PINVIN C OF E ACADEMY

OPAL Play and Risk Management Policy

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Date of next review: September 2027
Policy Owner: Headteacher- Emma Rose

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

TO LOVE | TO LEARN | TO SERVE

Our Vision

At Pinvin we are a caring inclusive school, where everyone is welcome as Jesus welcomed all. We work closely with all stakeholders to support our children in achieving their God given potential.

At Pinvin C of E Academy, we believe that every child is a unique creation of God, with a bright future as promised in ***Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."***

We strive to create a nurturing and inspiring environment where every child can achieve their full potential. Our vision is to ensure that all our pupils can ***'Be happy, grow and flourish.'*** in a safe and supportive community. Through innovative teaching and a commitment to Christian values, we prepare our pupils to become confident, compassionate, and resilient individuals, ready to thrive in a changing world.

Equality and Diversity Statement

At Pinvin C of E Academy we promote equality of opportunity. We promote positive attitudes and encourage active participation of all stakeholders regardless of race, gender, disability, age, religion, belief and sexuality. In so doing we strive to eliminate any unlawful discrimination or harassment of any group and where any such harassment is found appropriate action will be taken immediately.

> ***This policy has been reviewed; to the best of our knowledge, we do not feel it impacts negatively on any specific group or individual within our school community.***

1. Commitment

Pinvin C of E Academy undertakes to refer to this play policy in all decisions that affect children's play. Pinvin C of E Academy is committed to providing the strategic and operational leadership needed to provide and maintain quality play provision for all of our children.

2. Rationale

Pinvin C of E Academy believes that all children need opportunities to play that allow them to explore, manipulate, experience and affect their environment. We believe play provision should be welcoming and accessible to every child, irrespective of gender, sexual orientation, economic or social circumstances, ethnic or cultural background or origin, or individual abilities.

The OPAL Primary Programme rationale is that "… better, more active and creative playtimes can mean happier and healthier children, and having happier, healthier, more active children usually results in a more positive attitude to learning in school, with more effective classroom lessons, less staff time spent resolving unnecessary behavioural problems, fewer playtime accidents, happier staff and a healthier attitude to life."

This rationale aligns with Pinvin C of E Academy's vision of to 'Be happy, grow and flourish.' Our Vision is aspirational, inspirational and at the heart of our decisions. Recognising this is helpful because it reminds us that we each have things to work on; we have space to grow, develop and change to become the best version of ourselves.

We also believe that this process of continually developing our character and being transformed to become the best version of ourselves is really important for every student and staff member alike. Therefore, we actively promote and practice our Christian Values of Hope, Wisdom, Forgiveness, Peace and Love.

3. Definition and value of play

Play is defined as a process that is intrinsically motivated, directed by the child and freely chosen by the child. Play has its own value and provides its own purpose. It may or may not involve equipment or other people.

Pinvin C of E Academy believe that play has many benefits, including:

- Play is critical to children's health and wellbeing, and essential for their physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development.
- Play enables children to explore the physical and social environment, as well as different concepts and ideas.
- Play enhances children's self-esteem and their understanding of others through freely chosen social interactions, within peer groups, with individuals, and within groups of different ages, abilities, interests, genders, ethnicities and cultures.

- Play requires ongoing communication and negotiation skills, enabling children to develop a balance between their right to act freely and their responsibilities to others.
- Play enables children to experience a wide range of emotions and develop their ability to cope with these, including sadness and happiness, rejection and acceptance, frustration and achievement, boredom and fascination, fear and confidence.
- Play encourages self-confidence and the ability to make choices, problem solve and to be creative.
- Play maintains children's openness to learning, develops their capabilities and allows them to push the boundaries of what they can achieve.

4. Aims

In relation to play Pinvin C of E Academy aims to:

- Ensure play settings provide a varied, challenging and stimulating environment.
- Allow children to take risks and use a common-sense approach to the management of these risks and their benefits.
- Provide opportunities for children to develop their relationships with each other.
- Enable children to develop respect for their surroundings and each other.
- Aid children's physical, emotional, social, spiritual and intellectual development.
- Provide a range of environments that will encourage children to explore and play imaginatively.
- Provide a range of environments that will support children's learning across the curriculum and learning about the world around them.
- Promote independence and teamwork within children.
- Build emotional and physical resilience.

