

South Newman Primary School Play Policy

Rationale

This policy statement has been introduced to reflect the value that South Newman Primary School (SNPS) places on play and the importance of children and young people in our society. This policy sets out SNPS's commitment to ensuring quality play opportunities are available to all children.

This policy statement is established upon the principles that:

- Every child is entitled to respect their own unique combination of qualities and capabilities;
- The perceptions of the child, their views and opinions should always be respected for each child is connected to a wider culture;
- The child's free choice of their own play is a critical factor in enriching their learning and contributing to their well-being and development.
- The child's interpretation of directed play is respected and acted upon, leading to the connection of learning concepts in different contexts.

National Quality Standards

Quality Area 1 – Education program and practice 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.2.3, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 1.3.3

Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 2.2.2

Quality Area 3 – Physical Environment 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3

Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements 4.1.1, 4.1.2, 4.2.1, 4.2.2

Quality Area 5 – Relationships with children 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.2.1, 5.2.2

Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities 6.1.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2

Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.1.3

Related Documents/Policies

- Water Play Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Interactions with Children Policy
- Sun Smart Policy
- Early Childhood Plan 2022-2025
- Early Years Learning Framework
- Western Australian Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines
- Australian Curriculum: General Capabilities

Definitions

“Play provides opportunities for children to learn, as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. Play is a valued process for children’s learning, thinking, imagination story making and communication. Play provides children with the opportunity to develop a sense of agency and demonstrates their competence to be leaders in their own learning. Play can provide children with a sense of belonging and being and supports the development of children’s individual and social identity.” *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, p.30.*

Intentional Teaching: involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have ‘always’ been done that way.

Curriculum: in the early childhood setting curriculum means ‘all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children’s learning and development’. *Adapted from Te Whariki.*

Play-based Learning: A context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.

Play can be interpreted throughout the curriculum; however, play can be directly correlated to the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum.



Critical and Creative Thinking (Version 8.4)

“In the Australian Curriculum, students develop capability in critical and creative thinking as they learn to generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems. Critical and creative thinking involves students thinking broadly and deeply using skills, behaviours and dispositions such as reason, logic, resourcefulness, imagination and innovation in all learning areas at school and in their lives beyond school.”

“Creative thinking involves students learning to generate and apply new ideas in specific contexts, seeing existing situations in a new way, identifying alternative explanations, and seeing or making new links that generate a positive outcome. This includes combining parts to form something original, sifting and refining ideas to discover possibilities, constructing theories and objects, and acting on intuition. The products of creative endeavour can involve complex representations and images, investigations and performances, digital and computer-generated output, or occur as virtual reality.”



Personal and Social Capability (Version 8.4)

“In the Australian Curriculum, students develop personal and social capability as they learn to understand themselves and others, and manage their relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively. Personal and social capability involves students in a range of practices including recognising and regulating emotions, developing empathy for others and understanding relationships, establishing and building positive relationships, making responsible decisions, working effectively in teams, handling challenging situations constructively and developing leadership skills.”

“Students with well-developed social and emotional skills find it easier to manage themselves, relate to others, develop resilience and a sense of self-worth, resolve conflict, engage in teamwork and feel positive about themselves and the world around them. The development of personal and social capability is a foundation for learning and for citizenship.”

Play at South Newman Primary School

At South Newman Primary School, we believe that play allows children an opportunity to be creative and make decisions. It may or may not involve equipment or other people. Play might mean making noise, getting dirty, making a mess and sometimes be out of the direct gaze of an educator. We believe that the role of the educator is to support the play process and to help make connections between contexts, encouraging the growth of identity and wellbeing of each child.

SNPS believes in providing:

- A secure, caring environment where all children are happy, intrinsically motivated, relaxed and able to reach their full potential.
- Clear instructions that enable the use of equipment without hurting others and having fun.
- Educators that respect the children's rights by providing opportunities for creative, exciting play, the use of conflict resolution to support children and supporting children who have additional needs at playtime.
- Children to have the opportunity to tidy, organise and put equipment away.
- Educators assessing risks daily and encouraging children to assess any risks that may present themselves.
- Educators develop new opportunities for play, listening to children's ideas about play and supporting children who have additional needs to access play.

Developmental Stages of Play

Children move through the following developmental stages of play.

- Solitary Play – play where children play alone immersed in their own investigations and are not aware of others.
- Parallel Play – play where children play alongside each other observing, but playing individually. Interactions may be minimal.
- Associative Play – play in which several children may loosely play together. At this stage children may work together on similar projects.
- Cooperative play – play in which participants assist to achieve the group's goal. The participants take on roles, tasks and one or two children usually led the group.
- Competitive Play – play can be based on games with rules and performance is rated (such as chess). This type of play needs to be used with caution as it requires a certain level of development and players should be relatively evenly matched.

Types of Play

Dramatic – Children take on roles within pretend games about familiar experiences.

Fantasy – Children create props and use these as they engage in fantasy adventures.

Exploratory – Children explore the properties or functions of materials equipment and objects.

Manipulative – children manipulate and explore objects, parts and materials e.g. construction sets.

Physical – Children explore movements and ways to combine movements.

Games with rules – Children follow or create rules to reach a shared objective in games.

Managing Risk in Play

An essential part of play is the opportunity for children to take acceptable risks and challenge themselves beyond their existing capabilities. Allowing children to take acceptable risks develops their ability to independently judge risks and learn new skills.

