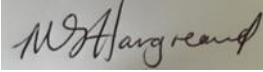


ST PHILIP'S CE PRIMARY ACADEMY

Early Years Foundation Stage Outdoor Learning Policy

Date of policy:	May 2025	Signed:  Head Teacher: Michelle Hargreaves Chair of Governors
Review date:	May 2026	Signed: Head Teacher Chair of Governors

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Safeguarding Statement

At St Philip's Primary Academy, we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all academy activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at St Philip's Primary Academy. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access the academy and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.

Vision Statement

Fostering curiosity and a love of learning is at the heart of our teaching. Broadening horizons enables all children to flourish and be fulfilled. Successes are celebrated and failure learned from, allowing us to shine through challenges. Together, we develop qualities of character necessary to be positive future citizens.

Our Guiding Principles

At St Philip's CE Primary Academy we pride ourselves on developing a positive ethos built on the foundations of the Christian faith, whilst taking into consideration that most of our pupils, staff and community follow the faith of Islam. We endeavour to ensure we are always 'Working together with hope in our hearts'

This ethos is based on the following principles that, as stakeholders, we all aim to uphold:

Value 1: NURTURING

We demonstrate kindness and caring towards each other so that we can find happiness and fulfilment. We promote and support children's wellbeing to support their growth and development.

Value 2: OPTIMISTIC

We believe that having a positive attitude towards situations enables us to be forward thinking and supports us in our goal of providing a good and better education for all of our pupils.

Value 3: ASPIRATIONAL

We have high aspirations for the futures of the children in our Academy. Through a high-quality curriculum and planning of lessons that are specifically tailored for our pupils, they will have the opportunity to achieve and surpass their potential.

Value 4: HOPEFUL

The value of hope is interwoven into our teaching and is and is an expression of our faith. Hope supports our spirituality, and through that, virtues such as forgiveness, empathy and compassion come to the fore.

Value 5: SINCERE

We are united as a whole to ensure integrity, honesty and trust are maintained. This quality within our academy means that we follow our values to ensure that we always do our best for pupils, staff and community.

Value 6: ASSURED

Our goal is to see our pupils confident, armed with independence and conviction, echoing 'Let your light shine' – Matthew 5:16

Value 7: RESPECTFUL

All members of our academy, including pupils, staff, governors, visitors and the wider community,

should be treated with respect. We hold politeness in high regard and we are accepting of each individual's uniqueness.

Value 8: KNOWLEDGEABLE

By fostering resilience, collaboration and risk-taking, we craft an environment where pupils are ready to be lifelong learners.

Policy Statement

Bradford Diocesan Academies Trust (BDAT) regards the excellent attendance of children as integral to the success of the pupils and thus the success of their academies. For the purpose of this policy, the term Trust refers to BDAT. The Trust is committed to ensuring that pupils and parents/carers understand the absolute importance of full attendance at our schools.

As part of our focus on diversity and inclusion, BDAT pledges that our policies will seek to promote equality, fairness, and respect for all staff and pupils. Our policies reflect the BDAT values of inclusion, compassion, aspiration, resilience, and excellence. By working closely with a range of stakeholders, such as our school, union, and HR colleagues, we have ensured that BDAT's policies do not unlawfully discriminate against anybody.

Purpose of the Early Years Foundation Stage Outdoor Learning Policy

“When children play out of doors they are exercising their growing intellectual and emotional muscles, as well as their physical ones. They are developing their power to think, to feel, to do, to see and understand, to represent and express. They are imagining, puzzling, wondering, exploring, befriending and sharing”

Mary Jane Drummond – Can I Play Out? Bradford Education 1995

The purpose of the EYFS Outdoor Learning Policy is aimed at developing outdoor learning for children aged 3-5 at St Philip's CE Primary Academy. The Academy grounds provide a variety of existing activities, terrains and habitats however we strive to develop these further in order to provide an outdoor environment that that has;

- Unique characteristics and features
- Equal value to indoor learning
- Positive impact on children's well-being and development
- Support of attentive and engaged adults who are enthusiastic about the outdoors and understand the importance of outdoor learning
- An environment that is richly resourced with play materials that can be adapted and used in different ways
- An approach to outdoor learning that considers experiences rather than equipment places children at the centre of the provision being made.

