



St. Christopher's CE Primary School



Play Policy

How Play is led at break and Lunchtimes

Statement The school is aware of the need to provide educational playground areas for students to play and exercise, as a balanced part of the school day. The school encourages students to be active, to benefit them physically, emotionally and educationally. Our playground is designed to give pupils challenges to enable them to learn about risk. This school will, so far as reasonably practicable safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff and others by maintaining suitable play areas and (where installed) maintain fixed play equipment and outdoor furniture. The school's playground includes areas for having fun, encountering nature, encouraging physical activity, space to meet make friends and hang out.

At the time of writing St Christopher's Play Policy and Playground and Outdoor play equipment Risk Assessment the following statements from the Health and Safety Executive document have been taken into account:

"HSE fully supports the provision of play for all children in a variety of environments. HSE understands and accepts that this means children will often be exposed to play environments which, whilst well-managed, carry a degree of risk and sometimes potential danger. 4. HSE wants to make sure that mistaken health and safety concerns do not create sterile play environments that lack challenge and so prevent children from expanding their learning and stretching their abilities....."

Recognising the benefits of play

Key message: 'Play is great for children's well-being 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'....."

Striking the right balance does mean:

- *Weighing up risks and benefits when designing and providing play opportunities and activities*
- *Focussing on and controlling the most serious risks, and those that are not beneficial to the play activity or foreseeable by the user*
- *Recognising that the introduction of risk might form part of play opportunities and activity*
- *Understanding that the purpose of risk control is not the elimination of all risk, and so accepting that the possibility of even serious or life-threatening injuries cannot be eliminated, though it should be managed*
- *Ensuring that the benefits of play are experienced to the full*

Striking the right balance does not mean:

All risks must be eliminated or continually reduced

- *Every aspect of play provision must be set out in copious paperwork as part of a misguided security blanket*
- *Detailed assessments aimed at high-risk play activities are used for low-risk activities*
- *Ignoring risks that are not beneficial or integral to the play activity, such as those introduced through poor maintenance of equipment*



St. Christopher's CE Primary School



Play Policy

- *Mistakes and accidents will not happen*

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment/childrens-play-july-2012.pdf>

Pre break and lunchtime preparation

Weekly: Caretaker carries out Health and Safety inspections around the grounds, including adventure play equipment on a weekly basis.

Daily :Teacher on duty is responsible for checking the outdoor adventure play equipment is safe to play on that day, if conditions are too wet / icy to use safely then children will either play outside but not on equipment or indoors.

Annual checks are carried out by an external company contracted in and any repairs required are carried out as soon as possible. If equipment is considered unsafe for use, it will be taken out of use until repairs are completed.

Outdoor adventure play equipment

Teacher on duty that day is to decide if the equipment is safe to use, they will carry out a visual check to see if it is too icy or wet to use and if there are any damaged areas.

Teachers are to remind children of the outdoor play equipment rules before use of the equipment:

Outdoor Play equipment rules:

- Only use when it's your classes turn.
- No running/playing tag around or on the playground equipment.
- No sitting/hiding under the bridge.
- When you get off the equipment make sure there is no one in the way.
- Don't eat your snack whilst on the equipment, both your hands need to be free.
- Use both hands when climbing.
- Avoid climbing on wet equipment.
- Be respectful of other people
- Don't overcrowd one bit of play equipment
- Be patient and wait your turn
- Keep yourself and others safe

Zones

The playground is zoned for different areas of play / learning – clear areas for ball games, quiet play, Forest school and pond area are fenced off and are not accessible during break or lunch playtimes.



St. Christopher's CE Primary School



Play Policy

First Aid

School has sufficient number of staff that are first aid trained. First Aid Kit and a First Aid trained member of staff to be on duty and available at all times outdoors. If the First Aider is outside, children will be taken to them in the first instance. First Aiders are to take the first aid playtime bag outside with them. All accidents / incidents to be logged on safesmart system and reports sent home to parents.

Supervision

Midday supervisors may not be able to see every child all of the time, especially when the children are playing in the trees. It is expected that MDS will move around throughout lunchtime in their designated area, finding out what the children are doing and where the children are playing. MDS can then check in on the children's play throughout lunchtime. Midday supervisors and staff covering breaks are not to congregate but spread out around the playground to ensure all areas are covered.

If early years are on the outdoor play equipment then there are 3 members of staff on duty and one member of staff to be near the outdoors play equipment at all times.

Conflict Resolution

All staff will use the 'Conflict Resolution' when supporting the children in the playground. The protocol is as follows:

1. Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions.
2. Acknowledge children's feelings.
3. Gather information.
4. Restate the problem.
5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together.
6. Be prepared to give follow up support.

Respecting Rights

Children have the right to be happy therefore to respect this right the children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others and have fun. MDS respect this right by providing opportunities for creative, exciting play, use conflict resolution to support children and supporting children who have additional needs at playtime.

St Christopher's School Children have the right to be safe therefore to respect this right children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others, assess risk and tidy equipment away. Staff respect this right by assessing risk daily, encouraging children to assess risk also and helping children to tidy up.

Children have the right to play and relax therefore to respect this right the children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others and help others who need it. Adults respect this right by developing new opportunities for play, listening to children's ideas about play and supporting children who have additional needs to access play.



St. Christopher's CE Primary School



Play Policy

Additional Organisation

To enable children to enjoy the vast space and activities, they are encouraged to wear appropriate outdoor clothing and wellington boots. Welly stores have been created around each Key Stage exit/entrance.

End of break / Lunchtime Organisation

The school handbell is blown at 12:55 for children to collect any play equipment used and take to the storage areas to tidy up. Children then return to their welly stores and place their shoes back on. Teachers return to their classes at 1:00. Children who have tidied up and replaced shoes can then go into their classes. By 1:00 all children have their shoes on and returned to classes. MDS on duty ensure all children have entered school. Then 'sweep' the areas for any items which need putting away and close any doors eg. Sheds, storage cupboards etc.

Play Leaders books Each Play Leader has a book in which they record exceptional behaviour at lunchtime. These children are praised during weekly Celebration Assemblies. Ideas for lunchtime play are also recorded in the back of these books.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Risk Assessment for Use of Playground, Outdoor Play Equipment and Outdoor Learning.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

This means that staff should be aware of the changing nature of the play taking place. They should support children to assess and manage risk as much as possible for themselves, but they should also be vigilant and take action, if they think that risk of serious harm is becoming unacceptably likely. Actions taken by staff when required should balance the reduction of likelihood or severity of harm while preserving as much of the benefit of the play as possible, and empowering the children to manage future risk as much as possible.