

# Learning Creatively

Creativity, Environment and  
Materials with Potential

Allen's Croft Children's Centre



# What is creativity?

**To think**

**To be curious**

**To be playful**

**To be imaginative**



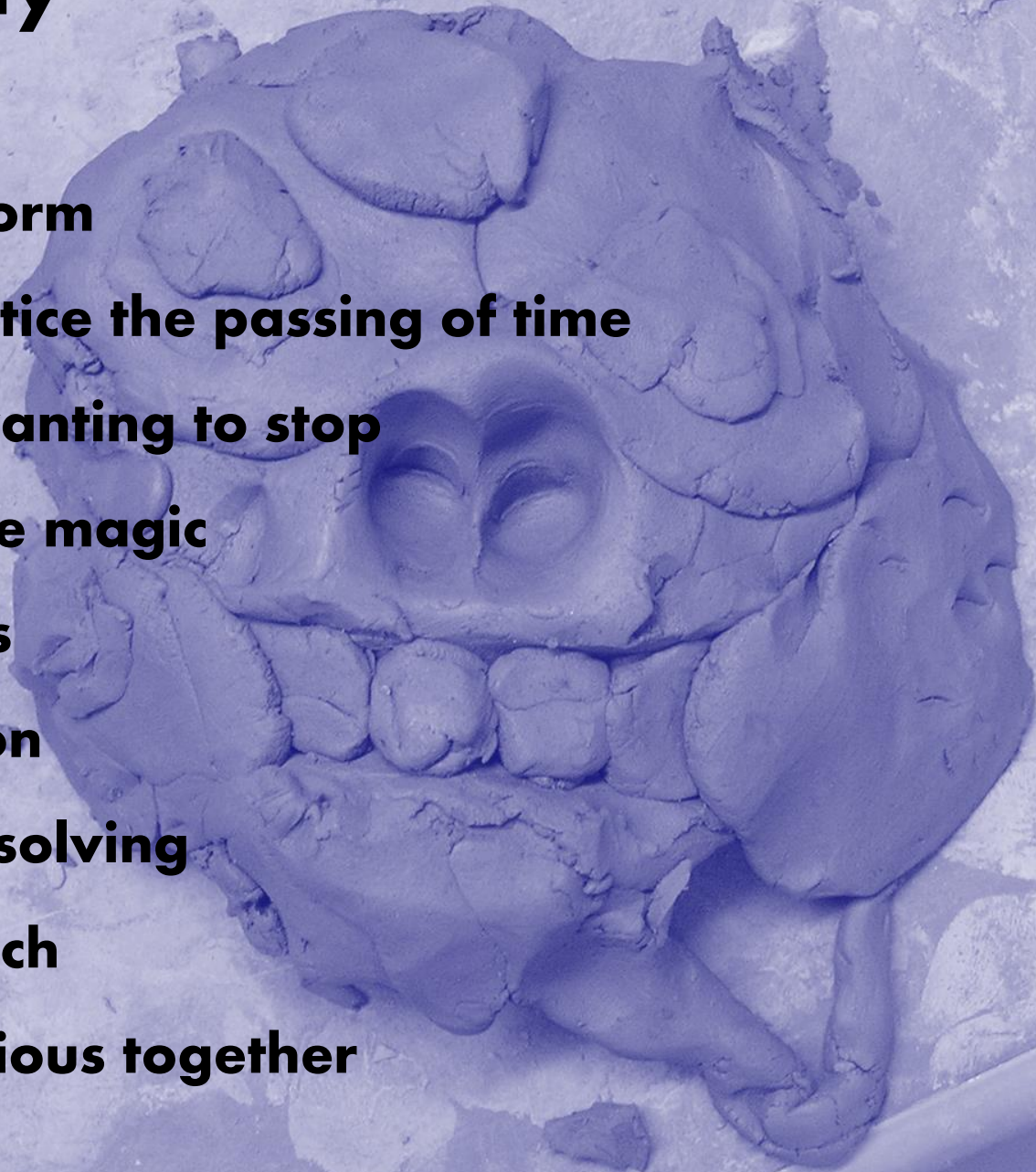
**'The ability to use the imagination to develop new and original ideas or things...'** Encarta Dictionary

