

# Outdoor Policy

We aim to offer the children daily opportunities to enjoy learning and play in our garden, drawing on their interests and imagination. We generally go out in our garden whether it is raining or shining so it is important that parents provide the right protection for their children whatever the weather.

## **Parents need to provide:**

- Outdoor appropriate footwear, either wellies or suitable trainers to run around in and join in all outdoor games. These will include climbing, running, kicking balls and balancing.
- Outdoor jackets, trouser or all in one suits. The children will run, jump and roll in the garden so please provide appropriate clothing for them to be able to do this.
- Hats, gloves. Please provide your child with either woolly hats and gloves or sun hats depending on the weather.

Due to staffing ratios children can not be kept inside if the whole class is going into the garden so it is the parent responsibility to dress them appropriately knowing they will be in the garden every day.

Through using the garden, children are able to develop a lifelong love and understanding of the natural environment, whilst developing their self-esteem, confidence and social skills as well as their physical skills. We wish to encourage parents to extend their children's experiences by visiting local woodlands as a family and to value the outdoor environment. All the children in the nurseries will have the opportunity to experience sessions throughout the year.

## **Environmental Considerations and Conservation**

We plan to promote environmental awareness, encourage sustainability and teach children and parents to value the outdoor environment and visit local woodlands as a family. The children are taught about respect for wildlife and responsibility for the world around them and to be aware of conservation issues of the woodland around them

## **Safeguarding Children in the garden**

The safeguarding of children is of utmost importance at all times and this policy is an addendum to our Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies and Risk Assessments.

Through use of the garden we aim for the children to develop the skills of health living and enjoying their time outside as a creative and imaginative space.



# Outdoor Policy continued

We will establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment by:

- Ensuring the provision of sufficient information and instruction for all adults, including volunteers as appropriate, so that they can contribute to their own health and safety and that of the children they are working with
- Establishing and being completely familiar with, all emergency procedures including the reporting and recording of procedures
- Ensuring that the designated risk assessments are undertaken by members of staff before entering the garden.
- Investigating any accidents and using information gathered to inform future risk assessment and policy making
- Ensuring that at least one appropriately qualified first aider is on-site
- Teaching all members of the party to maintain their own and others health and safety by involving them in the risk assessment process at appropriate opportunities
- Maintaining the legal adult-child ratio
- Ensuring that all equipment is in good working order and is used appropriately
- Securing the garden sheds at all times and only allowing access by staff
- Ensuring security gates and boundaries are secure.

## **Weather conditions**

As part of the EYFS the garden acts as an outdoor classroom, designed to support the EYFS curriculum through sensory planting, bug hotels, and a "free-flow" approach where children can move freely without the constraints of the classroom. Within the EYFS they promote daily access to outdoor learning and this we try to provide whatever the weather.

## **We will not go out in the garden under the following conditions:**

Thunder and lightning, high winds of 30-40mph, torrential rain.

Cold temperatures will be monitored but we expect children to turn up in appropriate clothing to go out in the garden even when it is cold and snowing outside. We specialise in outdoor learning through Montessori, so we do want to promote this through our settings.

## **How to dress for cold weather:-**

- **Layer Up:** Use merino wool base layers, fleeces, and waterproof outer layers to keep dry and warm.
- **Protect Extremities:** Use woollen balaclavas, scarves, and mittens (better than gloves) to prevent heat loss.
- **All in one suits:** For children under 5 these can be the best way to protect them in the cold and we are happy to have these kept in the nursery for garden time only.



# Outdoor Policy continued

## Sports sessions

We run weekly sports sessions at the nursery with a qualified sports instructor to help promote fitness, health and physical development for the children in our care.

These sessions can last up to 45 minutes and involve a lot of movement and running. For this reason, it is important that children wear appropriate, secure footwear that allows them to move safely. If suitable footwear is not provided, children will unfortunately be unable to take part in the session and will need to sit out, as we cannot allow children to participate barefoot.

During the changing seasons, the weather can vary significantly. Sessions may begin in cooler temperatures, but children can quickly become warm due to physical activity and rising temperatures. As part of our safeguarding responsibilities, staff will monitor children closely and may add or remove layers of clothing to ensure they remain comfortable and safe.

If your child is **unwell**, they should not attend nursery. However, if your child has recently been ill or is currently **taking antibiotics**, we ask that you inform staff in advance. This enables our team to use their professional judgement when supporting your child during physical activities. **Children can not be in nursery for the 24hr after taking antibiotics.**

Following the sports sessions, staff will again use their professional judgement to decide whether children need to **put layers back on or remove them**, depending on the activities they are moving on to and the weather conditions.

All nursery staff are **professionally trained in early years education and hold paediatric first aid qualifications**. They will ensure that children are appropriately supervised and kept comfortable throughout and after these sessions.

Children will have **access to their water bottles at all times** during the sessions to ensure they remain hydrated, regardless of the weather conditions.

At no point can we force a child to keep their clothing on. If it is deemed a risk for your child to be outside, then you will be called to collect your child or discuss the situation.

