



Early Years Outdoor Learning and Play Policy

At St John's School and Nursery we feel the outdoor area is so important to young children's learning and development. Our outdoor learning environments in Nursery and Reception are available to the children to work and play in every day- no matter what the weather, come rain or shine! After all there is no bad weather ~ just bad clothing!

We try and have minimal rules and regulations to ensure the children have the freedom to take risks and explore the natural world fully, developing their own imaginative games. We believe in getting messy and having fun!

Below lists the different areas in our Early Years environment and how the children are encouraged to use the area for an enjoyable experience whilst keeping safe and warm & dry.

Clothing:

- Our all in one waterproof suits are a vital piece of kit to ensure comfortable play in our outdoor areas. To preserve the waterproofing; suits will only be washed ONCE a year with waterproofing tech wash at Easter time. At other times suits will be left to dry and mud brushed off. (Obviously suits will be washed if children have an accident in them)
- In rainy weather children wear all in one waterproof suits and wellies
- When equipment and grass is wet children also wear suits and wellies
- In very cold & wet weather children wear extra layers under their suits & wellies. Children are also encouraged to wear a hat, scarf and gloves. (When they haven't brought their own; spares can be borrowed from a class collection)
- Sun hats are to be worn on hot sunny days
- Fancy dress clothes are permitted outside (unless they drag on the floor) in all weathers (eg can be worn under a suit if desired!)

Mud Pit & Mud Kitchen:

- This area is available ALL year round and all through every session, all day
- Suits and wellies must be worn in this area (except on extremely hot days)

- Water is available at all time to mix mud pies etc.
- Mud kitchen to be tidied at the end of each week (e.g. brushed down & lumps removed!)
- There is no limit to the amount of children that can work in this area ~ children to be encouraged to self-regulate the number that play here
- In the Nursery mud is to remain in the designated large mud kitchen area
- In Reception mud can be removed and used in a role play setting where appropriate
- Mud is not allowed to be thrown ~ sensible mixing play is encouraged

Climbing Frame:

- The wooden climbing frame is available all year round and everyday ~ except in ice and snow when it is not safe. The climbing frame can be used in wet weather sensibly
- Appropriate footwear to be worn (shoes or well-fitting wellies is fine). No crocs or flip flops
- In Nursery ~ no ankle length dresses to be worn on climbing frame for safety reasons
- In Reception ~ children are taught how to climb safely in long dresses
- Toys are allowed on the climbing frame to extend the children's imaginative play - but no wheeled equipment such as bikes, scooters or prams
- Toys must not be thrown from the climbing frame
- There is no limit to the amount of children allowed on the climbing frame at once~ children to be encouraged to self-regulate the number that play here
- In Nursery ~ children must travel down the slide feet first (due to the steepness of the slide) they can sit or lay. They are also allowed to explore climbing up the slide when it is clear to do so.
- In Reception ~ the children are encouraged to travel one way on the rings starting at the trim trail end
- Children are encouraged/allowed to explore different ways to use and move on the climbing frame. (e.g. sliding down the climbing wall). Adults to help support children to risk assess their movement choices for themselves

Astroturf Area & Concrete Area:

- This area is available all year round (even in slippery or icy conditions)
- In slippery or icy conditions children are taught how to move safely in these areas (e.g. not to run but walk carefully on ice)

Wheeled Equipment:

- Wheeled equipment can be used in all areas except on the climbing frame (e.g. bikes on the grass/astroturf is fine)
- Wheeled equipment can be used in all weathers except ice and snow
- Children are not allowed to push other children round in the wheeled equipment or crash wheeled equipment for safety reasons
- Adult outside to be aware of speed safety around other children and guide as necessary

Sand Pit:

- The sand pit is to be available every day all through the year
- Sand and mud are not to be mixed in Nursery or Reception
- In Nursery sand is to remain in or around the sand pit area (not to be transported across concrete area to avoid it becoming slippery)
- In Reception children are permitted to remove sand for a purposeful activity (e.g. role play cooking or picnics) and then return sand after
- In Reception the separate dry and wet sand trays are not to be mixed

Water:

- To be available outside everyday throughout the year
- Sleeves of clothing (e.g. coats or jumpers) are to be pushed up (aprons do not have to be worn)
- When children choose very splashy play (e.g. making puddles in builders trays to jump up and down in) they will wear waterproof suit and wellies

Running:

- Running is permitted outdoors at all times in all areas (except in icy conditions)



Ratified by Governors on

2018

Chair of Teaching and Learning Committee _____