

Overview

This standard identifies the requirements when promoting play. You are required to observe and assess how play supports all aspects of children's development, including physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth. You must create inclusive, stimulating play environments, respond to children's play cues, and balance child-led and adult-led play. You will be expected to reflect on your practice, collaborate with families and others, and engage in continuous professional development to enhance opportunities for play for all children.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. plan and implement play that supports all aspects of the development of children
2. create a safe and stimulating environment where play spaces, experiences, and interactions are inclusive and meet the diverse needs of all children
3. provide play experiences that encourage children to explore and connect with the natural environment
4. incorporate sustainable practices into play settings
5. facilitate a balance of child-led and adult-led play opportunities
6. implement strategies to support children with additional needs in play activities
7. foster a culture of curiosity, creativity, and enquiry through thoughtfully designed play spaces and resources
8. use digital tools and devices to facilitate the play experiences of children
9. observe and respond to the play cues of children, extending their learning and development through appropriate interventions
10. encourage and support children to make choices and lead their own play
11. support children to assess risks to themselves and others during play
12. follow procedures for risk assessment and health and safety without limiting opportunities for play and development
13. reflect on the play preferences of children and adjust the environment to enhance their experiences
14. collaborate with families to understand play patterns and preferences of children and how they can support play at home
15. engage with community resources to enrich the play experiences of children
16. build strong partnerships with others to support the play and development of children
17. gather feedback about participation levels and environmental factors, to assess the effectiveness of play provision
18. complete records and reports required for play provision
19. reflect on how you carried out your roles and responsibilities to promote play

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. a child's right to play
2. the different types of play
3. how play supports all aspects of the development of children
4. how play supports emotional regulation and the wellbeing of children
5. how play can be a source of joy and satisfaction
6. the importance of balancing child-led and adult-led play
7. how to observe and interpret play cues to extend the learning and development of children
8. how to encourage and support children to make choices and lead their own play
9. why children should have the opportunity to experience challenges and risks
10. how to carry out risk assessments that balance reasonable precautions and provide opportunities for play and development
11. how equality, diversity, inclusion, and rights inform play and shape the design of inclusive play opportunities
12. strategies to support children with neurodivergence and additional support needs to play
13. how to design and create safe, inclusive, and stimulating play spaces and experiences that meet the diverse needs of children
14. the importance of playfulness, kindness, and compassion in building positive relationships and fostering inclusive play environments
15. the influence of culture and background on the play preferences, interactions, and engagement of children
16. how to apply trauma informed principles to create safe, supportive, and nurturing play environments
17. how to design play spaces and experiences that stimulate curiosity, creativity, and enquiry
18. the importance of adapting play environments based on children's preferences and evolving interests
19. the benefits of outdoor and natural play in supporting wellbeing, learning, and connection to the environment
20. how to integrate sustainable practices into play settings, reducing waste and promoting biodiversity
21. the use of digital tools and devices in facilitating play, whilst ensuring they

support rather than replace rich, real-world play experiences

22. the transitions that children and young people may go through while playing

23. the expected patterns of development from conception to 21 years

24. factors affecting foetal growth and brain development

25. how social, physical, and economic factors shape children's opportunities to engage in meaningful play experiences

26. ways to support families to understand and value play and recognise play patterns, preferences, and developmental progress of children

27. how to analyse feedback to assess the effectiveness of play provision

28. how to locate and engage with community resources to enhance the play experiences of children

29. theories relevant to promoting play

30. the relevant legal requirements, standards of practice, frameworks and guidance for promoting play

31. how to work in partnership with others to promote play

32. how your personal experiences and unconscious bias may impact when promoting play, and how to address this

33. the role of supervision, reflective practice and learning and development in promoting play

Glossary

The glossary for this National Occupational Standard is available on the Skills for Care and Development website.

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Promote Play



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