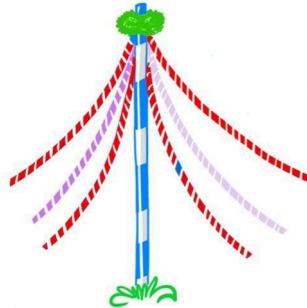


Maypole School



PLAY POLICY 2026-2027

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“Anyone who has observed play for any length of time will recognise that, for young children, play is a tool for learning and practitioners who acknowledge and appreciate this can, through provision, interaction and intervention in children’s play ensure progression, differentiation and relevance in the curriculum. The sense of children actively seeking to construct their own view of the world and the contribution of quality interactions with others, both adults and children, is now widely accepted as a suitable approach to early years’ curriculum”.

The Excellence of Play, edited by J.Moyles 1994 (page 6).

1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

Introduction

Maypole School understands the importance that the role of play has for our pupils. Play provides an opportunity for children to come to terms with themselves, their culture and language, other people and the world, and make sense of real life situations.

Play provides opportunities for exploration, investigation and problem solving and for children to practice their developing skills. Play helps to develop a child’s perseverance and resilience; qualities that our pupils sometimes struggle to develop.

It also provides opportunities for them to represent their experiences and use what they have learned in different ways - through music, language, imaginative and creative activities. The role of the adult is crucial in supporting and extending children’s play.

Rationale

Children learn and develop through play. Play is a motivating factor for learning. Adult help and participation are necessary for learning to progress.

What we want to achieve

At Maypole School we aim:

- To provide quality play in a stimulating environment, which allows the children to develop and learn.
- To provide adequate planning, time and space for play.
- To allow play to be sustained over a period of time.
- To allow play to be carried through to a conclusion which children find satisfying and gives rise to perseverance and concentration.
- To provide materials to start play, maintain it and develop its potential.
- To ensure play is enjoyed and shared by all children, albeit to differing degrees.
- To accept that the teaching staff can take an active role in furthering the learning situation and promoting physical, social and emotional development.
- To provide first hand experiences.
- To provide open ended tasks.
- To interact when relevant.
- To set new challenges.
- To remove materials when they have been ignored or served their purpose.

- To make rules to safeguard children, protect equipment and enable play to occur.
- To allow time for careful observation of children's play to facilitate assessment and planning for progression and continuity.
- To recognise and value the play situations encountered at home.

2. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

At Maypole School, through play, we aim to provide opportunities for the development of:

- Language development through experiences
- Early reading and writing skills
- Social skills
- Mathematical experiences e.g. Counting, matching, conversation
- One to one correspondence
- Emotional development
- Promotion of self esteem
- Self motivation
- Co-operation
- Dealing with feelings e.g. fear, apprehension, anger, curiosity, happiness
- Sharing and caring
- Imitative and imaginative play
- Learning to listen to others and follow direction
- Equal opportunities
- Cultural influences
- Innovation in using equipment
- Involvement in group play or observation

3. WHY PLAY IS IMPORTANT

Play...

- Is the natural and enjoyable way for young children to learn.
- Is an essential and rich part of the learning process.
- Develops imagination and creative thinking.
- Allows children to investigate, experiment and solve problems.
- Allows children to develop, consolidate and apply new skills and ideas in different situations.
- Allows children to explore and make sense of the world around them.
- Allows children to work through fears and anxieties.
- Allows children to learn about making choices and decisions.
- Puts children in charge of their own learning.
- Enables children to develop their personal qualities and attitudes.
- Enables children to develop social skills and form relationships.
- Allows children to take risks without fear of failure.
- Which is physical and energetic is an essential part of keeping healthy.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Play takes place both indoors and outdoors

Outdoor Play...

- Is both a teaching and learning environment.
- Outdoor design and layout needs careful consideration.
- Outdoor play is central to young children's learning, possibly more to some children than others.
- The outdoor classroom offers children the opportunity to utilize effective modes of learning – play, movement and sensory experience.
- Children need versatile equipment and environments.

What well-planned play will enable

Well planned play is promoted within the Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 at Maypole School by providing children with time, space, materials and equality of access in a secure environment with effective adult support.

Through well planned play children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that will help them make sense of the world.
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills.
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.
- Express fears or relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

What are we providing?

- Space - sufficient area to support play.
- Time - enough time to pursue/complete activities.
- Materials and stimulus - quality equipment, well labelled and accessible.
- Adult interest and encouragement - all adults deployed effectively.
- Equal opportunities (not doing the same games at every break time eg football).
- Breadth and balance - in activities and experiences provided.

Why are we providing?

- To give children the space to develop and extend play.
- Opportunities to explore materials.
- Develop role play.
- Develop concentration.
- Observe.
- Motivate.
- Enhance social skills.

How are we providing?

- Inside and outside play.
- Ordered framework.
- Varying lengths of time for play to develop.
- Storage of equipment.

Resources

A wide range of resources will be available in each classroom, and in shared spaces, appropriate to age and developmental stage. This list is not exhaustive and will be added to and developed throughout the year.

- Dressing up clothes
- Toys
- Board games
- Card games
- Dolls and figures
- Farm and zoo animals
- Dinosaur figures
- Sand and water play opportunities
- Lego
- Meccano
- Train sets
- Cars
- Bat, balls, racquets
- Craft games