recognised, by researchers and within the policy arena, for adults as well as children, as the evidence mounts of its relationship with intellectual achievement and emotional well-being" (Whitebread 2019)*

# WHY play at Quarter?

A play-based curriculum offers rich opportunities to equip our young learners with the skills, attributes and dispositions necessary for them to thrive in an ever changing world. Play promotes physical health and mental wellbeing. Through play, children learn to answer their own questions, learn new skills and learn to work collaboratively with other children or adults.

Some theorists emphasise that when playing, the child tries out ideas and comes to a better understanding of thoughts and concepts; others see play as a means of the child coping with reality through using their imagination; and, others see play as a means to practise new skills.

According to Education Scotland's Play Pedagogy Toolkit, play supports the four capacities of the curriculum for excellence as follows:

- **Successful learners** - through the use of imagination and creativity, tackling new experiences and learning from them, and developing important skills including literacy and numeracy through exploring and investigating while following their own interests.
- **Responsible Citizens** - through encountering different ways of seeing the world, learning to share and give and take, learning to respect themselves and others, and taking part in making decisions.
- **Confident Individuals** - through succeeding in their activities, having the sense of satisfaction of a task accomplished, learning about bouncing back from setbacks, dealing safely with risks.
- **Effective Contributors** - through playing together in leading or supporting roles, tackling problems, extending communication skills, taking part in sustained talking and thinking, and respecting the opinions of others.

# HOW does play work at Quarter?

The staff at Quarter Primary bring a wide range of experiences and skills to the play pedagogical approach. Embedding play pedagogy across schools in South Lanarkshire is one of the authority's strategic priorities this year. Miss McKissock was a part of a second cohort of primary teachers who are engaging in a Play Pedagogy training course with Ms Deirdre Grogan (Strathclyde University).

## Structure of the day



The school day includes a carefully planned balance of a variety of learning experiences.

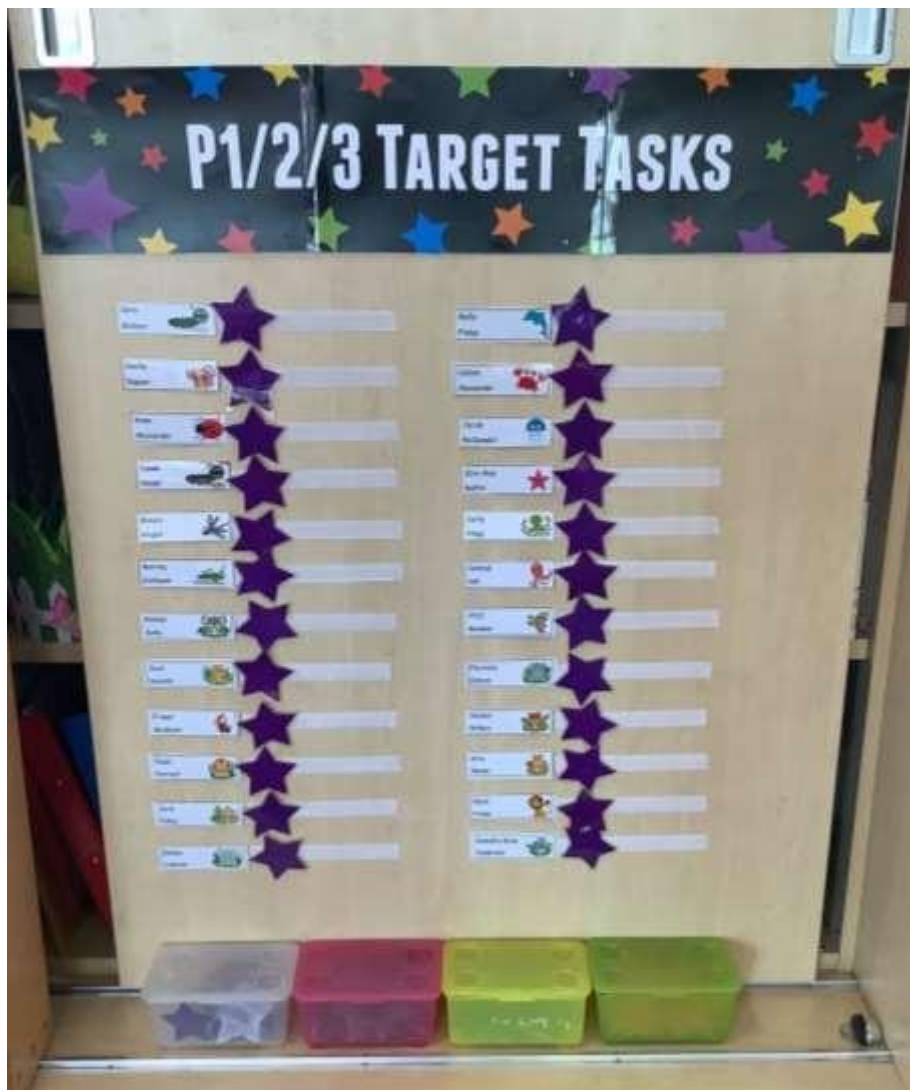
- Adult-led - direct teaching input from the teacher where they guide and instruct children through a learning experience with specific outcomes.
- Adult-initiated - an activity that has been planned for the children by the teacher. This usually consolidates prior learning from a teaching input. (e.g. maths game, magnetic board phonics/spelling practice, worksheet, jotter work)
- Child-led - This can be defined as behaviour that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. Children are invited to wonder about things which interest them.