Why Outdoor Learning is important

Outdoors learning in the Early Years is important at St Philip's because it;

- Supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles

- Offers children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement
- Promotes a sense of confidence and well-being
- Provided opportunities for developing harmonious relationships with other, through negotiation, taking turns and cooperation
- Supports those children who learn best through activity or movement
- Provides safe and supervised opportunities for children to experience new challenges, assess risk and develop the skills to manage difficult situations
- Supports children's developing creativity and problem-solving skills
- Provides rich opportunities for imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness
- Gives children contact with natural world and offers them unique experiences, such as direct contact with the weather and seasons.

Our vision for outdoor learning

At St Philip's; children's outdoor learning is enhanced by an environment that is richly resourced with exciting play materials and open-ended flexible resources that can be adapted and used in different ways, according to the needs and interests of the individual children.

The Learning is effective when adults focus on what children need to be able to do outdoor rather than identifying what children need to have. An approach that considers experiences rather than equipment and places children at the centre of the provision for outdoor learning, ensuring that individual children's learning and developmental needs are taken account of and met effectively.

Our practice involves providing opportunities for children in meaningful, engaging experiences that supports their development in all areas of the curriculum. It will include opportunities for children to;

- Be excited, energetic, adventurous, noisy, messy
- Talk, listen, interact, make friends
- Imagine, dream, invent, fantasise
- Create, invent, construct, deconstruct
- Investigate, explore, discover, experiment with their own ideas and theories
- Make sounds and music, express ideas and feelings
- Find patterns. Make marks, explore different media and materials
- Investigate concepts and ideas
- Be active, run, climb, pedal, jump, throw
- Dig, grow, nurture, cultivate
- Hide, relax, find calm, reflect
- Have responsibility, be independent, collaborate with others

Planning

At St Philip's we follow the guidance outlined within the 'Development Matters' document alongside our bespoke Curriculum for Curious Minds and plan accordingly to enable rapid progression within the 'Prime' and 'Specific' areas. Possible lines of development within these areas are provided below:

Personal Social and Emotional Development

- Develop confidence, self esteem and sense of security
- Develop independence as they acquire new skills
- Care for themselves and their personal safety
- Take care of the outside environment with respect and concern
- Become aware of and respect the needs and feelings of other, and reflect this in their behaviour
- Learn to follow rules

- Develop tolerance and perseverance
- Explore, experiment and be adventurous

Physical Development

- Enjoy physical play and the sense of freedom and well being it brings
- Begin to understand the importance of physical activity for good health and fitness
- Develop spatial awareness and how to share spaces safely with others
- Move confidently with increasing control and imagination

Communication and Language

- Talk about their experiences in the outdoor environment
- Talk about features of the outdoor environment
- Use language to describe, explain, predict and ask questions
- Interact and converse with adults and peers to extend language
- Develop ideas and follow directions and instructions
- Listen, respond and link language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical experiences
- Talk, listen and interact with each other in all areas, including a quiet space

Literacy

- Access a wide range of texts – books, leaflets, catalogues, reference materials and posters
- Enjoy stories, rhyme and songs in the outdoor environment
- Experience a variety of meaningful print such as labels, symbols and signs, and begin to understand some purposes for reading
- Experiment with early writing/mark making using water and rollers, brushes, chalk sand and paint, clipboards and pencils
- Use their drawings, written marks or writing to express their ideas and feelings
- See themselves and adults using writing for a purpose and discuss and agree the best way to present the writing, for example, lists, messages and reminders
- Write during role play and other activities

