

Outdoor Play

At Little Miracles we recognise the importance of outdoor play for children's learning and physical development. We aim for every child to access the outdoors daily and this is not seen as an optional extra. We will also make reasonable adjustments for children with additional needs and disabilities to access the outdoors.

The Importance of Outdoor Play

Outdoor play plays a huge part in children developing healthy and active lifestyles. The choices we make on behalf of the children during their early years will benefit them for the rest of their lives. The children have the chance to develop their gross and fine motor skills while playing outside, as well as experiencing freedom of movement and a sense of well-being. The children also have a chance to experience the natural world while outdoors which supports their understanding of the environment. They gain a sense of wonder and excitement from experiencing the weather and the seasons.

How Outdoor Play is delivered at Little Miracles

At Little Miracles the children have access to both the nursery playground as well as a chance to go on walks into the local area. The outdoor area at the nursery is risk assessed twice daily. Permission is sought from parents before taking children off the premises for walks and these are also risk assessed ensuring safe crossing points are used at all times. The pre-school children have free-flow for a large part of the day and the babies and toddlers access the outdoors at least once a day. As a staff team we recognise the importance of outdoor play being different to the indoor activities we provide at the nursery. We encourage challenging activities and allow children to take well-calculated risks while being supervised by their teachers. This contributes enormously to the children's self-esteem and self-beliefs and encourages them to overcome challenges. All activities outdoors are linked to the children's developmental level and their individual next steps. Outdoor Play is carefully planned for on a daily basis.

Outdoor Play and the Weather

At Little Miracles we believe that *"there is no such thing as bad weather only bad clothing"*. Parents are expected to ensure they provide clothing for their children appropriate to the weather. Teachers are expected to bring warm clothes, gloves and hats or a rain coat for themselves. When it's raining the covered decking area can be used to take turns accessing the outdoors. The only time children will remain inside if the weather conditions are not safe (eg. High winds, thunderstorms, thick ice).

If you feel that your child is too poorly to join in with activities outside, then we would recommend that your child be kept at home to get better.

Headcounts

On leaving the room our staff will carry out a head count and this will be repeated when they leave the garden. Whilst being in the garden a nominated staff member will ensure that a head count is carried out every 10 minutes and recorded on the garden head count form. This form will also be completed during free flow in the preschool room.