



POSITIVE PLAY POLICY

April 2025

Approved by:	Headteacher / Governing Body	Date: Summer 2025
Written in:	APRIL 2025	
Next review due:	Summer 2028	

EQUALITY STATEMENT

This document was formulated to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The Governing Body recognises its legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. This policy will ensure equality and fairness regardless of race, sex (gender), sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, disability or age.

GDPR DATA PROTECTION STATEMENT

Data will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

North Wheatley C of E Primary School



Positive Play Policy

BELIEVE * ACHIEVE * THRIVE

Our Vision and Values

At North Wheatley C of E Primary our vision and values are:

The journey through North Wheatley C of E Primary will give every member of the school community the courage and faith to: **'BELIEVE, ACHIEVE & THRIVE'** to encourage them to **'be the best me that they can be'** so that they **'Shine as lights in the World'** - Philippians 2:15.

Christian Values are the heartbeat of our school.

Believe: Believe in yourself, your faith and others

Achieve: Achieve your goals, your dreams and your future

Thrive: Thrive through a love of yourself, your faith, your values, your love of learning

Rationale

Staff at North Wheatley believe that children of all ages benefit from opportunities to play that allow them to explore, manipulate, experience and affect their environment.

We believe our play provision – both inside and outside - should be welcoming and accessible to every child, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, economic or social circumstances, ethnic or cultural background or origin or individual abilities.

Definition

Play is defined as a process that is *'intrinsically motivated, directed by the child and freely chosen by the child'*.

- Play has its own value and provides its own purpose.
- It may or may not involve equipment or other people.
- It may be serious or light hearted.
- It may produce something or it may be done simply for its own sake.
- It allows children an opportunity to be creative, to make decisions and to assess and manage risks.

At North Wheatley Primary School, we recognise that in play we may need to make a noise, get dirty, make a mess and sometimes be out of the direct view of adults.

We believe that the role of the adults is to support the play process.

Value of Play

We believe play has many benefits:

- Play is critical to children's health and wellbeing; it is essential for their physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development.
- Play enables children to explore the physical and social environment, as well as different concepts and ideas.
- Play enhances children's self-esteem and their understanding of others through freely chosen social interactions with individuals and within groups of different ages, abilities, interests, genders, ethnicities and cultures.
- Play requires ongoing communication and negotiation skills, enabling children to develop a balance between their right to act freely and their responsibilities to others.
- Play enables children to experience a wide range of emotions and develop their ability to cope with these, including sadness and happiness, rejection and acceptance, frustration and achievement, boredom and fascination, fear and confidence.
- Play encourages self-confidence and the ability to make choices, problem solve and to be creative.
- Play maintains children's openness to learning, develops their capabilities and allows them to push the boundaries of what they can achieve.



Aims

At North Wheatley, we want play to be an integral part of our universal offer to children during both the school day and through our wraparound provision.

