

GARDEN PLAY AND EQUIPMENT

It is well known that exercise is vital to aid the physical development of young children and to encourage them to continue a healthy lifestyle into their adult years.

As an Ofsted Registered Childminder I encourage the children in my care to join in all sorts of different physical activities and provide a range of resources to make it fun and enjoyable.

In my garden I will have a range of large outdoor equipment. Whilst this provides lots of opportunities for developing new physical skills and enjoyment it also brings danger. Children need to learn about danger and risk taking, however in order to make my garden a safe environment and to reduce the risk of possible accidents I have put the following procedures in place:

All minded children will be supervised by a responsible adult at all times.

Children will be taught the dangers of the equipment in a way that is suitable for their stage of development and understanding.

Children will be encouraged to take turns and share equipment.

The equipment will be checked/cleaned before use for animal faeces.

The equipment will be checked for wear and tear/ damage regularly and withdrawn from use if faulty.

Children will be encouraged to participate but will not be made to do any activity that they are uncomfortable with, for example a climbing frame.

Sandpits - Provide great play and learning opportunities, however, they can also pose several health and safety risks.

I will only use sand that is suitable for play and purchased from a recognised source.

I will regularly ensure the sand is changed; in between I will sieve for foreign bodies and rinse through with a diluted sterilising agent if applicable. Toxoplasmosis can be spread from cats to humans through dirty sandpits. Toxoplasmosis can harm an unborn child, but is usually a mild illness in children and adults. It causes a rash, swollen glands, fever and feeling unwell.

I will ensure the sandpit has adequate drainage to prevent the sand from becoming water logged. Insects can live in damp sand and may bite or sting children.

I will dispose of spilt sand.

I will ensure the sandpit is covered to prevent it being used as a litter tray by cats and other visitors to the garden.

I will ensure that the children are closely supervised whilst playing in the sandpit.

I will teach them about keeping the sand low to avoid it getting in their own and others eyes.

If you would like your child to wear a hat whilst playing in the sand then please let me know.

Skipping Ropes - There have been several serious incidents involving skipping ropes and I have, therefore, decided to follow the guidance from the British Heart Foundation's booklet 'Active Playgrounds, A guide for Primary Schools'

Safety considerations

Footwear : pupils will need to wear supportive footwear. Children may need to be encouraged to wear trainers for playground skipping if their outdoor shoes are not considered to be safe.

Space: Children need to be made aware that they require adequate space all around them to be able to swing the rope without making contact with other ropes or skippers. A designated playground area is, therefore, advised and other non-skipping pupils should also be made aware of the dangers.

Clothing : sensible, loose-fitting clothing which allows free movement of the legs and arms.

Weather conditions: Certain wet playground conditions or very hot weather may be considered unsafe.

Fluid intake: this is particularly important in warm weather conditions to avoid dehydration and prevent the body from overheating. Children are not as efficient as adults in controlling body temperature.

Rope length: For individual skipping, when children stand in the middle of the rope and pull the handles upwards, the rope handles should reach the armpits. They can be shortened by tying knots at each end just

below the handles.

Inappropriate use of the ropes : Children need to be made fully aware of the possible dangers of not using the ropes appropriately and correctly. In some cases, adult supervision may be necessary.

Paddling Pools - Children can have great fun using a paddling pool and it can also support their development in a variety of ways. However there are safety issues when children play with water and I have therefore put the following procedures in place:

Children will never be left unsupervised with water.

If a child needs the toilet then all children will come out of the pool and come inside with me.

If the doorbell rings again all the children will come out of the pool and come inside with me.

I will take my phone outside with me.

I will take enough towels and spare clothes outside.

The pool will be immediately emptied when not in use.

The pool will be refilled each day when in use.

I will support the children to learn about water safety.

I will never make a child go into the pool if they don't want to but will provide activities they can do in the pool area.

I request that parents inform if their child has a verruca on their foot so measures can be put in place to prevent them from spreading.

If toddlers and babies are in nappies I will request parents provide some form of swimming nappy to prevent the pool from becoming contaminated.

Emergency procedures are in place and I maintain my first aid certificate.

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