

For children this is initially based on their experiences of their home life. Role-play begins with props which closely resemble real objects in the world (pretend telephones, pretend cups and saucers, etc); for older children, the transformative power of their imagination enables one thing to stand for almost anything else they choose. Therefore the home corner is resourced with a mix with props which resemble real objects and more open-ended and adaptable resources.

For all children, the potential for sustained play is developed through adding different sensory experiences to the home corner by the inclusion of pasta, dough, flour etc to stir and mix.

We provide plastic food and sometimes real, so that they can use their imaginations to transform materials: a ball of playdough can become an orange, for example, and a pan of lentils a stew that is being cooked.

Role play as a context for development and learning in the EYFS Edit

Role play enhances children's personal, social and emotional development by providing opportunities for playing with others, using developing social and communication skills, for developing autonomy, and sometimes sustaining involvement for long periods of time with or without adult support. Through role play children can explore other people's points of views and respond to the feelings and wishes of others. Play can also be a medium for children to explore their life experiences and both joyous and sad emotions.

In role play, children develop their communication, language and literacy as they talk about what they are doing, initially using just one or two-words and later developing conversation, having to take turns, negotiate and listen to the ideas of others to imagine and create roles and scenarios. Role play can offer children a context for making marks and emergent writing, for example writing notes and lists, and an opportunity for emergent reading, browsing magazines, recipe books and other texts in the home area.

Children develop their problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy by exploring size, placement and quantities – which clothes fit which dolls, for example, setting the table, and hanging up dressing-up clothes. In role play children can use numbers, counting the number of people at the picnic, deciding how many plates and how much food to pack, or counting up the aliens who are dead on the ground.

It can provide a context for children to expand their knowledge and understanding of the world, as they imagine different events and explore different roles and jobs.

Role play supports their physical development, through outdoor role-play involving running and climbing, and through developing their fine motor

skills to dress babies, put on dressing-up clothes and put home-corner and picnic items in and out of boxes and cupboards.

Children's creative development is supported as they develop their imagination and also play by imitating what they know about adults and other children. In role play children can use their imagination to devise and act out storylines, put together sequences of movements, and develop ideas with others.