# Apollo After School Club

## Play Policy

All children are entitled to play; it is intrinsic to their quality of life and an important part of how they learn and enjoy themselves.

According to the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2026)*, "Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals, and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play and learning that is guided by adults."

At Apollo After School Club we recognise the importance of play to a child's development and follow the Playwork Principles. As playworkers we support and facilitate play, and do not seek to control or direct it. We will never force children to participate in play but allow children to initiate and direct the experience for themselves.

### Facilitating play

We support and facilitate play by:

- Providing an environment which is safe and suitable for playing in.
- Setting up the Club so that activities are ready before the children arrive.
- Providing a range of equipment, resources and activities on a daily basis, and keeping a record of these to ensure that varied play opportunities are offered
- Encouraging children to request additional or alternative equipment as they choose, and if a request has to be refused, explaining why.
- Not expecting children to be occupied at all times.
- Making outdoor play available every day, unless the weather is particularly bad.
- Involving children in planning activities, to reflect their own interests and ideas.
- Planning activities that enable children to develop their natural curiosity and imagination.
- Allowing children freedom of creative expression, particularly in artistic or creative play.
- Intervening in play only when necessary: to reduce risks of accident or injury, or to encourage appropriate social skills.
- Warning children in advance when an activity or game is due to end.

### *Play areas and equipment*

- All indoor and outdoor play areas are checked and risk assessed daily before the children arrive in accordance with our **Risk Assessment** policy.
- The Club keeps an inventory of resources and equipment, which is updated regularly and reviewed to identify where any additional resources are required.
- Children are involved in selecting additional equipment and resources for use at the Club.
- The resources used at the Club promote positive images of different ethnic backgrounds, religions, and abilities, in line with our **Equalities** policy.
- The Club has a selection of fiction and non-fiction books, suitable for all age ranges.

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| This policy was updated and adopted by: **Apollo Youth Club** | Date: August 2026 |
| To be reviewed: July 2027 | Signed: Jackie Daniel, Chair |

Written in accordance with the *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2026): Learning and Development requirements [1.16-1.18], Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment [3.78 – 3.81]*