

Outdoor Play

At **Little Miracles Day Nursery** we are committed to the importance of daily outdoor play and the physical development of all children regardless of their age and stage of development. We provide outdoor play in all weathers. Where possible and appropriate, we make outdoor activities accessible to children with learning difficulties and disabilities to ensure inclusive use of the outdoor area.

We recognise that children need regular access to outdoor play in order to keep fit and healthy, develop their large and fine motor skills, experience learning in a natural environment and access sunlight in order to absorb vitamin D more effectively. We also refer to The Chief Medical Office guidance on physical activity.¹

We aim for the children to go outside at least twice a day. We will adapt the time spent outside if appropriate i.e. very windy, very hot or very cold however, children will visit the outside unless it is deemed unsafe. (I.e. icy or too hot). If children are too poorly to play outside then we ask you to keep them at home as our outside play forms part of our daily routine for all children at the nursery. Please provide appropriate clothing that is labelled for outside play i.e. wellies, sun hats, all in ones etc.

The garden is checked for safety first thing in the morning and then before every time the children are taken out. Older children will help check the garden in small groups using our safety spy's checklist.

On leaving the room staff will take with them the register or list the children they are taking on the garden headcount check if some children are staying in the room. These will be recorded on the chart on the wall to show the ratios and number of children.

Children will be counted as they leave the room and as they enter the garden. They will then be checked by a nominated person every 10 minutes and recorded on the garden Headcount form.

The outdoor areas, both within the nursery grounds and in the local community have a wealth of experiences and resources which help children to develop in a variety of ways, including independence, exploration and investigative skills, risk taking and self-esteem, all of which support children to develop skills now and for the future.

We ensure all areas are safe and secure through close supervision and the use of robust risk assessments and safety checks. Where possible and appropriate, we plan and encourage play that helps children understand and manage risks. This type of play allows children to explore and find their own boundaries in a safe environment with supportive practitioners. Staff are informed of the importance of safety procedures and are trained appropriately to ensure these procedures are followed effectively.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-physical-activity-guidelines

We obtain parental permission before any child leaves the nursery during the day. This includes short outings into the local community. There is more information in the outings policy.

We plan all outdoor play opportunities and outings to complement the indoor activities and provide children with purposeful activities that support and follow individual children's interests. There is a balance of both adult-led and child-initiated opportunities to enable children to learn and practice new skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Where activities take place away from the setting (e.g. in the local wood) then a mobile phone and first aid kit will be taken to ensure the safety of children at all times. A trained paediatric first aider will be present when away from the main setting.

We use this policy alongside the following policies to ensure the safety and welfare of children throughout their time outside:

- Health and Safety
- Sun Care
- Caring for Babies and Toddlers
- Lost Child Policy
- Parents and Carers as Partners
- Supervision of Children
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Outings.

This policy was adopted on	Signed on behalf of the nursery	Date for review
<i>17.12.2019</i>		<i>17.12.2020</i>