

From 'A Team Cawdor Lesson – Our Ingredients': Thinking and Inquiry

When planning for application of the learning intention we identify opportunities for children to inquire both independently and in collaboration with their peers. This may be through a playful provocation or through an area of research.

[STAFF CLICK HERE – INQUIRY/ PLAY PEDAGOGY RESOURCES](#)



In early learning and childcare (ELC) and early primary we use [Realising the Ambition](#), alongside professional reading, to shape our approach to learning through inquiry. In primary, alongside professional reading, we use [Pyle and Danniels' Continuum of Play Based Learning](#) to guide our approach.

Free Play (Child Directed/ Child Initiated)

In ELC, our spaces are designed with our children to facilitate children's free play throughout the day based on their interests.

In early primary, the day begins with 30 minutes outdoor free play. With access to the continuous provision, children's free play is facilitated through timetabled slots throughout the day.

In P1-P7, all children have their right to play realised through 'Fun in 31'. During this time, children have free choice to explore their interests individually or collaboratively with access to resources from across the school apart from digital technology. Adults observe and interact with children, supporting collaboration and providing resources.

Collaboratively Designed Play (Child Initiated/ Adult Initiated)

In ELC, through observations, adults identify how they can extend children's learning through responsive planning. Spaces may be redesigned, or resources may be provided to provoke thinking. This supports learning in small groups or across the setting.

In P1-P7, children have weekly timetabled slots for [Loose Parts Play](#) to support children's development of the [Metaskills](#). Teachers, with children, identify key learning for each [Loose Parts Play](#) session. When planning, teachers may work across classes to support wider collaboration.

Through [Cawdor Quests](#), children and adults plan collaboratively to identify how children will develop knowledge, understanding, and skills. Children engage with a range of resources to research, collaborate, and reflect.

Our Team Cawdor Approach to Inquiry Learning



From ELC to P7

Inquiry Play (Child Initiated)

In ELC and early primary, children's individual interests are extended through interactions with adults. Through responsive planning, adults make comments e.g. "I wonder what...", ask developmentally appropriate questions, and provide resources to support children to inquire and experiment.

In middle primary, children have timetabled slots of exploratory play, with access to a range of resources. Adults interact and extend children's thinking through prompts using comments, questions, and resources.

In upper primary, opportunities for inquiry are planned for when initially exploring concepts in science, technology, and expressive arts, where children experiment with resources prior to direct instruction and problem solving.

Playful Learning (Adult Initiated/ Adult Directed)

In ELC, adults identify where it is appropriate to plan for playful experiences which will enhance children's learning on an area of the curriculum. Children are invited to engage with experiences which are supported through adult interactions, e.g. a science experiment. Resources may be available afterwards to enable further inquiry.

Across the curriculum in P1-P7, adults plan for opportunities to be playful through posing problems. When presented with a problem, both independently and collaboratively, children engage with resources to hypothesise, try various solutions, and present their findings. Direct instruction supports next steps in learning.

In P1-P7, all children engage in Masterclasses, developing learning through a playful approach. Children have the choice from a range of Masterclasses, attending three different Masterclasses throughout the year. The [Metaskills](#) are used to support children to reflect on their learning. These reflections are recorded in their Profiles.

Learning Through Games (Adult Directed)

In ELC, adults identify where it is appropriate to support areas from the pre-school developmental overviews, e.g. turn-taking, through pair or small group adult-directed games.

Across the curriculum in P1-P7, adults identify opportunities to learn through adult-directed games to support specific areas of learning. These are usually planned for to reinforce and apply learning which has been introduced through direct instruction. Games may be played independent of or supported by an adult, with children working in a range of group sizes depending on the purpose of the game. Adults also plan for games using digital technology which may be engaged with independently or collaboratively.