

- Contact with natural and living things to maintain their inborn affinity, curiosity and fascination with all things belonging to the natural world
- Freedom to be inquisitive, exploratory, adventurous, innovative and messy
- A vast range of real experiences that are relevant and meaningful and that make sense
- Endless opportunities for discovery play and talk so that new experiences can be processed, understood and used
- An environment that feeds information into all the senses at the same time
- Involvement with the whole body giving deeply felt meanings and all round physical health
- Movement experiences that develop essential structures within the brain and nervous system
- Emotional and mental well-being, where self-image and esteem grow
- Social interactions that build relationships, communication, social skills, and the enjoyment of being with others
- Lots of opportunities to set themselves challenges and to learn how to keep themselves safe
- A place that meets the way they learn best and allows them to express feelings, thoughts and ideas in a way most suited to them.

(White, 2008)

Time to reflect

Think back to when you were young. What sort of things did you play with or do? What memories do you have of play? What made you smile? Do you think about being indoors playing games or watching television? Or do you recall running around in the fresh air, collecting leaves, digging in mud with sticks, making rose petal perfume and jumping in puddles? Reflect on how you felt and try and put yourself in the shoes of a young child when evaluating your outdoor provision.



Photo courtesy of Arbor Green Nursery