



## Poseidon Play Policy

All children have the right to play.

***All children have the right to play and need to play: free to choose what they do – extend and challenge themselves, take risks and enjoy freedom.***

***The right to play is enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.***

At Poseidon Primary School we believe play is an essential part of every child's life, it is a fundamental mode through which children learn and is integral to their enjoyment of life, their health and their overall development. Through play our students will explore the world around them, naturally develop understandings in their own time, at their own point of need and have the opportunity to practice and refine new skills. We understand that play is essential to our students' healthy physical and emotional growth, their intellectual and educational development and for acquiring and enhancing their social and behavioural skills. We believe that play takes many forms; it may or may not involve equipment or a dedicated space and may or may not have an end product. Children are provided with opportunities to play on their own or with others, to be boisterous and energetic, to be quiet and contemplative, light-hearted or serious.

At Poseidon Primary School we acknowledge that our students spend a considerable amount of their time in our care and that due to societal anxiety and current technologies many children's lives, outside of school, are relatively sedentary and spent indoors. We therefore acknowledge the need to provide for and promote unstructured outdoor play in nature, both within the school's context and the wider community.

The objective of this statement is to secure for all the students of Poseidon Primary School an increase and enhancement in the quality of play opportunities within the school's environment and to provide staff with a framework to assist them in making decisions about the role of play in their pedagogy and practice as well as offering guidelines and justifications for the provision of play materials, risk opportunities and hazard management.

### Types of Play

Play is a valued process for children's learning, thinking, imagination, story making and communication.

The play of children includes many different types including sensory, explorative, physical, creative, symbolic, projective, role and dramatic and games with rules.

All are important aspects of children's learning and development.

(EYLF Educators Guide, p.30)

## Play in Classrooms

- **Play must be planned, intentional and purposeful.**
- **Both students & teachers are actively involved.**

### Play needs

- - a balance between child led, child initiated and teacher supported play.
- - teachers to engage in sustained shared conversations with students.
- - to promote & model positive ways to relate to others.
- - to support the inclusion of **all** students.

## During Class Time

### Child Directed Play

In child directed play the teacher creates an environment that offers opportunities for discovery and challenge with the aim of encouraging students to actively construct their own learning experiences.

Children actively choose how, when, with what and with whom to engage and interact, they select and direct their own learning of skills, concepts, understandings and dispositions by participating in a range of experiences.

(WAPPA, “Defining and Clarifying Intentional Teaching, Guided Play and Child-Directed Play”)

### Guided Play

Guided play involves the purposeful use of co-constructed play that involves teachers and students working together to achieve explicit learning outcomes. Within guided play activities there is a continuum of teacher assistance and support that varies from brief, in the moment shared interaction, to sustained intervention and teacher scaffolding. The teacher **actively participates** in the play context, guiding, listening and responding as the play unfolds.

(WAPPA, “Defining and Clarifying Intentional Teaching, Guided Play and Child-Directed Play”)


## Recess and Lunch (Outside of Instruction Time)

Free play which may include –

### Loose Parts Play

Loose parts equipment is currently being used in both Kindy and PP and Year 1 – Year 6 Playground. From time to time, as needed, at the start of each term, there will be a delivery of new equipment to the school. This equipment will alternate between the K – PP students and the Year 1 to Year 6 students.

Loose parts play involves the use of materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. They are materials with no specific set



of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials. Loose parts can be synthetic or natural.

(Nicholson, “The Theory of Loose Parts Play”)

#### Nature Play

Nature play refers to play that occurs in the outdoor environment. Typically it involves the interaction with natural materials such as trees, plants and other vegetation, soil, sand and earth, sticks, rocks and stones, but in a broader sense it is also the exposure to sunlight, wind, air, rain and other natural phenomena.

## The Principles of Play

### Inclusivity

#### Every Child Needs time and Space to Play

All students need time and space to play freely, confidently, and safely in both the indoor and outdoor environments. Play provision at our school actively endeavours to include the widest possible range of students with particular consideration for students with special needs.

### Knowledge and Skill Development

Children need and want to challenge themselves.

We aim to provide play opportunities that are stimulating, challenging and exciting thereby allowing students to take risks in order to build their confidence, learn skills and develop resilience. Children are encouraged to learn to assess their abilities as they relate to foreseeable dangers and develop the ability to manage risk in their daily lives.


### Time and Space

#### Children need time and Space to Play

The school day should allow time for children to relax and play freely with their friends. Young children learn best through play and, as they get older, play supports and enriches their learning. Children learn best if teaching is creative and enjoyable. In school, time and space for play and outdoor learning is as important as formal teaching. School grounds should be good places to play. (Play England 2007).

In Kindy to Year 1 classes, it is intended that 2 hours per week (minimum) be allocated to the provision of play-based, intentional teaching activities. This is to occur during class time.

We strive to maximise time and space for play opportunities by structuring the daily timetable to allow for play and by enhancing and utilising the resources within the school’s indoor and outdoor environments to generate provocations for play. Most notably this is currently being enhanced



through the development of Nature Play and Loose Parts Play in the outdoor learning environment. Teachers are supported and encouraged to create a playful and enjoyable learning environment within their classrooms.

These endeavours are endorsed and validated by Quality Area 3 of the National Quality Standards.

### Risk Management

Children need to experience risks when they play in order to develop the appropriate skills to independently identify and manage risks both at school and throughout their lives. Many children have an intrinsic desire to take risks as a means of assessing and challenging their individual capabilities. The play policy endeavours to respond to these needs and wishes by providing students with stimulating, challenging and skill development opportunities.

It is essential that these risks are foreseeable by the student so that they can decide on if and how to manage the risk. Younger students and students with special needs may require extra support at identifying risks.

It is acknowledged that minor injuries are an inevitable result of exploring risk however, it is imperative that students are not exposed to unacceptable, unforeseeable hazards that could result in serious injury or death.

### Limitations of Play

*Intentional teaching, guided play activity and child-directed play and learning are not mutually exclusive, but rather, complementary teaching approaches. All three offer significant teaching and learning opportunities and require dedicated time within a balanced learning program.*

(WAPPA, “Defining and Clarifying Intentional Teaching, Guided Play and Child-Directed Play”)

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Approved by staff in 2019

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