Greengairs Primary School

Outdoor Learning Policy

Rationale

“Every child has the right to relax, play, and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.” Article 31, UNCRC.

Every child at Greengairs Primary School has the right to play, as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Right of the Child.

Play is intrinsic to child development and learning, and should take place indoors and outdoors. The Scottish Government promotes children’s right to play outdoors every day in its national Health & Social Care Standards; “As a child, I play outdoors every day and regularly explore a natural environment”.

Outdoor Learning and Play

The term ‘outdoor learning’ includes learning and playing outdoors using school grounds and local areas, involvement in community projects, environmental education, and recreational and adventure activities. Outdoor learning should serve as a means for children to access a range of curricular areas, and make use of a range of skills.

Each class has a designated area of our playground and eco-garden to look after to increase their sense of responsibility for the environment. These areas are used to teach a variety of curricular areas such as maths and PE. We also use natural materials with the pupils to encourage problem solving and team work.

Children at Greengairs Primary school regularly enjoy the opportunity to learn outdoors within our local area. This includes visits to Stanrigg Memorial Park and exploring the green space (known as Blacktongue Farm Road) behind our school.

The Benefits of Learning Outdoors

* Increased physical activity
* Increases creativity, imagination and understanding, which allows opportunities for critical thinking and reflection
* Ensures children value and care for nature within their local area
* Development of mental, social and emotional wellbeing by developing resilience and risk assessment.
* Development of social skills which are imperative for building relationships and working together

Staying Safe Outdoors

Children at Greengairs Primary School are supported in taking risks within a safe and secure outdoor environment. Children are taught to manage risks, communicate and collaborate effectively, and develop resilience through the unique challenges that outdoor learning can offer. All children are regularly reminded about the importance of staying safe, in accordance with the ‘Safe’ SHANARRI health and wellbeing indicator.

Risk Assessment

Each outdoor learning activity will be risk assessed by the member of staff leading the outing. Where children require medical supplies, for example inhalers, these will be taken on any outdoor excursion out with the school grounds.