



## **Supports for your child at Kidz@Play**

“Inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education this is reflected in the development of strategies that seek to bring about a genuine equalisation of opportunity.” The Salamanca World Statement (UNESCO)

In Kidz@Play, we value the rights of all children attending our service. We recognise the ability and individuality of all children by providing each and every child with opportunity to require reaching their full potential. These opportunities are provided through the active participation of the child, seeing the child as an active learner within our inclusive culture. We recognise and believe inclusive preschools provide quality early years experiences for all involved.

At Kidz@Play we follow a play based emergent interest curriculum This means that our curriculum is based on the interests that the children present with on a day-to-day basis in playschool. We follow the children's emerging interests and document them through observations in their learning journal and throughout everyday activities in playschool. We support and encourage the individuality and uniqueness of every child at our setting. Play is such an important aspect to children's learning and development. We think of each child

as a confident and competent learner and encourage each child to direct their own learning in playschool. We as Early year's practitioners support their learning and encourage extensions of their learning based on their personal interests. As we are a play-based playschool, we have a lot of free play for the children to learn and explore through play and activities that have meaning and importance to them as individuals.

Sometimes children require support to help them reach their full potential and participate in ECCE. This support may be short term, or it may extend to their transition to Primary School. Kidz@Play offer many supports for your child, should your child require.

Our play based- emergent curriculum provides children with many opportunities to access Aistear, the curriculum framework. Our child led curriculum is based on the interests of the children as well as their age and stage. It is also adjusted to include all children in a fun and exciting way.

In Kidz@Play your child may be supported through AIM and other relevant agencies such as KARE and Network Disability Team (NDT).

The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a model of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme.

The Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) is a programme of supports designed to ensure that children with disabilities can access the Early Childhood Care and Education Programme in mainstream pre-school settings and can participate fully in the pre-school curriculum alongside their peers.

AIM is a child centred model of supports, involving seven levels of progressive support, moving from the universal to the targeted, based on the needs of the child and the pre-school setting. The model is designed to be responsive to the needs of each individual child in the context of their pre-school setting. It will offer tailored, practical supports based on need and will not require a formal diagnosis of disability.

**Levels 1 – 3** of the model involve a suite of universal supports which are designed to promote and support an inclusive culture within pre-school settings by means of a variety of educational and capacity-building initiatives for pre-school providers and practitioners. International evidence suggests that these supports, when appropriately developed, are sufficient to support many children with disabilities.

However, where a pre-school provider, in partnership with a parent, considers that some further additional support may be necessary to meet the needs of a particular child, they can apply for one or more targeted supports under levels **4 – 7** of

the model. Additional targeted supports could take the form of expert early childhood care and education advice and mentoring (Level 4), specialised equipment, appliances, and minor alterations (Level 5), therapeutic supports (Level 6) and additional capitation to fund extra assistance in the ECCE pre-school room (Level 7). More information on these targeted supports is provided below.

Finally, AIM applies to all mainstream pre-school settings which are funded through the ECCE Programme. In addition to mainstream settings, pre-school services are also offered in special pre-schools and early intervention classes which



cater exclusively for children with disabilities. While the underlying vision of AIM is to cater for as many children as possible in mainstream settings, it is recognised that a

small number of children will continue to need specialised services.

## KARE

Where your child requires more specialised support, KARE may be able to provide that service. KARE delivers support to children aged 0-5yrs who present with an intellectual disability/developmental delay.

At Kidz@Play we use the Key Person Approach.

A Key Person approach is where a staff member has a small group of children to which they are the child's key worker. The child normally has a bond/ strong relationship with the staff member which helps the children feel safe and secure in their preschool environment. The key person will insure your child is settling into the new environment and be there for them each day ensuring the child's well-being is supported by having a go to person in the preschool.

As a key worker your child's interests, learning and development is supported and documented throughout their journey at Kidz@Play.

Your child's key worker supports not only your child but your family as well with any questions or needs you may have in relation to your child. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to chat to their child's key worker or any staff member whenever they feel necessary. Your child's key worker will always make time to speak with you about any concerns or questions you may have.