The opportunity for children to play in an unstructured way in not only an indoor environment, but an outdoor environment encourages creativity, it improves social and emotional development as children develop self-regulation and executive function. The opportunity to make decisions and take measured risks in an indoor and outdoor play environment develops resilience, confidence and competence.

Children would never learn to walk, climb stairs or ride a bicycle unless they were strongly motivated to respond to challenges involving a risk of injury.

Carefully considered and comprehensive risk assessments of all play provision within the school should be reviewed on an annual basis, or whenever significant change/development in play provision/equipment takes place.

To manage the levels of risk we will follow the guidelines below:

- Recognise the need for professional judgement in setting the balance between safety and goals.
- All staff should self-assess and manage risk, e.g red tape should be used to section off play areas or equipment which are deemed to be ‘high risk’.
- Ensure risks are as apparent as possible to staff and children.
- Ensure risks that children may not appreciate are controlled and managed – provide staff with training to supervise play setting.
- We may not be able to see every child all of the time, especially when using the play cubes.
- All staff are assigned a duty zone and it is expected that staff will move around throughout the playtime, finding out what the children are doing and where the children are playing.
- Staff wear a high visibility vest, small first aid kit for minor injuries and carry a handheld radio for easy communication to relay information to Office Staff.

Adults Role in Play

Depending on the desired learning objective, adults can take a range of roles. Set up and facilitate play, observe, monitor and support children’s participation. Adults can direct the play or be a co-player. They may be stage manager, mediator, player, scribe, assessor, communicator or planner.

Assessing Play

Play is rich in meaning and educators devote time to observe, document and interpret the meaning inherent in children’s play.

A risk matrix which is useful to use during the risk assessment process, helps in identifying the level of risk by looking at the likelihood that a negative event may occur, and the severity of the consequences should it occur.

Risk Matrix						
		Likelihood				
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain
Consequences	Major	Moderate	High	High	Critical	Critical
	Significant	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Critical
	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Minor	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Insignificant	Very low	Very low	Low	Moderate	Moderate

(ACECQA Risk Assessment and Management Tool, 2021, p.20)

First Aid

There are First Aid boxes located in all blocks for access by all teachers. There is first aid equipment located in the school administration building. All staff on duty carry a small first aid kit for any minor injuries. A current list of first aid staff is located with each First Aid box.

Any head bumps must be reported to parents via a phone call. Any Band-Aids or ice packs given to a child is written up on a report sheet, stating the child's name, what happened, location of injury, and what first aid was administered. This is then signed by the staff member who administered the first aid.

At least one educator in each duty area holds a handheld radio for any communication that needs to be given to the Admin Team.

Attachment

1. Playground Risk Assessment and Management Tool
2. Weekly Indoor and Outdoor Learning Environment Safety Checklist

Risk assessment and management tool – for children under 5

My name:

Date:

Learning experience:

How do we make it safer?
Do we need help?



What are we doing?
How might someone get hurt?

What happened?
What should we do next time to make it safer?



Risk assessment and management tool – for children over 5



My name:

Date:

Learning experience:

Identify

What are we doing? What do we need to use?
Could someone's wellbeing change? How?

Assess

Have we done this before? What happened?
What could happen now?

Manage

What should we change to make this safe?
Do we need some help?

Evaluate & Review

How did everything go? Did anyone get hurt?
What can we do differently next time to make it safer?
What did you learn?

Week beginning: _____

Indoor learning environment safety – Daily checklist								
NQS Element	Hazard identification and Risk management	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Action required	
							Immediate	Follow up
2.2	Hazards from human activity have been managed (e.g. broken glass, rubbish or dirt).							
2.2	Hazards from the natural environment have been managed (e.g. animal waste, spider webs, insect remains).							
2.2	All doors and gates are closed securely and locked where appropriate. Note - fire exits should not be locked.							
3.1	All facilities, materials and equipment are in good repair and are appropriate for the age group of children.							
2.2	Hazards from electrical outlets and cords have been managed.							
2.2	Chemical hazards have been managed through secured cupboards and signage where appropriate.							
2.2	Trip and slip hazards have been managed (e.g. loose equipment or loose tiles, damaged mats/rugs).							
2.1	Rubbish bins are clean and ready for use.							
2.1.2 2.2.2	Forms for accident/injury/illness, medication and asthma or anaphylaxis management are stocked, up to date, filed and displayed where appropriate.							

To add more rows press TAB.

Staff full name and signatures

Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday:	Thursday:	Friday:
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Week beginning: _____

Outdoor learning environment safety – Daily checklist								
NQS Element	Hazard identification and risk management	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Action required	
							Immediate	Follow up
2.2	Hazards from human activity have been managed (e.g. broken glass, rubbish, cigarette smoke).							
2.2	Hazards from the natural environment have been managed (e.g. insects, animal waste, hazardous plants, pooling water).							
2.1.2	Weather conditions have been checked and practices for the day adjusted where appropriate							
2.2	Equipment and play areas (such as gardens, fixed swing structures and sandpits) are clear of rubbish, waste and excess debris (raked as appropriate).							
3.1.2	Movable outdoor equipment is in good working order and positioned according to the relevant regulations and/or national standards.							
2.2	Trip and slip hazards on walkways have been managed (e.g. leaf litter, loose equipment or raised concrete).							
2.1	Bathrooms and handwashing facilities are accessible from the outdoor environment. Facilities are clean, well-stocked and in good working order.							
2.1	Fresh drinking water is accessible from or in the outdoor environment.							

To add more rows press TAB.

Staff full name and signature

Monday:	Tuesday:	Wednesday:	Thursday:	Friday:
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