

OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

“Young children come to early years setting as active, experienced learners with a natural curiosity. They are unique individuals eager to make sense of their world, to develop relationships and extend their skills.”

“The outdoor environment provides an ideal setting to allow children to develop this curiosity and be active in their learning and develop a sense of physical, mental and emotional well-being, through participation in a range of experiences and spontaneous social interactions.”

Aims

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating outdoor environment where space is used effectively to enable children to explore a broad balanced curriculum using a range of interesting resources suitable to their individual needs.

Planning

- Outdoor play is explicitly planned for using features of learning from the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The environment should be treated as an extension of the playroom. Plans will consider of children’s interests and be responsive to their learning experiences.
- We work with children outside, in this case staff will provide resources in the outdoor environment which will enable children to explore the same learning intentions that had been planned for indoor play. The provision of resources and structuring of the outdoor environment should allow children to expand their interests, make choices and have the freedom to explore this stimulating area.
- We will plan activities that offer physical challenges.
- Provide sufficient space to set up suitable activities.
- Give children adequate time to use a range of equipment.
- Adults will help individuals to encourage independence.
- Language will be used to encourage communication and interaction with others.

Resources

- A variety of resources are available for staff and children to select from to provide a range of learning experiences across the curriculum. These include resources for physical play e.g. bikes, balancing beams, balls etc and a further selection of resources which promotes learning in the curriculum areas, e.g. understanding the world, both staff and children have access to these resources to choose as they wish.
- Resources will be used in a variety ways to support specific skills.
- Children are encouraged to be independent in selection and return of resources and staff will provide clear rules about tidying equipment so that children know what to do.
- We have use of our local nature park for our children to explore the outdoors in a stimulating environment, this provides lots of opportunities for gardening, growing, mini beast hunts etc.
- Umbrella, rain macs and wellingtons are provided by nursery so children can enjoy the rain and snow.

Assessment and Recording

As learning experiences in outdoor play are planned using features of learning and staff observations of children's involvement and interactions, the outdoor area will provide the basis for assessment which will be incorporated into the children's development profiles. In addition to assessment information observations may also be used to respond to children's interests and experiences and inform future planning. Photographs will illustrate children's experiences and will be included as evidence of learning in children's profiles.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Plans will provide evidence of the provision and range of experiences in outdoor play. Staff evaluate their planning and provision often in consolidation with members of the management team. This is paramount in the area of outdoor play as it is highly responsive and prone to change due to factors such as weather. Evaluations inform future planning and fed back to the staff team planning and staff meetings. Photographs will also provide evidence of outdoor play in children's portfolios; wall displays and in the planning folder.