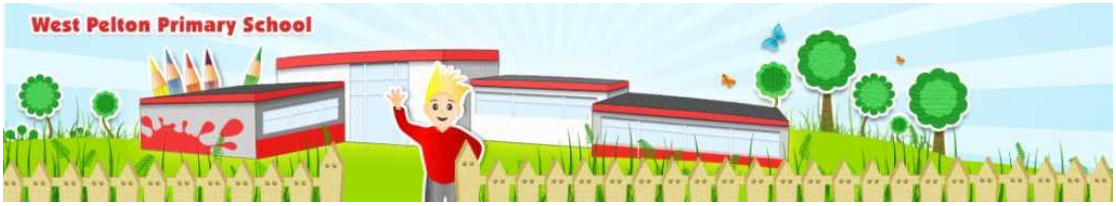
West Pelton Primary School & Nursery



West Pelton Lunchtime Policy

This policy sets out West Pelton Primary school's commitment to ensuring all children enjoy lunchtime though quality play opportunities, healthy eating and a relaxed, calm environment.
All children have a right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of activities (Article 31).
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
At West Pelton Primary School we promote children's rights and responsibilities from the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. We see children's rights are a central focus in everything we do, as a framework for our teaching and learning and at the heart of our ethos.

Through our belief in children's rights, we aim to provide a secure, caring environment where all children are happy, relaxed and able to reach their potential.

Rationale

This policy sets out West Pelton Primary School's commitment to ensuring that quality opportunities for play are available to all our children. We aim to improve the way we think about, and provide, opportunities for play. We believe that all children need opportunities to play which allow them to explore, manipulate, experience and affect their environment within challenging settings, free from unacceptable levels of risk.

Purpose

We define play as any freely chosen activity which a child finds satisfying and creative. It may or may not involve equipment or other people. We want to improve play opportunities because:

- Play is essential for physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual welfare and development
- Play enables children to explore their physical and social environment and develop different concepts and ideas
- Play encourages self-confidence and the ability to make informed choices
- Play is critical to children's physical and emotional health and wellbeing
- Play enables children to explore and develop the balance between their right to act freely and their responsibilities to others
- Play is a child's right under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31.

Guidance

We recognise that in order to play children may need to make a noise, get dirty, make a mess and sometimes be out of the direct gaze of adults and we aim to support the play through positively managing these needs.

Why is risk important in play?

An essential element of exploration within the medium of play is the opportunity for children to experience freely-chosen activities, where they can 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.

As a team we feel taking risks in play have these benefits.

- Enables children to develop their own boundaries, knowing where and when to take a risk
- Builds confidence
- Develops independence
- Promotes peer interaction and reciprocity
- Extends experiences and develops life skills for the future

It is the school's responsibility to strike a balance between the risks and the benefits of play. This policy sets out the school's overall objectives for risk management in play provision, and the school recognises the challenge that this brings.

To manage the level of risk within our play provision we will adopt South Gloucestershire's managing risk in play provision guidelines.

These guidelines are:

- Recognising the need for professional judgements in setting the balance between safety and other goals
- Ensuring risks are as apparent as possible to staff and children
- Designing spaces where the risks of hazards are clearly apparent
- Ensuring that hazards that children may not appreciate will be controlled and managed
- Providing trained staff to supervise play settings

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.

Organisation

<u>Play Leader Meetings</u>

Play Leader Meetings are held between staff and pupils. During these meetings the following may be items on the agenda

- Play Leader organisation
- Activities to be provided
- Health and Safety
- OPAL display boards updates

- OPAL newsletters

Pre-lunchtime Preparation

Caretaker carries out Health and Safety Checks around grounds each morning.

Play Leader has allocated time to prepare/organise any additional provision.

Supervision

Play Leaders are designated to an 'area'

Remote supervision
Play Leaders may not be able to see every child all of the time, especially when the children are playing in the trees. It is expected that Play Leaders will move around throughout lunchtime in their designated area, finding out what the children are doing and where the children are playing. Play Leaders can then check in on the children's play throughout lunchtime.

Restorative Approach
All dinner staff will use the 'Restorative response' approach to behaviour management:-
Those affected are invited to share:
1. What has happened.
2. What the impact has been on those involved: i.e. who has been affected and in what ways they have been affected.
3. What needs to happen to put things right or to make things better in the future.

Respecting Rights
Children have the right to play and relax therefore to respect this right the children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others and help others who need it. Adults respect this right by developing new opportunities for play, listening to children's ideas about play and supporting children who have additional needs to access play.

Children have the right to be safe therefore to respect this right children must follow instructions, use equipment without hurting others, assess risk and tidy equipment away. Play Leaders respect this right by assessing risk daily, encouraging children to assess risk also and helping children to tidy up.

Additional Organisation

To enable children to enjoy the vast space and activities, they are encouraged to wear wellington boots. Welly stores have been created within the school grounds to facilitate this.

End of Lunchtime Organisation

The whistle is blown 5 minutes before the end of the lunchtime play for children to collect non-waterproof items and return them to the shed before changing wellies / shoes and washing hands.

Adopted by the Governing Body.

16 March 2026