

Developing a high quality role play area

High quality role play areas and home corners encourage pretend play, social and language development and much more. They are a crucial component of a well-planned nursery environment. Babies and toddlers will imitate, while older children will act out more complex scenarios like a birthday party, linked to their own experiences.

- A well-resourced home corner will encourage children's creativity, use of language and social interactions. The younger the child the more props they will need to support their play. Provide high quality realistic resources in your home corner, e.g. real plates and cups

- The home corner can be a great place for vocabulary acquisition for children learning English as an additional language. They will link familiar objects with words in a relaxed and meaningful context



- For quieter children the role play area can be an attractive space. Consider how you section off the area using fabric or screens to make it a place where they can explore using language confidently

- Adding themed enhancements to a role play area e.g. soft toys as pets or a shop can enable older children to consolidate their understanding of the world or try out new ideas

- Some children may have limited experiences of the world and it is the responsibility of settings to widen and deepen their knowledge and understanding. E.g. if you are going to have an ice cream parlour or a fish and chip shop, plan a visit with the children for them to experience it first-hand.

- Add to your permanent home corner, themed objects or loose parts based on children's interests or a topic. Children can incorporate them into their play within a familiar context.

- Adding loose parts or large blocks to a role play area means children can choose how they use the area and adapt it to their interests. This can be particularly beneficial for older children in the setting. Large blocks, tyres and planks outdoors promote problem solving, team working and creativity.

- Consider how your resources can promote play based learning opportunities for literacy and maths. Provide resources such as a timer, clock and measuring cups that reflect how maths works in the real world. You could connect it to the book corner which looks like a lounge. Add a calendar, whiteboard, recipe books or catalogues to create meaningful opportunities for the children to write

- How you, as the practitioner, interact with the children is key. You can follow their agenda by narrating their play or make a suggestion for an idea or play prop. However if you observe a child in character,

immersed in their play, it's important to leave them be. Observation will give you insight into their language development and what their special interests are, which you can harness for future learning opportunities.

NDNA products to support you with this activity

- [LVC - Observation, assessment and planning](#)

Find more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna