



Clutton Primary School – Play procedures

The school undertakes to refer to the play policy in all decisions, which affect children's play

Rationale

Our school is about preparation for life – the whole child; their mental, physical, social and cultural development and well-being. By creating an environment that enables a positive and playful childhood, we encourage our children to be independent, capable and competent.

Our rationale is that ...”better, more active and creative playtimes can mean happier and healthier children, and having happier, healthier, more active children usually results in a more positive attitude to learning in school, with more effective classroom lessons, less staff time spent resolving unnecessary behavioural problems, fewer playtime accidents, happier staff and a healthier attitude to life”.

The Value of Play

Play is defined as any freely chosen activity, which a child finds satisfying and creative. It may or may not involve equipment or other people. We believe the learning opportunities of play include: -

- Emotions e.g. learning about oneself and others, sadness/gladness, rejection/acceptance, frustration/achievement, boredom/fascination, fear/confidence.
- Social interactions - enhancing self-esteem and understanding of others through freely chosen interactions e.g. within peer groups, with individuals, with groups of different ages, abilities, interests, gender, ethnicity and culture.
- Making choices, problem solving, being creative
- Playing with scrap materials, tyres and other multipurpose objects.
- Achieving, but also coping with failing.
- Communication and negotiation skills.

The school will help children maximize the benefits they can gain from play by provision of trained staff who are informed by, and work to, the Playwork Principles. These are:

- Play is essential for physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development
- Play enables children to explore the physical and social environment, different concepts and ideas
- Encourages self-confidence and the ability to make choices
- Play is critical to children’s physical and emotional health, and enables them to explore and develop the balance between their right to act freely and their responsibilities to others
- Free play can have a direct positive impact on a child’s ability to reach their potential.

Aims: The school aims to address the provision of improved play opportunities:

- To ensure play settings provide a varied, challenging and stimulating environment.
- To allow children to take risks and use a common sense approach to these risks and their benefits.
- To provide opportunities for children to develop their relationships with each other.

- To enable children to develop respect for their surroundings and each other.
- To aid children's physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development.
- To provide a range of environments which will encourage children to explore and play imaginatively.
- To provide a range of environments, which will support children's learning across the curriculum and learning about the world around them.
- To promote independence and teamwork within children.
- To build emotional and physical resilience.
- To ensure 20 percent of school time is designated playtime (A child in Year 6 will have spent 1.2-1.4 years in play).

Benefit and Risk: *'Play is great for children's well-being and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool.'* (Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation guide is published for Play England 2012)

The school will use the Health and Safety Executive guidance document 'Children's Play and Leisure – Promoting a Balanced Approach' (September 2012) as the principle value statement informing its approach to managing risk in play. It will adopt a benefits/risk approach as detailed in 'Managing Risk in Play Provision' Implementation Guide. 'Managing Risk in Play Provision Risk-taking' is an essential feature of play provision, and of all environments in which children and young people legitimately spend time at play. Play provision aims to offer children and young people the chance to encounter acceptable risks as part of a stimulating, challenging and controlled learning environment. In the words of the play sector publication 'Best Play', play provision should aim to 'manage the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children and young people safe from harm'.

The Adults' Role in Play:

Staff will use and refer to 'The Principles of Playwork' when appropriate interventions are needed, but ultimately will strive for facilitating an environment which nurtures self-directed play. The play-worker's core function is to create an environment which will stimulate children's play and maximise their opportunities for a wide range of play experiences. All adults within the school are responsible for enabling and enriching the child's play experience both in terms of the design and resources of the physical environment and in terms of the attitudes and culture fostered within the play setting.

Environment

We believe that a rich play setting should ensure that all children have access to stimulating environments that are free from unacceptable risk and thereby offer the opportunity to explore themselves through their freely chosen play

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