



# Manor Wood Primary

## Foundation Stage Policy for Outdoor Play

November 2020



## Policy for Outdoor Play

- This document is a statement of the aims, principles and objectives for Teaching within the Foundation Stage at Manor Wood Primary School.
- It was reviewed in April, 2017.
- *CMPS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of all children, and expects our staff and volunteers to share this commitment.*

### Introduction

“Young children thrive and their minds and bodies develop best when they have free access to stimulating outdoor environments for learning through play and real experiences.”  
(Early Years Vision statement)

At Manor Wood Primary School, we know that our children are entitled to an Outdoor curriculum. We believe in the benefits of an outstanding and challenging outdoor environment and the right of our children to experience the different and special nature of Outdoors every day.

### Our Aims and Objectives

“Young children growing up today are often denied the opportunities for safe outdoor activity. The challenges involved in vigorous outdoor play in the early years setting are, therefore, more important than ever.”  
(Edgington, 2004)

We believe that the aims and objectives stated in our Foundation Stage Policy are fully embedded in our curriculum for Outdoor Play. However, we recognise that some learning can only take place outdoors, where the children have direct access to the natural world and have the freedom and opportunity to take control of their own learning. Through playing in the outdoor environment we believe our children become:

- Healthy
- Independent
- Confident
- Capable
- Enthusiastic
- Happy
- Self-motivated
- Creative
- Interested
- Investigative
- Empathetic
- Successful Learners
- Resilient

### Staff Roles and Responsibilities

“The success of the experience will depend, of course, on the teachers. They can give or withhold success.”

We believe that adults as educators in Outdoor Play hold a crucial role as:

Enthusiasts – They understand the value of Outdoor Play for children, enjoy being outside and are determined to overcome barriers to assure quality conditions for learning and teaching

Providers – They use the resources available in creative ways, auditing opportunities and plans to offer a wide range of experiences for children on as continuous a basis as possible

Supporters – They defend the outdoor curriculum, preserving enough time and space for children to become engrossed in their play and raise the status of it through recording and demonstrating the potential of learning outdoors

Responders – They watch and listen carefully to children as they play, engaging them in talk and playing alongside them

Contributors – They start with the children's interests and build on them by suggesting other possibilities and introducing new stimulus to develop their thinking

Practitioners will respond to children in the Outdoor Learning Environment as they would within the Indoor Classroom. Each practitioner will be active and involved in supporting the interests of children in the Outdoors and each practitioner's ideas and contributions will be valued in order to promote an effective working team.

### Health and Safety

Health and Safety and Security issues are of prime consideration and are regularly reviewed and monitored by the staff team. Risk assessments are conducted in order to facilitate safe outdoor experiences for children and to reduce risks, *not* to prevent children from having rich opportunities and experiences outside.

As stated in our Foundation Stage Policy:

- Equipment is regularly inspected by the staff to ensure that it is not hazardous.
- All new activities are risk-assessed.
- Accidents are recorded in a book.
- Staff are kept informed of changes in current legislation and practice by the co-ordinator.

### Outdoor Curriculum

Our Outdoor curriculum is broad, balanced and designed to emphasise the relevance of the knowledge, skills and understanding developed through learning and experience.

Outdoors can provide a place ...

... that helps the children make sense of their world

... where they can develop their imagination, creativity and ability to express themselves – which is fundamental to successful learning.

... Where they can develop their personal, emotional and social lives, their sense of themselves and feelings of belonging.

...In which they can develop their desire and ability to communicate, especially through conversation; be introduced to literacy and numeracy and explore mathematical thinking in meaningful and natural ways, through their own interests and play.

A place where children can explore and enjoy what their body can do – a place for moving and doing

At all times the children are provided with equipment and opportunities to explore:

- Construction
- Imaginative Play
- Games
- Natural Materials / Water / Sand
- Wheeled Equipment
- Books
- Mark Making
- Music
- Nature

Resources are enhanced and extended according to the children's interests and learning styles.

#### Planning, Observation and Assessment

“Given that some children behave quite differently inside and out, observations of them in both areas will give a more complete picture of their personality, their level of understanding and where they need help.”  
(Bilton, 2002)

We believe that observation plays a key role in our everyday practice. By watching and listening to children we can understand how, why and where they learn. We use the knowledge gained from our observations in the planning of Outdoor activities and the setting up of the Outdoor learning environment, taking into account the children's current interests and development.

We also use this knowledge to inform our planning and practice, in both the short and the long-term. Opportunities are taken to evaluate the learning environment and the resources within it, making improvements or offering support where necessary.

Time is given to make observations and to reflect upon them. Observation followed by assessment ensures that our Outdoor provision is progressive, reflective of the children's differing stages of development and is intellectually stimulating and challenging.

#### Inclusion

“Inclusion is a process of identifying, understanding and breaking down the barriers to participation and belonging.”  
(National Early Years Forum, 2003)

In our setting we offer an inclusive practice where all children can enjoy outdoors because they:

- Get help when needed.

- Understand what safety measures are in place but are challenged with risky freedom.
- Easily access in, out and around the outdoor area and are offered space and movement on a large scale.
- Make sense of the space and the unique learning opportunities.
- Understand where they need to go to participate in what they would like to do.
- Experience a variety of levels and textures.
- Easily find what interests them and enjoy both peace and tranquillity and stimulation and challenge.
- Use equipment, resources and materials provided and are supported in their own learning style.

**The Foundation Stage Unit at Manor Wood Primary School offers children the opportunity to learn to judge and extend their capabilities, to explore their limits and experience excitement, nervousness, courage, daring, thrills and real spills within an outdoor environment that offers constant flexibility to meet each child's needs.**

This Foundation Stage Policy for Outdoor Play was adopted by Manor Wood Primary School on 01/04/2017

Chair of Governors – Mrs K Adams	
Signature:	
Frequency of review:	4 years
To be reviewed and approved by:	MWPS Full Board
Date of next review:	November 2024

### REVIEW RECORD

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review
01/11/2020	Agreed review schedule.	November 2024

Name:		Signature:	
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on behalf of MWPS Full Board

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

Name:			
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