ARTPAD Principles

This course was developed through research and an agreed set of Principles:

The following Principles are important for a pedagogical approach that recognises the role of drama and play when working with children and young people in re-engaging them in formal or informal education.

These Principles are also underpinned by **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 33)**

1. Methodology

Both drama and the creation of spaces where children can play have specific approaches and methodology that need to be understood. They also require a particular mind-set in order to support the development of resilience and child-driven, self-initiated learning.

In practice, this means:

- Engaging students' expertise, initiative, imagination, responsibility, strengths and diversity of learning styles for problem solving
- Encouraging unusual and creative ideas and risk taking
- Ensuring time for intrapersonal reflection and insights
- Using constructive and non-punitive evaluation and feedback
- Balancing and supporting the group with respect to individual strengths

2. Environment

The creation of an environment that considers both the human and physical aspects of the space will best support resilience and the engagement of children and young people in formal and informal learning.

In practice, this means:

- Supporting children's access to freely chosen play through the provision of space, time and resources that encourage independence and choice
- Creating environments that are safe both physically and emotionally whilst balancing them with the need to take risks and experiment
- Leaving space open for children to follow their own interests and/or being open to uncertainty
- Considering the needs of individual children as well as the whole group

- Remembering it is OK to fail and try again
- Being aware of the impact of the adult in spaces created by and for children

3. Attitude of the Adult

The respect, relationship and support developed through a positive attitude from the adults around them plays a huge part in children's self-confidence, resilience and overall development.

In practice, this means:

- Being positive and flexible in our approach
- Valuing and respecting each child/young person as a unique individual
- Being a consistent and empathetic role model
- Reflecting on our behaviour, our practice and our relationships with others
- Sharing the responsibility of learning and developing resilience with the child
- Being attuned to the need for children and young people to take physical and emotional risks
- Intervening with care and considering always the impact of the adult on the child /young person

4. The Individual within the Group

An understanding of the impact of wider influences on the child, both from home and society is important when considering their development of resilience.

In practice, this means:

- Respecting individuality and supporting equality and inclusion
- Challenging sensitively remarks and attitudes that impact on individuals
- Balancing the needs and dynamics of the group with those of the individuals
- Supporting opportunities for socialisation and individuality
- Enabling children as far as possible in resolving their own problems
- Co-operating and giving value to significant individuals in a child's life

5. Empowerment

Drama and Play support resilience through developing competencies in making individual choices, being in control of things happening around them and having an ability to influence these things.

In practice, this means:

- Supporting learning from different and multiple perspectives,
- Engaging (drama) or supporting (play) children and young people in designing their own learning process or facilitating their own activities
- Finding the balance between increasing independency (identity, self-esteem, self-awareness) and interdependency (socialisation / shared responsibility)
- Giving each child the right and opportunity to develop in their own unique way

6. Alignment

Alignment as a final principle: All our efforts should be aligned to support and facilitate the development of resilience for children and young people.

In practice, this means:

- A commitment to a whole organisational approach to the methodology and best practice as set out in the above Principles
- Committing to Alignment on two different levels:
- Personal alignment: the principles of attitudes, empowerment, trust and social aspects
- Structural alignment: the principles of environment, methods and tasks
- Developing a resilience framework with indicators for individual children
- Having a flexible, diverse and holistic approach
- Understanding at all times the importance of a happy childhood
- Having an unconditional positive regard for children and young people

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

'State parties recognise the rights of the child to rest and to leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child'

THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ARTICLE 31