

Outdoor Play Policy

Aim

Outdoor play is an integral part of the curriculum for all age groups and requires specific planning and supervision. The outdoor play area is a useful resource and every effort should be made to enable the children to have supervised free access to the outdoor play area every day.

The outdoor play area should be an inviting and stimulating environment supporting learning across all areas and should offer a variety of different activities for example a space to develop skills like climb, balance, a space to play on wheeled toys, a quiet area to read a book, a place to draw or create patterns with natural materials and a space to dig and a growing area.

Planning for the outdoor learning should recognise the area as an extension of the indoor learning area. The planning forms should indicate planned out door learning activities. Many activities that we do indoors can be transferred to the out doors like sand and water play, drawing, ball games.

Exploring the out door environment is an important part of development of knowledge and understanding of the world, both within the centre grounds and the surrounding areas.

Safety

Staff must ensure that the out door play areas are safe and secure. All outdoor play equipment is checked regularly and removed if broken or dangerous. It is the responsibility of every member of the nursery staff team to ensure that the out door area is safe and secure before allowing the children into the area.

Clothing

Staff must ensure that all children are dressed appropriately for the weather conditions.

For hot weather:

- All children and staff should wear a sun hat.
- Sun protection cream with sun protection factor of SPF 15 or more, this should be applied liberally and reapplied regularly.
- Children and staff to be encouraged to drink more water when playing outside.
- To play in the shade.
- Children should be out of the direct sunlight during the hottest parts of the day 11am – 3pm.
- Children under the age of six months should always be kept out of direct sunlight altogether

- STAFF SHOULD SET A GOOD EXAMPLE BY APPLYING SUN CREAM AND WEARING SUN HATS.

For cold Weather

- All children should have an out door coat, hat or hood, and preferable gloves or mittens.
- Babies in buggies should be shielded from strong winds.
- If it is wet under foot or raining children should wear boots or have alternative indoor footwear.

Centre staff should request appropriate clothing from parents and keep a stock of spare clothes for emergencies.

Supervision and supporting children's learning

Supervision of outdoor learning is equally as important as supervision of indoor learning. Staff must ensure that they are interacting with children and supporting children's play and learning appropriately as they would indoors. The safety and security of the children is of the utmost importance and appropriate staff ratios must be maintained. The centre operates a free flow between indoor and outdoor learning areas, staff teams need to ensure that appropriate ratios are maintained. This will necessitate a need for team work and co-operation.

Outdoor play must not be viewed as a recreation time for staff and it is neither a time for ratios to drop while staff take their breaks.

Fresh air

Everyone needs fresh air especially children. It contains fewer germs than air inside because ultra-violet rays kill the germs and it contains oxygen which gives us energy and also stimulates exercise.

Sunlight causes the skin to produce Vitamin D, which is required for growth of healthy bones and teeth. Non-mobile children should be taken out in a buggy or to lie on a blanket to watch leaves move, to enable them to benefit from fresh air. If the weather makes it impossible to play outside due to heavy fog or heavy rain, the indoor play area must have well ventilated windows in order to supply fresh air into the rooms.

Methods

Useful resources and websites

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| This policy was adopted by for Loseley Fields Children Centre. | |
| Name: | |
| Position: | |
| Signature: | |
| Date: | Review Date: |