



“CREATIVITY, RESPONSIBILITY, RESPECT, AND HAPPINESS”

BLUE COAT CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Play Policy

Committee responsible for this policy	Resources committee
Policy initially approved by FGB	2014
Policy reviewed/amended	11 th Oct 2016: 30 th Oct 2018
Policy review term	Triennial
Policy due for review	2021

Statement of Intent / Scope of the Policy



*'Play is a key part of how we learn about
Ourselves, Others and the world in which we live.'*

Commitment

This policy has been written to reflect the value that Blue Coat CEVA Primary School places on quality play and its impact on children. All key decisions surrounding play at Blue Coat will be guided by this policy.

Rationale

Play is fun, enjoyable and developmental: Children's learning, imagination, creativity, and independence is promoted by the act of play. Through this experience, children explore and discover physical and social boundaries, and in doing so construct their understanding of the world and people around them. Quality play can ensure that children become more adept at managing and assessing risk in their lives so as to remain safe and healthy.

We recognise the importance that play contributes towards the school's ethos. It affords children the opportunities to find out who they are whilst developing and maintaining relationships with their peers. The school's core Christian values relate equally to play as they do to life in and around the school building: Respect, Responsibility, Happiness and Creativity are values we hope and aim for children to live by and develop independently throughout their play times when presented with the opportunities.

Children have a right to play. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 31), ratified by the UK Government in 1991, recognises the importance of play for children and young people up to the age of 18. Moreover, the school commits to an agenda of equal opportunity whereby all children are entitled to the same experience of quality play regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or otherwise.

Definition

At Blue Coat we define 'play' for children as:

*'A child-initiated act of engaging in an experience purely for
the purpose of enjoyment or recreation.'*

Aims

By committing to providing quality play experiences for all of our children at Blue Coat, we aim to provide a set of conditions that:

- Provide a challenging and stimulating environment for play
- Afford children with opportunities to take and manage risks
- Promote independence and self-confidence

- Seek to broaden and strengthen friendships with peers
- Develop imagination and creativity
- Promote and support physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development

Play and Risk

‘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 between protecting children from the most serious risks and allowing them to reap the benefits of play is not always easy [...] In essence, play is a safe and beneficial activity. Sensible adult judgements are all that is generally required to derive the best benefits to children whilst ensuring that they are not exposed to unnecessary risk’

~ CHILDREN’S PLAY AND LEISURE - PROMOTING A BALANCED APPROACH, Health & Safety Executive, 2012

Opportunities to explore and take acceptable risks during freely chosen activities is an essential element of play. Allowing children to challenge themselves beyond existing capabilities and take risks develops their ability to independently judge risk and learn new skills. By preventing a child from being allowed to take acceptable risks in their play is to inhibit their development and undermine their capacity to deal with the wider unsupervised world.

The school recognises its duty of care in balancing acceptable levels of risk in play with the benefits for children. This policy states the school’s objectives (and therefore the ‘benefits’) for allowing children to take acceptable levels of risk in their play.

In determining levels of ‘acceptable risk’, the school will carefully consider these during comprehensive risk assessment of all play provision which is reviewed on a 6-monthly basis, or wherever significant change/development in play provision or equipment or child circumstances takes place.

The Role of Adults in Play

The school will be guided by the Playwork Principles when developing the roles of adults in supporting quality play.

Blue Coat recognises the fluid nature of play. Staff use Dynamic Risk Assessment when supporting the children at play, alongside standard written risk assessments. Dynamic Risk Assessments happen on site and are based on observation of what is happening at any one time.



There is no stated supervision ratio for playtime supervisory staff. Blue Coat deploy a range of supervision techniques across the play spaces, including direct (children in direct eye sight), roving (adult moving within a defined supervision area) and remote (adult monitoring a large area from a good viewpoint).

Cross Referenced:

Safeguarding Policy; Health & Safety Policy; Anti-bullying Policy; Equal Opportunities Policy, Supervision Policy