

Gaineamh Sand



Foghlaim/learning

Learning across all six areas of the curriculum can take place in the sand area. It is an area which offers opportunities for children to:

- * Refine the personal, social and emotional skills of turn-taking and co-operation. (the youngest children often spend time here, sometimes alone, sometimes with others of differing ages.)
- * Enhance their speaking and listening skills
- * Develop their understanding of mathematical concepts relating to weight, measure, size and making comparisons
- * Develop their understanding of aspects relating to knowledge and understanding of the world, including the investigation of materials and their properties.
- * Develop their fine motor skills as they use tools and pour sand through funnels into small containers
- * Engage in imaginative play by creating imaginary worlds.

Suíomh/Location

- Some naíonraí have two sand areas— one for dry sand and another for damp sand—as the properties of sand are so different and allow for such diverse learning experiences.
- In such cases, naíonraí usually position the damp sand tray outdoors or near the entrance to the outdoor play area.
- If there is only room for one tray ensure the children have opportunities to experience sand in all its forms.

Pleanáil/Planning

- Staff need to plan to ensure that children can use the sand area in a wide variety of ways. Children need access to this area every day.
- If there is only one tray ensure that children have opportunities to experience sand in all its forms.
- Dry sand can be enhanced by the addition of coloured sand, glitter or sequins.
- Plan to change dry sand to wet sand with the children. Add water in small amounts and discuss with the children what happens as more water is added.
- On some occasions turn the damp sand into wetter sand so that children can see that it is no longer mouldable and has completely different qualities. Sometimes add washing up liquid or bubble bath for the children to whisk and make sand 'mousse'. When this sand dries out it will appear to have a more powdery texture.
- Once the staff team have decided on the consistency of the sand they need to plan to make available resources to support the planned learning.
- Monitor the use of the sand area to ensure a balance of activities to support all six curricular areas.
- Monitor the use of the sand area and use observations to inform future planning.

Aiseanna/Resources

Many resources can be used in the sand area, but these should not all be available every day. Basic resources should include:

- A good quality sand tray at the appropriate height
- Assorted graded containers
- Buckets and spades
- Trowels, rakes and combs
- Sieves colanders and tea-strainers
- Sand wheels
- Flower pots
- Small equipment- tiny spoons, tweezers, film containers
- 'treasure' - nuggets, sequins, beads, beans painted gold
- Cooking utensils including saucepans
- Scoops and spoons
- Assorted containers including bottles and boxes
- Natural objects- rocks, twigs, shells, cones and plants



Eispéireas agus gníomhaíochtaí/ experiences and activities

Plan activities that expand the children's knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes.

- Use materials to enhance creative play.
- Provide mark making equipment
- Provide an assortment of graded materials.

Tacaíocht foghlama/ supporting learning

The adult role:

- Ensure that the sand area and resources are well maintained.
- Plan to spend time in the sand area, acting as a role model in the use of equipment
- Create an exciting environment which stimulates children's creative and imaginative play
- Provide resources that encourage children to investigate materials and tools
- Ask open-ended questions that encourage investigation and help children hypothesise and experiment
- Introduce, use and reinforce language which is specific to learning in this area.

Teanga/language

Introduce, use and reinforce the language specific to the sand area

Tirim tais buicéad spád gráinne mús criathar síothlán doirt tochail patrún lán folamh trom éadrom níos mó ná níos lú ná cothrom rianta mór beag
Dry damp bucket spade grain mousse sieve colander pour dig pattern full empty heavy light more than less than balance tracks big small

