OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

OUTDOOR PLAY IN EYFS POLICY

Mission Statement
Loving and learning together on our journey following Jesus with Mary as our guiding star “Love one another as I have loved you” John 13: 34-35

Type of Policy:	Non-statutory
Approval of the policy has been delegated to:	Headteacher

Policy approved by:	
SLT member (signature):	

Date of last review:	
Term of next review:	Autumn 2023

OUTDOOR PLAY IN EYFS

“When children play out of doors, they are exercising their growing intellectual and emotional muscles, as well as their physical ones. They are developing the power to think, to feel, to do, to see and understand, to represent and express. They are imagining, puzzling, wondering, exploring, befriending and sharing”.

“Can I: Play Out” Outdoor Play in the Early Years – Bradford LEA 1995
Taken from the forward written by Mary Jane Drummond

“The best classroom and the widest cupboard is in the open air”.
Margaret Macmillan

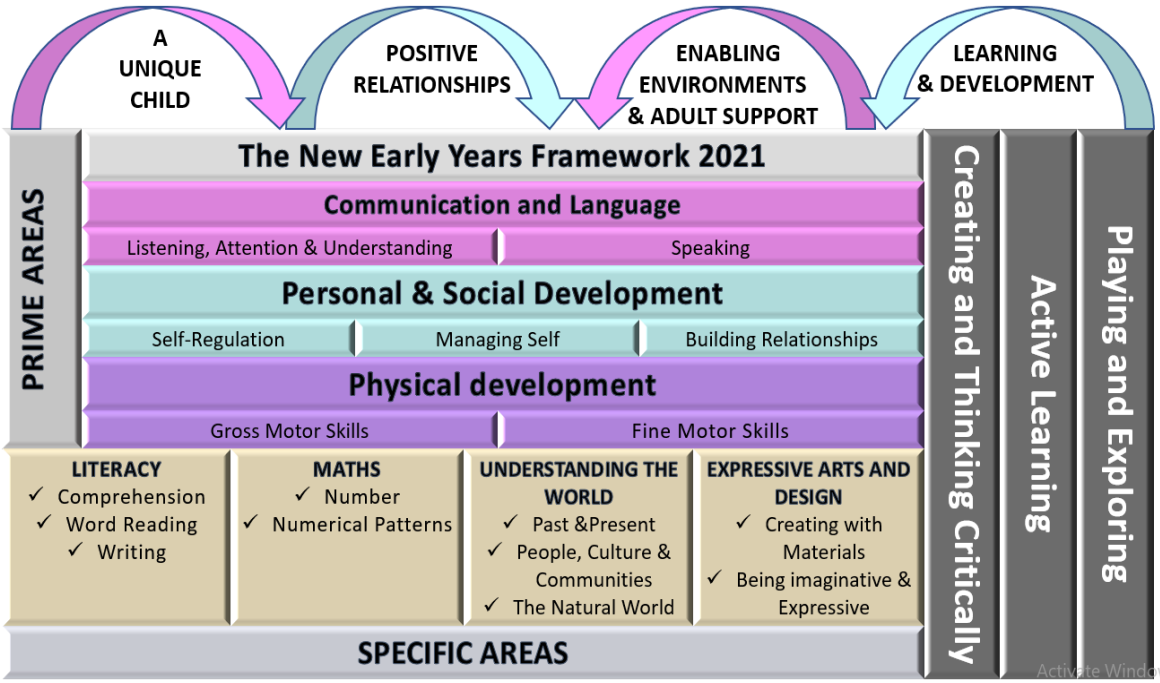
EYFS statutory Framework 2021 (Pg 36) states that: ‘Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example unsafe weather conditions). Providers must follow their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 (for example, the provisions on reasonable adjustments).

Definition: For the purposes of this document the School Outdoor Learning Environment comprises all areas which children use outside the school building, and that are conducive to Early Years multi-sensory learning experiences.

Rationale: Rifkin 1997: ‘The younger the child the more the child learns through sensory and physical activities; thus the more varied and rich the natural outdoor setting, the greater its contribution to physical, cognitive and emotional development.’

As children increasingly spend leisure time indoors it is important that schools are able to provide outdoor learning, with opportunities for creativity and child initiated activity.

The New EYFS Curriculum Sept 2021



Each of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning areas are developed through Outdoor Play.

