



Laxey School

Play Policy

Learning It's Up To You



INTRODUCTION

At Laxey we recognise both the importance of free play and providing opportunities and resources to facilitate this play. We believe that it is crucial for children to learn through imaginative/creative play by being allowed to take risks, solve problems and collaborate freely with minimum adult input. We understand that children will naturally create and/or seek out challenging situations and that while making the most of their play some children may have accidents, get dirty, wet or upset.

We recognise that any potential risk of harm to children needs to be balanced with the potential benefits that come from their play. We acknowledge that accidents can and will happen; however, we will put in place the necessary measures and training to enable our staff to help manage any risk and keep children safe.

This school believes that adults' attitude towards, and understanding of, children's play will have a significant effect on the quality of the play opportunities offered. This school will therefore provide training opportunities among its staff so that we are confident when facilitating children's freely chosen, self-directed play.

Risk-benefit assessment

Decisions about what is a reasonable risk will be made using a risk-benefit approach. This process involves considering the potential benefits afforded by an opportunity alongside any potentially negative outcomes and then making a judgement about whether the potential for injury is proportional to the benefits. For the purpose of risk-benefit assessments, benefits can be physical, emotional, social or environmental (and are likely to be a combination of all of these). Risk of injury can be identified by considering the likelihood of any potential injury occurring together with the potential severity of that injury.

Staff will:

- *Allow children to play freely, monitoring their actions and only intervening if necessary e.g if a child is in danger of serious physical/emotional harm
- *Guide children's choices with minimum interference i.e allowing children to learn from their mistakes and solve problems themselves
- *Risk assess with the children when introducing loose parts or another aspect of play i.e discuss risks and benefits before loose parts etc are introduced to the playground
- *Monitor the safety of loose parts and anything else involved in free play e.g trees, sticks, pipes
- *Accept that children will get wet and dirty
- *Accept that minor accidents will happen and give appropriate first aid where necessary
- *Observe and monitor during playtime duties such that no areas of the playground are left for extended periods out of line of sight.