



Contact Us

Long Lane Primary School
Long Lane
Tilehurst, Reading
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Access For All

At Long Lane, we have designed our outdoor learning space intentionally, with inclusion in mind. We want there to be access for all pupils regardless of their learning capacity, physical ability, or disadvantage.

All our activities serve a purpose; to support skills of proprioception, co-ordination, heavy lifting and mobility. For example, the go-karts use skills of co-ordination as they are powered by the feet and the loose parts use heavy lifting, pulling and pushing. Resources are sometimes used as part of intervention, or as support for regulation.

This means that all children who may need these reasonable adjustments to support and develop them in school can do this with ease and in a truly inclusive way with their peers.

However, what we have found is that all the children are benefiting from this learning in so many ways.



Long Lane Primary School



The Benefits of Outdoor and Active Child Initiated Learning

**OUTDOOR LEARNING
RISK ASSESSMENT**

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Why does Long Lane use a child initiated learning approach?

Play allows children to make sense of the world by experimenting, solving problems, and developing skills such as critical thinking, language, and social-emotional intelligence. Research suggests that children who have ongoing play and child initiated experiences are happier and more likely to be curious and question the world around them.

How does this approach benefit children?

Child initiated learning plays a pivotal role in developing resilience, curiosity, problem solving, social skills and independence. It is also a way of children learning through mistakes and trial and error. At Long Lane we pride ourselves in prioritising the teaching of life skills and the Secrets of Success (how to be successful in life and learning, an integral part of our ethos throughout our curriculum and school).

We strive for our children to understand their uniqueness and develop their own curiosities and interests that will help them to develop self awareness and ambition.

In the outside area, with all the activities available, our children are encouraged to be creative, to take risks in a safe environment and to learn from their play the same way an inventor or aspirational adult would.

Why is our equipment not bought as ready made play activities?

We have some equipment that is obvious in its use, such as go-karts and the climbing frame.

Although these are popular, we have noticed that when children have equipment where the purpose of it is not laid out or prescriptive, they will be much more creative and use their imaginations. Just as the pictures in this link show.

What skills can my child gain?

Resilience and Risk taking

If you always play it safe you are not in the learning zone. Challenge and risk support problem-solving, healthy thinking, drive and ambition.

Creativity and Curiosity

Children are often most creative when you give them the box rather than the toy! Their imagination is sparked and their creativity is unlimited. Using imagination comes easily to children but only when they are presented with good opportunities to do so.

Teamwork and Social skills

This is where we see the most opportunities for learning. We seize every opportunity to support getting on with others and sharing equipment. It's unrealistic to think that children are not going to experience conflict; if there was none then there wouldn't be opportunities to resolve differences and build resilience. Our children develop an understanding of others and know that not everyone comes with the same level of patience or manners. We are all different and all welcome! Children learn to adapt to others' and their own needs, be upstanders and support each other. The drop in behaviour incidents and conflict is phenomenal. They often also learn that two minds are better than one, and know that in order to build something great you may need and value help.

Problem solving and Independence

Children need to be independent in their learning and take accountability. They are more enthused about learning when they are able to problem solve and understand FAIL (ask your child...)

Self-Esteem and Confidence

All of the above skills are the keys to success, building self-esteem and confidence in children so that their learning is not about regurgitating facts but also about life skills they can use in their future.

How do we manage risks and behaviour?

It is inevitable that when we challenge ourselves and involve ourselves in true learning, particularly outside, there are some risks involved. We believe that small, calculated and well managed risk can develop confidence and drive, ensuring that children are free to be creative and curious.

We expect that sometimes there will be disagreements, accidents or lack of understanding that may lead to the need for reflection and action. After all, our children are learning and mistakes are opportunities for development.

Therapeutic Approach to safe behaviours

Not all children have the same level of social skills or behaviours. We have a robust therapeutic approach which prioritises safe behaviours (both physically and emotionally). We use our 4 stage behaviour approach and our knowledge of the children to establish preventative measures. We provide educational and protective consequences to ensure that play is safe for them and their peers (please ask for more info on this approach).

Safety checks and supervision

Pupils are specifically taught how to use play equipment safely, and through Science, DT and PE we teach children the safe use of apparatus and proximity to others. We closely supervise pupils when learning through play and advise of good choices.

We carry out weekly safety checks of equipment and visual checks before every time of use. If there are any accidents or incidents, these are fully investigated and reported appropriately (please ask for more info).