

Jane Stevenson

Play with loose parts



Today's session

- What are loose parts anyway?
- Some of the key benefits for our children
- A wee chance to play
- Risk benefit assessment
- Questions
- How you can get involved

Our playground

- We are lucky to have a wonderful school
- The one drawback is the limitations of the playground in terms of size and play potential
- Introducing loose parts is a cheap and effective means of giving children access to a variety of play experiences

The Theory of Loose Parts

- "In any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery, are directly proportional to the number and kind of variable in it."
Nicholson (1971)
- In other words the more moveable parts you have and the more variety you have the more scope you have to create and discover



Loose parts are:

- Any materials which can be moved, manipulated and combined together in novel ways
- They are 'ambiguous materials' so don't have an obvious purpose or specific way of being used (unlike most toys)



Which are 'loose parts'?



Some Benefits

- Endless possibilities
- Creativity, exploration, imagination
- Positive feelings = confidence
- Problem solving skills, teamwork and communication
- Inclusion
- Resilience
- Brain development
- Learning to assess and manage risk
- Lots and lots of learning

A short clip

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nqi1KyJJeKg>



Time to Play!

- Have fun, explore
- Leave inspiration for the children's break time

Are the risks assessed?

Yes

- There is a process to weigh up the benefits against the risks
- Measures are put in place to ensure risks are at an acceptable level
- Children are given support to learn to assess and manage risks and to recognise when things are too risky

Risk benefit assessment

- HSE statement:

‘Play is great for children’s well-being and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool’.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childrens-play-july-2012.pdf>

Evaluation and getting involved

- Has this been useful?
- What else would be helpful?

- Our ideas:

Bingo card – loose parts you have collected

Play with loose parts over the holidays and
tweet your pics to

@Roseburn #roseburnlooseparts

Lots more videos on Grounds for Learning website

This Place is like a Building Site!

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNXOtS_vjVM



Spread the word



We have forgotten that **children are designed by nature to learn through self-directed play** and exploration.”

PETER GRAY
PSYCHOLOGIST