

Lubbins Park Play Policy

Date Reviewed – March 2026

Review Due – March 2027

What is Play?

“Play is a very misused adult word. To a child it is a way of life. To an adult it often means unimportant recreational things we do when we are not working”

Jean-Jaques Rousseau

Play is the way children interact with the world.

Play is the universal language of childhood. It is through play that children understand each other and make sense of the world around them.

It is a process of observing, testing, trying, imitating, and enjoying the environment they are in and people they are with.

Play is what children naturally do when given freedom, time, and space.

Play is “what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons”. (Getting Serious About Play, DCMS)

Susan Isaacs stated that play encompasses children’s behaviour which is:

- Freely chosen
- Personally directed
- Intrinsically motivated

Play is when children act for no “external goal or reward”. They are following their own whims, interests and desires.

The key elements of play are that it is:

- Fun
- Uncertain
- Challenging
- Flexible
- Non-productive

What are the benefits of play?

Right to Play list the benefits of play as:

- PLAYING HELPS US CONNECT WITH OTHERS

When we play, we practice skills like communication and conflict resolution, and develop lasting friendships

- PLAYING BUILDS OUR CONFIDENCE

When we play, we take risks and step outside our comfort zone

- PLAYING TEACHES US TO ACCEPT DIFFERENCES

When we play, we break down social barriers, build connections, and give each other space and opportunities to lead and contribute

- PLAYING STRENGTHENS OUR RESILIENCE

When we play, we learn how to process difficult emotions, cope with challenging situations, and express our feelings to those around us.

- PLAYING FOSTERS OUR CURIOSITY

When we play, we learn to focus and persist in activities using our own enthusiasm. We learn to connect ideas, gain a deeper understanding of lessons, and how we can apply these concepts to our lives.

- PLAYING BUILDS PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

When we play, we learn that we can make a mistake and try again in a safe and familiar context. We build on these mistakes to find innovative solutions to problems.

At Lubbins park we recognise all of these benefits and so give every child the opportunity to play from the very beginning of their school journey, until the very end.

Play opportunities at Lubbins Park

At the very beginning of school life at Lubbins Park children are given a vast amount of time to play and develop their skills. In the nursery, children are encouraged to play through independent activities and adult led activities. Continuous provision in the early years allows children to select a range of purposeful resources and use these in their play.

As children move in to reception the importance of play continues. The curriculum allows for lots of time in continuous provision where children can select their own resources and develop their own play. Staff come along side the children to develop their play, encourage and give confidence to children to try new things.

As children move through the school, children have a 15-minute morning break time and a 1-hour lunch break. During this time, children have access to a variety of resources that they can use within their play. As a school we have provided designated areas such as:

- A mud kitchen
- A sand pit
- Stage area
- Story telling circle.

In addition to these zones children have access to a range of resources such as:

- Crates
- Balls
- Rackets
- Skipping ropes
- Parachutes

Our aim is to provide children with opportunity to play, outside of curriculum time, in order to continue to benefit from play.