



## **Minerva Play Policy**

### **Rationale**

This policy sets out our belief and commitment to raising the quality of play experience for all children within the school.

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.

### **Minerva Primary Academy believes that play:**

- Is innate. It can be physical, imaginative, creative, explorative, stretches perceptions and encourages all areas of development. Some children need play skills modelled to them.
- Is freedom of choice when child led and children should be given opportunities that they might not have outside of school. It does not need to have an outcome.
- Is a chance to form social and communication skills and recognise boundaries of relationships across age groups. This is an opportunity for all children to develop their 'Effective Lifelong Learning Inventory' (ELLI) skills.
- Is taking managed risks and being challenged—as it will help children to make informed and adapted decisions in play and life.
- Should be planned for through different curriculum areas and using appropriate resources available to them including a range of loose parts.
- Will happen in all weather, apart from extremely hazardous conditions and in line with our risk assessments.
- Is something children learn from and can have a positive impact on a child's ability to meet formal educational goals.
- Involves children, climbing, getting dirty and being hands on.
- Is sometimes getting bumps and scrapes which is proven to build resilience, perseverance, problem solving and strategic thinking.
- Encourages co-operation and responsibility.
- Above all, should be joy-filled, fun, enjoyable, memorable and an exciting experience for all participants.

## Aims

We recognise that playtime is approximately 15% of a child's school day. With such a large proportion of time spent at 'play' we recognise the need to:

### Continue to keep children at the heart of decisions and provide a consistent message

- for those whose role is to plan for or provide for play within the school to gain a greater understanding of play, its principles, qualities and benefits and be kept up to date with training.
- to consult children in decision-making on the planning, design, creation and supervision of play opportunities.
- to give clear and consistent messages to children about what are acceptable boundaries in regards to loose parts, causing direct harm to other people and resources, bug hotel and wildlife, and natural hazards etc.

### Improving the quality of the play environment.

- Give our children opportunities to encounter challenge, stimulation and acceptable levels of risk in their experience of play so they can blossom in all areas of development across age groups.
- Give children regular opportunities to make and shape their play environment with loose parts and decision making about playground development.

Scrap store Play pod is open to children every lunch time. The scrap is a valuable play resource, providing a huge range of scrap materials such as cardboard tubes, tyres, lengths of material, netting, ropes, crates and bins which extends the choices and possibilities of play for all children on a regular basis. The non-prescriptive nature of these loose parts in combination with children's inventiveness and creativity results in them using the items in endless different ways, enabling all ages, genders and abilities to find ways to play and socialise together.

### Allowing greater access

- Extend the availability and accessibility of play opportunities for our children through after school 'Come and play' sessions, holiday period play sessions/clubs and all-weather clothing (when available).

By giving children the choice when wet play is called to continue playing outside at lunchtime providing, they have suitable clothing. This would still meet risk assessment requirements with children only playing in zone 3 and 4 with members of the team.

Positive play interactions are promoted within our school values of 'safe, respectful, learning'. Carefully considered and comprehensive risk assessments of all play provision within the school should be reviewed on an annual basis, or whenever significant change/development in play provision/equipment takes place.

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