These aims align with our Vision and Values which are promoted throughout our academy. At Pinvin C of E Academy we take pride in our ambition to:

- Create a happy, stimulating, caring learning environment where risk taking and challenge is encouraged.
- Awaken and nurture a love of learning that will last a lifetime and provide everyone with the skills to pursue that learning independently and collaboratively.
- Enable everyone to reach the highest standard of which they are capable, academically and in other fields such as sport, arts and culture.
- Encourage all learners to develop their own interests, passions, enthusiasms, creativity and individuality.
- Help learners to understand and care about the world in which they live, and to believe in their ability and responsibility to change that world to make it better.
- Empower learners to develop a strong sense of right and wrong, good and bad, equality and justice. Give them the inner strength to act according to these values.
- Provide learners with the skills and understanding to live a healthy, successful life, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

- Foster respect, tolerance and love for others, regardless of race, gender, religion or difference, within a framework of equality of opportunity and fairness.
- Help learners to appreciate human achievements and aspirations and to believe in their own potential to attain great things.
- Promote a feeling of pride and confidence in learners' identities; as individuals, as members of our school, as part of the local community and as citizens of the world.

5. Rights

Pinvin C of E Academy recognises the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes the right to play, recreation and leisure (Article 31) and the right of children to be listened to on matters important to them (Article 12). We acknowledge that we have a duty to take these rights seriously and listen to children's views on their play.

6. Benefit and risk

'Play is great for children's wellbeing and development. When planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to weigh up the risks and benefits. No child will learn about risk if they are wrapped in cotton wool.'

Managing Risk in Play Provision: An Implementation Guide (Play Safety Forum, 2012)

Pinvin C of E Academy will use the ***Health and Safety Executive guidance document Children's Play and Leisure– Promoting a Balanced Approach (September 2012)*** as the principal value statement informing its approach to managing risk in play. In doing so, we will adopt a risk-benefit approach as detailed in ***Managing Risk in Play Provision: An Implementation Guide (Play Safety Forum, 2012).***

Risk-taking is an essential feature of play provision and of all environments in which children legitimately spend time at play. Play provision aims to offer children the chance to encounter acceptable risks as part of a stimulating, challenging and managed play environment. As outlined in the play sector publication 'Best Play', play provision should aim to 'manage the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children and young people safe from harm'.

In addition to standard risk-benefit assessments Pinvin C of E Academy will practice dynamic risk management with children, encouraging them to identify and manage risks in an environment where adults are present to support them.

7. Supervision

The law requires that children in school have supervision but for primary school playtimes there are no stated ratios. During the school day there should be one or more adult's present outdoors. Pinvin C of E Academy recognises OPAL's three models of supervision: Direct, Remote and Ranging.

Except for new children in reception, whose skills and orientation in the school environment need to be assessed, Pinvin C of E Academy does not believe direct supervision is possible or beneficial.

Supervisors will use ranging and remote supervision models, so that children can quickly find an adult and adults patrol their zones to gain an awareness of the kinds of play and levels of risk likely to be emerging.

8. The adult's role in play

Pinvin C of E Academy will help children maximise the benefits they can gain from play by the provision of trained staff who are informed by and work in accordance with the Playwork Principles.

Staff will use and refer to these principles when appropriate interventions are needed, and ultimately will strive for facilitating an environment that nurtures children's self-directed play.

The playworker's core function is to create an environment that will stimulate children's play and maximise their opportunities for a wide range of play experiences. A skilled and experienced playworker is capable of enriching the child's play experience both in terms of the design and resources of the physical environment and in terms of the attitudes and culture fostered within the play setting. Playworkers are a channel of access to new materials and tools and they can act as a stimulus to children to explore and learn. They are also available to participate in the play if invited.

9. Equality and diversity

Through providing a rich play offer meeting every child's needs our aim is that all children, regardless of age, gender, race, disability or other special needs, can develop and thrive, build strong relationships and enjoy school.

10. Environment

Pinvin C of E Academy believes that a rich play setting should ensure that all children have access to stimulating environments that are free from unacceptable or unnecessary risks and thereby offer children the opportunity to explore for themselves through their freely chosen play.

We will strive to continually improve the quality and diversity of our school's grounds to enhance play. We will use the document 'Best Play' to guide us on what a quality play environment should contain. www.freeplaynetwork.org.uk/pubs/bestplay.pdf

We will strive to provide a rich play environment which:

- Supports safeguarding.
- Helps children to develop confidence in flourishing together and advocating for their own rights increasing their social and emotional capabilities.
- Helps to foster a love and enjoyment of the outdoors, which is a key foundation of caring for each other and the environment.