

Teaching and Learning

Pedagogy - helping children learn



So what is pedagogy? There is no one, simple, agreed upon definition but it can be understood as the theory and practice behind learning. In early years there are many different pedagogical approaches and the statements that come under this feature in the Development Matters guidance will lead us to explore some in further detail, such as enabling environments, guided learning and more.

Pedagogy is closely connected to the curriculum, as once we have considered what we want children to learn (intent), pedagogy will help us to figure out how children will learn it (implementation).

Task

Below are the statements from Development matters that helps us think about how we can use pedagogy to support effective practice. Use these themes and questions to dive deeper into how you are ensuring this is part of your practice.

- Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help.

Q - Do you believe in this statement?

Q - What are your children's superpowers?

Q - How do you support children to make progress?

Q - How do you know that they are making progress?

Q - What help do you provide?

- Effective pedagogy is a mix of different approaches. Children learn through play, by adults modelling, by observing each other, and through guided learning and direct teaching.

Q - What pedagogical approaches are you aware of?

Q - What pedagogy do you use within your setting?

Q - What's the difference between guided learning and direct teaching?

Q - Do you have a balance between these? How do you know this?

- Practitioners carefully organise enabling environments for high-quality play. Sometimes, they make time and space available for children to invent their own play. Sometimes, they join in to sensitively support and extend children's learning.

Q - How do you organise your environment to support high quality play?

Q - What is high quality play?

Q - How do you respond to extending children's learning? Share some examples.

Q - Is your routine flexible to allow children time to extend their learning?

Q - Do you sensitively join in play? How do you do this?

- Children in the early years also learn through group work when practitioners guide their learning.

Q - Do you plan time for group activities?

Q - How are the group activities established? What is the reason for the activity?

Q - Does the practitioner know what the intention and the impact is of the activity?

Q - Does the practitioner have the language to support the activity?

- Older children need more of this guided learning.

Q - Is time planned to stretch and challenge the older age group of children?

Q - Are you meeting the older child's needs? If so, how do you know that you are?

- A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important aspect of pedagogy.

Q - How do you consider the outdoor learning environment?

Q - Do you provide activities that all children might want to access outside?

Q - What proportion of the day can the child access outdoors? Can you be flexible to the child wants to learn outside?

- Has this exercise raised more questions?
- Were there elements that you feel you could learn more about?
- What will you now do, to further develop your understanding of pedagogy and how your practice is influenced?