



Oaklands School

Play and use of the School Grounds Policy

Oaklands School is very privileged to have a beautiful setting and extensive outdoor space. We believe that we should use this space to support and enhance the education of our children and to offer them first class play facilities. The school day should allow time for children to relax and play with their friends. Learning through play is part of good teaching. School grounds should be stimulating places to play.

Play

Play is one essential way that children come to understand themselves and the world around them. Play is a vital part of a child's life. Play is essential for physical, emotional and spiritual growth, for intellectual and educational development.

Through play children explore the physical and social environment, ideas and concepts and learn how to deal with situations that trouble or frighten them. Through play they develop self-confidence, a sense of themselves as individuals able to make choices, and learn the connection between choice and consequence. In this they learn what cannot be explicitly taught.

We want to ensure that play opportunities at Oaklands School are created that allow children to explore, manipulate, experience and affect their environment within challenging settings, free from unacceptable risk. We believe that importance must always be given to the child's choice and control over their own experience.

Outdoor play and curriculum activities

Our aims:

- to enhance learning opportunities for pupils across the curriculum, including both personal, social and physical development
- greater environmental awareness of pupils
- improved pupil behaviour
- more enjoyable break times for pupils
- an environment, which is safer because it meets pupils' play and social needs, while still offering challenge and opportunities to learn from experience.

Implementation

Learning Opportunities:

- Use of grounds for Science activities
- Use of outdoors to compensate for limited space in the School - e.g. teaching the use of rovers in ICT and drama to support the curriculum.
- Use of outdoors on Friday afternoon activities e.g., Art
- Use of grounds for other curriculum subjects such as creative writing and Geography
- A bespoke area for planting seeds and looking at life cycles of plants.

Environmental Awareness

- Class activities aimed at raising environmental awareness.

Improved behaviour

- involvement of pupils - School Council- in play provision
- buddy scheme
- active involvement of adults on duty
- PSHE sessions to discuss outdoor play

Enjoyment

- separate area for younger children
- suitable play equipment
- sufficient time for play
- separate decking area for reading, board games and writing/colouring activities

Safety

- A well-planned site can help children to understand the nature of risk - what is and what is not an acceptable degree of risk - and may improve their personal safety.
- Risk assessments of outdoor space will be regularly updated, to ensure the safety of our children.

Managing Risk in play provision

Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of serious injury.

Judgements about the acceptability of risk are made on the basis of a risk assessment and are informed by an understanding of the balance between risk and benefit. Three factors can help to determine whether the level of risk is acceptable:

- the likelihood of coming to harm
- the severity of that harm
- the benefits and rewards or outcomes of the activity

Risks and procedures

1. Child leaving the school premises:

Children are supervised by adults when they are outside.

The gate into Albion Hill has a double catch.

The gate into the High Road is locked by key pad during play times, whenever practical.

All children are collected from the School Office when leaving the premises with their parents or guardians during the school day.

Children are not allowed to leave the premises with an adult other than their parent or guardian unless the parent has given permission. When permission is given by telephone, the identity of the caller is checked by ringing the parent back.

2. Child falling down the steps on the way to and from the playground or school field.

Children are trained from a young age to hold onto the child height railing as they go down the steps.

*Children are supervised by an adult.
Children are not allowed to run.*

3. Accidents on the playgrounds, paddock and school field.

Play equipment provided is chosen so as to avoid unacceptable risks. There will always be a risk of a child falling and grazing their knee or bumping into another child. Children whose behaviour causes risk of injury to another child will be dealt with by an adult on duty. Adults on duty will spread out in the play areas so that all areas are being watched.

Only nursery children play in the paddock, under adult supervision.

Play equipment provided in the paddock is suitable for nursery age children and is regularly checked by staff.

Trees on the school field are regularly checked for safety.

Football is played in a separate area of the school field, whenever possible.

There is a boundary fence all around the field and a high fence between the field and the road.

First Aid equipment is available on the school playground and the school field. (For further details, see the School First Aid Policy.)