Your child's key worker will support the holistic development of your child while attending Kidz@Play.

## **Linc Co-ordinator**

Linc is the Leadership for Inclusion in the Early Years programme. The programme is designed to support the inclusion of children within the Early years setting.

At Kidz@Play we have two Linc co-ordinators one in each of our settings. Jess who is one of the owners and directors of Kidz@Play and manager of our Kilcock service and Emma and Laoise who are managers of our Maynooth service.

The role of an Inclusion Co-ordinator:

- Leading inclusive practice.
- Supporting staff with inclusive practice.
- Continuous professional development to further all staff's further learning and development.
- Working alongside Parents and guardians with Early years specialists to best support your child.

within the Early Years setting such as Aim specialists, Speech and Language therapists, Occupational Therapists etc.

- Promoting diversity, inclusion, and equality throughout the service.



We would like to hear from you! Write any questions you may have here. We would be happy to help!

Kidz@Play offer a rich learning environment for children to learn and discover in. We have lots of different areas while are defined by the children's interests within the learning environment. We have areas such as Mark-making & painting, sand play, water play, music & dance, construction corner, role play & dress up, home corner, small world play, library area, sensory room, playdough, and our outdoor area.

### **Mark making & Painting Area:**

Our mark making area is where children can express themselves creatively and artistically through the medium of arts and crafts. The children have a large variety of materials to express their thoughts and ideas with such as crayons, pencils, markers, paint, glue, glitter, paper, stickers, scissors, stamps, stencils, confetti, and other recycled materials to bring their ideas to life in playschool.

Mark making and painting is important for children to support the development of their imagination, creative skills, fine and gross motor skills, and their co-ordination skills. Language and social skills are also supported as the children engage in conversation with their peers and teachers about what they have created.

### **Sand Play**

At Kidz@Play the children can explore sand play with a wide variety of materials such as buckets, spades, cups, funnels, sieves, water, stones as well as small world toys, diggers, and cars both in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Sand play provides opportunity for exploring, building, scooping, pouring, and digging. Sand encourages children to explore and use their imaginations to create different structures. Social skills are also

supported as children engage and talk to each other as they play with the sand building and exploring together.

### **Water Play:**

Water play can be explored both in indoor and outdoor environment. Water play provides hours of fun and valuable learning as the children get stuck in and love exploring water play and getting wet. We have lots of water toys such as bottles, cups, funnels, sea animals etc which encourage lots of pouring, filling, emptying, and transferring as they children play and discover.

Water is an open-ended material that fosters curiosity, imagination, and experimentation. It provides opportunity for children to build their social and emotional skills, language development, physical skills and teaches math and science concepts.

### **Music & Dance:**

Music and Dance is a huge part of our daily routine at Kidz@Play with lots of musical instruments on offer, songs, cd player, CDs, radio, and speakers for the children to explore and express themselves through dance and music in playschool. We use music a lot for setting the tone of the environment with classical music for the children to listen to while they play as well as for transitions throughout the day. The children love to choose their own songs to dance along to with their friends and express themselves through music. The children enjoy playing lots of different musical instruments which we have on offer such as the drums, triangles, tambourines, keyboard, shakers etc, making their very own band to enjoy together in the classroom.

Music and dance are important for the children to express their thoughts and ideas, it also helps children to build motor skills while

they practice self-expression. Music builds a sense of belonging among children as they feel connected to their peers, families and teachers through songs and music.

### **Construction Play:**

The construction corner is filled with lots of building materials such as large wooden blocks, Lego, wooden cylinders, construction tools, toolboxes, construction hats, hi visibility jackets and some signs and symbols of construction sites along with some photographs of buildings to inspire the children's creativity skills.

Construction play encourages children to share their thoughts and ideas through building, creating their ideas from blocks, Lego, and other materials. It also supports children's problem-solving skills as they figure out where each piece can go and work together to build their structures and then use them for laying with together.

