



PLAYTIME BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that “Children have the right to relax and play and to join in with a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities”.

AIMS

It is vital that as educators, we support and value the role of children’s play. Through their play we want our children to:

- Develop and build friendships and relationships
- Learn social skills (eg. take turns, co-operate, follow rules, cope when things go wrong)
- Develop confidence and self-esteem
- Develop emotional well-being
- Problem solve
- De-stress
- Let off steam
- Exercise and keep fit
- Have fun and be happy!

Children will experience different emotions in their play such as joy, fear, anger, sadness, shock and disgust. This will be within a safe context where there are rules to help keep things in check and adults to help give support. Sometimes things will go wrong in their play and we want our children to build resilience- the capacity to thrive despite adversity and stress by coping with difficult situations through developing creative approaches and problem solving. So added to the above list is:

- Develop resilience

For some children, playtimes can be challenging either because they are getting left out of games, have no-one to play with or are on the receiving end of name calling or rough play. For other children, playtimes can be difficult because of their own anti-social or aggressive or rough behaviour.

CHILDREN'S NEEDS

The school recognises the following needs of all children:

1. physiological needs- hunger, thirst, warmth
2. safety- secure, safe
3. belonging- love, affiliation with others, acceptance
4. esteem- to achieve, be competent, gain approval and recognition

(Maslow, 1973)

To ensure that these needs are met, all supervising staff are aware of these needs. They constantly monitor, assess and question the children to ensure that these needs are fulfilled. For example, they encourage a child to eat more lunch or to drink more fluid if he/she has not had much; they look after a child and make them feel safe if he/she has fallen over; they find a child someone to play with if he/she is lonely, they give praise to a child when he/she has done well. In short, staff apply a lot of common sense practice that a parent does with their own child.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Staff follow the Code of Conduct below to ensure that there is a positive relationship between adults and children. This ensures that all children are encouraged to behave well.

1. You are warm, friendly and kind, but firm.
2. You act and speak with confidence and sincerity, and express a sense of humour naturally.
3. You treat all pupils with equal respect by listening to their opinions and considering their feelings. You are as impartial as possible.
4. By distinguishing between the deed and the doer, you never damage your relationship with the children. You may object to what the child is doing, but not to the child him/herself.
5. You set boundaries for expected behaviour and maintain these boundaries through praise and encouragement.

ORGANISATION

The playground has been developed over recent years to ensure that there is enough hard surface, space and large equipment for the children to play in. The playground is organised into four different zones:

- Chasing Zone (for running, hiding, climbing, imaginative games)
- Fitness Zone (for using hoops, skipping ropes, ankle skips, balances, walking pots, fitness trail)
- Quiet Zone (for snacking, reading, chatting, chalking)
- Games Zone (for circle games & hopscotch)

Foundation children do not have set playtimes, but in Year 1 and 2 children have a morning playtime at 10.30am. There are at least two members of staff on playground duty, including a first aider. There is no set afternoon playtime, but teachers can take their children outside if they so wish.

At lunchtime, children spend the first weeks of term in separate Foundation and Key Stage 1 (Y1 & Y2) areas. After this time, there is a phased period of encouraging Foundation children to join the children on the big playground. There are at least 9 trained lunchtime supervisors on duty (one per class).

Equipment storage is designed so that equipment does not easily get lost or damaged / tangled. Most equipment is housed in an easily accessible place for the children. However, staff on playground duty need to ensure that any equipment that is kept in the shed (eg. books) is put out at the beginning of the playtime.

At the end of playtimes, children must put away all equipment when instructed and stand still when the bell rings. The bell should be rung promptly just before the end of playtime. At

lunchtime in KS1, classes line up when their teacher arrives on the playground just before 1.15pm.

Indoor playtimes due to bad weather can have a negative effect on behaviour as children are often “cooped up” all day without the chance to run off their excess energy. This can lead to inattentive and fidgety learners. Therefore, it is important that supervising staff have a number of strategies to call on to create a happy, calm, fun, stimulating and socially enjoyable wet playtime. Wet Play Activity Boxes are available which contain a variety of activities to occupy children- such as colouring sheets, quiz and puzzle activities. One classroom within a year group can be used to show a DVD or host a “talent show” and staff also have access to a range of active games which they can lead.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING CO-OPERATIVE PLAY AT PLAYTIMES

We recognise that having fun with their friends at playtimes is a very important part of a child’s day and that for many it is the most important part of their day!

