

# GARSTANG ST THOMAS CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

## POLICY: COMPETITIVE SPORT

At Garstang St Thomas Church of England Primary School, Physical Education (PE) and sport are a high priority. For many years our school has taken a lead organising, hosting and taking part in inter-school competitions. We are blessed with staff who are committed to giving as many children as possible the opportunity to take part in sport. This means we take part in a high number of events and we have a very high percentage of children engaged in competitive sports.

Our programme of PE and sport is designed to be inclusive. We want to see all children of all ages and abilities involved in PE and sporting activities. We also recognise that competitive sport at primary school is seen as the first step to sport at the highest level and therefore, we provide opportunities for children to excel and to compete at the highest standard possible. In doing so, we strive to develop those children with gifts and talents in sport.

We believe in the value of competitive sport and healthy competition as part of a well-rounded education. As such, we endeavour to run as many teams and clubs as possible at different levels in a wide variety of sports at both 'friendly' level as well as competitive cup/competitions.

The contents of this policy detail our long-established practices and procedures at Garstang St Thomas school.

### **Inclusion events**

We provide our children with the opportunity to take part in inclusion events. These are 'friendly' events designed to encourage children who may not have the same opportunities as other children. Many of these events focus on taking part rather than winning.

Team selection: This is subject to the aim of the inclusion event.

### **Friendly events**

We take part in a range of events throughout the academic year. These events are usually in the form of inter-schools sporting competitions at secondary schools or through sports partnerships. For these events, we strive to get as many children to take part as possible. Where possible, we enter more than one team.

Team selection: We endeavour, as far as possible, to rotate team selection in order to give a fair chance to all **children who are interested** to be able to part of a school team. For these events, we usually field mixed teams although team selection is not random - children may be matched to play together in order to aid their development etc.

### **Competition events**

These are events where schools compete for cups/trophies and awards and includes a range of sports including athletics, netball, football and other sports. In line with providing opportunities for enabling as many children to take part as possible, we will, when possible enter more than one team.

Team selection: We select our strongest team(s) for these events. In all circumstances, teams are selected by staff using their professionalism and experience to pick the right team to represent the school for that particular occasion. Factors taken into consideration when selecting a team include ability, age, form, fitness, attitude, approach, discipline, organisation and whether or not the match/ competition is of a competitive/ 'friendly' nature. Whilst attendance at after school training is not necessarily a prerequisite for selection, the additional training time will be of benefit to those attending. Occasionally a child/children will be allowed to play for a team in an older year group where competition rules allow.

N.B. Team selection changes by event. Staff make team selection for individual events (or groups of events). This means there are no set teams - the 'Year 5 football team' doesn't exist but there will be Year 5s invited to be part of various teams during the year.

### **Clubs and training**

We welcome all children to join our extra-curricular clubs and training. Some of our children require additional support to access our clubs and activities and we endeavour to work with parents/carers to enable all children to be able to take part.

We use a range of approaches at training/clubs from dedicated training activities in particular to focus areas as well as matches/ games (as appropriate). Please note when there are large groups, we often group by ability to allow all children to have a fair opportunity to get engaged in an activity and also to allow children the opportunity to best develop their skills. This is in order to make sessions accessible for all.

### **Self-esteem, mindset and attitude**

By taking part in competitive support, children will experience winning and losing. They will also be with other children with a range of abilities and talents. In sporting activities and at competitions, it can be very easy for the children to see who is the fastest, who can jump highest etc. There is also selection by ability for competitions / training.

With support from school staff and parents/carers, all children can have a happy, positive experience where they can develop their skills. We encourage our children to develop a growth mindset and keep a positive attitude in all circumstances.

With parents/carers support, we expect children:

- To be respectful and follow directions and instructions from school staff.
- Have a positive attitude and be willing to play for any position or team (A, B etc) as directed by the member of staff.
- If selected for a team, show kindness to others, be a positive role model and not boast about selection.
- To speak to member of staff if there are any problems during a competition or training.

### **Parent/Carer Feedback**

Please note with competitive sport it is impossible to please all children all the time. There are limits to the number of matches/ competitions that it is possible to arrange and to participate in. There are limited number of positions in teams and there are ranges of abilities for our staff to meet the needs of.

**Contact staff:** Whilst it is acceptable to speak to a member of staff asking about what a child can do to develop further to play in a particular position/ activity etc. It is not acceptable for parents/carers to seek to influence team selection, positions or sporting activities.

We have a linked governor at school for competitive sport. The governor is able to look at the details of team selection, with a mind to fairness and equality, and have discussions with staff about competitions and training. If you would like to provide feedback, please contact David Holmes (Governor) c/o Garstang St Thomas School, Kepple Lane, Garstang, PR3 1PB.