



Sherwood Park School

Sherwood Park Campus &
Sherwood Hill Campus

PLAY AND LEISURE POLICY

Policy Name	Play and Leisure Policy
Date of Issue	May 2022
DFE Guidance	Recommended
Description Content	Covers play & leisure (a core subject area) and how this applies to teaching & learning for our pupils
Reviewing Body	Senior Leader with responsibility for the Play & Leisure curriculum subject team Responsibility for review - Play & Leisure subject team
Assigned Reviewing Period	Every 2 years
Date of Next Review	End of Summer Term 2023 - 2024 (Note: This policy will remain in force until an updated policy been approved)

Version Number	Review Date	Amendment Details



SHERWOOD PARK SCHOOL
PLAY AND LEISURE POLICY

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SHERWOOD PARK SCHOOL

PLAY AND LEISURE POLICY

The Play and Leisure Policy must be published and circulated to all pupils, parents and staff at least biannually.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Wellbeing Policy, SEN Policy and Communication and Literacy Policy. The play and leisure policy should be considered and embedded within all curriculums and pathways.

- Early Years Foundation Framework - Birth to 5 Matters
- Equals Pre-formal curriculum
- Equals Informal curriculum
- Equals Semi-formal curriculum.
- Equals Formal curriculum.
- PfA preparing for adulthood outcomes.

It is also embedded within the school ethos and framework for learning with particular reference to using the DIR philosophy as a whole school approach.

At Sherwood Park school, we view play as a vital tool for building healthy foundations for social, emotional, communication and cognitive skills. We place particular emphasis on the importance of taking the learner's lead during play, to demonstrate respect and build their confidence by knowing that the way they play can be fun to us too.

The Aims and Purpose of this Policy

This policy is written to reflect the value and emphasis Sherwood Park School places on play and leisure to the lives of children and young people (CYP) at the school. It reflects the school's commitment to ensuring that every child and young person has the right to engage in play and leisure. For optimal child development, play is essential and this has been recognized by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNCRC) as a right of every child (Kenneth, R Ginsburg, 2007). UNCRC identifies the fundamental rights of children and these include their right to play. As referenced in Article 31, UNCRC:

1. States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Our Philosophy

Our philosophy at Sherwood Park School is to strive to embody the rights stated within the UNCRC Article 31 to enable school staff to meet the play and well-being needs of our learners. We therefore aspire to ensure that all learners have opportunities embedded across their day to engage in play and leisure as this leads to positive outcomes of well-being and happiness as well as providing the building blocks for learning and academic skills.

Our school philosophy aims to use the power of relationships and human connections to promote regulation, engagement, communication, and thinking. We aim for interactions with all learners to be respectful, playful, joyful and engaging. We are focused on using well-being and relationship based approaches, framed by our LEARN approach and DIR-Philosophy in order to support our learners to develop essential play and leisure required for learning and independence. This includes use of approaches and interventions such as Shanker Self-Reg, Intensive interaction/ people games, identiply, role play activities, Lego Therapy and DIR-Floortime. Through the use of these approaches and interventions, we aim to increase each learner's ability to feel safe and secure by learning that people are fun and can be a shared play partner. This enables us to follow the child's lead during meaningful play and leisure activities to build spontaneous and purposeful initiation, engagement and increase back and forth purposeful interactions.

We strive for all pupils to be understood, respected, encouraged and extended in their play and leisure skills. An integral part of our ethos is prioritising pupil voice, self advocacy and autonomy. We will facilitate meaningful engagement and learning across all areas of play and leisure, supporting progress at an appropriate pace by implementing child centred and evidence based approaches and interventions. Staff acknowledge that pupils at Sherwood Park School attend school with a wide range of attitudes towards, understanding of, and experiences with play and leisure; and also a range of developmental and play and leisure challenges. All students will be supported and challenged to develop their engagement, interaction, communication, attention and listening and thinking skills in a variety of meaningful contexts across all curricular areas. We will work with the pupils and their families to guide each individual towards becoming as independent as possible. We honour the individualised play for each of our learners and strive to ensure that they have motivating and meaningful leisure and play opportunities.

Every child and young person has the right to equal opportunities for access to play materials and activities, taking into account their sensory and physical differences and impairments as well as their personal preferences and motivations. As such, appropriate adaptations will be made to the activity, environment and communication for each individual, striving to meet their individual needs. For example, supported use of adapted bikes and scooters, adapted swings and specialist equipment and technology. Alternative access will also be considered and supported (e.g. use of eye gaze, switches and keyguards). Where physical support is required during play and leisure activities, we aim to avoid and reduce prompt reliance, with a key focus on independence.