4. Accidents on the adventure playground.

Children may not play on the adventure playground unless there is a member of Oaklands School staff on duty. A safety surface has been provided. The equipment is regularly checked by professionals. There is a rota for use of the adventure playground so as to ensure a sensible number of children are using the equipment at a particular time. Any child whose behaviour poses danger to another child will be dealt with by the member of staff on duty. The adventure playground is closed after school, except when used by Teatime Club with appropriate staff supervision.

Risk assessments are written for all outdoor activities.

Playtime/Lunchtime Guidelines for staff on duty

We aim to provide an environment in which all children have the opportunity to enjoy lunchtime and playtime without any restrictions imposed by the behaviour of other children. With this aim in mind, playground rules have been drawn up and are displayed next to the playground. A shed with play equipment is provided on the playground and seating is provided on both the field and the playground. The adventure playground is used by classes on a rota at lunch times.

In the Hall

- Pupils line up outside the dining hall and should wait quietly, particularly when they are near the office. Staff are responsible for supervising the lunch queue.
- Staff help their children to choose what to eat and ensure that they eat sensibly.
- A minimum of one member of the teaching staff is on duty in the dining hall, together with the lunchtime staff.
- Children should be encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you' when asking for food to be served.
- Good manners should be encouraged at all times. In particular, children should use a knife and fork to eat, when appropriate.
- Whenever possible the younger children wait at the table until the whole table has finished and then ask a member of staff to dismiss them.
- Children (except those in EYFS and Year 1) should clear their own plates, under adult supervision.
- A member of the lunchtime staff should supervise the younger children while collecting coats (when required) and going out to play.

In the Playground/on the Field

- At least one member of the teaching staff is on duty together with lunchtime staff (see rota for timings).
- One member of staff is responsible for supervising the adventure playground at lunchtime (see rota).
- Walkie talkies are available in the School Office as a means of communication and are taken to the playground/field by the first lunchtime supervisor on duty.
- Staff on duty should spread out so that all areas of the playground/field are supervised.
- First aid equipment is available on the playground. In case of more serious injuries e.g. head bumps, a member of staff should accompany the pupil to the Medical Room for first aid. An accident form should be completed.
- Children should be supervised when they leave the playground/field to go to the toilet. Where necessary, one adult should be on duty outside the playground/field.
- Staff should be vigilant and try to intervene before problems start to arise, particularly where a game may lead to serious injury. Children should, however, be allowed to run around, play football and not be restricted from appropriate adventurous play.
- Staff should be aware of children who find playtime difficult and encourage other children to let them join in their games.
- If appropriate, staff may decide to initiate games for the children.
- Five minutes before the end of playtime, children should be asked to put the play equipment away. (Year 6 pupils should ensure the equipment is neatly put away). A member of staff should lock the shed.
- At the end of playtime, the first bell is rung for children to line up.
- At the second bell, children should be quiet.
- The children are supervised as they return from the playground/field to the school building. Class teachers or the Teaching Assistant should collect their class from the playground.

In order to encourage all children to follow the Lunchtime/Playground Rules, the following system of Rewards and Sanctions has been agreed by the staff:

Rewards

- A class or individual who has behaved well on a particular day may be awarded house point(s) or the Good Behaviour certificate.
- Children may be awarded lunchtime certificates for exceptional and consistent behaviour by the Headmistress at the end of each half term.

Sanctions

- A verbal warning from a member of staff/lunchtime staff.
- Time out on a playground bench.
- If, following a warning and time out on the playground bench the child continues to misbehave, their behaviour should be reported to the Head of EYFS/KS1 Coordinator/KS2 Coordinator who after investigation, may decide to impose a playtime/lunchtime detention.
- All incidents of possible bullying should be reported to the Headmistress. The Anti-Bullying Policy will then be followed by the Headmistress.

Staff Links

- The Headmistress/Deputy Head act as the link between the teaching staff and the lunchtime staff.