

Independence at The Den

An important part of The Den's philosophy is that children should play and contribute to the daily activities with an appropriate level of independence. Children should settle into playing quickly and staff should provide support and intervention where aimlessness appears.

Free-flow play activities are available both indoors and outside and children can easily choose new activities to play with. Children will be aware that it is their responsibility to tidy up after they have finished with an activity. Recycling bins are available and are part of our routine.

During times where activities are planned children it is important to offer alternatives to suit ways of learning and allow the child to lead the way with their creations!

Staff should be skilled at judging when to leave children to their independent play, and when to intervene with a well-judged moment of teaching; for example, suggesting techniques for making paper aeroplanes, but understanding that guided discovery is also a strategy for learning.

Below are a list of strategies to ensure independence is promoted.

- Children are unique with different dispositions with different ways of playing and learning. Activities need to be planned to meet the diverse needs of the group and the age range.
- Activities should be flexible so that children can 'run' with independent ideas. For example: in a craft activity some may wish to follow set instructions and need guidance and help to reach an end product, some may want to be more creative and place their own stamp on their piece some may wish to use the materials presented in creating something entirely different!
- Activity length needs consideration – some children can lose focus quickly: is there an extension/deviation task?
- Catering for the three Modalities: is the activity catering for **visual, kinaesthetic, auditory**?
- Ensuring the environment stays vibrant and 'live'.
- Changing the environment – big focus on outdoor play.
- Choice – providing a limited range of activities set up that allow children to choose their activity.
- Staff – maintain a passion for education! For example – not just introducing an activity but perhaps starting with a play, story, and mysterious happenings!
- Involving kids right from the start helps generate & sustain interest: arranging for resources & materials [collecting & getting from home, etc.], organising into groups, distribution, etc. finally, the end-product should be displayed/show-cased and awarded/complimented.
- The key to maintaining challenge and interest lies in supporting children's play and learning as an individual.
- Create a routine so that children have a role to play.
- Children are part of the group – helping with food preparation and making their own food creations.
- Children are part of the wider community – recycling.
- Active Listening
- Being approachable, adaptable and flexible,
- Planning, evaluating.

This policy was adopted by: The Den	
Date: 01.09.20	Signed: <i>AGriffin</i>