The daily balance of how many adult-led and adult-initiated experiences varies depending on the stage and level at which your child is working.

## Target Tasks

Each day the children have set 'target tasks' to complete. These are adult-initiated activities that the children will work on either independently or with support from an adult. These are displayed as coloured stars beside the child's name. These will include a variety of maths and literacy tasks and some from other curricular areas. Once they have completed these tasks they will remove their star from the display to record they have completed it.

As mentioned previously, the number of 'target tasks' will depend on the stage and level at which your child is working.



## The Learning Environment

During play, the adult's role is to observe children and identify learning opportunities. This may result in the adult provoking the child/ren with new vocabulary, questions, challenges or support as appropriate. Adults may join in and scaffold or model skills.



There are several different areas within the classroom, open area and outdoor space where children can play and learn.

- They have access to a wide range of resources and open-ended materials.
- Adults will observe, scaffold and extend the children's learning through their play.
- Health and wellbeing is promoted through positive social interactions, physical activity and the development of self-confidence through choices in child-led learning.
- Resources are available to all to encourage independence and promote inclusion through self-selection and independence.
- Gross and fine motor skills are developed through the provision of various resources and different spaces.
- Resources and opportunities are planned to encourage literacy and numeracy skill development across all areas.





### How do we know it works?

- tracking and monitoring to check progress of individuals against benchmarks and expected levels
- measure progress against baseline assessments and transition reports from previous teacher
- parent feedback
- learner feedback
- formal assessment of the child's knowledge and skills - SNSAs
- use challenge questions in HIGIOS & HGIOELC to adapt and change practice
- self-evaluations, peer observation, SLT classroom monitoring

## Sources

A Scottish website aiming to deliver children and young people's right to play in Scotland

<https://www.playscotland.org/play-strategy/>

Education Scotland website

<https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/>

Education Scotland's National Improvement Hub - A toolkit which aims to support practitioners working with children in the early level to appropriately use play pedagogy to support learning and development.

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/early-level-play-pedagogy-toolkit/>

The Scottish Government Early Years Framework

<https://www2.gov.scot/resource/doc/257007/0076309.pdf>

Curriculum for Excellence - building the curriculum 2 - active learning in the early years

<https://www.education.gov.scot/Documents/btc2.pdf>

How Good Is Our School? 4th Edition

<https://education.gov.scot/improvement/self-evaluation/HGIOS4>

How Good Is Our Early Learning and Childcare?

[https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks\\_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1\\_NIHeditSelfevaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf](https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Frameworks_SelfEvaluation/FRWK1_NIHeditSelfevaluationHGIELC/HGIOELC020316Revised.pdf)