

St James' RC Primary School - Outdoor Play in EYFS Policy

This policy has the School's Motto at its heart.

**Faith in action,
Growing together,
Walking in the footsteps of Christ**

Introduction

Play is an essential part of every child's life and vital to the processes of human development. It provides the mechanism for children to explore the world around them and the medium through which skills are developed and practised. It is essential for physical, emotional and spiritual growth, intellectual and educational development and acquiring social and behavioural skills.

Ethos

We believe that children learn through outdoor play and that this complements and enhances their indoor learning.

We aim to:

- Promote good quality, challenging, safe and accessible play for all children;
- Provide well-planned engaging activities outside similar but different to indoors;
- Provide an environment to extend and improve children's learning and well-being regardless of the weather;
- Expand children's horizons of what learning can be experienced outside;
- Fulfil the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoors as well as indoors.

All outdoor play provides opportunities to:

- Be independent;
- Be inventive and creative;
- Make choices and decisions;
- Take risks and solve problems;
- Learn and play without been controlled or supported by an adult;
- Develop individual interests and find own boundaries;
- Communicate, co-operate and negotiate with others;
- Experience a sense of adventure, excitement and fun;
- Develop fine and gross-motor skills;
- Develop physical skills for supporting emotional well-being;
- Develop an appreciation of things seen, touched, smelt and heard;
- Develop a sense of awe and wonder in the natural world;
- Experience the seasons in all their richness;
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the natural environment;
- Develop and extend cognitive skills through active experience, discovery and practice;
- Engage in new experiences;
- Revisit, repeat, re-live, recall, build-on and adapt previous experiences;
- Experiment, observe, hypothesise, draw conclusions;
- Experience quiet and secluded areas.

Also, there is something very special, which we delight in and value enormously about our outside area, something which we believe to be part of the very essence of childhood. This is the world of imagination, fairy-tale, magic, pretend, enchantment and story.

Outdoor Play supports all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Policy into practice

There must be one member of staff supervising outdoor play (not including staff who support children

with individual needs) at all times. We teach the children care and respect for each other and the environment. Children may move large or heavy objects, planks, boxes or ladders when appropriate around the area to make their own constructions. We show the children the best way to move these objects independently, or with a friend and encourage the children to ask an adult to help test their construction for safety. Children are encouraged to dress appropriately for the outdoors. We keep waterproof clothing and wellingtons in school permanently. In summer, children bring hats every day. They may have their outdoor time limited on very sunny days to avoid over exposure to the sun. We teach children safety rules and children are encouraged to manage risks. We provide children with a broad and balanced curriculum indoors and out. We designate areas for specific equipments for example, wheeled toys, balls and large construction. We provide children with honest and appropriate answers to their questions about the world around them. We make full use of prevailing weather conditions after risk assessing the conditions. Wheelchairs can access all areas.

Where does outdoor play take place?

EYFS outside area: This area comprises a grassed area with mud kitchen, an L shaped concrete area that wraps around the classroom, a raised platform area currently home to our mini 'garden'. Children have access to a range of resources including mark making cupboard, investigation cupboard, water area, sand area, construction area, physical area and scooters. Outside activity comprises a balance of directed activity, set up to promote further acquisition of knowledge or skills and to provide challenge and self-directed activity allowing children to follow their own interests. We are able to access the KS1 playground via a gate which provides larger play space.

KS1 playground: Primarily used during break time this area comprises concrete playground (variety of playground markings), large apparatus (slide, A frame, net, stepping logs), apparatus trail (balance bar, tyre bridge, stepping stones, chain bridge, wooden bridge), willow den and bug hotel. A variety of resources are available to access (ball, bats, hoops, cones, scoops, balance boards, chess, dominoes, dice, skittles). This area is shared with KS1 children to encourage play across the age range.

Forest School: Planned sessions take place in our Forest School which is located on site. There are directed activities to learn skills and 'free' time to encourage play and child led extension of ideas. Children in EYFS will access Forest school throughout the year every other week.

Safeguarding

We ensure that all staff and volunteers have DBS checks and know the school's child protection procedures. The risk assessment of the outside area is monitored weekly.

Other Policy links:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- Anti-Bullying;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- EYFS Policy;
- Transition Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be updated in line with any new developments in the school and/or any new government guidance.

It was last reviewed in: summer 2021. It will next be reviewed in: summer 2024

This statement of policy was approved by the Governing Body at their meeting on:-

Date: ___18th May 2021_____

Signed:

____Mary Hutchinson_____ (Chairperson)

____L Weekly_____ (Head teacher)