**Create 'bring into existence'**

**Creativity 'involving creation or invention; showing imagination and originality'** Oxford English Dictionary

# **Creativity**

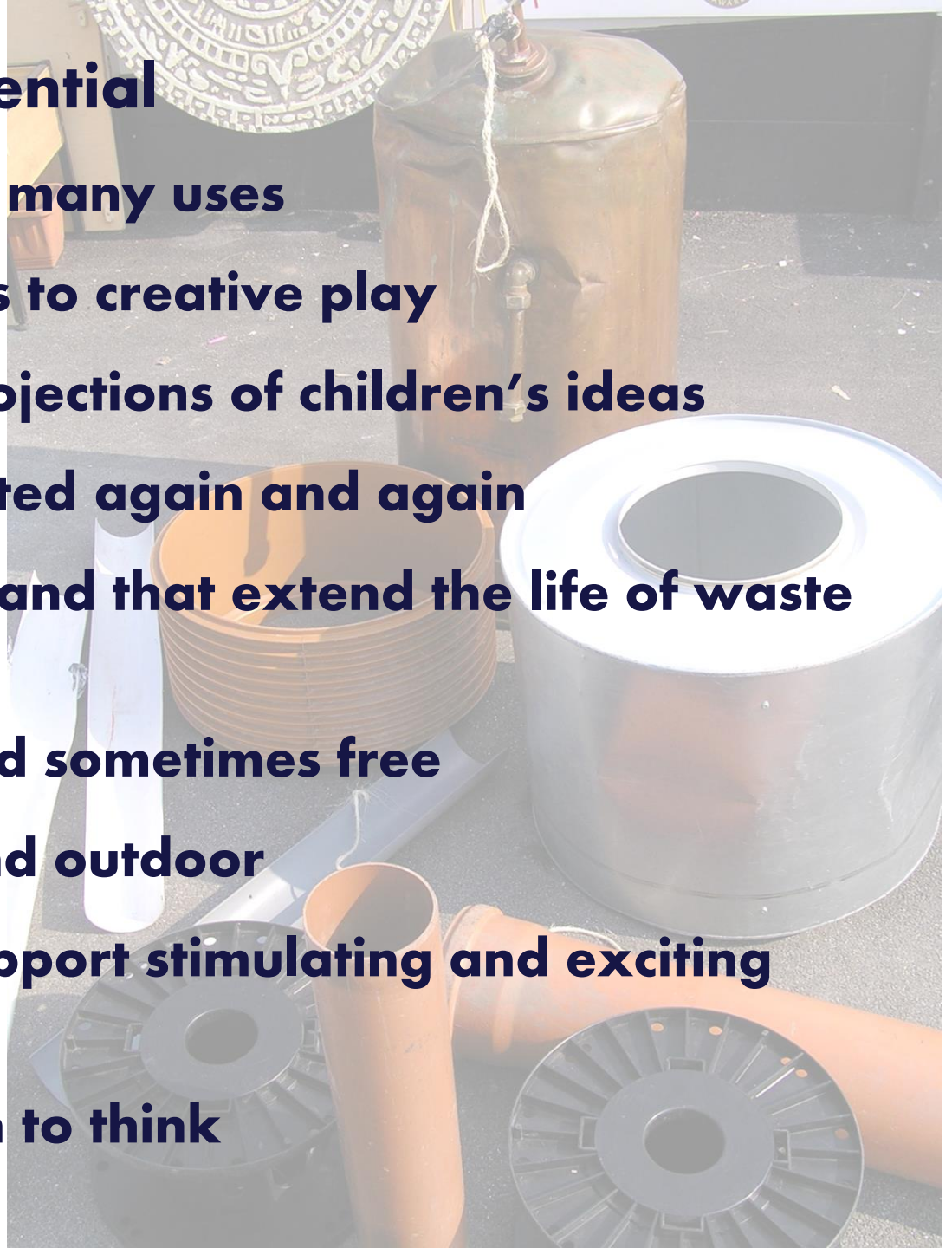
- **To think**
- **To transform**
- **To not notice the passing of time**
- **On not wanting to stop**
- **To conjure magic**
- **Freedom**
- **Expression**
- **Problem solving**
- **To research**
- **To be curious together**



'Our task is to help children communicate with the world using all their potential, strengths, and languages, and to overcome any obstacle presented by our culture...Our experience also confirms that children need a great deal of freedom; the freedom to investigate and to try, to make mistakes and to correct mistakes, to choose where and with whom to invest their curiosity, intelligence and emotions. Children need the freedom to appreciate the infinite resources of their hands, their eyes and ears, the resources of forms, materials, sounds and colours. They need the freedom to realise how reason, thought, and imagination can create continuous interweavings of things, and can move and shake the world...As adults, we need the same freedom, as well as...competence, curiosity, and imagination...in order to offer children, and to build with them, the opportunities for learning and knowing.'

# Materials with Potential

- Resources that have many uses
- That lend themselves to creative play
- That can hold the projections of children's ideas
- That can be re-invented again and again
- That are renewable and that extend the life of waste products
- That are low cost and sometimes free
- That work indoor and outdoor
- That provide and support stimulating and exciting play
- That require children to think



# **Environment**

- **That values children and families**
- **That is flexible**
- **That is transformational**
- **That can respond to the interests of children**
- **That is accessible**
- **That informs children and families and staff**
- **That allows children a sense of ownership and belonging**
- **That provides for different needs-quiet, curiosity, sensory, group, individual, shared interests, indoor and outdoor**
- **That communicates that children and families are deserving of beautiful things**

# **A Blank Canvas**

**To make the children visible**

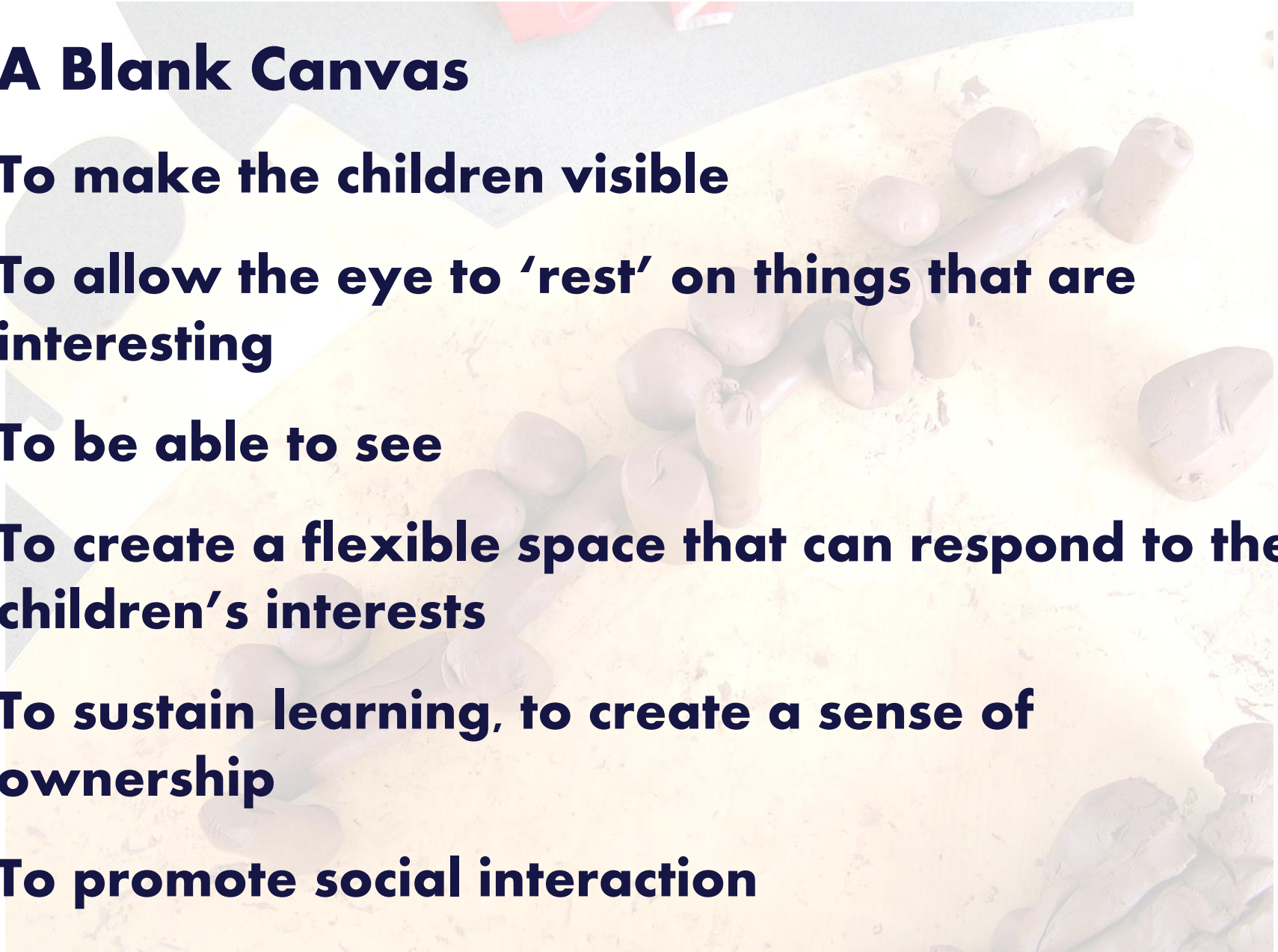
**To allow the eye to 'rest' on things that are interesting**

