Loose Parts

Overview

Loose parts offer endless possibilities for play. They can be used for construction, water play, and more. Nature offers a huge variety of loose parts which spark curiosity all year round.



Setting Up

Find an area where the children can access the materials easily and transport them to their play space.

Gather a variety of items made from different materials which will spark curiosity and engage all five senses as your children play.

Make sure there is enough room for the children to transport larger items.

Storage for loose parts could be:

- In large tubs, e.g. flexi tubs
- In a small shed
- In lidded boxes.

Equipment

- Large parts – wooden blocks, wooden planks, log pieces, crates, tyres, buckets, pipes, guttering
- Den building materials – tarpaulins, pegs, ball bungees
- Small parts – pine cones, conkers.

Key Questions

Observe how the children are playing and comment on what they are doing, *"Your tower is taller than you!"*.

Ask questions to support problem solving skills

"I wonder how you could balance the plank…"

The Benefits

- Active Play – choosing resources, making changes, problem solving
- Physical and Sensory Exploration
- Creative and Critical Thinking Development.

Progression in Learning

Add different items periodically, using children's interests.

Use the seasons and the weather, e.g. create a boat in the rain.

Use when singing nursery rhymes – build a wall for Humpty Dumpty.