



Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment

Providers must take reasonable steps to ensure the outdoor environment is safe and secure

8.18 Outdoor Play Policy

Policy statement

We aim to provide an outdoor environment that:

- Is safe and secure whilst providing an exciting, stimulating and challenging place where all children can grow, develop and explore using their senses.
- Extends and enhances the provision within the indoor environment;
- Supports development within all seven areas of learning
- Supports the specific needs of all children;
- Provides both adult-directed and child-initiated opportunities throughout the day;
- Provides space for children to work in a range of different groups on both a small and large scale.

Procedures

- In cold weather all children must wear an outdoor coat, hat (or hood) and preferably gloves and mittens. If it is wet underfoot they should wear boots or have alternative indoor footwear
- Staff to ensure that if they are on garden duty at any time, they are in the garden promptly with their children to maintain appropriate level of staffing.
- When outside, all staff members are to make each other aware when they are going inside to toilet or deal with an accident. By doing so, any further children needing support can be passed into this member of staff thus maintaining a safe level of staffing within the garden.
- Staff to ensure that they spread out throughout the garden to supervise all areas being used.
- All children who have an accident whilst outside must be written in the accident form so that a message can be passed on to their parents/carers.
- When supervising in the playground, please ensure that you keep moving and remain vigilant for potential problems arising.
- All children will have the opportunity to utilise the outdoor area at least once a day. In the event of more requiring outdoor play, the group will be split and ensure that all children have their allotted time.
- Staff must ensure that all external play areas are safe and secure. Outdoor play equipment should be checked regularly and removed if broken or dangerous. Fixed play equipment should also be checked regularly.
- The garden area may out of bounds at times; this will only be at the discretion of the Nursery Manager.

Wet Playtime

- If the weather is unsuitable for outdoor play, ie torrential rain or slippery due to ice/snow the children will remain in their classrooms enjoying group activities.

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is the key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. In playing, they behave in different ways: sometimes their play will be boisterous, sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing, sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.

Through play in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules;
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- Take risks and make mistakes;
- Think creatively and imaginatively;
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems;
- Express fears or relive anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

Health & Safety

In order to maintain a safe outdoor environment the garden is checked on opening and closing the nursery by the Management team. In addition to this all members of staff are responsible for carrying out regular checks of the garden throughout the day. Any broken equipment or safety hazards are noted in the health and safety maintenance book which is located in the office for the directors attention.