

Outdoor Environment Zoned Areas / Learning Bays

Creating different zones or learning areas in your outdoor environment can be a great way to provide a range of activities and stimulus to help develop different skills.

If you do not have much space you can also set up different zones / learning bays on different days or at different times.

In this section you will find the following to help you create different learning /zoned areas:

1. A quick reference sheet showing the key skills and key Startwell characters linked to each area
2. More detailed fact sheets on each of the areas which contain:
 - a. Practical tips to create this zone in different sized gardens
 - b. Startwell linked activity ideas

	Main Startwell Characters Involved						
Learning Bay / Zone	Suzy Startwell	Katie 180	2 Snacks Max	Sammy Skills	Fay 5aDay	Active Azra	Micky Me Size
Large-Movement Area	✓	✓		✓		✓	
Small-Equipment Area	✓			✓		✓	
Climbing/ Balancing/ Different Gradients Area				✓		✓	
Mud Kitchen	✓			✓	✓		✓
Sensory/Messy Play	✓		Depends on activity	✓	Depends on activity	Depends on activity	
Food Growing/ Gardening/ Digging	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Snack Area	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Sand and Water Areas	✓			✓		✓	
Imaginative Area (Open ended play / exploration)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Creative Area (Art/ Design / Music)				✓	Depends on activity	✓	
Large-Scale Construction Area	✓			✓		✓	
Quiet Area	✓			✓			
Wheeled-Vehicle Area				✓		✓	
Baby / Young Children's Area	✓			✓		✓	

General Practical Information & Tips for the Zones

Practical Tips

- Complete a risk assessment of the area
- Complete a risk assessment of equipment that will be used
- Make sure the equipment is accessible and has storage space to aid tidy up times
- Label storage areas / boxes with a name and picture
- Look at the age ranges using the area to ensure that equipment is age/ stage appropriate
- Create outdoor activity books for the different zones. You may want to laminate some pictures for the outdoor area showing a variety of activities / children doing different activities to support children if they need extra ideas for that zone or reminders for staff
- Make sure the areas are changed regularly to follow children's interests/ themes you are covering throughout the setting
- Create zones where no furniture is static so the area can be used for a variety of games and activities
- The outdoor environment should be used in all weather and provisions should be in place in order to do this
- If you are planning to use tyres to grow food in this is the current advice linked to concerns about the rubber leaching into the soil:
 - Line the tyres so there is a barrier between the tyre and soil
 - Change the tyres each year
 - Avoid growing root vegetables in them, only grow produce which are above ground

For more information and ideas see the Startwell page on Pinterest and look at our Skills of the Month sections in the Startwell Newsletters

Zoning Information for... Large Movement Area

Purpose

- Somewhere where children can develop big movements, locomotor and gross motor skills
- A space to dance, run, race, jump, hop, crawl and other high energy movements
- A space to try throwing and using a bat
- This could be a multi-purpose area for planned and child led activities

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- Create an area where no furniture is static so the area can be used for a variety of games and activities
- Is the flooring suitable for dancing and running? If not can it be changed?
- You can create a stage area using pallets and plywood if you have a large area
- Play music outside to encourage free movements
- Collect a variety of balls, bean bags and bats etc. for children to use outdoors
- Plan for large gross motor activities and for high energy activities outdoors – if you do not have space use a local space e.g. park / playing field

Don't forget to talk about the Startwell characters
(see above)

Activity Ideas

High Energy Activities

- Having a dance session outdoors
- Play Simon (or Suzy Startwell) said using high intensity activities to make the heart go boom
- Play chase games, running freely, food themed relay races
- Use your Startwell cubes with high energy activities such as running, jumping, dancing
- Set up a high intensity obstacle course where children have to run, jump, hop etc.

Large movement skill development

- Read active stories outside and follow the large motor actions
- Pretend to be animals, fruits, vehicles etc. – can you move like a/make the shape of a...
- Play copy me copy you games

Large movements with equipment

- Set up activities for the children to catch, throw, roll, kick balls/ bean bags
- Set up activities for the children to use bats/ rackets etc. to hit or move balls/ bean bags

Zoning Information for... Small Equipment Area

Purpose

- To experiment with different equipment of different shapes, sizes, weights e.g. balls, hoops, bean bags
- Develop skills with different small equipment through free play and planned activities
- Area for developing manipulation skills

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- The Small Equipment Area is a great space to support children's manipulative skill development.
- Ensure this area is well supervised and that small objects are out of reach from the babies, especially if they are using the outdoor space at the same time.
- Create boxes which contain different pieces of equipment that the children can use and engage with:
 - Balls – footballs, baskets ball sets, sensory balls, bell balls, foam balls, small balls
 - Rackets and Bats
 - Skipping ropes, hoops, quoits, bean bags
 - Creative dance equipment – scarves, wrist ribbons, ribbon bells, pom pom
- Explore how the equipment moves, feels, and reacts.

