

## Child-led play at nursery

**Allowing children control over their own learning and play in their early years is essential to building strong, resilient and independent learners now and in the future.**

How do you ensure you focus on listening to your nursery children, supporting their rights to have a voice and making their own decisions about their lives?

To do this, child-initiated activities should form a considerable part of your day and your setting:

- Allow children to choose where they wish to play and learn
- Allow children to choose which activities and resources they wish to use

Have a wander around your setting:

- Can children access their resources and toys for themselves?
- Do you have storage units at their height?
- Can they see what is in storage units at a glance?
- Do you have a free space in your setting so children can place these resources out, once they have chosen them?
  - It is no good giving children the option to choose their own resources if they then have to clear away an activity you have put out to do so!
  - Some settings have an empty table and a space on the floor dedicated to 'Children's Choice'
    - This could be labelled with green tape so the children can identify this. This will also help when your inspector comes to visit as the children will be able to explain how this works
- Consider the layout of your setting. Ensure children can free-flow inside and outside, and think about how you will maintain the safety of children by monitoring ratios - you could operate a board at the door where children are able to pop an image of their face when they go outside and remove when they come in. This way the adults can monitor numbers but more importantly do regular headcounts and know where each child is in the setting at any time.