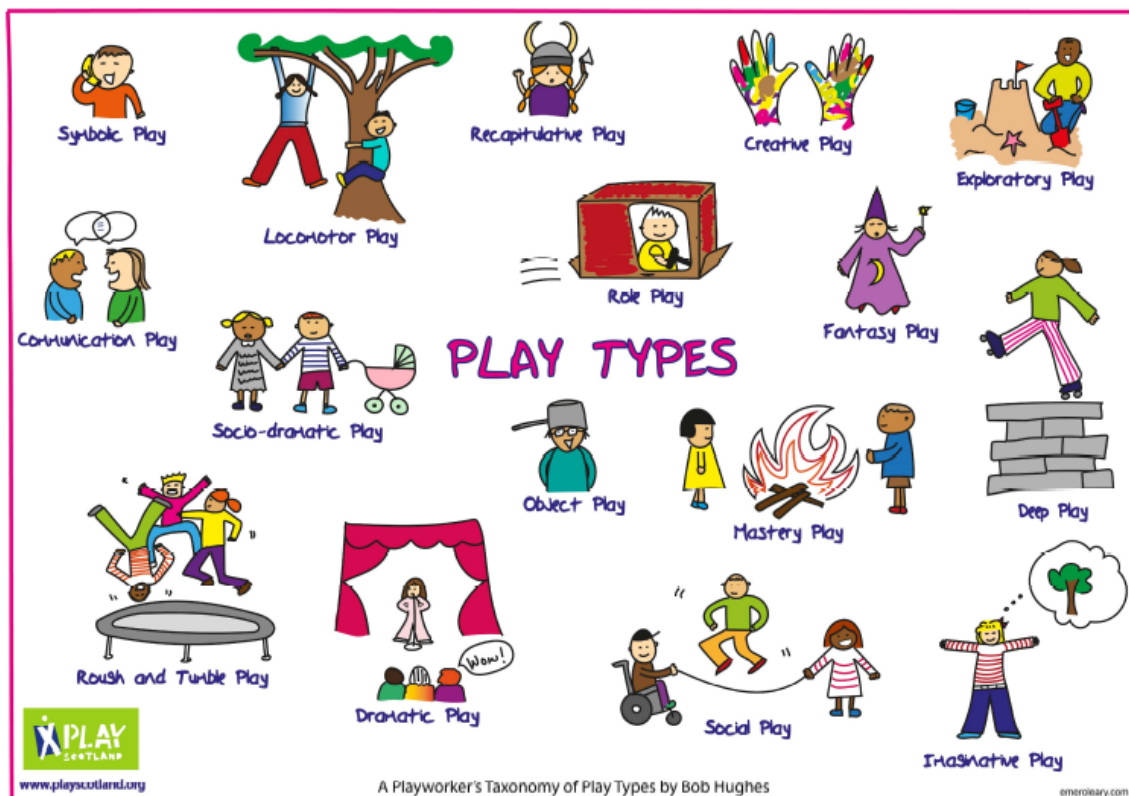
We will therefore strive to:

- Provide a range of environments that will: encourage children to explore and play imaginatively, support children's learning across the curriculum and their learning about the world around them
- Ensure play opportunities provide a varied, challenging and stimulating environment.
- Enable children's physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development.
- Build emotional and physical resilience.
- Promote independence and teamwork.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop their relationships with each other.
- Enable children to develop respect for their surroundings and each other.
- Ensure adults provide inclusive opportunities for creative, exciting play and use restorative justice to resolve conflicts and to support children who have additional needs.
- Allow children to take risks and use a common-sense approach to the management of these risks and their benefits.

Environment

We believe that a rich play setting should ensure that all children have access to stimulating environments that are free from unacceptable or unnecessary risks and thereby offer children the opportunity to explore for themselves through their chosen play.

We will strive to continually improve the quality and diversity of our school's grounds to enhance play, and will refer to the Taxonomy of Play Types (developed by Bob Hughes) to help provide a range of play opportunities .



Equality, Equity & Diversity

Through providing a rich play offer - meeting every child's needs - we will ensure all children, regardless of age, gender, race, disability or other special needs, can develop and thrive, build strong relationships and enjoy school.

Benefit & Risk

'Play is great for children's wellbeing and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool.'

Managing Risk in Play Provision: An Implementation Guide (Play Safety Forum, 2012)

North Wheatley Primary School will use the Health & Safety Executive Guidance document, *Children's Play and Leisure – Promoting a Balanced Approach* (September 2012) to inform its approach to managing risk in play.

In doing so, the school will adopt a risk-benefit approach as detailed in *Managing Risk in Play Provision: An Implementation Guide* (Play Safety Forum, 2012).

Risk-taking is an essential feature of play provision and of all environments in which children legitimately spend time at play. Play provision aims to offer children the chance to encounter acceptable risks as part of a stimulating, challenging and managed play environment. As outlined in the play sector publication 'Best Play', play provision should aim to *'manage the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children and young people safe from harm'*.

Staff at North Wheatley will practise 'dynamic' risk management with children, encouraging them to identify and manage risks in the play environment where adults are present to support them.

Supervision

The law requires that children in school have to have supervision during outdoor play, but for primary school playtimes there are no stated ratios. During the school day there should be one or more adults present outdoors.

North Wheatley Primary School recognise three models of adult supervision for outdoor play: Direct, Remote and Ranging.

Except for new children joining the school in EYFS - whose skills and orientation in the school environment need to be assessed - the school does not believe that direct supervision is always practical or beneficial when children play.

Our playtime supervisors and after-school playworkers will therefore use 'ranging' and 'remote' supervision models, so that children can quickly find an adult and adults can move around the site to gain an awareness of the kinds of play and levels of risk likely to be emerging.

