

# St Chad's CE (C) Primary School Policy For EYFS Outdoor Learning



We are a Church of England School and our policies are written with a commitment to our Christian Character, which is rooted in the Bible.

*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the person of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*

**This policy is available on our school server, website and is available on request from the school office.**

**This policy will be reviewed in full by the Governing Body on an annual basis. This policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Governing Body in January 23 and is due for review during Jan 24.**

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|--------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Signature</b>   | <i>J Brennan</i><br>Joanne Brennan         | <b>Headteacher</b>        | <b>Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2023</b> |
| <b>Signature</b>   | <i>Z Comley</i><br>Zoe Comley              | <b>Chair of Governors</b> | <b>Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2023</b> |
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## **INTENT**

Here at St Chad's we believe that our surroundings and the environment can have a powerful impact on children, who learn directly through their senses and by interacting with the environment around them. Our outdoor environment provides a wealth of opportunities for young children to explore and investigate, to connect with nature and to be curious and solve problems. We encourage self-regulated learning whereby children select their own apparatus and materials and we ensure that our curriculum is based on the interests of our pupils. Outdoor learning compliments the indoor classroom and there is strong evidence that high quality learning outside has a profound impact on the learning that takes place indoors.

We believe that as lifestyles in the 21st century have become more sedentary, playing and learning outdoors is crucial to supporting young children's health, physical development and their emotional well-being. We also provide opportunities for challenge and risk within a framework of security and safety but most importantly of all, our outdoor provision is playful, active and exciting! Our school values of kindness, respect, independence, honesty, belonging, empathy and commitment are all rules for our outdoor area and they are introduced to the children on day one in our setting as we 'Build together with Jesus for a better future'.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Children have the opportunity to free flow to the outdoor provision on a daily basis. The seven areas of learning are carefully planned for and catered for outside and our outdoor space compliments the indoor learning environment. Permanent provision is available outside for the children and this is enhanced with additional items that tie in with the topics the children are studying and their current needs and interests. All of our experienced practitioners recognise the importance of outdoor learning and take an active role in activities both indoors and outdoors. All EYFS staff take responsibility for the planning and resourcing of the outdoor area with the class teachers and the EYFS manager taking the lead in promoting excellent practice.

- The areas available to children at all times are:
- Mud kitchens
- Den Building
- Loose Parts / Construction area
- Writing/ Phonics canopy
- Maths Canopy
- Reading Garden
- Role play area / Stage
- Large Musical Instruments Area
- Bird watching/nature hut
- Garden/Planting area
- Climbing frame
- Road track and bikes
- Transient art
- Reflection Garden
- Sand / water play

Our children are supported by highly experienced adults who are committed to recognising, capturing and extending children's learning outdoors by reacting rapidly to ever changing conversations, ideas and children's interests, ensuring that an opportunity to 'learn in the moment' is never missed.

Early communication and language is supported through a range of outdoor activities such as den building, sand and water play, problems solving and investigative activities to encourage active discussion with peers. Physical development in the outdoors is something we pride ourselves on and at St Chad's we have a physical development whole school approach to our outdoor spaces, with play equipment becoming more advanced as children progress throughout the school. Our EYFS outdoor area has specific zones for physical development as well as this being planned into to other areas of learning such as den building, balancing and

role play activities. Children are further supported with their physical development through outdoor PE sessions ran by Bee Active who carefully plan and deliver each session.

Practice is improved upon year by year by working with EYFS hubs, advisors and by networking with our local schools. Our outdoor environment is consistently maintained to ensure an excellent learning experiences for all children and it is part of our yearly School Development Plan.

## **IMPACT**

As our pupils spend time outdoors exploring, investigating, climbing and self-selecting their resources, we enable them to:

- become independent, resilient learners who are not afraid to take calculated risks.
- become problem solvers, team workers, and deep thinkers.
- leave the Early Years Department fully prepared for their transition throughout the school.
- develop fine and gross motor skills that help aid them in their everyday life skills.
- Make excellent progress with their physical development and personal, social and emotional skills ensuring that most children reach the expected level of development at the end of the foundation stage.
- Have a love of nature and be curious and inquisitive about the natural world.
- Know how to work with their peers in a positive way and how to deal with conflict positively.
- Be happy, healthy and understand the importance and benefits of being outdoors.