



**Policy:      Play Provision Policy**

Date Reviewed by Staff:	September 2019
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Date Reviewed by Business Committee:	14/11/19
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Date Ratified by Full Governing Body:	12/12/19
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Next Review Date: (3 years unless otherwise advised)	2022
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### **Our vision**

Our vision as a Church of England primary school, deeply rooted in a strong Christian tradition, is to develop happy, young people with enquiring minds, a lifelong love of learning, respect for themselves, others and the environment so that they will have the skills, resilience and adaptability to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

### **School aims**

Barrington Primary School recognizes the importance of the need for high quality sustainable play for children regardless of their needs and abilities and that inclusive play is achieved by offering carefully considered outdoor spaces that offer a real choice of accessible play opportunities. We believe that play is essential for physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual development.

### **Commitment**

Barrington Primary School is committed to using this play policy in all decisions it makes which have an impact on children's play.

At Barrington Primary School, we want to help children to be safe, reliable, independent and successful citizens for the 21st century, embodying our Barrington Values. We want to ensure each child is making appropriate progress in line with school achievement aims. We aim to give our children confidence and a desire to achieve their full potential.

Barrington promise;

- To implement the changes in this policy gradually and systematically
- To be informed by the children and work with the children to create a space that is exciting, engaging and enthuses the children, where they feel safe to take risks and explore their world.
- To work with parents and the local community to make use of local expertise.
- To build projects collaboratively, respecting existing boundaries.

### **Rationale**

Children spend 1.4 years of their primary school years in the playground. This time is valuable and need coherent planning. Changes in culture and society have led to "play poverty" in childhood which has a range of negative impacts.

Better play means happier children. Happier children means fewer behaviour problems, a more positive attitude to school, more effective lessons, core skills development, less staff time spent resolving unnecessary problems, fewer accidents and happier staff.

Play England's Charter for Children's Play which states that:

- Children need time and space to play at school
- Adults should let children play
- Children value and benefit from staffed play provision
- Children's play is enriched by skilled play workers
- Children sometimes need extra support to enjoy their right to play

As a school, we recognise our duty and responsibility to support children's playtimes. Play is recognised for the important contribution it makes to education and lifelong learning. Research shows that play can enhance problem solving; it is also widely regarded as offering opportunities for social interaction and language development.

As a result of implementing this policy we believe that children will:

- be happier;
- increase self-awareness and self-esteem;
- improve language and communication skills;
- improve concentration;
- improve their imagination, independence and creativity;
- improve social skills;

- be resilient, confident, good problem solvers;
- be ready for anything as a result of negotiation and independence of thought;
- be better at problem solving;
- develop life skills; and
- improve their physical development, co-ordination and fitness.

### **Definition**

Play is defined as an activity that a child enters into that is freely chosen personally directed and intrinsically motivated and that actively engages the child. Play can contribute to all four areas of a child's development;

- Physical (co-ordination, fitness)
- Educational (the knowledge and understanding of academic outcomes)
- Intellectual (cognitive development, problem solving and imagination)
- Social (communication, leadership and teamwork)

Barrington Primary School recognises that:

- great play allows children to be creative and co-operative;
- adults' roles in great play is to be responsive to children's invitations and requests;
- great play may be solitary or social;
- great play invites investigation;
- great play makes children happy and happy children are better learners.

### **Rights, Equality and Access**

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 a wide range of cultural, artistic and recreational activities.

Barrington acknowledges that every child has the right to choose the kind of play that is suitable for them whatever their age, gender or background.

### **Health, Safety, Benefit and Risk**

Risk taking is an essential feature of play provision and of all environments in which children legitimately spend time playing. Play provision aims to offer children the chance to encounter acceptable risk as part of a stimulating, challenging and controlled learning environment. Play provision should aim at managing the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep the children safe from serious harm.

Children should be encouraged and supported to encounter and manage risk for themselves in an environment that is as safe as it needs to be rather than devoid of risk. The benefit to children of challenging play opportunities should be balanced with any potential risk.

### **The Adults' Role in Play**

We believe that is the job of a playworker to ensure that the broadest possible range of play opportunities are available to our children, to observe the play that is happening and select a mode of intervention or make a change to the playspace if needed.

Playworkers ensure that the play space is inclusive—supporting all children to make the most of the opportunities available in their own way.

### **Environment**

At Barrington we will:

- use the outdoor space as a natural resource for learning and playing
- include the children when planning for playing and learning outdoors
- ensure that the outdoor area offers children the opportunity to investigate and explore, problem solve, use their imagination and creativity;

- encourage the children to respect the outdoor environment and care for living things;
- give children the opportunity to manage, play in and use the space and freedom afforded by the outdoors.
- enrich the quality of the environment to maximise variety of play types and increase play value

### **All Weather Play**

*'There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing'* Norwegian Headteacher, April 2005

- The school takes a 'whatever the weather' approach to play
- In order to allow for access to the whole grounds throughout the year; both pupils and staff are expected to have suitable warm and waterproof clothing in school at all times, including boots.
- In extreme weather however, such as torrential rain, icy conditions, high winds or intense sun a decision will be made by the SLT as to whether to limit or curtail play activities if they feel that by not doing so children will be at significant risk.

### **Strategic Aims and Practices**

#### **1. The Outdoor Environment**

We plan to work together, with the pupils, to develop the school grounds over several years to promote the continued creation of recreation and play spaces by the children. Our ultimate aim is to have landscaped the outside space and provided plenty of open ended play opportunities.

#### **2. Loose Parts**

Research shows that the greater the range of experiences presented by a play environment, the more children will naturally explore and learn through play. The important ingredients for these experiences are loose parts; attractive flexible materials that children can readily change, manipulate and control for themselves. The play sheds provide a fully accessible and controllable environment for the children to play how they want to. These elements lead to a high level of ownership which is a powerful ingredient in a positive play and learning experience for any child.

#### **3. Supervision**

The school will move towards a much greater emphasis on playwork roles and skills for play supervision.

#### **4. Monitoring**

The school will continue to use the lunchtime audit tool and pupil surveys to monitor implementation of its play policy, strategy and action plan.

### **References**

<http://www.playengland.org.uk>

Play England is a registered charity, no. 1150216, and a company limited by guarantee, no. 07880687.