Mathematics

- Sort and categorise resources, equipment and naturally occurring objects
- Identify, understand and use numbers – both cardinal and ordinal, for example, numbers on parking bays, number lines, number plates, counting games, rhymes, jungle and stories
- Develop appropriate mathematical language through counting games, rhymes, jungles and stories
- Recognise, explore and create patterns, shapes and colours, for example, with leaves, pebbles and 2D shapes

- Match objects, for example, photographs with outdoor features
- Compare size, length, capacity and weight, for example, when playing on a see-saw
- Experience and talk about the routine and the passing of the time of day, the week, months and seasons
- Investigate and talk about patterns, colour and shapes in the outdoor environment, for example, shapes of trees, leaves and clouds
- Sort, design, plan and build with a range of 3D shapes
- Explore spatial awareness through different types of movement, for example, balance, locomotion and manipulation
- Begin to understand and use positional and directional words, for example, forwards, backwards, in front of, behind, above and below
- Use mathematical language use as heavy, light, full, empty, long, short in relevant contexts

Understanding the World

- Develop their powers of observation by using their senses, for example, access tools such as magnifying glasses
- Recognise objects by sight, sound, touch, smell, taste
- Ask questions, experiment, design, make and solve problems, for example, use flexible equipment that encourages experimentation like guttering and bricks
- Recognise and experience that some things change over time, for example, trees during autumn and clothes people wear
- Talk about and experience features in their local environment, such as the school setting and community
- Care for and respect living things and handle them sensitively, for example, worms in a wormery
- Listen to stories while outside about people and places
- Talk with adults and other children about themselves, their home, their setting and people who work within the setting and local community
- To use technology in their exploration, for example, taking photographs of minibeasts.
- Experiment, for example, transporting water from one place to another in a variety of ways.

Expressive Arts and Design

- Explore a variety of materials and appreciate colour, shape, texture and sound at vertical and horizontal levels
- Experience a variety of media and techniques such as painting, drawing, mark making, modelling and printing, both large and small scale
- Develop their sense of spatial awareness through the use of 3D and other materials, for example, working with recyclable materials in the junk yard to shape, rearrange and create environments for supporting imaginative play
- Observe and experience outdoor characteristics using all of their senses

- Listen and respond to a variety of sounds, rhythms and sounds in the outdoor environment
- Make music by vocal sounds, body sounds, singing, clapping and playing percussion instruments
- Make and use instruments to invent music which expresses thoughts and feelings
- Participate in dances and singing games
- Use outdoor features as a stimulus for music
- Plan, design and engage in stimulating role play, which encourages them to play cooperatively, negotiate roles, agree rules and act out scenarios
- Express their thoughts, ideas, feelings and imagination with confidence, enhancing self esteem and oral language
- Link imaginative play scenes inside and out, providing much more scope for large movement, noisy play and involving the whole child

Health and Safety

The safety of children is paramount. Risk Assessments are performed and available for all practitioners to read and take appropriate steps to ensure controls are in place to minimise injury. The Risk Assessments are stored in a green folder, marked clearly and hanging adjacent to the double doors leading outside. Children are trained to use the equipment safely therefore it is imperative that siblings or other children within the school premises do not use this unless under the supervision of an EYFS practitioner.

An EYFS practitioner will perform a daily risk assessment checklist to identify provisional resources are in sound condition and file recordings. Practitioners will make judgements as to the appropriateness of children's clothing, footwear and inclement weather and it's appropriateness for safe learning outdoors.

For security, the gates will be closed and locked before children are allowed outdoors and practitioners will remain vigilant and challenge any unauthorised persons on premises.

Roles and Responsibilities

Foundation Stage Leader

- Support colleagues in developing activity ideas that make use of the outdoor environment.
- Organise the renewal, update and complement resources needed to facilitate effective outdoor learning
- Audit and monitor current practice
- Keep staff informed of developments or changes in education regarding outdoor learning
- To assess risks and mitigate them through controls

Teachers and Practitioners

- To develop activity ideas that make use of the outdoor environment

- To develop the outdoor area as an enabling environment
- Ensure the outdoors adds value to the children's learning
- To extend and support children's spontaneous/self initiated play
- To extend and develop children's language and communication in their play
- Perform daily risk assessment checklist.

