



October 2016

LEARNING, PLAY AND PLAY EQUIPMENT POLICY

This Policy links to the following:

- Partnership with parents and the local community
- Equality and Diversity
- First Aid
- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding/Child Protection

Amendment History

Version/Issue Number	Date	Author	Remarks/Reason for change	Review Date
1	October 2016	Nikki Gray Daphne Sohl	Agreed by the Governing Body Updated to incorporate Weybridge and Walton	January 2019

This policy will be reviewed in January 2019 or sooner if there are any amendments that need to be implemented following changes in Government legislation/guidelines



October 2016

Learning, Play and Play Equipment Policy

1. Statement of intent / policy statement

Walton and Weybridge Children's Centres believe that all children are capable and competent learners. As such, the children who use these centres and the facilities have the right to enjoy clean, safe, age-appropriate and non-discriminatory play equipment. Active play should encourage all aspects of a child's learning and development; these aspects encompass physical, intellectual, cultural, spiritual, language, emotional and social learning and development.

Aim / purpose

Walton and Weybridge Children's Centres will:

- Enable children to become inquisitive, resourceful and independent learners
- Develop high self esteem and help children develop the skills necessary to build positive relationships
- Develop tolerance and understanding in children in order that they respect the ideas, cultures and beliefs of others
- Recognise and value the importance of play in a child's learning and children develop and progress at various rates
- Contribute to developing the awareness and understanding of the importance of play among parents and carers
- Encourage all children to reach their full potential by engaging in positive play experiences
- Promote learning through active engagement in meaningful contexts
- Recognise that parents/carers are a child's first educator, and therefore the staff will aim to work in partnership with families, to deepen a shared understanding of the importance of play within each child's development
- Offer children the opportunity to develop and extend their understanding of their worlds through talk and play
- Arrange planned experiences which provide the foundation for later attitudes to learning
- Encourage children to explore and investigate their world in a unique and non-threatening manner that allows them to make sense of their environment
- Use Early Years Practitioners to support children who trust, respect and care for their ideas and actions
- Provide periods of uninterrupted time to persist at activities both indoors and outdoors
- Offer opportunities for children to make informed decisions and to take responsibility for their ideas and actions
- Encourage children to show consideration for others and to treat all equipment with respect
- Challenge stereotyped ideas about children's play

- Employ staff who are able to accurately observe children at play, interact with them sensitively and monitor their development in all areas of the curriculum to inform future planning of play provision
- Encourage children to have equal access to all kinds of play opportunities and experiences

2. Scope

This policy applies to everyone in the centre

'Staff' includes both those employed by the county council as well as those from other as part of the multi-agency framework delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage agenda. This also applies to staff from the statutory and non-statutory sector; the latter includes private, voluntary and independent groups.

3. Mandatory systems and procedures

Play resources

- The centre will provide a range of resources and materials which can be used in a variety of ways that encourage children to express their ideas, make decisions, solve problems, apply their own reasoning and share their experiences with others
- All toys, activities and play equipment should portray images of people that positively reflect male and female roles, and also a range of ethnic cultures and disabilities
- Any broken or damaged equipment will be disposed of safely and securely in line with any manufacturer's guidelines. For example, any electrical equipment needs to be disposed of according to the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2006
- If equipment needs to be thrown out the Children's Centre Manager must be informed
- After each school term the staff will check the play equipment carefully and be prepared to make recommendations for any purchases as well as equipment needing to be repaired or discarded.
- Before and throughout each session with children, staff will make a watching brief on the play resources and the learning environment for any damaged or broken equipment
- When considering buying new play equipment, staff should find innovative ways of consulting with children to inform their decision-making
- There should be an annual audit of all equipment to account for any missing or damaged equipment
- Resources within areas are labelled and organised so that children can access them independently and take responsibility for tidying them away
- Resources should include items which are bought, collected and recycled
- Children are encouraged to use materials creatively and imaginatively and to reflect on their play experiences
- Resources are monitored regularly for suitability and safety

- Resources are cleaned/washed regularly by staff, or as part of the children's play experiences e.g. washing up in the home corner

Recording and assessment

- A variety of tools are used to record evidence of a child's progress and development; these might include photos, video clips, artwork a child has created or observational evidence. Such material is generally shared immediately with the child, and put, where possible, into a child's achievement book/personal learning pathway
- With parents knowledge and approval it can sometimes be useful to share with other staff e.g. therapists, health visitors and family support staff as evidence or work created by the children. This can inform the work of other practitioners

Review and evaluation

- Depending on the children's interests, sessions will reflect preferred themes, interests and possible ideas for extending their indoor and outdoor individual/group learning. This will inform the short-term planning process. To this end, staff will review and evaluate activities on a sessional basis
- Staff, e.g. crèche workers, will meet regularly to plan on the basis of the above, so that learning goals are established for that week, any differentiation for children with special/additional needs is made and other adults e.g. staff and volunteers are aware of their roles

Role of the staff

- Staff will support and encourage children's natural curiosity in the world around them by supporting and extending children's play/learning through talk and providing additional resources/activities in a sensitive manner so that the children control and direct their learning
- Staff will help the children to develop a positive image of themselves both as a learner and as a member of the community by valuing all their contributions and observations
- Staff should also regularly monitor and evaluate their own activities and provision for supported learning through peer observation and individual staff supervision

Organisation for play

- All children with disabilities should have the same play opportunities as their peers
- The adult/child ratios are observed at all times
- Planning for play includes provision for different kinds of play. The following situations and resources are readily accessible to the children:
 - ✓ Outdoor play
 - ✓ Imaginative play
 - ✓ Small world area
 - ✓ Water and sand
 - ✓ Construction play



October 2016

- ✓ Writing area
- ✓ Workshop creative area
- ✓ Book corner
- ✓ Malleable
- ✓ Computer area

Organisation of the outside space

- The outdoor play area can be split into different areas for planning purposes to contain:
 - ✓ Sand area
 - ✓ Small apparatus
 - ✓ Quiet area
 - ✓ Story telling area
 - ✓ Gardening area
 - ✓ Water area

6. Implementation / methods

The Children's Centre Manager will ensure, through the supervision process that the above checks are made in a regular and timely manner. Regular liaison with other agencies using the centre will also enable all the above standards and requirements to be met.

7. Monitoring and reviewing

- It is the responsibility of the Children's Centre Manager to monitor and review the effectiveness of all policies relating to the centre
- The Children's Centre Managers will review and update this policy in line with the children's centre policy review cycle
- The Children's Centre Managers will update and amend this policy and its procedures in line with any emerging and relevant government legislation or county council guidance

8. For further information please contact:

Nikki Gray
Walton Children's Centre
Sandy Lane
Walton on Thames, Surrey
KT12 2EQ

Tel: 01932 229 313

Daphne Sohl
Weybridge Children's Centre
The Churchfield Pavilion
Churchfield Road,
Weybridge, Surrey
KT13 8DB
Tel: 01932 820106

The Children's Centre Managers are the first point of contact should any queries arise over this policy and its related procedures.



October 2016

8. Policy endorsement

This policy is agreed and signed by the governing body of Grovelands School

Signed:

Name: Tyrone Lawless

Chair of Governors
October 2016

Signed:

Name: Liz Nicholls

Executive Head
October 2016