Outings and Outdoor Play

Policy Statement

We believe that children benefit greatly from a variety of experiences outside the preschool environment. Outings and outdoor trips provide valuable learning opportunities and support children's understanding of the world, confidence, social skills and physical development.

This policy outlines how we keep children safe during outings, the procedures staff must follow, and the measures we take to ensure all trips are planned, risk assessed and supervised appropriately.

Safety and safeguarding are always our highest priorities.

Aims of the Policy

We aim to ensure:

- All outings are safe, planned and well supervised
- Children experience a broad range of learning opportunities
- Parents are informed and give consent
- Risk assessments identify and minimise hazards
- Staff are prepared for emergencies
- Individual needs, including SEND, are fully considered
- Local Authority and EYFS requirements are met

Outdoor Play at the Setting

Daily outdoor play forms part of our curriculum.

We ensure:

- Outdoor areas are **securely fenced**
- A **daily safety check** is completed before use
- Sandpits are **covered and cleaned regularly**
- Equipment is **age-appropriate and maintained**
- Any pooled water is **emptied before use**

- Outdoor areas are **free** from hazards
- Outdoor play is **supervised at all times**
- A **first aid kit** and **drinking water** are always available

Outdoor learning supports physical health, wellbeing and development.

Planning for Outings

Before any outing takes place, staff must ensure:

- The outing has been discussed with the manager
- A **written risk assessment** is completed and signed off
- All staff understand their responsibilities
- Routes, facilities, toilets and access points are identified
- SEND or medical needs are fully considered
- Weather conditions and accessibility have been reviewed

Where possible, staff conduct a **pre-visit check** to identify potential risks.

Parental Consent

Parents must provide:

- **Written consent** for all local outings at registration
- **Additional consent** for special trips or visits further away

Parents are informed in advance of:

- Destination
- Purpose of the trip
- Ratios
- Transport used (if applicable)
- Items children need to bring

We do not take a child on any outing without valid parental consent.

Staffing and Ratios

Outings have **enhanced ratios** depending on location, distance, and children's needs.

As a minimum:

- EYFS ratios will be maintained

- Additional adults will be provided where necessary
- Children with SEND may have 1:1 support
- Staff must position themselves at the **front, middle and back** of the group

A named outing leader is responsible for:

- Counting children regularly
- Managing the group
- Keeping emergency items accessible
- Ensuring staff follow risk assessment actions

Items Staff Must Take on All Outings

Staff must carry:

- A fully stocked **first aid kit**
- Any **emergency medication** (EpiPens, inhalers etc.)
- Children's **contact details**
- Register and headcount sheet
- **Mobile phone** (setting–issued)
- Accident/incident forms
- High–visibility vests or identifiers (if appropriate)
- Drinking water
- Nappies/wipes (if required)
- Spare clothing
- Map or directions (if needed)

Nothing is left to chance during outings.

Risk Assessment

A written outing–specific risk assessment must include:

- Hazards and control measures
- Grouping and supervision strategies
- Road safety considerations
- Water safety (ponds, lakes, fountains)

- Animals and livestock
- Toileting arrangements
- Weather risks (sun, wind, cold, rain)
- Any SEND adaptations
- Emergency procedures
- Staff positioning

Dynamic Risk Assessments

Staff must continue to assess risks **throughout the outing**, reacting to:

- Unexpected crowds
- Traffic
- Weather changes
- Environmental hazards

Supervision During Outings

Staff must:

- Maintain visual supervision at all times
- Carry out frequent headcounts (every 5–10 minutes)
- Position themselves strategically
- Ensure children walk safely, staying together
- Use reins, wrist straps, buggies or walking ropes where appropriate

Children must never be left with volunteers or visitors.

Use of Transport (If Ever Required)

If transport is used (e.g., hired coach, minibus, taxi, or car):

- Vehicles must be insured, roadworthy and suitable
- Seatbelts must be used at all times
- Children must never sit in the front seat
- Staff must not use private vehicles unless authorised
- Ratios are increased due to higher risk
- Children enter and exit vehicles safely with staff assistance

If your settings **never** use vehicles, we will add this line:

Our setting does not use private or public transport for outings. All outings are within walking distance.

Just let me know if this applies to all your settings.

SEND, Medical or Additional Needs

We ensure all children can take part safely by:

- Conducting individual risk assessments where needed
- Making reasonable adjustments
- Allowing extra staffing
- Ensuring accessibility for wheelchairs or medical equipment
- Carrying emergency medication
- Sharing strategies with all staff before the outing

Emergency Procedures on Outings

If an emergency occurs:

- The outing leader takes charge
- Staff ensure children are safe and accounted for
- Emergency services are contacted if required
- The manager is contacted immediately
- Children may be moved to a place of safety
- Incident forms are completed afterwards

Missing Child

If a child goes missing on an outing:

- Staff immediately alert all adults
- All children are gathered and supervised
- Staff search the immediate area
- The manager and emergency services are contacted
- Parents are informed
- Full missing child procedures are followed

(Links directly to your Missing Child Policy.)

After the Outing

Staff must:

- Conduct a debrief
- Review the risk assessment
- Record any incidents or concerns
- Evaluate what went well and what needs improvement

This helps improve future outings and evidences reflective practice.

Review and Monitoring

Managers will:

- Approve all risk assessments
- Monitor staff practice on outings
- Check headcount and supervision records
- Review this policy annually or sooner if needed

Legal and Guidance Framework

- EYFS Statutory Framework (2024/25)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Ofsted Early Years Inspection Framework
- Local Authority guidance

Signed: _____
Position: Manager
Date: _____