

## **Eastbury Community School**

### **EYFS Outdoor Play Policy**

#### **Introduction**

The Department for Children, Schools and Families has found that; “there is evidence that when learning outside the classroom, children:

- attain higher levels of knowledge and skills
- improve their physical health and increase their motor abilities
- socialise and interact in new and different ways with their peers and adults
- show improved attention and enhanced self-concept, self-esteem and mental health
- change their environmental behaviours and their values and attitudes.”

The outdoors can provide space and freedom for a type of learning that is difficult to replicate indoors. All children have the right to experience the unique and special nature of being outdoors. At Eastbury Community School we feel it is important to enable children to use the outside environment as a context for learning throughout the year.

#### **Aims**

We aim to;

- provide a safe, secure, stimulating and exciting learning environment which takes account of the children’s interests
- ensure that our outdoor area and resources within it are flexible and versatile, where children can choose, create, change, take risks and be in charge of their play
- ensure that children enjoy energetic activity outdoors and the feeling of well-being that it brings, including opportunities to develop their gross motor skills
- enable children to work both individually and co-operatively outside
- give children the opportunity to find a quiet space to relax
- organise and/or provide necessary resources (e.g. Wellington boots, raincoats)
- develop a set of rules through discussion with the children, enabling them to use resources safely and to manage and use the space and freedom responsibly
- observe, assess and record outdoor learning, ensuring that there is adequate provision for children to extend their learning

#### **EYFS Areas of Learning**

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

##### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- The resources and experiences outside provide opportunities for children to develop co-operation and build relationships
- Children are encouraged to work together, take turns and help each other
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for the resources in the outside area. They are able to set up the areas and tidy resources away
- The organisation and management of outdoors supports children in initiating and developing their own ideas and interests
- Children are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder about living things and natural environment
- Children develop their understanding and show respect for living things

- The resources and experiences outside provide opportunities for children to act out their feelings

### Communication and Language

- There is a good range of stimulating first-hand experiences for children and adults to discuss
- Staff model communicating and developing language in a variety of ways; conversation, discussion and commentating
- There are places for children to talk with each other

### Physical Development

- The planning of equipment in the outdoor classroom takes into account all stages of children's physical development
- There is a good range of equipment to develop children's co-ordination and control skills
- The resources and equipment encourage a variety of ways of using the body
- The children are presented with challenges that enable them to discover what they are able to do whilst learning about the limitations of their bodies
- Children are able to experience a variety of different sized materials and use them in a variety of ways
- Children are encouraged to use their bodies imaginatively e.g. dance, music and movement
- Staff ensure that boys and girls have equal access to all areas of physical learning

### Literacy

- Reading and writing are incorporated into activities and experiences. They are relevant and meaningful to children's interests and patterns of learning
- Children are encouraged to use the written word or write for a range of purposes, e.g. signs, messages, tickets
- Non-fiction books are a stimulus for investigations outdoors
- Stories are told/read/re-enacted outside
- Children are encouraged to express their ideas, interests through role play

### Mathematics

- Children are encouraged to explore patterns, shape, measurement and numbers in the natural and made world. There are resources to support this range of learning
- The available resources enable children to solve mathematical problems
- Staff encourage children to develop and use their mathematical language
- The range of equipment enables children to work on a large scale
- Children are encouraged to play mathematical games with large equipment
- Numbers are incorporated into children's play
- Children are encouraged to write numbers or record mathematical ideas in relevant and appropriate ways

### Understanding the World

- Children are encouraged to observe and express their ideas about similarities and differences in the natural world
- Children are encouraged to explore the physical environment and are able to solve problems in their own way
- Changes in the weather are used to stimulate investigative work
- There is a good range of natural and made materials for children and adults to talk about

- The outside area is organised so that children are provided with opportunities to play out their life experiences and to develop imaginative play

### Expressive Arts and Design

- Children are encouraged to represent their ideas imaginatively. There are a range of materials so that they can create 2D and 3D images
- Opportunities are provided for children to develop large-scale work and mark-making
- Children are encouraged to explore colour, shape and texture within natural materials
- Staff plan for music, movement, dance, singing and drama to take place in the outside area
- Children are encouraged to express their ideas, interests through role play

### **The Role of the Adult Outdoors**

Adults should be actively involved with children in their games and activities where appropriate and should not be solely in a supervisory role.

Adults should be:

- Talking with children in a variety of ways (conversing, discussing, questioning, modelling and commentating)
- Helping children to find solutions to problems
- Supporting, encouraging and extending their activities by making extra resources available and providing new ideas
- Initiating games and activities and joining in games and activities when invited by children
- Observing, assessing and recording
- Evaluating observations in order to plan appropriate resources and experiences
- Being aware of every child's equal right of access to a full outdoor curriculum which is broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated regardless of race, culture, religion, gender or disability
- Being aware of safety issues
- Providing role models for appropriate clothing i.e. hats, coats, boots to suit weather conditions

### **Health and Safety**

We will support children in taking risks within a safe and secure environment. It is important to ensure that the outdoor environment offers challenges and teaches the children how to be safe and aware of others.

We will ensure that;

- all play apparatus and equipment is installed subject to the manufacturer's instructions
- risk assessments are carried out on all large play equipment and play spaces daily
- play equipment and playground areas are frequently assessed for condition and safety by the staff and school caretaker. Should there be damage to, or concerns surrounding the safety of, any playground equipment, these will either be addressed immediately or the equipment will be taken out of use until the matter is resolved
- all staff share responsibility for ensuring that the outside play area is safe. Any concerns need to be reported to the Head teacher and the school caretaker

**Weather**

All children are regularly advised to bring coats to allow them to go outdoors. Decisions regarding individual children should take account of the suitability of their clothing and drying facilities available. In hot weather parents will be advised that all children should wear hats. They will be expected to apply sun cream to their children before coming to school. All children will have access to water in the outdoor area in hot weather.

**Equality and inclusion**

We endeavour to ensure that all children whatever their abilities are able to play and explore outdoors within the school grounds and further afield. Activities are not offered on the basis of gender and we try to balance out over time the specialist visits offered to all children within the school. At all times we aim to respect cultural issues.

Signed..... (Head of School)

Reviewed September 2017