



Witton Gilbert Primary School

Play Policy

This policy sets out Witton Gilbert Primary school's commitment to ensuring quality play opportunities are available to all children. As a school we aim to improve the way we think and provide opportunities for play. We believe that play is essential for physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development. The school grounds provide a crucial place for children to experience self-initiated play.

Our Aims

Our school aims are:

- To provide children with a play setting which is both stimulating and challenging.
- To allow children to take measured risks
- To provide children with a range of environments, which will support their learning across the curriculum and about the world around them.

We aim to give the children the opportunity to:

- Explore the world around them through playful experimentation
- Develop social skills, enhancing communication, collaboration and problem solving.
- Encourage resilience and self-confidence.
- Think creatively
- Develop independence and take responsibility for themselves and others.
- Develop physical health
- Develop emotional health, allowing the balance between acting freely and allowing everyone to have their rights. Our rights and responsibilities are displayed in every classroom.
- To develop skills in self-assessing and managing risk.

What is Play?

Play is any freely chosen activity which a child finds satisfying and creative. It may or may not involve equipment or other people. It may be serious or light hearted. It may produce something or it may be done simply for its own sake. It allows children an opportunity to be creative and make decisions.

We recognise that play may need to make a noise, get dirty, make a mess and sometimes be out of the direct gaze of adults. We believe the role of the adults is to support the play process. Children will also have the opportunity for 'free range' play within the school grounds.

Respecting Rights

All children have a right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of activities (Article 31). United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

At Witton Gilbert Primary School we promote children's rights from the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. We see children's rights as a central focus in everything we do, as a framework for our teaching and learning and at the heart of our ethos.

The school has a rights respecting ethos. In our communal areas, such as the playground and hall, in which we play sports and eat, we use the following rights.

- We have the right to be happy.
- We have the right to be safe.
- We have the right to play and relax (Article 31)

Play Policy

Through our belief in children's rights, we aim to provide a secure, caring environment where all children are happy, intrinsically motivated, relaxed and able to reach their potential.

Children have the right to be happy therefore to respect this right the children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others and have fun. Adults respect this right by providing opportunities for creative, exciting play, use conflict resolution to support children and supporting children who have additional needs at playtime.

Children have the right to be safe therefore to respect this right, children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others, assess risk and tidy equipment away. Adults respect this right by assessing risk daily, encouraging children to assess risk also and helping children to tidy up.

Children have the right to play and relax therefore to respect this right the children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others and help others who need it. Adults respect this right by developing new opportunities for play, listening to children's ideas about play and supporting children who have additional needs to access play.

Risk assessment and play

An essential element of exploration within the medium of play is the opportunity for children to experience freely chosen activities, where they can take acceptable risks and challenge themselves beyond their existing capabilities. Allowing children to take acceptable risk develops their ability to judge risk independently and learn new skills.

All children both need and want to take risks in order to explore limits, venture into new experiences and develop their capacities, from a very young age and from their earliest play experiences.

Children would never learn to walk, climb stairs or ride a bicycle unless they were strongly motivated to respond to challenges involving a risk of injury.

Children work with staff to create child-friendly risk assessments of areas within the outside play areas. They consider potential risks and how they can manage these risks safely. These are updated regularly.

Where a particular child has significant individual needs that may affect his/ her ability to play safely in the grounds, then parents/ carers and the child are involved in creating personalised risk assessments in order to identify hazards and measures to control risks. These are updated regularly.

Play England

Carefully considered and comprehensive risk assessments of all play provision within the school are reviewed on an annual basis, or whenever significant change or development in play provision/equipment or child circumstances takes place.

To manage the levels of risk we will follow the guidelines below:

- Recognise the need for professional judgment in setting the balance between safety and goals.
- All staff should self-assess and manage risk, e.g. tape or cones should be used to section off play areas or equipment which are deemed to be 'high risk.'
- Ensure risks are as apparent as possible to staff and children.
- Ensure risks that children may not appreciate are controlled and managed
- Provide staff with training to supervise play setting.
- All staff are responsible for ensuring that adults are in place before the children are allowed outside.
- Staff who are unable to carry out a playground duty are responsible for arranging another adult to cover their area.
- Large, standing equipment has Level 3 checks by an independently ROSPA approved company on an annual basis .
- Level 2 checks are carried out on a 3 monthly basis by the School Business Manager and the caretaker. Any issues are reported to the Headteacher.
- Level 1 checks are carried out on a daily basis.
- The play-leader checks all equipment and loose parts on a daily basis.
- Written records are kept in the office.
- A Health & Safety audit is carried out every 2 years by LA Health & Safety Team.

Remote supervision

We may not be able to see every child all of the time, especially when the children are using the trees. All staff are assigned a zone on and it is expected that staff will move around throughout the playtime, finding out what the children are doing and where the children are playing. Staff can then check in on the children's play throughout playtime.

First Aid

All lunchtime supervisory staff carry a waist bag, which contains basic First Aid equipment. There is also additional First Aid equipment stored in the office. All of the lunchtime staff and Teaching Assistants are First Aid trained and they should be consulted with regards to more significant incidents. Any head bumps must be reported to parents via a phone call. If an incident involving a child requires a phone call home this must be discussed with the Headteacher prior to the call being made. All First Aid incidents should be recorded using the First Aid file situated in the office. For Reception children, there is a First Aid file situated in the Reception class, which is collated together with the office records.

Clothing

During the colder and wet weather wellies or walking boots should be worn by staff and children when walking on the school field. Children should also wear coats during cold weather. Parents are regularly reminded to provide these through newsletters.

Inclusion

All children are entitled to welcoming and accessible play provision, irrespective of gender, economic or social circumstances, ethnic or cultural background or origin or individual abilities. It is our responsibility to ensure adequate provision is provided.

Review

This policy will be closely monitored by the head teacher and deputy. A working group, comprising of play worker, play consultant, and parent governor, will take responsibility for managing the action plan for play.

SOME USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

www.DfES.gov.uk

www.durhamlea.org.uk/abs

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