Don't forget to talk about the Startwell characters
(see above)

Activity Ideas

Bean Bags

- Use Sammy Skills to develop fine motor skills by pinching, squeezing, stretching bean bags
- Use Suzy Startwell to demonstrate movements with children and ask them - What do they feel like? What do they sound like? Can you hear the beans as you shake them?
- Ask the children to walk round balancing a bean bag on their arm held out in front of them like Sammy Skills. Try balancing it on other parts of the body e.g. shoulder, head, foot
- Test your core strength – try to sit down keeping the bean bag on your foot. Then try to lie back with the bean bag on your foot. Do you have the core strength to wave your arms at the same time
- Try to throw the bean bags at the cones to flip them upside down like Active Azra. Activities which provide a reaction, i.e. cone flipping, will engage the child more

Balls

- Set up an obstacle course using the balls. Can you roll the ball crouched down? Can you dribble the ball? Can you bounce the ball? Can you throw/kick the ball into a target?
- You could also incorporate your bats and rackets
- Have Startwell Character targets for the children to try to hit with their balls or bean bags and discuss the messages

Zoning Information for... Climbing / Balancing Area

Purpose

- Develop skills and abilities in balance, co-ordination, climbing, swinging, strength, self-confidence and self-awareness
- Develop both static stability and dynamic stability
- Be able to climb up and climb down with control
- Develop different muscles e.g. core strength, upper-body strength

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- Low level balancing is a good activity to begin with
- Collect a range of equipment so that children can make their own balancing areas e.g. wooden/plastic beams, large stones, tyres, crates, pallets, plastic tubes, walking tins, logs, chalk
- Low level ladders can be used for balancing, climbing and other activities
- If you do not have different gradients in the garden you can create some using ramps, blocks, large outdoor bean bags
- In small spaces having portable equipment enables you to create an open space for different equipment/ activities
- Think about your setting rules for the area e.g. amount of children allowed in the space at one time, height of buildings that they have created to climb on, what actions can they complete on the gradients etc.
- Provide opportunities for both static and dynamic stability

Don't forget to talk about the Startwell characters (see above)

Activity Ideas

Balancing

- Start with low level balancing such as walking on a chalk or tape line
- Set up a balancing course that is low level and secure for children to test out their skills. Use planks on tyres, stones or crates as they become secure
- Balance a plank of wood over a tube and support the children to balance on it, initially holding their hands then eventually on their own
- Create a tight-rope / slack-line at a low level between 2 low fences/ trees.
- Stilts can be made out of large used tins, encourage the children to walk from one end to the other
- Create a rope swing from a tree or frame

Climbing

- If you do not have a climbing frame create a low level climbing wall, tyre tower etc. for climbing or visit your local park if they have one
- Place low level ladders around the area to encourage climbing, place the ladder over 2 tyres for children to crawl/ climb across

Different Gradients

- Climb up the gradients/ hills/ ramps and roll/run/crawl back down. Can they collect Fay 5 a day items that are hidden up high?

Zoning Information for... Mud Kitchen Area

Purpose

- To practice food preparation skills (without using food)
- An area to role play, create and be imaginative

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- When planning a mud kitchen consider how all ages of children may use it, for the younger children why not make a low-level one, enabling non-mobile children to join in the whole experience
- Involve parents/carers/grandparents in the construction process and for donations of old pans and utensils, a great way to develop parent partnership links
- Old pallets, tyres, kitchen cupboards are ideal for using to create a mud kitchen. You can start off basic and then develop it further over time
- A very simple idea for low-level mud kitchens is placing two tyres next to each other and inserting washing up bowls into the middle of each tyre; this is perfect for young children
- Mud kitchens are ideal for all year round outdoor play. A spot of rain can often help to make the mud even more gloopy and fun!

