



Outdoor Play Policy

Rationale

We understand the importance for all children to have access to the outdoor environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage states that:

“Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area or, if that is not possible, ensure that outdoor activities are planned and taken on a daily basis (unless circumstances make this inappropriate, for example unsafe weather conditions).”

Aims

It is the setting’s aim that all children should access the outdoors at least once a day, whether this through a play session in the garden, or through going for a walk. Outdoor play is an integral part of the routine and curriculum offered, and should be an enjoyable experience for the children and staff alike. We endeavour to make the most of offered opportunities through the environment, activities, equipment and stimulation.

Policy

Outdoor play is paramount to young children’s learning, and the indoors and outdoors environments reflect one another. The outdoor environment is a prime opportunity for teaching and learning, and adults will interact with the children to extend their knowledge and skills. The outdoor layout is given lots of thought, with opportunities for children to use effective styles of learning, through a variety of equipment, including open-ended resources. It is important that children can modify the outdoor environment as they see fit.

It is our policy to ensure that:

- The outdoor area is risk assessed daily, with any problems noted down, to ensure the safety of the children.
- Toys and equipment are checked for damage when they are set out and tidied away.
- A variety of resources are available to the children. Resources available will help children to learn and develop within all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- All equipment is left neatly ready for the next group of children or tidied away appropriately at the end of the day.

- The correct staff to child ratios are adhered to when accessing the garden. These will change for outings away from the nursery (see trips and visits policy).
- Staff interact with the children when outside, to ensure supervision is maintained, and to encourage the children's interest and development.
- Children access the garden in all weathers, except in extreme circumstances. Children who may be suffering from illnesses such as coughs and colds- if a parent feels their child is not well enough to take part in all of the setting's daily routine we feel it is necessary for them to recover at home.
- Parents provide appropriate clothing for the children, for example hats and gloves in cold weather, and sunhats on hot days.
- Non-mobile babies will be taken into the baby garden.
- There are no hazardous plants growing in the garden.
- The outdoor classroom and Secret Garden will be available to the children when not being used by small groups of children.

Reviewed March 2024