Some children do not know how to play and just have a lack of idea about what games they can play. As a school, we need to provide for these children and to make sure we are providing for their needs. This is done by dividing the playground into different zones of activities for children to participate in. Children are encouraged to use the different zones for their intended purpose.

Our Golden Rules

Our Golden Rules apply outdoors as well as indoors:

1. We are gentle- We don’t hurt others
2. We are kind and helpful- We don’t hurt anybody’s feelings
3. We listen- We don’t interrupt
4. We are honest- We don’t cover up the truth
5. We work hard- We don’t waste our time or others’ time
6. We look after property- We don’t waste or damage things.

Children are taught to say “*Please stop it, I don’t like it*” if someone says or does something to them that they don’t like. This should be spoken firmly, but calmly, with a raised hand signal. If this doesn’t work, they are taught to go and tell an adult. Sometimes an anxious parent tells their child to hit back, but this should not be encouraged on any account as it inevitably ends with children indiscriminately hitting each other and is very difficult to sort out. If a parent feels that they have no option but to say this to their child, they should come into school to talk to the class teacher or the head teacher so that alternative strategies can be sought.

Dealing with unacceptable behaviour

It is worth mentioning that most children behave very well for most of the time! But strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour need to be in place. Measures taken depend on the age or special needs of the child and the nature of the unacceptable behaviour.

For one-off incidents, staff will talk to the children involved about an incident to ascertain what has happened using the following questions:

What happened?

What were you thinking about at the time?

Who have you upset?

How do you think (name of child) is feeling?
Why are they feeling (name emotion)?
What do you think needs to happen next?

Staff will always listen to both sides of the story and endeavour to come to a fair and appropriate response. Guidance is given to explain why such behaviour was unacceptable and an apology is encouraged where appropriate. Children may be encouraged to play away from each other or helped to think of a different game. The school behaviour system of a “glum face” may be applied.

For repeated incidents, children may be withdrawn from their playtime, or told to play in a designated area. They may be given simple personalised targets on a card and rewarded by smiley faces when their target is achieved. After 10 smiley faces, the child sees the head teacher and a certificate is sent home.

For children who continue to find co-operative play at playtimes a real challenge or if a child's parent reports that their child is unhappy, is being bullied or is having any difficulty with another child at playtime, an investigation will take place to look at the underlying causes of the problem. This will be undertaken by the class teacher and/or the head teacher and will involve any or all of the following:

1. Observation of the child(ren) at play to work out what is going on and to try to establish why
2. Discussions with the child about his/her feelings and motives
3. Discussions with the other children involved in the difficulties
4. Discussions with the child's parent(s) or other children's parent(s) to help with understanding and addressing the problem
5. Making a personalised “social story” for the child. This specialist technique uses simple language to convey to the child how they should and should not behave at playtime. This story is then read regularly to the child by staff at school and can also be taken home for the parent to reinforce.

It is vital that problems are sorted out because if a child is unhappy, it can affect their self-esteem and their ability to learn. The child will continue to be monitored for an agreed amount of time and discussions between the parent and the school will be maintained during this period.

If a parent or a member of staff has a concern about a child, it is important that this is reported to the class teacher or head teacher so that it can be addressed promptly. Regular meetings between lunchtime staff and the head teacher are held so that any difficulties can be aired and resolved.

Policy Date: Summer Term 2024
Policy Review: Summer Term 2025

Equality Analysis Impact

This policy was written with reference to and in consideration of the school's Equality Policy. Does the policy have an adverse effect on employees, pupils or the wider community and therefore have a significant effect in terms of equality? **No**
Does the policy have an adverse effect upon a group with protected characteristics? (sex, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, age) **No**

Any questions or concerns regarding this policy should be made to the headteacher.