

Outdoor Play and Provision Policy St. Joseph's RC Primary School.



"The best classroom and the richest cupboard is roofed only by the sky"

Margaret McMillan

Rationale

"Play underpins all development and learning for young children. Most children play spontaneously, although some may need adult support, and it is through play that they develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally."

(EYFS Practice Guidance)

Play underpins the delivery of the EYFS and children **must** have opportunities to play indoors and outdoors. Outdoor play is as important as indoor play and we must ensure that all children have the opportunity to participate in a range of innovative and engaging activities every day to enable them to develop a range of skills, based on their diverse needs and interests.

Objectives

At St. Joseph's School we aim to:

- Give children the opportunity to engage in activities in the outdoor environment as part of our continuous provision
- Include planning outdoor activities in our planning for learning
- Use our outdoor provision as a stimulating context and a natural resource for learning
- Ensure the outdoor environment offers children the opportunity to investigate and explore, problem solve, use their imagination and creativity
- Ensure the outdoors offers children opportunities to develop their large motor skills

- Ensure that children enjoy energetic activity outdoors and the feeling of well-being that it brings
- Observe, assess and record the learning that happens in the outdoor environment
- Give children opportunities to plan and have ownership for their learning in the outdoor environment
- Help children to care for the outdoor environment
- Enable children to work independently and with others
- Enable children to develop an appreciation of natural beauty and a sense of wonder about the world
- Respect the outdoor environment and to care for living things
- Enable children to manage and use the space and freedom afforded by the outdoor environment
- Give children the opportunity to relax, enjoy and have fun outdoors
- Use tools safely and effectively

Quality of Provision

At St Joseph's School we will:

- Facilitate safe and secure access to the outdoor area on a daily basis
- Provide a wide range of stimulating activities which will be organised through discussions during team meetings and planning based on children's individual needs and interests
- Organise a timetable of provision to ensure that the adult to child ratio is covered outdoors as well as indoors at all times
- Organise and provide necessary resources as appropriate, for example clothing, footwear, tools etc
- Encourage children to use a variety of natural resources
- Have a clear understanding of how the outdoor environment benefits the children's learning and general wellbeing
- Ensure there is a balance between child initiated and adult led activities
- Facilitate opportunities for children to lead their own learning in the outdoor environment
- Work directly with children to ensure that their play is supported and extended sensitively
- Ensure there is a good, safe and appropriate use of space, resources, materials and equipment
- Have a good understanding of how young children learn and are flexible enough to explore opportunities that occur spontaneously when outdoors
- Always respect the choices individual children make regarding the preferred learning environment
- Have high expectations based on each child's stage of development and individual interests
- Provide opportunities for all children to have full access to, and use of the outside environment everyday

- Have consistent expectations of behaviour, treating the outdoor environment as respectfully as the indoor environment
- Consistently monitor children's progress through observational assessment on a regular basis
- Ensure that observational assessment records are used to provide the next steps of individual learning needs and inform future planning of activities to motivate the interests of all children

Quality of Learning and Development

At St Joseph's School, we aim to provide an effective learning environment where children:

- Have access to a stimulating outdoor environment everyday, providing opportunities for them to learn and develop where best suits their needs and interests.
- Feel secure, valued, safe and confident to take their own risks
- Are interested, motivated and are excited to learn in the outdoor environment.
- Are given first hand experiences within the natural environment where they can explore, experiment and make sense of their world around them.
- Have the opportunity to lead their own learning and development through purposeful play in the outdoor environment.
- Can learn from each other and through spontaneous interaction with peers and adults.
- Can practise, consolidate and extend previous learning and experiences through opportunities of sustained thinking with adults and peers in the outdoor environment.

“Providing well-planned experiences based on children’s spontaneous play, both indoors and outdoors, is an important way in which practitioners support young children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. In playing, children behave in different ways: sometimes their play will be responsive or boisterous, sometimes they may describe and discuss what they are doing, and sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.”



(EYFS Practice Guidance)

September 2017

Review Date:

Reviewed by:

