



Outdoor Play policy

January 2016

Explorers
Academy



Where BIG adventures begin!

"When children play out of doors, they are exercising their growing intellectual and emotional muscles, as well as their physical ones. They are developing the power to think, to feel, to do, to see and understand, to represent and express. They are imagining, puzzling, wondering, exploring, befriending and sharing".

*"Can I: Play Out" Outdoor Play in the Early Years - Bradford LEA 1995
Taken from the forward written by Mary Jane Drummond*

"The best classroom and the widest cupboard is in the open air".

Margaret Macmillan

We recognise the importance of outside play and we aim to create an outdoor area which is stimulating, exciting, takes account of the children's interests and is used throughout the year as a learning environment.

Each of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning areas are developed through Outdoor Play.

1. Developing Personal, Social and Emotional Learning Through Outdoor Play

- The resources and experiences outside provide opportunities for children to develop co-operation and build relationships.
- Children are encouraged to work together, take turns and help each other.
- Children are encouraged to take responsibility for the resources in the outside area. They are able to set up the areas and tidy resources away.
- The organisation and management of outdoors supports children in initiating and developing their own ideas and interests.
- Children are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder about living things and natural phenomena.
- Children develop their understanding and show respect for living things.
- The resources and experiences outside provide opportunities for children to act out their feelings.

2 . Developing Communication, Language and Literacy Through Outdoor Play

- There is a good range of stimulating first-hand experiences for children and adults to talk about.
- There are places for children to talk with each other.
- Reading and writing are incorporated into activities and experiences. They are relevant and meaningful to children's interests and patterns of learning.
- Children are encouraged to use the written word or write for a range of purposes, e.g. signs, messages, tickets.
- Non-fiction books are a stimulus for investigations outdoors.
- Stories are told/read/re-enacted outside.
- Letters and words are displayed outside and the reinforcement of phonic skills actively encouraged.
- Children are encouraged to express their ideas, interests through role play.

3. Developing Mathematical Learning Through Outdoor Play

- Children are encouraged to explore patterns, shape, measurement and numbers in the natural and made world. There are resources to support this range of learning.
- The available resources enable children to solve mathematical problems.
- Staff encourage children to develop and use their mathematical language.
- The range of equipment enables children to work on a large scale.
- Children are encouraged to play mathematical games with large equipment.
- Numbers are incorporated into children's play.
- Children are encouraged to write numbers or record mathematical ideas in relevant and appropriate ways.

4. Developing Learning About and Understanding the World Through Outdoor Play

- Children are encouraged to observe and express their ideas about similarities and differences in the natural world.
- The children are encouraged to respect the outdoor environment and care for living things.
- Children are encouraged to explore the physical environment and are able to solve problems in their own way.
- Changes in the weather are used to stimulate investigative work.
- There is a good range of natural and made materials for children and adults to talk about.
- The outdoor area offers children the opportunity to investigate and explore, problem solve, use their imagination and creativity.
- There is a sufficient range of resources to develop children's interest in movement.
- Children are able to use a range of natural and made materials to design, make and build.
- The outside area is organised so that children are provided with opportunities to play out their life experiences and to develop imaginative play.
- Staff support and develop children's imaginative play related to life experiences.
- Staff ensure that all children have access to a wide range of resources and experiences.
- Staff teach the children to use tools safely and appropriately.

5. Developing Physical Development Through Outdoor Play

- The planning of equipment in the outdoor classroom takes into account all stages of children's physical development.
- There is a good range of equipment to develop children's co-ordination and control and gross motor skills
- The resources and equipment encourage a variety of ways of using the body.
- The children are presented with challenges that enable them to discover what they are able to do whilst learning about the limitations of their bodies.
- Children are able to experience a variety of different sized materials and use them in a variety of ways.
- Children are encouraged to use their bodies imaginatively e.g. dance, music and movement.
- Staff ensure that boys and girls have equal access to all areas of physical learning.

6. Developing Expressive Arts and Design Learning Through Outdoor Play

- Children are encouraged to represent their ideas imaginatively. There are a range of materials so that they can create 2D and 3D images.
- Children are encouraged to explore colour, shape and texture within natural materials.
- Staff plan for music, movement, dance, singing and drama to take place in the outside area.
- Children have the opportunity to experience a large range of textures and different materials.
- Opportunities are provided for children to develop large-scale work.
- Appropriate resources are available to support large-scale mark making.

The children within Reception are also involved in the Forest school programme (*See separate Forest School Handbook*)