At Our Lady's we believe that:

- Outdoor play is central to young children's learning.
- Indoors and outdoors is viewed as one combined and integrated environment.
- Outdoors is both a teaching and learning environment, where adults interact with children to extend their knowledge, skills and concepts.
- Outdoor design and layout is given careful consideration.
- The outdoor classroom offers children the opportunity to use effective styles of learning – playing, movement and sensory experience.
- Children are given a wide range of open-ended equipment and environments.
- Children are able to control, change and modify their environment.

These are the key principles that underpin effective outdoor play.

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage September 2021

Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

Intent

Our curriculum design is ambitious and meets the needs of every pupil allowing them "To Love one another as I have Loved you". Learning is rooted in Gospel values and the social teaching of the Catholic Church. Foundations of our curriculum are embedded in quality first hand experiences, designed to secure knowledge and skills by encouraging all our learners to dive deeper in their learning. We recognise the unique, individual child and so the curriculum is adapted successfully to ensure each child is able to meet their potential.

We promote imagination and creativity through a balanced, creative and challenging inclusive EYFS curriculum where learning is durable and transferable . The curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced ensuring children are encouraged to make connections , apply and reason. We recognise happy, calm confident learners are able to flourish and thrive. We encourage and promote positive learning behaviours . Emotional health and well-being embody the aims of our curriculum. Through immersion in these lifelong learning skills our children will have strong interpersonal and communication skills, which will enable them to become responsible and active members of our diverse society.

In EYFS our curriculum is designed for high level of engagement, ensuring children's interests and high quality texts are at the heart of our curriculum. We maximise every opportunity to make cross curricular links and provide real life learning opportunities to create high interest and attainment. We encourage each child to be a unique child, who is resilient, capable, confident and self assured. We build strong links with parents ensuring positive and strong relationships are established early on. We create a warm, exciting, stimulating and child led environment which encourages children to be independent learners. Communication and language is at the heart of everything we do, always listening to the child, parent and each other. We create strong links with nurseries and Year 1 to prepare every child at each stage of their transitions.
By the end of Reception year our intent is to ensure that all children make at least good progress from their starting points and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to start Year 1 ready.

Impact:

The impact of what we do is evident in the children, parents and assessments for each child.
This includes SEND and disadvantaged children.
We are able to describe each child and their likes and dislikes.
All children are given the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Implementation:

Each half term, EYFS staff introduce a new theme and text to provide inspiration and a 'hook' for learning, whilst providing the flexibility for children to follow their own interests and ideas. Children learn through a balance of child initiated and adult-directed activities.
The timetable is carefully structured so that children have directed teaching during the day. The timetable changes throughout the year to take into consideration the changing needs of the children. These sessions are followed by small focused group work. This means the teacher can systematically check for understanding, identify and respond to misconceptions quickly and provide real-time verbal feedback which results in a strong impact on the acquisition of new learning.
Children are provided with plenty of time to engage in 'exploration' throughout the variety of experiences carefully planned to engage and challenge them in the provision. The curriculum is planned for the inside and outside classrooms and equal importance is given to learning in both areas.

Introduction

At Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School we value outdoor play as an intrinsic part of the curriculum. The Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage actively promotes the provision of outdoor play. By ensuring outdoor play is an integral part of the school routine we consciously seek to transmit a positive attitude to the outdoors and enrich the child's understanding of the world around him/her. Active learning experiences outdoors are essential for young children. They give children opportunities to practise their developing skills, to explore their world and make them feel good. It is also important for children's physical, mental and emotional development. We believe that children should begin to take risks and face challenges outdoors. Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School will make provision for young children to be active and interactive, and to improve their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Staff will support their development by helping children to use all their senses to learn about the world in which they live, and to make connections between new information and what they already know. Children will be supported in developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices about their bodies. Children will grow in confidence and be able to manage risks in their play. Staff will provide time to support children's understanding of how the effects of exercise affect our bodies and what we do in response to it. The following guidelines have been developed to ensure a balance of children's safety and children's development. Before and after school at Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School, parents are responsible for the supervision of their children. Younger Siblings and pupils on outside play equipment before and after school The School's Insurance provision does not cover unsupervised siblings use of outside equipment (the child has not been taught how to use the equipment safely, or may have incorrect dress). No permission is given to siblings to play on outside equipment.

