



Getting started with play-based learning in early years

Benefits of play-based approach in the Early Years

Interviewees:

Dr Alison Borthwick

Early years practitioner and specialist

Helen Bradford

Early years specialist

Dr David Whitebread


Developmental Cognitive Psychologist and early years expert

What are the benefits of play-based approach in the early years?

Alison Borthwick There are so many benefits with play-based learning. So, for me, play-based learning is that teaching approach that allows some space for sense making. It allows learners to test ideas, to make mistakes (whether they're deliberate or otherwise), and really encourages that 'what if' culture from both adults and learners.

Helen Bradford I think that the most important benefit of play-based learning in early years is enabling children to take control and explore situations of real-life events that they encounter and they can also experiment with societal rules or roles. So, for example, the child with a new baby sibling who changes and bathes a doll in the setting home corner. And it's important not only for their own individual exploration but also involves shared social experiences with their peers.

David Whitebread Well, the most important benefit of play-based learning in early childhood education is clearly that it engages the children's enthusiasm for learning. It makes everything they're doing so much more fun, so much more engaging and also, it presents the children with activity for which they can understand the real purpose. Children who have experienced play-based learning environments as a young child go on to be much more confident about themselves as learners, they achieve much higher levels, much more likely to go to university, and, you know, to get a really good quality education, to achieve well. But also, grow into a much more rounded individual. Friendship skills, much more good social and emotional skills, they tend to be able to maintain long-term stable emotional relationships. So all kinds of good things stem from play-based learning provision for young children in early childhood education.



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