

# Roe Valley Integrated Primary School



## ***PLAY BASED LEARNING POLICY***

**Chair of Governors:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Curriculum Leaders:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Principal:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ratified Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Policy Updated:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **School Ethos & Mission Statement**

Roe Valley Integrated Primary School strives to promote primary education of the highest quality for all children, in an Integrated and caring environment.

## **Introduction**

The staff of Roe Valley Integrated Primary School regard learning through play/activity based learning as a valuable means of delivering the Northern Ireland Curriculum throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

Our aim is to provide a stimulating, safe, caring and creative environment. Throughout play we promote the child's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development.

Through play based learning opportunities, staff will:

- Provide appropriate activities from the resources available and are matched appropriately to the interests and experience of the children in the class.
- Plan an adequate amount of time for play so that children can engage in worthwhile activities.
- Provide choice and opportunities for play that are new as well as play that is repetitive.
- Plan activities which will foster the children's own interests and encourage them to use their own initiative and develop their confidence.
- Keep appropriate records that inform class teachers, teaching assistants and others about individual children and their abilities. They will be used to inform future planning.

## **The Curriculum**

Children learn best when learning is an integral part of the curriculum. We plan play through a theme based approach. This provides opportunities to develop learning across the curriculum. Our children will experience play within the six areas of learning:

- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- The Arts
- The World Around Us
- Personal Development and Mutual Understanding
- Physical Development and Movement.

Play opportunities will be evident in Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 classrooms eg:

- Role Play
- Small World
- Construction

- Sand
- Water
- Writing Area
- Art Area
- Table Top
- Dough/Clay
- ICT
- Science and Technology
- Other Activities

### **Aims of Play**

- To create an enjoyable learning environment where play is promoted as a pleasurable activity.
- To improve concentration and develop problem solving skills and processes
- To develop inquiring and creative minds.
- To develop positive attitudes to learning.
- To promote and develop skills of observation and investigation in all areas of the curriculum.
- To develop self-esteem, self-confidence and independence.
- To encourage and develop positive relationships with adults and peers.
- To promote co-operation, taking turns, sharing and self-control.
- To foster social and emotional development and sensitivity in interpersonal relationships.
- To promote co-ordination and develop fine motor skills.
- To encourage children to respect and care for classroom materials and equipment and play safely.
- To promote respect for classroom environment and to enhance key skills such as tidying up.
- To observe and monitor progress.

### **The Learning Environment**

When planning play we aim to take account of each child's individual needs, interests and ability by providing a safe environment that is inviting and stimulating and likely to promote the children's social, emotional, cognitive and language skills. We will provide a wide range of resources, materials and activities, which will challenge and develop individual abilities.

Staff recognise the importance of praise, encouragement and guidance in the development of learning. We will take into account aspects of safety and the incorporation of basic safety guidelines in the learning environment.

At Roe Valley IPS our classrooms are situated around a shared resource room and outdoor covered play area. This area is used for Play Based Learning/Activity Based Learning. The resource

room/covered play area becomes an extension of our classrooms. Within the resource room/covered area we have specific areas, for example, sand, water, tuff trays, painting, construction. This extra environment gives children more space to explore and work in small groups. It is well resourced and provides easy access for children. We believe a well organised, stimulating and secure environment enables children to become confident, active learners. Resources are clearly labelled and have specific places in the classroom and resource room. Children understand the concept of 'tidy up time'. This encourages teamwork and further promotes independent learning.

### **Timetable for Play Based Learning and Activity Based Learning**

Foundation Stage children participate in Play Based Learning every day. There are opportunities for indoor and outdoor play during play based learning.

Key Stage 1 children participate in Activity Based Learning in line with thematic planning.

### **Organisation and Management of Play Based Learning**

- Thematic Planning with pupil input.
- Whole class introduction by the teacher providing an overview.
- There will be a particular learning intention delivered through play, the teacher/teaching assistant will make observations and record information about each child, which will lead to future planning.
- Children may move freely to another area during play sessions.
- Children are reminded they have only five minutes of play left. Music is then played to signal tidy up time.
- Children are brought together to review their play.

### **Planning and Observations**

Teachers in Foundation Stage plan for Play using a 6 week planning format. This format highlights the main areas of Play as recommended in the Northern Ireland Curriculum. (Input KS1). Teachers in the Foundation Stage also plan for Outdoor Learning. Teachers evaluate their planning and these comments are used to review and inform future planning.

Through our observations we aim to build an all-round picture of each child's progress in play. Staff will use their observations to evaluate, review and inform future planning, taking into consideration resources available, teaching strategies and organisation. Children's response to areas and the suitability of these for a particular class will also be considered. Staff will observe children working in groups and as individuals.