Don't forget to talk about the Startwell characters
(see above)

Activity Ideas

- Explore the garden and find natural resources (leaves / sticks / stones / acorns) to make a recipe in the mud kitchen, use different movements, stretching, bending etc. An extension activity for older children could be to make an outdoor recipe book
- Make a mud kitchen restaurant. The children can take turns at being the waiter, the chefs and the customers. An outdoor white board or chalk board could be used for a menu board
- Make food stones to use in the mud kitchen creations. How many of their 5 a day can they fit into their mud kitchen dishes
- To increase the amount of physical activity, hide mud kitchen equipment around the garden and get the children to go on a treasure hunt to find them
- Plan activities to develop skills such as pouring, stirring, scooping, spreading, mashing, mixing together

Zoning Information for... Sensory / Messy Area

Purpose

- To experience nature, what is outdoors
- To experience messy activities where it is easier to clear away
- Link messy / sensory play to nature / outdoor themes

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ Think about the activities you do inside, can they be replicated outside?
- ☼ Create a range of sensory bins/boxes e.g. farm and harvest; flower garden; planting. You can link to books such as The Very Hungry Caterpillar
- ☼ Encourage children to use all of their senses – touch, sight, smell and sound. Be careful with taste as some things can be poisonous!
- ☼ Have bowls of soapy water, so children and staff can wash their hands (and feet)
- ☼ Remember to reiterate health and safety messages
- ☼ All staff and children to wash their hands after being outdoors

Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Paint with natural resources such as leaves, twigs, pebbles and stones exploring the different textures they create
- ☼ Try sensory painting using hands/feet
- ☼ For younger children/babies use edible finger paints. You can make these from yoghurt and food colouring or very well-cooked fruits/veg that have been blended until smooth
- ☼ Explore the textures and scent of different herbs
- ☼ Scavenger hunt – call out on an item to be found. Focusing on texture, colour and shape
- ☼ Create leaf kebabs. Encourage the children to find as many different coloured and shaped leaves. Then practice threading on to suitable sticks
- ☼ Use a sticky backed label to make colour postcards. Search for different coloured and textured materials e.g. leaves, stones, grasses, petals etc.
- ☼ Build fairy houses for your fairy garden using natural resources
- ☼ Create nature pictures
- ☼ Refer to the mud kitchen, food growing/digging and creative zone ideas

Zoning Information for... Food Growing / Digging

Purpose

- Learn about planting, growing, caring for plants, harvesting and eating fruit and vegetables
- An area to dig, explore the texture of wet and dry soil and use garden equipment
- Learn about mini beasts and lifecycles

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- Have a separate digging area to practice with tools and techniques.
- Use tuff trays or plastic boxes if you are short on space
- Encourage all children to dig in the dirt. Offer a range of garden equipment/tools e.g. large spoons for younger children
- Hanging/wall mounted containers and pots are good if you are short on growing space or try wooden boxes, tubs, plant pots, grow bags, washing up bowls, buckets, old sinks & wellies
- Offer a range of tools: sieves, shovels, forks, rakes, hand trowels, buckets, watering cans
- Ask families to donate seeds and equipment
- Grow a variety of flowers, plants and herbs
- Have suitable outdoor clothing appropriate to the weather conditions for all children and staff
- Refer to our food growing newsletter articles (April-June 2018) on the Startwell website and the food growing calendar

Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters (see above)

Activity Ideas

Digging:

- Practice digging, raking and tunnelling. Children can build structures using mud, bricks and wood, make mud pies or bury 'treasure'
- Dig for spaghetti worms using tweezers to develop fine motor skills

Growing:

- Grow your own seeds e.g. runner beans. Link the activity to Jack and the Beanstalk (make it active)
- Collect seeds from fruit/veg the children have eaten e.g. apples, lemons, limes, tangerines and try to grow them
- Develop a role-play garden centre using large trays and deep sand trays for 'planting' and a shop area for selling plants, flowers and garden accessories.

Mini beasts:

- Create an insect life cycle tuff tray
- Plan a mini-beast hunt hide plastic ones among flower pots, logs, small boxes, potted plants and under stones and pebbles. Then search for real ones!
- Create bug hotels – homes for mini beasts using natural resources

Zoning Information for... Snack Area

Purpose

- Experience different eating experiences i.e. eating outdoors, in different weathers, in different areas etc.
- Follow your indoor snack routines outdoors without having to interrupt your time outdoors
- Actively experience nature in different ways

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ Think about the routine you use indoors, can it be replicated outdoors?
- ☼ Let the children know that snack will be a picnic outside using a rhyme, phrase or sign
- ☼ Trays or shallow boxes can be useful to transport the food and drink
- ☼ In summer cover food to stop flies and wasps
- ☼ Have bowls of soapy water, so children can wash their hands and help clear up

In Large/ Permanent Spaces...

