

Our Vision for our school playground

The playground equipment is going to be used primarily by the children of our school. We currently have no static equipment of the children of Parkwood Academy. In 2021, the neighbourhood in which the school is located was ranked in the 20% most deprived in the country. The children of Parkwood deserve to have quality play equipment to use not only as part of break and lunchtimes, but also as part of the curriculum. With a stark rise in children attending Parkwood Academy with Special Educational Needs (SEN) the need for equipment to not only improve muscle strength but also balance, problem solving as well as a way of making friends and improving mental health.

We are looking to raise £90,000.00 to make our playground dreams come true. Please call the headteacher or donate directly to our Just giving page: https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/lisa-cracknell?utm_term=xgNWWjyD



We intend to open up our playgrounds for our wider community **for free** to use our equipment after school and during weekends. We would like to establish community groups where families can come together and offer each other support as well as giving the young people in our community a safe place to be.

The aim of gym trail is to improve physical development focusing on developing balance, co-ordination, core strength and fine and gross motor skills.

We would like to implement a safe area-based initiative that target families and young people where they are most needed would help reduce inequalities. It is time to look again at how to boost the chances of young people growing up in poor households in poor areas. With your help and support by donating what you can towards this project we intend to bridge these gaps to provide a safe space for our young people to attend both inside and outside of schools.

We will be setting up active groups to use our equipment outside of school hours to benefit our whole community to be used by mother and toddler groups, local brownie and cubs groups, SEN groups (where public spaces can be quite challenging) the list goes on.

Climbing frames are an excellent method to encourage children's physical activity and exercise without them even knowing. Children should aim for an average of 60 minutes of exercise per day to develop movement skills, muscles, and bones, which a trip to the playground or break time in the school playground can readily provide. Playground climbing frames allow children to follow their natural instincts to scramble, crawl and climb which aids in the development of their muscles, motor skills, and coordination whilst still being lots of fun.



As well as being a wonderful form of exercise, climbing frames also build up body strength, improve balance and help to develop spatial awareness. Children who climb become more agile and more confident on their feet. Gross motor skills involved in climbing also improve fine motor skills, which are required when drawing and writing. Working out how to get from one part of the climbing frame to another develops cognitive skills and introduces children to problem solving. Climbing helps children to face their fears and feel a sense of achievement when they finally reach their goal.

According to the Voice of Play, who analyse the benefits of play in young children, “playground equipment like climbers and overhead hanging apparatuses present kids with physical challenges and free play encourages them to take risks. When kids take that risk and overcome the challenge, they develop a sense of accomplishment that leads to higher self-esteem.”

Trim Trail equipment, combined together to make a series of apparatus, can be one of the many types of playground equipment that help children's ability to decipher risks and weigh-up their individual abilities to complete the trail. If they are able to complete it within a group, encouragement from their peers will not only help them to finish the trail confidently, but also help to define friendships and personal growth.

Background and benefits of exercise in areas of poverty

Parkwood Academy is close to average in terms of size, with 235 pupils. Across the whole provision, around 45% are currently in receipt of Pupil Premium funding compared to 23.2% average in England during 2022-23. In 2021, the neighbourhood in which the school is located was ranked in the 20% most deprived in the country. Around 22% of the pupils have English as an additional language; this number has grown recently. Our Special Educational Needs provision has grown rapidly in recent years, now at 20%. Ethnic minorities are increasing and now account for almost 36% of the school population.



Poor health among low-income households inhibits exercise, with parental ill health impacting directly on children's levels of physical activity. Few free sporting opportunities exist outside school, and charges are often unaffordable. Only a limited range of sports is available and some sports are expensive (Child Poverty Action Group)

But why focus on sport? Sport makes a significant difference to young lives: it contributes to young people's health and, therefore, their development; it involves engaging with other young people in a positive way, thereby helping to avoid trouble; and it encourages concentration, motivation and other learning skills that help their education, as well as their working and social lives. However, young people living in disadvantaged areas face many barriers to participating in sport.

- Poor health among low-income households inhibits exercise, with parental ill health impacting directly on children's levels of physical activity.
- Few free sporting opportunities exist outside school, and charges are often unaffordable.
- Only a limited range of sports is available and some sports are expensive.
- Lack of safe spaces in which to play deters parents and children, so street play becomes less safe and attractive.
- Poorer local environments have fewer open spaces and lower controls over conditions.



Once young people are out of education, however, their participation falls as sports and leisure centres, football and other clubs are often too expensive. Informal games and outdoor activities are quickly replaced by 'hanging out with friends, drinking and smoking'.

- Sports can 'help keep children and young people out of trouble'. But many parents feel that supervision at youth clubs is not tight enough. The balance between running an informal session for young people and having sufficient control over behaviour is difficult to get right.
- Young men 'hanging out' on the streets deter younger children from spending time outdoors. Inner city areas have weaker controls and ethnic divisions create tensions that prevent young people from participating.
- Local authority cuts have taken a toll on frontline care and affordable activities. In the eyes of parents – and many young people too – public spaces are not sufficiently supervised. Projects targeted at young people may not survive.
- Areas with greater poverty need cheaper provision.
- Engaging young people directly in shaping the way things happen reinforces their ambition to progress and helps decision makers and activity organisers.

Therefore as a school, we intend to identify young leaders to help drive this project forward and to sustain our young leaders to coach their peers.

We intend to ensure that although inequality and family poverty affect young people and limit participation in sport and other beneficial social activities. Active participation encourages young people to do more training, builds their confidence in accessing jobs, encourages healthy lifestyles, and displaces the need for drinking and other potentially harmful, unhealthy activities.

For further information of playground equipment designs please click the links below:

EYFS: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/179286559/>

KS2 Area: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/178472226/>

KS1 Area: <https://online.flippingbook.com/view/816057169/>