

Physical Environment Policy

Aim

In Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup we are committed to providing a welcoming and caring environment that provides for the children's safety and wellbeing and supports them in their development and learning. We believe that the organisation and layout of the environment should enable children to be active, and involved in social and individual play activities and experiences.

Implementation of the policy in Sidcup Baptist Church Playgroup

It is the responsibility of the management committee

- to take positive steps to establish a welcoming and friendly environment for children and parents.
- to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for the children's care, health and wellbeing, as well as their development and learning.
- to provide both indoor and outdoor play activities and experiences.
- to ensure that all parents and children, including those with disabilities, have easy access to the premises.
- to ensure that all aspects of planning, design and building observe local control requirements.
- to implement specific local control requirements with regard to health and safety, planning and building requirements, provision of equipment and the use of staff.

Space within the playgroup

- We provide appropriate space for children, including those with special needs and disabilities, to move freely and safely around the playgroup.
- We organise the space to allow a wide range of play experiences, including whole-group activities.

Toilet facilities

- We provide appropriate and sufficient toilets and washing facilities for the number of children in the playgroup, as well as separate toilet facilities for adults. We ensure that facilities are clean and hygienic at all times.

- We provide appropriate space and facilities to encourage children to be independent.

Kitchen facilities

- We provide drinks and snacks for children during the session.
- We ensure that kitchen facilities comply with environmental health and food safety regulations (in collaboration with the Church Health and Safety Officer).
- We identify specific procedures for the safety of the children relating to the kitchen facilities, including risk assessment and supervision.

Premises

- We ensure that all areas of the building to be used by the children are clean, and well maintained. Any issues are referred to the Church Fabric officer.
- We ensure that there is a working telephone on the premises to contact outside assistance, as well as to receive incoming calls.
- We have efficient systems for contacting parents, support services and other agencies.
- We ensure that all the children have easy access to drinking water, eating facilities and toilet facilities.
- We provide an environment that reflects the children's development and learning and has relevance for local cultures and communities.
- We ensure that the premises are well lit and have some natural light.
- We ensure that the premises are kept at a comfortable temperature throughout the year.
- We ensure that the premises are for the sole use of the playgroup when the children are there.
- We provide safe storage facilities for all types of equipment, care and hygiene facilities, and play and learning equipment.
- We provide an area of privacy where parents, staff and other agencies can speak confidentially.

Indoor provision

- We create defined areas for different play activities, thus supporting the children in all seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- We use the available space creatively and flexibly to provide opportunities for the children's imaginative play, movement and large-scale play activities.
- We provide opportunities for both floor play and table activities.

- Where practicable, we create opportunities for children to access equipment and materials independently, and choose for themselves, by using low-level open-storage shelves and boxes.
- We encourage the children to care for their environment by making some cleaning equipment (brushes, dustpans, cloths) available for them to access and use independently to clean and tidy up play areas.

Outdoor provision

- We offer regular opportunities for children to play in a natural environment of grass, trees and bushes.
- We have daily opportunities for children to play outside, providing open space where they can run, as well as using other play equipment.
- We ensure that there are areas of shade and shelter.
- We use the outdoor environment to offer a wide range of learning opportunities for investigation and exploration, thus developing all seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Display

- We create a rich and stimulating environment by using visual and interactive displays.
- We provide display areas for children's own work, including pictures, drawings, writing and models.
- We ensure that displays are informative, and relevant to all families within the local community.

References and Regulations

Reference to the Early Years Foundation Stage safeguarding and welfare requirements

Providers must ensure that their premises, including overall floor space and outdoor spaces, are fit for purpose and suitable for the age of children cared for and the activities provided on the premises.

Providers must comply with requirements of health and safety legislation (including hygiene requirements).

The premises and equipment must be organised in a way that meets the needs of children.

Children Act Regulations relating to our policy

OFSTED must be notified if any changes are made to the premises or their use.

References

Department for Education: Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (2017)

Reviewed October 2020