**The Importance of Play**

**Parents. Think of your own childhood. What do you remember playing when you were growing up?**

**There is nothing more important to children than playing.**

**For school readiness they need a curiosity in exploring the world around them, a joy in movement leading to core strength for developing gross and fine motor skills, social skills and boundaries and language development through talking and listening. Play underpins healthy brain growth as neural links are made and pathways developed.**

**Play deprivation**

**Leads to negative behaviour, aggression and frustration, anxiety, physical delay, language and communication delay, poor social skills, poor spatial awareness, poor risk management strategies, myopia (through lack of distant views), rickets and bone density problems, smaller and malformed brains. Limit screen time.**

**Try to recognise when children want to play and give cues eg run up and tig then run away. Some get it wrong and hit out so may need help to engage others or join in established play. In school we have a ‘buddy stop’ that children can go to.**

**Children need structured and unstructured play times eg**

**-old sheets and rugs to make dens with.**

**-boxes, sellotape, glue, scissors, paints for creative making.**

**-water, sand, varied containers, tubes, guttering.**

**-board games, balls, hoops.**