Our Principles

We strive to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and developmental curriculum designed to meet each pupil's needs.

- To promote a safe environment, providing relevant and appropriate materials and equipment
- To develop regulation, communication and learning through play and leisure opportunities.
- To adapt games, activities and resources for each child.
- To promote independence and responsibility through play.
- To create environments where enhanced learning takes place through play, investigation and exploration
- To ensure there are equal opportunities and access to play environments and resources for all pupils.
- To support social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional development.
- To develop an awareness of rules and accountability and respect each other.
- To work with families and supporting parents/carers to understand the value of play in the overall development of children.
- To share and celebrate children's achievements and enjoyment with parents and families.
- To share resources and play and leisure ideas with parents

Responsibilities

These may include the responsibilities of the:

Governing Board

- To have a current Play & Leisure Policy and ensure this is updated reflecting current best practice.

Senior Leadership

- To ensure that the climate of the school encourages prioritising pupil interests and motivations for play and leisure
- To ensure appropriate resources are available for the policy to be fully implemented.
- To review progress across curriculum areas relevant to this policy and monitor effectiveness of teaching and learning and interventions used to support whole school pupil progress.

The responsibilities of the subject team leaders

- Subject team leaders will develop a policy and keep it updated.
- To ensure all school staff read and adhere to the policy.

- To ensure staff have access to appropriate information about the pupils with whom they are working including pupil's profiles.
- To identify training and development needs within the school related to play and leisure.
- Training will be delivered to both campuses in regards to how to develop play skills across cohorts and levels in order to ensure that play is meaningful, functional and developmentally appropriate.
- Team will review school playground equipment and deploy an inventory of toys/equipment, identifying areas requiring updating.
- To provide a resource bank for indoor play to promote different areas in play and leisure including drama/imaginative play which can be done indoors (during winter months)
- Play curriculum will be embedded into preparing for adulthood, particularly with regard to expanding and enhancing leisure opportunities.
- Team will meet with the Senior Leadership team to share minutes from meetings and the Play & Leisure development plan.

Teaching and Therapy Staff

- Build relationships with learners to help them feel safe and secure
- Promote child-initiated play, by following the child's lead actively supported by adults
- Focused learning, with adults guiding the learning through playful, rich experiential activities, with built in wait-time to support the child's pace of learning and engagement.
- Increase range of interests to engage in a wider range of meaningful activities, whilst respecting the child's current motivators.
- Organise the time, space and activities in the daily routine to reflect the overall combination which best supports children's well-being and learning (e.g. predictable, repeated play sequences and modelling).
- Ensure that pupils have access through personal exploration using a sensory motor approach.
- Ensure play and leisure activities and resources for children are developmentally appropriate.

Support Staff

- To be responsive, trained and competent play partners in order to facilitate engagement and interaction.
- To provide appropriate modelling of play and interaction to learners across the day.
- To ensure strategies and programmes are implemented and supported across the day through attending and implementing training

- To make sure resources, games and activities are up to date, complete and in good condition.

Legal Duties and Guidance

NICE Guidelines for Social, emotional and mental wellbeing in primary and secondary education

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng223/chapter/recommendations#whole-school-approach-2>

References

Ange Anderson, *Learning Through Play for Children with PMLD and Complex Needs: Using Purposeful Play to Support Cognition, Mental Health and Wellbeing*, (2022) Abingdon Oxon, Routledge.

Can I Learn to Play? Randomised Control Trial to Assess Effectiveness of a Peer-Mediated Intervention to Improve Play in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Lane, S. J., & Bundy, A. C. (2011). *Kids can be kids: A childhood occupation approach*. Philadelphia: FA Davis.

The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds Kenneth R. Ginsburg, MD, MEd, and the Committee on Communications and the Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health

Resources and links

<https://www.icdl.com/>

<https://www.learnplaythrive.com/>

<http://ipaworld.org/resources/for-parents-and-carers-play-in-crisis/>

<http://www.complexneeds.org.uk/modules/Module-1.1-Understanding-the-child-development-and-difficulties/All/m01p070d.html>

http://www.bbbautism.com/pdf/article_65_play_intervention_strategies.pdf

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-1-4419-1698-3_781

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1750946722001143>