Caretaker

- To ensure the grounds are free from foreign litter and debris
- To contribute to assessment of risks and health and safety

Assessment

Assessment of children's learning outdoors follows the guidance outlined within the academy's 'Early Years Foundation Stage Policy'. This includes formative assessment that considers children's learning in both child or adult initiated activity. Outdoors provide plentiful opportunities to assess children's characteristics of effective learning.

Parents

At St Philip's; children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. This includes strong relationships between school and parents. Parents are encouraged to contribute to children's learning journeys and can do this by writing 'Wow Moments' of learning and events that occur outdoors. Practitioners also work with parents to promote the intrinsic benefits of learning outdoors and ensure that children are dressed appropriately for this in all weathers.

Weather

At St Philip's we continue with our outdoor learning in all weathers. All children are regularly advised to bring coats to allow them to go outdoors. Extreme wind can bring other dangers against which children cannot be wrapped up such as flying debris, or simply being blown over. Decisions to work outdoors should assess this possibility and decide if the activity can go ahead on any given day. The sun too can bring its own concerns. Children and parents are advised to bring a sun hat and suitable clothing, as well as applying sun cream before they come to school. If the activity outdoors is prolonged we ensure that children remain hydrated and stay under shelter from the sun.

Offsite Experiences

At St Philip's provide opportunities for children to experience opportunities for learning offsite. We engage in activities such as 'forest schools' that allows children to explore freely in a precautionsed environment as well as providing access to a variety of trees and plants to look at, talk about and touch or smell, as well as opportunities to see first hand growth of birds, squirrels and other life forms such as worms, insects or ponds.

We also encourage practitioners to use the locality as a learning environment, enabling children to understand the features of the area that they lives as well as the importance for the children to care for their environment by helping them understand the need to place litter in bins, recycle and look after open spaces.

Equality and inclusion

Our setting is committed to anti-discriminatory practice for all children and families. We respect and value the diversity which exists in the wider community. We are committed to challenging attitudes that promote discrimination, ensuring respect for all and preparing all children for life in a diverse society. In order to promote inclusive values children need to be surrounded by the beauty from a variety of cultural contexts and everyday artefacts which encourage and promote cultural diversity and challenge stereotypes. Resources used in our outdoor provision and choices of places to visit are carefully considered to ensure we promote inclusivity.

Statutory Requirements

There are statutory requirements governing Outdoor Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These are outlined within the 'Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage' document and appropriate steps are taken to ensure the academy fulfils its obligations. The requirements are;

Safety

3.55. Providers must ensure that their premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises. Providers must comply with requirements of health and safety legislation (including fire safety and hygiene requirements).

Premises

3.58. The premises and equipment must be organised in a way that meets the needs of children. Providers must meet the following indoor space requirements⁵⁹ where indoor activity in a building(s) forms the main part of (or is integral) to the provision:

- Children under two years: 3.5 m² per child
- Two year olds: 2.5 m² per child
- Children aged three to five years: 2.3 m² per child

Where the space standards are applied, providers cannot increase the number of children on roll because they additionally use an outside area. Forest and other exclusively (or almost exclusively) outdoor provision is not required to meet the space standards above as long as children's needs can be met. For this kind of provision, indoor space requirements can be used as a guide for the minimum area needed.

Outings

3.66. Children must be kept safe while on outings. Providers must assess the risks or hazards which may arise for the children, and must identify the steps to be taken to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards. The assessment must include consideration of adult to child ratios. The risk assessment does not necessarily need to be in writing; this is for providers to judge.

3.67. Vehicles in which children are being transported, and the driver of those vehicles, must be adequately insured.

Monitoring

It is the responsibility of the Early Years Foundation Staff to follow this policy. The senior Leadership Team will carry out monitoring on the EYFS as part of the whole school monitoring system.

Review

This policy should be reviewed and ratified by the Governing Body of St Philip's Primary Academy every two years.