**To be able to see**

**To create a flexible space that can respond to the children's interests**

**To sustain learning, to create a sense of ownership**

**To promote social interaction**



# Why do we provide choice inside and out?

- Creative thinking is not something that happens within four walls
- It is part of the centres philosophy
- Some children prefer working outdoors. They can be more focused, happier and more creative.
- Some of the children's interests will evolve more successfully if they are extended outdoors
- Outdoor spaces are generally easier to move around in, providing more challenging physical activity and benefits to health as a result







# Work on Dragons

**Creativity, shared sustained thinking,  
internal and external imagery**

**Seek and delight in new experiences**

**Positive approach to new events**

**Shows confidence and independence**

**Display high levels of involvement and persists for an extended period of time  
(personal, social and emotional)**

**Initiates communication with others displaying greater confidence in more informal contexts**

**Describe main story settings, events and principal characters**

**Uses talk to give new meanings to objects and actions, treating them as symbols for other things (communication, language and literacy)**

**Respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel**

**Using imagination**

**Explore colour, shape, texture, form and space in two and three dimensions  
(creative)**

**Investigate objects and materials by using all of their senses as appropriate  
(knowledge and understanding of the world)**

**Manipulate materials to achieve a planned effect (physical)**

**Showed interest in shape by sustained construction activity or by talking about shapes or arrangements (maths)**

**Early Years Foundation Stage**

**George is engaged in the process of modelling with clay. He works for more than an hour. George is making an external model of an image in his head. His experience and skill with the clay is supporting his satisfaction in making the model. His sustained efforts are enabling him to produce an expressive and detailed piece of work. Clay is a transformational material. It can become whatever the child imagines it to be. George is thinking and working creatively; his work flows; his actions are transforming the material.**

**Young children find processes in which they can transform materials quite magical. At first they can see a change but they may not understand how it came to be. With repeated experiences they learn that certain combinations of manipulation will always do certain things. George has learnt how to combine the different skills learnt in play to create his model.**

**Knowing that you possess the ability to change and alter materials is one of the ways in which young children develop confidence and self esteem. It can make you feel very powerful to know you can transform something. Even that you can perform magic!**

**The engagement in transformational activity inspires playful language, encourages the children to share their knowledge and invest long periods of time in activities and fosters their curiosity. All these benefits are the result of creative thinking, time and a supportive environment.**

A young girl with pigtails and a boy are looking at a drawing on a whiteboard. The girl is holding a marker and appears to be drawing. The boy is holding a small white object, possibly a toy or a drawing. The background is a whiteboard with various drawings, including a large, abstract scribble and a small drawing of a face.

**Trust that children have an innate desire to learn and are curious about everything in their environment**

'...since I have... seen how intensely a child looks at things, you can't really describe that looking as naïve. My work is child-like in the sense that I am never satisfied to look at something and say that is just a pond or a tree or whatever. I want to touch it, get under the skin of it somehow, try and work out exactly what it is.'

**A Goldsworthy, Interview with the Observer 19.3.07**



PLANNING Phase Two

Children's Names	Actual questions/Thoughts During reflection	Planned Experience	Educators support	Reflection Comments after experience	Where next?
Rees Hannah Mikey Zeba Javi	① what is it about finding insects that you like?  ② which part of the garden are insects found?	using insect pots to observe more closely.  Drawing physical features of the outside environment	offer resource To stop and reflect.  Talk about health safety when using equipment  Be a positive role model in the care and respect for living things.	Rhanna "they will die if you don't put them back" why? "because they don't like it inside" Mikey "I like finding worms" Hannah "its not raining you wont find worms" "lady birds like the sunshine"  "its a caterpillar then a sheep then a cow then a butterfly"	Explore The Life Cycle Of A Caterpillar  Use Clay Work And Drawing To Make Representative Models
Chontelle Koby Rhanna Huda Hassan Tommy	why do we need to put the insects back when we have finished?				

May 07

working through frustration to get the required result and satisfaction.

Rhanna  
Rhanna  
Rhanna  
Rhanna  
Thasmya  
James  
Rhanna

observation words  
worm house  
Final Result  
James's first attempt of an observational clay work (looking at photographs)

Reception, Yr 1 - Pre-school

Relationships - keep, and give supported.  
• between children  
• children + adults  
• children acting as

Children @ primary school bring expectations + emotions with them and + old is expected of them + challenge for school staff.

Weight, Balance  
Measure  
Working together.  
Exploit mathematical problems, calculate number of steps + area to be covered.

'Look Jess it's a bear!  
Dusting  
Fragrant, fantasy, play

Fun  
Enjoyment

Friendship  
Fragrant  
Balance