- ☼ Create a special space to eat using fixed
 - Child sized picnic tables,
 - Small benches arranged to be social
 - Low table with log stools

In Smaller / Temporary Spaces...

- ☼ Create a special space to eat with removable
 - Blankets or rugs
 - Chairs from indoors
 - Fold out picnic tables

Don't forget to talk about the Startwell characters
(see above)

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Have a 2 Snacks Max or Fay 5aday picnic where you chat about the Startwell message and use the character
- ☼ Have a teddy bears picnic and invite parents to join in too
- ☼ Connect with nature by eating outdoors then leaving leftovers for the birds to eat and watch them from the window
- ☼ If you have just harvested some produce from your growing area, eat these outside
- ☼ Talk about what you are eating, can the children spot anything outside which is the same colour, shape etc.
For example "I am eating a red strawberry can you see anything else red out here?"
- ☼ Helping to carry the food and utensils outside will help the children be more active
- ☼ Build activity into the snack / picnic by having a moveable feast. Set up different eating areas around the garden and move between them to try different foods
- ☼ Create a scavenger hunt by hiding different elements of the picnic (or pictures of them) around the outdoor space

Zoning Information for... Sand / Water Area

Purpose

- Explore and experiment with textures, adding liquids to sand, properties of water
- To develop skills of pouring, filling, building with different textures
- Experiment moving water around

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ Sand pits can be made from building a square of bricks, putting 4 railway sleepers together on the ground or using a large tyre filled with sand
- ☼ If outside space is limited a large plastic box with lid could be used as a pack away outdoor sandpit
- ☼ To maintain sand pits ideally cover them to protect from the rain and animals. Plastic sheets weighted down could be used for this
- ☼ Equipment that can be used in a sand or water tray/pit:
 - Watering cans
 - Buckets and spades
 - Spoons
 - Sticks
 - Combs
 - Sieves
 - Moulds
 - Pots and pans
- ☼ Ensure that there is suitable clothing for the children such as wellington boots and splash suits for water play.

**Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)**

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Cucumber water – put water in a plastic container and add slices of cucumber. Let the children explore the texture of the cucumber and flavour of the water.
- ☼ Get different size jugs and bowls and get the children to practice their pouring skills. For older children try and get them to move a measured amount of water from one area to another by pouring from jug to jug. How accurate have they been?
- ☼ Put old cooking equipment in the sand pit and get the children to make a 'recipe'. Get them to practice weighing, pouring, stirring, sieving the sand.
- ☼ Hide food 'treasure' in the sand and get the children to find them. This could be plastic or real food. The food could be ingredients for a recipe, different coloured foods to colour match or healthy and unhealthy food to sort.
- ☼ Develop gross motor skills and upper arm strength by washing windows with rollers and squeezes.

Zoning Information for... Imaginative Area

Purpose

- An area for open ended play and exploration, to role play
- To help children develop their skills and experiences through imagination



Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- As a staff team make a list of the contexts for imaginative play for example doctors, emergency services, vets, farm, zoo, restaurants, travel agents, hairdressers, library, garden areas, fruit/veg shop, florists, shops, schools, offices, pirates, super heroes, car wash, camping, sea sides, fairgrounds, forts, archaeologist building sites, home corner, washing babies, secret hideouts, etc.
- Collect a range of open ended objects and props that can be used in a variety of imaginative play
- Labelling the boxes of objects allows easy creation of the area to take place
- Try using deconstructed role play areas that are not ridged so that children can develop them themselves
- Create an area where no furniture is static so the area can be changed by the children to create a range of imaginative areas
- Involve the children and parents in creating the area – can they bring things in from home?
- Create a space for small role play areas – race tracks, dinosaurs, fairy houses etc...

**Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)**

Activity Ideas

- Support children to talk about their interests and design the role play area around them
- Help the children go on collection hunts around the setting to find extra equipment to create their desired areas
- Create an imagination circle to develop and explore their imaginations and dreams
- Use music in the outdoor environment to assist with children's imagination i.e. sounds of the sea and imagine you are on a ship sailing to a deserted island, or sounds from the rainforest that you're trekking through
- Print and cut out the Startwell characters and leave them in the imaginative area. Can the children come up with stories linked to the Startwell messages?

