



Corngreaves Academy
The best in everyone™
Part of United Learning

Policy for Play



Policy written by Leanne Timmins (SENDCo and OPAL Curriculum lead) on 4.9.25 and it will be reviewed on 1.9.26

Signature:

L Timmins

Head of School Signature: *J Robinson*

Date: 4.9.25

Commitment

Corngreaves Academy recognises the true importance of children's play and we will refer to this play policy in all decisions that affect children's play.

We are committed to providing the strategic and operational leadership needed to provide and maintain quality play provision for all of our children.

We have named:

Richard Hackett as our Play governor.

Leanne Timmins as the Curriculum lead for play.

Stephanie Garratt as the Play Leader.

Rationale

At Corngreaves our core values are "Relationships=Learning=Success" and we are committed to promoting opportunities for all ages and abilities of children to have dedicate time to socialise and learn through outdoor play.

We believe that all children need opportunities to play and that this is their right (Rights of the Child Article 31, play is a human right)! We recognise that good quality playtimes lead to improvements in behaviour, provide new and creative experiences, increases physical activity and improves mental well-being. We believe play provision should be welcoming and accessible to every child, irrespective of gender, physical ability, special education needs, sexual orientation, economic or social circumstances, ethnic or cultural background or origin.

The OPAL Primary Programme rationale is that "... better, more active and creative playtimes can mean happier and healthier children, and having happier, healthier, more active children usually results in a more positive

attitude to learning in school, with more effective classroom lessons, less staff time spent resolving unnecessary behavioural problems, fewer playtime accidents, happier staff and a healthier attitude to life.”

Definition and value of play

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.

We believe play has many benefits for example play:

- supports our Super 7 School Rules
- supports our values of Relationships=Learning=Success
- is critical to children’s health and mental wellbeing, and essential for their physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development;
- enables children to explore the physical and social environment, as well as different concepts and ideas;
- enhances children’s self-esteem and their understanding of others through freely chosen social interactions, within peer groups, with individuals, and within groups of different ages, abilities, interests, genders, ethnicities and cultures;
- will provide opportunities for children to develop their relationships with each other;
- requires ongoing communication and negotiation skills, enabling children to develop a balance between their right to act freely and their responsibilities to others; 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;

- *encourages self-confidence and the ability to make choices, problem solve and to be creative;*
- *maintains children's openness to learning, develops their capabilities and allows them to push the boundaries of what they can achieve.*

Aims

In relation to play our school aims to:

- *Ensure play settings provide a varied, challenging and stimulating environment.*
- *Allow children to take risks and use a common-sense approach to the management of these risks and their benefits.*
- *Provide opportunities for children to develop their relationships with each other.*
- *Enable children to develop respect for their surroundings and each other.*
- *Aid children's physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development.*
- *Provide a range of environments that will encourage children to explore and play imaginatively.*
- *Provide a range of environments that will support children's learning across the curriculum and learning about the world around them.*
- *Provide children with the opportunity to use a range of equipment and resources whilst taking care not to hurt others.*
- *Promote independence and teamwork within children.*

- Build emotional and physical resilience.
- Adults to provide inclusive opportunities for creative exciting play and the use of emotion coaching to resolve conflicts and to support children with additional needs.
- Adults to dynamically risk assess and to ensure the resources are tidied away at the end of the play session.

Benefit and 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)

Risk-taking is an essential feature of play provision and of all environments in which children legitimately spend time at play. Play assemblies will introduce pupils to new activities where health and safety rules will be agreed with all. Staff will observe at a distance and intervene if necessary.

In addition to standard risk-benefit assessments at Corngreaves we will practice dynamic risk management with children, encouraging them to identify and manage risks in an environment where adults are present to support them.

Supervision

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

OPAL's three models of supervision: Direct, Remote and Ranging. Except for new children in reception, whose skills and orientation in the school environment need to be assessed, when they are ready they will then join the main school playground. Staff on duty will use ranging and remote supervision models, so that children can quickly find an adult and adults can patrol large sites to gain an awareness of the kinds of play and levels of risk likely to be emerging. Any concerns will be reported back to the OPAL team, who will reassess anything necessary.

The adult's role in play

The school will help children maximise the benefits they can gain from play by the provision of trained staff who are informed by and work in accordance with the Playwork Principles. Staff will use and refer to these principles when appropriate interventions are needed, and ultimately will strive for facilitating an environment that nurtures children's self-directed play. The 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.

Adults support the children to develop new opportunities for play, listening to their ideas about play and supporting all children to access play.

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 freely chosen play.

Clothing

Play will be outdoors, unless the weather causes it to become dangerous, so staff and children will need to be prepared. During the colder and wet weather pupils will be encouraged to bring wellies and waterproof coats.

In the sunnier weather, children will need sun cream and hats to protect from the sun.

Rights

Our school recognises the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes the right to play, recreation and leisure (Article 31) and the right of children to be listened to on matters important to them (Article 12). We acknowledge that we have a duty to take these rights seriously and listen to children's views on their play.

We are committed to equal opportunities and the objective of this policy is that no person should suffer or experience less favourable treatment, discrimination or lack of opportunities on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, religious or philosophical beliefs, health status, HIV status, age, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, political beliefs or trade union membership, class, responsibility for dependents or physical attributes.