

# EYFS Outdoor Policy



## Aims and Values of Outdoor Play

At Yatton schools we intend to provide children with the best experiences of outdoor learning through the implementation of this policy. The impact of this policy can be seen in the children's progress in all areas of their learning.

*"Children will always say the classroom is controlled or owned by the teacher. When asked it will be the parent, most often the mother, who controls the home. But outside, no one owns it or controls it...Children feel free outside, they do not need to explain themselves, they do not need to prove anything, they can just be themselves. This means children are likely to achieve more and more easily and we can view their true selves." (Helen Bilton)*

### INTENT

During children's Reception year at school, we believe that it is just as important to provide the children with rich learning opportunities outdoors as well as indoors. It is our intention that these outdoor opportunities will:

- Support the different interests of children.
- Allow children to investigate, and gain a greater understanding, of the natural world around them.
- Give children experiences which heighten emotions such as wonder, joy and excitement.
- Provide a 'language rich' environment within which children can play, explore and learn.
- Give children the opportunity to explore and manage their sense of danger. \*
- Provide additional opportunities for physical development and motor development.

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### 1. Planning

The planning of the outside area is part of the overall mid-term planning and all adults in the EYFS team have an input. This means that the experiences outside will correlate to the learning in the classrooms. Alongside this, we will maintain high quality learning opportunities by resourcing 'learning sheds' which will allow the children to initiate and extend their own play across the EYFS curriculum.

Language underpins the learning outside, and *teacher notes* accompany each 'learning shed' to highlight the potential opportunities to develop talk, vocabulary, story-telling, questioning, creating, wondering, imagining and investigating.

#### 2. Timetabling

The outdoor area is split into three areas: the large playground, the small playground and the garden. Classes will follow a rota stating which outdoor area they should be in on a given morning. During the afternoon children are free to visit any area but staff, assigned to an area in the morning should remain there throughout the day.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities of the adults

Adults within the EYFS team might provide a variety of roles depending on the context.

With the children as learners:	Practical aspects:
<p>Adults will be positive and respectful role models by being there for children to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play: To have interactions of depth and meaning.</li> <li>• Converse: To clarify and challenge thinking, to inspire imagination, to develop and assist in problem-solving, to share experiences.</li> <li>• Help: To hold, reinforce, resource, scaffold.</li> <li>• Show: To celebrate, question, test, model, raise self-esteem and praise.</li> <li>• Question: To answer questions, help children to thing find out/explore/wonder, celebrate questions and foster curiosity.</li> <li>• Explain.</li> <li>• Find: Answers, resources, people, stories, solutions.</li> <li>• Fix.</li> <li>• Sort out a disagreement.</li> <li>• Give permission.</li> </ul>	<p>Adults will be required to do the following on an 'as-needed' basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out safety checks on small outside equipment including bikes.</li> <li>• Make dynamic risk assessments of play and play areas.</li> <li>• Clean and maintain resources and ensure resources are fit for purpose.</li> <li>• Set up and store equipment safely.</li> <li>• Ensure adherence to schools' Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• Teach children to respect resources and tidy-up – this means when it is time to tidy-up outside, everyone will stop and children will be given specific jobs so that they learn to return things carefully to the right place.</li> </ul>

### 4. Resourcing/Upkeep

Each of the 'Learning Sheds' are to be updated on a termly basis (short term). Teaching staff will be responsible for the planning and resourcing of these.

Upkeep and resourcing of the general areas should be undertaken by all staff on a day-to-day basis.

Support staff who use the reception playground during playtime/lunchtime should ensure that is tidied at the end of each play session.

### 5. Observation and assessment

Recording observations with Tapestry is encouraged when there is good opportunity to capture a child's new learning, wow moment or progress. However, the importance of all EYFS adults being in the play is paramount to the best outdoor learning practice.

## **6. Health and safety**

The outdoor area is split into three areas: the large playground, the small playground and the garden. At the beginning of the year, children will be shown particular places within these areas that are 'out of bounds'. 'Out of bounds' areas include:

- Behind the shed in the large playground.
- The scooter/bike shed.
- The sectioned off garden used by gardening club.
- The garden behind the roped off area in the garden.

