

## The School Play Policy

The development of a play policy within school will provide a useful means of demonstrating how the school is addressing the Every Child Matters agenda and the fulfilment of every child's potential throughout its work.

The involvement of all members of the school community, including staff, governors, parents and pupils, is essential if a school policy on play is to be meaningful and become embedded throughout the school's work.

A school play policy can include:

- the school's objectives for play and their contribution to other school priorities;
- how play may be linked to specified learning outcomes for specific year groups;
- how play-based learning activities would contribute to the development of a personalised learning approach, in terms of meeting the needs of children's individual rates of development and learning styles;
- equal opportunities issues, including ethnicity, gender, special educational needs and cultural diversity;
- the role of teachers and other adults in play activities;
- implications for professional development and support;
- the rules for play activities, including how these are formulated and communicated and any kinds of activities which are encouraged or banned;
- resourcing, including use of indoor and outdoor spaces and time made available for play
- assessment and recording strategies;
- monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

### Resources:

<http://www.schoolsoutforplay.org.uk/PlayResource-4924.pdf>

<http://www.schoolsoutforplay.org.uk/play-in-schools-integrated-settings.pdf>

<http://www.schoolsoutforplay.org.uk/pas.pdf>

## Sample School Play Policy Statement '*play is not just for playtime*'

This policy statement has been produced to reflect the value that **NAME OF SCHOOL** places on play and the importance of children and young people in our society.

The statement is founded on the principle that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government in December 1991, recognises the importance of play for children and young people

This policy statement is predicated upon the principles that:

- every child and young person is entitled to respect for their own unique combination of qualities and capabilities;
- the perceptions of the child and young person, their views and opinions should always be respected for each child and young person is connected to, and a bearer of, a wider culture;
- the child and young person's free choice of their own play is a critical factor in enriching their learning and contributing to their well being and development.

The **NAME OF SCHOOL** believes that:

- play is the elemental learning process by which humankind has developed. Children and young people exhibit a behavioural imperative and instinctive desire to play. It has contributed significantly to the evolutionary and developmental survival of our species. Children and young people use play in the natural environment to learn of the world they inhabit with others. It is the very process of learning and growth, and as such all that is learnt through it is of benefit to children and young people
- play encompasses children and young people's behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. It is performed for no external goal or reward, and is a fundamental and integral part of healthy development - not only for individual children and young people, but also for the society in which they live.
- play is so critically important to all children in the development of their physical, social, mental, emotional and creative skills that society should seek every opportunity to support it and create an environment that fosters it. Decision making at all levels should include a consideration of the impact of those decisions, on children and young people's opportunities to play.
- play is first and foremost the process of a child and young person's own, self-directed learning and as such is a process that has a validity for all ages. It is such a vital component of a child and young person's life that the child and young person's capacity for positive development will be inhibited or constrained if denied free access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities. It is the very freedom and child centredness of play that makes it such an effective and comprehensive learning process.

Signed

Dated