Policy into practice

At Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School we have:

- Two separate outdoor areas for the EYFS children to access. One area is located within the Nursery grounds and the other is located outside the two Reception classrooms.
- Defined boundaries in which the children can feel safe, secure and confident in both outdoor areas.
- Watchful adults to provide appropriate intervention in order to help engage children in the learning process.
- A range of large and small equipment is available in both Nursery and Reception areas. A range of cross-curricular activities which help promote interactive and independent play as well as sharing and physical skills.
- Space for growing, and caring, for plants.
- Opportunities for self-initiated activities, under adult supervision.
- Access to the wider environment at playtimes and with adult supervision.

Monitoring and evaluation

The outdoor curriculum is monitored by the EYFS lead and all EYFS staff. The effective use of our outdoor spaces and equipment, for delivering all areas of the EYFS, is evaluated through observation and by monitoring each child's progress.

Planning for the outdoor area

Careful planning is created on a termly basis with linked child initiated ideas. The outdoor environment will ensure that it enriches all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment:
Assessment is by systematic observations of each child's achievements and interests and by interaction with the children during play.
All assessments inform current and future planning.

Recording:
Floor books are created with some photos and recorded observations by all staff..

Reporting:
In Nursery and Reception, observations and achievements are reported to parents or carers in confidential interviews each term and by 'stay and play' sessions where the parents view their child's books and make comments about their child's learning and interests.
A formal report is sent home in July.

Informal discussions are encouraged and can take place with parents or carers at a mutually agreed time.

Inclusion

The outdoors curriculum of shared and physical activities is an important part of a child's overall development. At Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School we are committed to providing for each child, whatever their individual and/or special need, the opportunity to access all areas of the EYFS curriculum. We adapt the facilities and activities whenever possible, to enable all children to benefit.

Resources

Our varied resources aim to cover all areas of learning within the EYFS curriculum.

To maintain a high standard, these resources will be continually reviewed, thus enabling the maximum input in the important area of learning out of doors.

Staff Supervision

At all times children will be supervised by qualified staff. Adults must make health/safety issues a priority when outside and remain vigilant. Staff will interact with children to help develop all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Security

An adult will check that the playground gate is closed before the children go out to play. Once the session is underway, children are not allowed through the gate. (Adults collect balls etc). Staff will make a judgement on the weather/suitability. The Health & Safety group (inc Governor) will include the EYFS outdoor area in their half termly risk assessment walk and then report and respond to any risks identified. Site Manager to make monthly premises checks which include outdoor play equipment. A daily risk assessment check to be completed by staff (this will be in the form of a walk around the area to check equipment). Any actions to be taken to be communicated with all staff and as necessary to the pupils.

Appropriate footwear must be worn. If staff feel that footwear is unsuitable they will use their discretion to restrict a child from a particular area of the playground or wooded area. Appropriate clothing must be worn for outside play Scarves should be worn inside coats and staff will be vigilant with items of clothing that have hoods (protruding objects). Gloves removed for climbing. Sun Hats - notice to parents re: sun safety.

Outdoor Water Play Water aprons to be worn. Water emptied at the end of each day - at home time to allow water to drain away and dry up. Staff need to be aware of the inherent danger of water play.

Track Bikes/scooters kept in sheds and 'track' areas of the playground. Adult intervention to reduce speed/risk of collisions. Discourage bumping. Encourage correct use of bikes Clothes - laces/pull cords risk of catching in wheels. Bikes/ Scooters to be lined up against the shed at tidy up time Staff to remove from use, any bikes that fall into disrepair, notify administration staff.

Planted Areas Prickles etc. to be removed .Shrubs to be trimmed to make a safe route - around the garden when necessary. Storage of Outside Play Resources Small resources are stored in boxes. Resources that become unsuitable for good quality play will be removed by staff. Small PE apparatus in boxes in the storage unit. Construction equipment is stored in the shed.

Gross Motor Skills Balls and other small equipment to be put out without other toys/equipment being put out in the same area, so that space is available to practise skills.

General Issues Staff to be vigilant in ensuring all children including those with additional needs are given equal access to outside play.

Policies to refer to: Health and Safety All curriculum policies.

Risk Assessment New equipment and changes to the play area will require a risk assessment. All outside play fixed equipment is checked annually and recommendations are implemented.