### **Role play and Dress up:**

At Kidz@Play the children have the opportunity to take on many different roles from our dress up and role play area, from builders to hairdresser's superheroes to princesses, firefighters to gardai the possibility is endless.

Role play supports children's imagination, role play skills and social skills as they play together dressing up taking on many different roles and bringing them to life through playing and exploring. Role play promotes confidence building among young children as they play together expressing themselves through role play sharing thoughts and ideas among their friends and teachers.

**Library:**

Our Library areas gives the children an inviting, relaxing area to enjoy a book individually or with friends sharing the magic between the pages of stories. Children enjoy listening to a story being read to them, or also enjoy reading stories to each other. Our libraries are filled with a wide variety of books in many different languages so that each and every child can find a book which they enjoy.

Books and storytelling encourage language & literacy and communication skills as well as supporting children's imaginations. Imaginations are inspired with illustrations and encourages children to write and create their own books and stories in playschool.

**Home Corner:**

The home corner is filled with lots of materials for children to play with, explore and recreate roles and experiences which they have experienced themselves or wish to explore.

The home corner takes on many different roles based on the children's imagination's, it can be a kitchen, a shop, a restaurant, or anything the children wish it to be. It is filled with materials such as kitchen utensils, plates, cups, cutlery, food, pots and pans, table and chairs, aprons and oven gloves, a cash register, cookbooks etc, for the children to play individually or co-operatively.

The home corner supports creativity, imagination, language and communication skills, role play, exploring, problem solving and identity and belonging. Lots of cooking, eating, cleaning, and playing happens in the home corner.

### **Small World:**

Small world play gives children the opportunity to act out scenarios with small figures and objects. We have lots of small world toys on offer such as, dinosaurs, zoo and farm animals, dolls, babies, small figures, cars, fairies, and fairy gardens sea creatures to name a few. Small world play is usually based around a certain interest the children have.

Small world play encourages emotional development as children explore and experiment with different emotions as they act them out through their play. It also supports the development of social skills as children play together engaging in conversation, acting out various scenarios and problem solving together. Language skills are built on as children learn new vocabulary through play with new materials and conversations that take place as they share thoughts and ideas among friends and adults.

### **Playdough:**

One of our favourite activities to do in playschool is to make our own playdough. The children help to create the playdough each week by mixing flour, oil, water, and salt along with their chosen colour of paint. The children work together as a team and take turns mixing all the ingredients together to make the playdough.

Playdough has a variety of benefits for children such as sensory, learning and exploring and developmental benefits. Playdough builds up and strengthens hand muscles and dexterity as they children roll, squeeze, pat and manipulate playdough tools and shapes. Playdough is a very tactile activity as its texture changes throughout the stages of making it provide sensory play for the children to explore.

### **Sensory room:**

We have fabulous sensory rooms at Kidz@Play which offer a variety of experiences for the children's senses. The sensory room gives children the opportunity to learn and explore using their senses of smell, touch, hear, and sight to experience a range of different stimuli.

In our sensory room you will find cushions, blankets, tents, different colour lighting, music, a variety of toys to explore such as different textured materials, a variety of sponges, different textured balls, mirrors, rollers, sand timers, sensory bottles, light box with wooden sensory blocks, ball pit etc.

Sensory play helps with children's creativity, problem solving, emotional regulation and motor skills.

### **Outdoor Play:**

At Kidz@Play we love to spend as much time as possible outdoors. Children have wellies and wet gear which they wear out so they can explore and play in their outdoor environment with lots of water sand and mud play. The children have a lot of opportunity to play, explore, grow plants, fruit and vegetables, do some gardening, paint or mark make, build, read, run around and play sports.

Exercise is very important for children's health and well-being. Outdoor play encourages a healthy lifestyle which we also promote and encourage here at Kidz@Play through healthy eating and exercising. Being outside provides lots of opportunity for exploring learning, developing motor skill, builds social skills and relationships, and encourages children to care for the environment as they become more aware of nature.