### Tree climbing

At the beginning of the year, children will be taught to climb the Maple tree in the garden safely after which time they will be allowed to climb the tree independently. The height at which children can climb the tree should be 'risk-assessed' by an adult on a child-by-child basis. A rule of thumb should be that children should not climb more than halfway up.

### First Aid

If a child requires first aid treatment, they should be sent to the adult inside the class in the first instance on the assumption that it is safe for the child to move to a different area.

### Bikes

When bikes/scooters are being used in the large playground alongside additional PE equipment, children will be asked to ride/scoot at the top end of the playground.

## **7. Weapon and Superhero Play**

At Yatton Infants, the principles we hold with regard to 'weapon play' are as follows:

- Approaches to teaching and learning in role play should reflect the interests of the children and not exclusively those of the adults.
- Planning for role play in the environment should be based upon assessment information from the observed play of the current cohort.
- Our setting will acknowledge the positive aspects of the character of the Superhero and highlight the negative aspects of weapon use and physical violence at a level that is appropriate to the age and needs of the children. This will be mainly done through story, drama and appropriate discussion.

- Styles of teaching and learning should meet the needs of children and not pre-conceived notions of what is or is not appropriate role play.
- All children's emotional welfare, wellbeing and involvement should be assessed in relation to this style of play.
- Children should enjoy the play opportunity.
- The Weapon/Superhero play should motivate and challenge children.
- Children, parents/carers and staff need to be involved on an equal basis in the formulation and regular review of these principles.

*"...in order for practitioners to support successfully the imaginative development of children from the springboard of war, weapon and superhero play, they may first need to extend the imaginative landscape inside themselves to refresh that sense of possible worlds that we wish to bring to children. We need to look beyond the weapon to see the child holding it." - Penny Holland*

## **8. Weather**

Throughout the year, children should be adequately clothed and protected for different weather conditions. Parents will be asked to provide wellington boots and waterproofs for their child, and these should remain in school at all times. During sunny weather, it is a requirement that all children should bring a named sun hat to school. Children should also have sun cream applied before coming to school. If sun cream needs to be reapplied, a named bottle should be handed to the class teacher. The class teacher/LSA will ensure that sun cream is applied (by the child) before lunchtime.

Yatton Infants will keep spare waterproofs/wellies and sunhats for children to use. In the instance that we run out of spare clothing, children may not be permitted to access the outdoor area.

## **9. Equality and inclusion**

*"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid." - Albert Einstein*

### Children with Special Educational Needs

At Yatton Schools we will ensure that all children, whatever their ability, are able to play and explore the outdoors within the setting's ground and further afield. We will endeavour to make our spaces as inclusive as possible by:

- Ensuring that our outdoor spaces are accessible for all children.
- Introducing elements of shade, light and texture ensuring that the environment is more appealing to children who experience cognitive or sensory impairment.
- Continuing the development of the 'sensory' aspects of our garden.

- Ensuring quiet spaces are available so that children have the opportunity to escape the 'hustle and bustle'.

### Gender and Equality

Boys and girls sometimes show different kinds of behaviour and make different choices in their play. Where girls and boys do share the same play area, they sometimes use it differently – for example, the home play area can be dominated by girls, with boys choosing more risky outdoor play. As Glenda MacNaughton notes, "Children's pretend play is rich in information about how they understand gender relations. As they play at 'having babies', 'being monsters' or 'making a hospital', they show others what they think girls and women can and should do, and what they think boys and men can and should do." At Yatton School we will observe how children demonstrate what they know about men and women – and girls and boys – in their gendered play. We will challenge stereotypes through story, drama and appropriate discussion.

#### **10. Monitoring and evaluation**

Staff at Yatton Infants will continue to monitor and evaluate the learning and play that takes place outdoors to gauge the effectiveness of practice and the policy.

\* *"Children who have limited opportunity to play outdoors may lack a sense of danger". EYFS P.26*

MacNaughton, G 'Even pink tents have glass ceilings: crossing the gender boundaries in pretend play' in Dau, E and Jones, E *Child's Play: Revisiting Play in early Childhood Settings* (1999).

Bilton, H 'Outdoor Learning in the Early Years' (2010)

Bilton, H 'Playing Outside – Activities, ideas and inspiration for the Early Years' (2014)

Holland, P 'We don't play with guns here' (2003)