



# PLAY AT ELRICK PRIMARY



## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PLAY?

Play is defined as behaviour which is **'freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated'**.

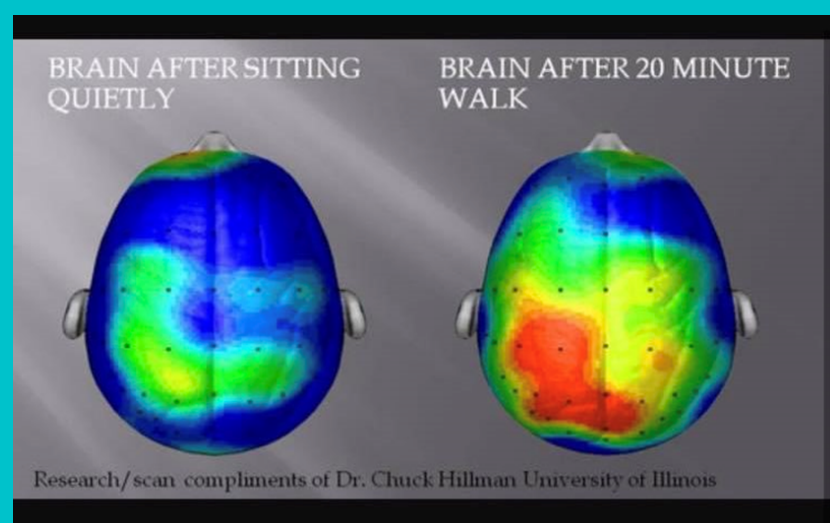
Play comes in many forms. It can be active, passive, solitary, independent, assisted, social, exploratory, educational or just for fun.

It can happen indoors or outdoors. It can be structured, creative, messy, entirely facilitated by the imagination or can involve using the latest gadget. What is important is that children have the freedom to choose how they play.

## THE SCIENCE

Children learn most when they are engaged. Children are engaged when they are initiating their own play and following their interests. We can measure engagement levels using The Leuven Scale. Our observations consistently show that our learners in Elrick can show high and extremely high levels of engagement when they are playing.

**When children are engaged, they are learning!**



- [Leuven Scale for Engagement and Wellbeing](#)



## WHY PLAY IN PRIMARY ONE?

At Elrick School, we strive to ensure the transition from nursery to primary one is smooth. To do this, we utilise play as a vehicle for learning. We purposefully design a learning environment which mirrors that of a nursery or early learning centre. By achieving a consistent pedagogical approach, we hope to ensure children make that big step towards school life in a happy and settled way.

**Happy children learn best!**

[Curriculum for Excellence: Building the Curriculum 2](#)



[Realising the Ambition: Being Me](#)



## WHAT DOES PLAY LOOK LIKE IN PRIMARY ONE?

A **literacy rich classroom** is full to bursting with opportunities to develop and strengthen literacy skills. Children are often found writing menus and taking orders in the class café, noting medical records in the vet and inventing stories at the writing table. We can hear language development as the children navigate family life in the role play house. We see fine motor strength being developed at the playdough table, just in time for putting that pencil in their hands.



**Numeracy** skills are developed and strengthened while creating structures with large wooden blocks including fractions and estimation. We see children exploring capacity at the water tray all while creating 'potions' or 'lemonade'.

We hear children develop and practise essential counting skills while making cakes at the playdough area, counting their cakes in 2's or subitising using the muffin tray.

## TAKE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF



[Snapshot of Play in P1](#)





# TODAY WE ARE TEACHING THE ADULTS OF TOMORROW



For many of our learners, their future jobs have not even been invented yet. Play helps us equip our learners with the transferable skills they will need to succeed.



## META-SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Meta-Skills are innate, timeless higher order skills that create adaptive learners and promote success in whatever context the future brings.

At **Elrick School**, we place skills at the heart of our curriculum. We recognise how essential the development of these skills are within the context of developing the young workforce.

Play offers the opportunity to support and challenge our learners to develop these skills.

### Social Intelligence

Communicating  
Collaborating  
Feeling  
Leading

### Self Management

Focusing  
Integrity  
Adapting

### Innovation

Curiosity  
Creativity  
Sense Making  
Critical Thinking



## WHAT DOES PLAY LOOK LIKE BEYOND PRIMARY ONE?

### Play Projects in First and Second Level

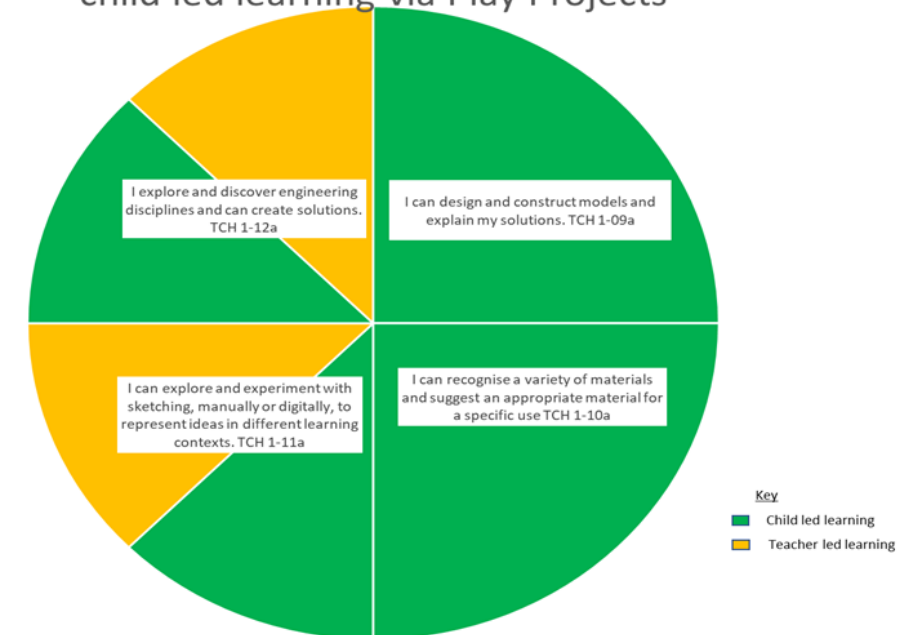
Through a research study and the introduction of 'play projects', Mrs Coney has paved the way for play beyond primary 1. 'Play Projects' are providing a space for learners in

primary 2 to develop, practise and extend technology, design, literacy and meta skills. By providing this opportunity through the lens of play, the children are highly engaged and so learning is deep and meaningful. This practise in P2 is also creating a smooth transition for P1 pupils who are used to a child led play based environment.

**P6 pupils take part in weekly purposeful play sessions.** These sessions take the form of 'play projects' too. Pupils brainstorm topics they would like to explore during these sessions and are given the freedom to take the project in their chosen direction.



Craft, Design, Engineering and graphics EO's covered through child led learning via Play Projects



### Outdoor Learning and Pupil Voice

During our outdoor learning sessions with Mrs Scott, it has become clear when gathering pupil voice across the school, that free play outdoors is what our learners would like more of. The outdoor environment provides the perfect open ended setting to allow our learners at **Elrick School** to develop a wide range of meta-skills. They achieve this through den building, rope work and loose parts play.