The Adult Role in Play

Staff at North Wheatley will help children maximise the benefits they gain from play by the provision of staff who are informed by the **'Playwork Principles'**.

Staff will use these principles when appropriate interventions are needed, and ultimately will strive for facilitating an environment that nurtures children's *self-directed* play.

The adult / playworker's core function is to create an environment that will stimulate children's play and maximise their opportunities for a wide range of play experiences.

A skilled and experienced playworker is capable of enriching the child's play experience both in terms of the design and resources of the physical environment and in terms of the attitudes and culture fostered within the play setting.

Playworkers are a channel of access to new materials and tools and they can act as a stimulus to children to explore and learn.

They are also available to participate in the play, if invited by the child / children.

PLAYWORK PRINCIPLES	
1	All children need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of individuals and communities.
2	Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3	The prime focus and essence of play-work is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4	For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult-led agendas.
5	The role of the playworker is to support all children in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6	The playworker's response to children playing is based on knowledge of the play process and reflective practice.
7	Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children's play on the playworker.
8	Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well-being of children.

- An adult may suggest wider opportunities to develop play or to enhance it. This may include adding new resources or play equipment.
- Adults may ask questions to deepen understanding or peek interest in play, like *"Wow, this is amazing. How does it work?"* or *"I love what you have made. Why did you choose to do it like that?"*.

Behaviour & Safety

We recognise that some children find it difficult to manage and regulate their emotions and behaviour during play and unstructured times.

We have a clear, concise **BEHAVIOUR SIGNPOST** to help them remember what is acceptable behaviour, including during play activities.



We help our children understand what this means while they are at school:

 OUR BEHAVIOUR SIGNPOST EXPLAINED 				
Follow Instructions	Show Respect	Be Kind	Try Hard	Stay Safe
Do what you are asked by staff Stop if someone tells you to stop Respond straight away: <i>first time, every time</i>	Tell the truth Listen to each other Look at the person talking Use our manners Ask permission Tidy-up equipment Look after belongings Use AMETHYST power	Say nice things Use kind hands / feet Co-operate Understand other people's opinions Look after each other Help each other Share equipment Use RUBY power	Try your best Keep focussed Stay on task Challenge yourself Bounce back from mistakes Have resilience Persevere Use EMERALD & SAPPHIRE power	Walk sensibly around school Sit smartly on chairs Pick up things from the floor Play safe games outside Look-out for others Use TOPAZ power

We have also created a detailed BEHAVIOUR CHARTER for our outdoor playtimes:

 NORTH WHEATLEY CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL 	
<u>PLAYTIME BEHAVIOUR CHARTER</u>	
We will...	
- Choose sensible games to play - Play nicely with each other - Be aware of safety as we play - Use kind language to others - Cooperate & listen to each other - Resolve minor arguments between us - Tell another child to stop if they are doing something wrong or something we don't like - Stop what we are doing if another child tells us to stop - Show respect to adults on duty - Listen and follow instructions from adults	
We will NOT...	
- Play dangerous or rough games - Tease or call each other names - Use bad or unkind language - Ignore or be rude to the adult on duty - Deliberately hurt someone (e.g. pinching, punching, kicking) - Bully other children	

More specifically, we are clarifying and reinforcing our guidelines on certain aspects of playtime which we believe will reduce injuries and first aid during playtime:

- Football and similar activities are zoned and should be played on the MUGA or far-end of the playground
- Bikes and trikes should be kept on the track / nearer school and should not be taken up or down ramps or slopes
- Children should not be climbing on picnic tables
- Children need to keep their shoes on during playtime
- Wrestling, playfighting or using anything as a 'weapon' may result in an injury
- Lifting each other off the ground could result in a child being dropped and injured
- Climbing trees cannot be safely supervised by staff during playtime

GYMNASTICS

We know we have several competent gymnasts in school. At the moment, we are happy for them to partake in basic gymnastics (e.g. handstands, cartwheels, bridges, rolls, walkovers) in a designated area away from other activities that might result in an accident. We have provided matting for them to use and have explained that they must always have older children acting as spotters and supervising peers / younger children. We have also asked that they do not teach each other new moves (which may be above their capabilities) and be aware of their own limitations and levels of competence.

WE WILL CONTINUALLY REVIEW THESE GUIDELINES AND PUPIL SAFETY AT PLAYTIME

Changes and adaptations may need to be introduced by school leaders before
the next formal review of this policy by the Governing Body