Zoning Information for... Creative Area

Purpose

- To allow children to be creative
- An area for art, design and music
- Children will have opportunities to listen and respond physically to sounds they hear

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ Build up a trolley/box of resources & materials
- ☼ Use the resources around you – leaves, pebbles, play equipment
- ☼ Squirty bottles and old washing up liquid / paint bottles are great for water play/art

Paper...

- ☼ Rolls of paper / lining paper are great for large surfaces
- ☼ Try hanging up sheets / large sheets of paper for art
- ☼ Use clips / stones to hold paper in place

Painting on other surfaces...

- ☼ Pieces of wood, bark, boxes
- ☼ Make your own blackboard with blackboard paint

Sound

- ☼ Collect items which make different sounds
- ☼ Use kitchen items, utensils, boxes, buckets
- ☼ Think about different types of sounds i.e. Banging, Tapping, Blowing, Scraping, Clicking, Splashing

Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters (see above)

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Create some Startwell Story stones and tell / act out the stories/ key messages outside

Scavenger hunts

- ☼ Go on an active scavenger hunt to collect natural resources, encourage the children to stretch high, look down low etc.
- ☼ Use these collected natural resources to make into brushes for mark making, make natural pictures / art / shapes, create nature postcards by sticking to labels

Music

- ☼ Allow space to listen to the surroundings and respond physically, act out the sounds, find things that make those sounds
- ☼ What might different foods sound like?
- ☼ Make your own instruments e.g. shakers from food items such as pasta and rice

Painting

- ☼ Slide painting allows the children to climb, reach and balance whilst watching the paint drip down the slide
- ☼ Print / paint with fruit, vegetables, pasta, other foods
- ☼ Water painting with large tools creates large movements and balance

Zoning Information for... Large Scale Construction Area

Purpose

- To work with large objects
- To create large constructions
- To develop fine and gross motor skills

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ The EYFS refers to construction in many of its 7 areas including physical, mathematics and expressive arts and design. A construction area allows children to play, explore, actively learn, create and critically think all things which are crucial to a child's learning and achieving. Although this is usually part of the continue provision indoor, the outdoor environment provides a whole host of new opportunities.
- ☼ Set up a box of resources for children to use and construct with – try and place this box the other side of the garden so that children need to walk back and forth to get their construction equipment like Active Azra would.
- ☼ Don't worry about purchasing expensive construction materials, why not set up a box using natural open ended materials e.g. logs, stones, twigs, sticks, planks of wood etc.
- ☼ Try to leave a space where the construction can stand in the garden without being destroyed (or leave a camera out to take a photo) as children are very proud of their constructions.

**Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)**

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Put music on outside which has a whole host of sound effects to support with children's imagination in the construction area e.g. sounds of the sea could encourage children to construct a boat, or sounds of the jungle where they may want to construct a shelter.
- ☼ Cardboard boxes and tubes are great open ended resources – encourage children to move around using Active Azra and explore them, climb in side them and de-constructing them to see how they are put together.
- ☼ Put out a toolbox and hardhats and use it as an opportunity to talk about health and safety. The children can act as the builders and you can ring them asking for the job you would like done.
- ☼ Draw out paths in the garden and once a vehicle is constructed the children can drive along the path. You could add road signs and use this as an opportunity to talk about road safety.
- ☼ Who can build the tallest building? Who can build the widest building? Reach tall and wide and discuss the Sammy Skills you're developing.
- ☼ Ask the children to make fruit and vegetable shapes, a food stall etc. using the large construction resources

Zoning Information for... Quiet Area

Purpose

- A space for quiet activities
- Space for focused stories, rhymes, listening to sounds and music
- To provide opportunities for personal thinking / reflecting time. Positive time out
- Allowing space to rest, reflect and absorb

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ Create an area where there are less distractions and where the children feel safe and secure
- ☼ Try to find an area away from noisy areas
- ☼ This could be a designated area, a den or structure for example a cubby house, fort, tepee, hammock beneath the trees, bean hut, sunflower grove, tree house, stick tepee, large box, material, even a pair of large umbrellas can form a lovely, non-permanent hideaway
- ☼ On some occasions use a stereo to develop relaxation using calming music

