**5.g WEAPON & SUPERHERO PLAY POLICY**

Weapon & Superhero Play Policy

At Woolston preschools we recognise that each child is unique and we will do everything to support children to be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of secure and loving relationships, as well as having the opportunity to learn in a positive and stimulating environment.

**Birth to 5 matters- Range 4 in imaginative play asks that the children have opportunities to:-**

***Uses everyday materials to explore, understand and represent their world – their ideas, interests and fascinations.***

***Begins to make believe by pretending using sounds, movements, words, objects.***

Most children enjoy engaging in imaginative play that relates to, and makes sense of, the world that they live in. For lots of children this imaginative play contains a strong element of weapon and superhero re-enactment. Re-enacting weapon use is a universal language of play for children and usually results in high levels of engagement for the children actively involved in it.

Research and writings suggest that children learn important lessons by exploring these themes in a safe arena of play, for example, concepts such as good and evil, life and death, strength and power, gender and identity.

At Woolston preschool we feel it is important to create a whole preschool approach of which staff, children, parents and other agencies have a clear understanding. This policy is a formal statement of our approach to children’s weapon and superhero play.

**Principles that underpin the policy**

Approaches to teaching and learning in role play should reflect the interests of the children and not exclusively those of the adults

All children’s emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement should be assessed in relation to this style of play

Weapon/superhero play should motivate and challenge children

Woolston preschools will acknowledge the positive aspects of the character of the superhero and highlight the negative aspects of weapon use and physical violence at a level that is appropriate to the age and needs of the children. This will be mainly done through story, drama and appropriate discussion

Ongoing opportunities for quality imaginative play are not overlooked or left to chance, but thought about and planned in advance

Children should enjoy the play opportunity

Parents and carers need to feel well informed and comfortable with the approach to weapon/superhero play and the principles that underpin it

**Procedures**

* If children wish to make a weapon then this will be supported by a practitioner, as it may be an ideal learning opportunity to follow their interests.
* Children will be allowed to be creative with the props they use during their play, providing it will not break, hurt others and is observed by a practitioner.
* When superhero or weapon play is taking place, a practitioner will be nearby to observe and extend play.
* The practitioner may introduce other storylines or characters to develop this in a creative way.
* Superhero costumes brought in from home are allowed into preschool, just as princess dresses or fairies are allowed. This will help practitioners to plan for individual children's interests.
* Conflicts and disagreements will happen, as it would in any play, and this will be dealt with by a practitioner listening, discussing, compromising and supporting the children in resolving the problem.
* If parents are concerned by weapon/superhero play, then they are asked to speak to a member of staff and may be referred to the preschool deputy or preschool manager. Their concerns will be taken seriously and the issue will be addressed.

**Continuing professional development**

The staff in the setting know what the development matters and Early Years Foundation Stage profile contain and how to interpret the scale points in relation to role play.

All staff are confident in making assessments through the observation of children and using their own professional judgement

Staff plan opportunities for role play collaboratively checking that continuity and progressions are evident and based on children’s preferences and interest

This policy will be reviewed regularly and will assess how we can best support, assist and facilitate weapon and superhero play.

**This policy was adopted at a meeting of Woolston and Woolston Adventure Pre-Schools held on September 2019**

**Latest Review December 2023**

**Role on committee: Nominated person Woolston Preschool manager**

Signed by Name Gemma Woodward

Date Date

Name of Signatory: Signature