Décor & Equipment

- ☼ Use natural/ pale colours within the area to create a calm atmosphere
- ☼ Collect large cushions/ pillows that are easy to wash and pale/ natural coloured teddies/ soft toys for use in this area
- ☼ Collect a variety of books for outdoor use, they could also be themed around nature / outdoors
- ☼ A range of natural material can be useful for children to cover themselves with or add to the den/ area

**Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)**

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Hold a yoga session outdoors – in the quiet area if there is space
- ☼ Use the area to hold relaxation sessions
- ☼ After the children have participated in an active event you can use the quiet area to bring down their heart rates and talk about the impact on their bodies
- ☼ Can the children take part in circle time activities that involve stretching and low intensity movements
- ☼ Help the children to sit quietly and identify sights, sounds, feelings etc.
- ☼ Plan some low intensity activities to help develop physical/ food skills e.g. dough gymnastics – squeezing, stretching, pinching etc.
- ☼ Ask children to lie on their backs and tap into each of their senses – what can they see from where they are lying? What can they hear? What can they smell? What can they feel? This can be extended to include food tasting in the quiet area. Feel the food, touch it, smell it, taste it.

Zoning Information for... Wheeled Vehicle Area

Purpose

- To enable development of skills such as pushing, pedalling, steering, controlling
- Allows development of co-ordination and spatial awareness
- To provide space to practice manoeuvring and steering safely around a course

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

Skill development...

- Riding on large vehicles is a great way to develop children's core strength. It also helps develop children's dynamic stability, balance and bilateral coordination.
- Encourage children to ride/scoot backwards as well as forwards to help develop steering control and spatial awareness.
- Support children to mount and dismount the vehicles safely.
- Using small vehicles develops pushing and pulling, balance, core stability, crawling, reaching and stretching (especially in babies)
- Movement directions

Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)

Activity Ideas

These activities will get the children active like Azra and also develop different skills like Sammy

- 🌀 Create role play themes for wheeled vehicles e.g.
 - Car wash – balance and stretch to clean different parts of the vehicle
 - Building site – twist, balance and develop spatial awareness to move items with the vehicles
 - Car park – move the vehicles into designated bays
- 🌀 Link indoor & outdoor role play areas e.g. have a shop indoors then wheel the trolley outside to the car park
- 🌀 Create a course, road or track for the children to follow, make it more complex for the older children, try adding ramps, tunnels
For large areas follow it on trikes, bikes, scooters, cars
For smaller areas push smaller vehicles around the course developing core stability and balance by crawling, pushing and stretching
- 🌀 Do wheeled vehicle relays and treasure hunts where the children have to move foods of certain colours, healthy/unhealthy foods to different places or to go and find them

Zoning Information for... Baby / Young Children's Area

Purpose

- To ensure babies and young children (pre-walkers) have outdoor experiences
- To provide a dedicated space / equipment for babies and young children in the outdoor environment

Key Startwell Characters:



Practical Tips

- ☼ Is the flooring suitable for crawling and tummy time?
- ☼ Collect a range of blankets, material and soft cushions so the children can sit/ lie comfortably
- ☼ Use tarpaulin under the sheets / blankets to keep the area dry
- ☼ Collect a range of natural objects/ toys that can be explored in sensory baskets
- ☼ Collect tyres, boxes and crates for climbing in and over
- ☼ Arrange mirrors around the space so the babies can see themselves/other elements of their surroundings
- ☼ Create a space near a tree / frame so scarfs can be hung to develop children's tracking skills. The sun will also filter through and wind will move the branches.
- ☼ Add chimes, natural mobiles, light catchers, fairy lights
- ☼ Have suitable clothing so the babies can explore other areas

**Don't forget to link to the Startwell characters
(see above)**

Activity Ideas

- ☼ Fill low level planters with sensory scented elements that the babies can explore – touch, smell etc...
- ☼ Have low level tuff trays for babies to explore sand, water, soil etc...
- ☼ Create a textured area/ pathway for exploration
- ☼ Roll out bubble wrap for babies to crawl and roll over
- ☼ Encourage the children to crawl and splash in puddles
- ☼ Read active stories, songs outside
- ☼ Put objects just out of reach of babies to encourage them to reach for them
- ☼ Set up a garden obstacle course using a series of objects for the babies to interact with e.g. boxes, tunnels, hoops, balls. Get the babies to move thorough, over and round the objects
- ☼ Babies could experience meal and snack time outside. Offering new meal time experiences keeps things interesting for babies and young children