

## Little Oaks Day Nursery

### **Outdoor Play Policy**

At Little Oaks Day Nursery we recognise the importance, and value, placed on outdoor play and its role in children's learning and physical development regardless of their age or stage of development. Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to develop their large and small muscles, experience a different environment from the indoors and have access to sunlight, which supports absorption of vitamin D in the body.

As part of our daily routine all children will have the opportunity to explore the nursery's large outdoor learning environment and will participate in planned/free choice learning activities regardless of the weather. The majority of our lower ground base rooms have direct access to the nursery's outdoor area allowing for free flow play both indoors and outdoors. Rooms without immediate outdoor access are committed to providing outdoor play as part of their daily routine as a minimum twice a day.

#### Equipment and Resources

We provide a variety of large resources which cover all areas of the EYFS, including the climbing frame, role play areas, sandpit, digging bays, willow tunnels, gardening areas and a creative station as well as smaller boxed resources, bikes and scooters. The outdoor garden will be set up daily with a variety of adult led and child initiated activities, allowing all children to learn, explore and problem solve in their natural environment and build on their investigative skills, risk taking, independence and self esteem.

All equipment will be stored in designated outdoor sheds; the toys and equipment will be monitored and risk assessed to ensure that no parts are missing or broken. All equipment found to be in an unsafe condition will be removed from further use. A garden checklist will be completed before allowing children to enter the garden area to ensure it is hazard free.

#### Safety

The nursery is committed to providing a safe and secure outdoor space. Staff will ensure a robust risk assessment is carried out before children enter the garden and of all planned activities. Staff will model behaviour which will allow children to become engaged in their learning, whilst taking risks safely. Children will have access to water proof clothing, however we ask parents to supply sensible clothing for all weathers such as sun hats and sun screen for the warmer months and hats, gloves, coats and wellington boots for the colder months. Staff are also encouraged to wear suitable and protective clothing and to lead and participate in a range of outdoor activities, in all weathers.

## Sun care

As a nursery we are committed to ensuring that all children are kept safe from the risks of sun and understand the damage sunburn can have to a child later in life.

- Staff will ensure outdoor play will be limited in extreme hot weather between 11 am – 2pm to ensure children are not exposed to the sun at its hottest.
- All children must be provided with suitable clothing and a named bottle of sun cream.
- Children will have sun cream applied before all outdoor play and we ask parents to support this by sending children to nursery with sun cream already applied.
- Any child not supplied with sun cream may not be able to access the outdoor area.
- In emergencies and with parents consent children will be allowed to use sun cream provided by the nursery.
- The nursery has some designated areas for shade which will be given priority to the younger children and rotated for the older children to have a cooling off period.
- Children will be offered water at frequent intervals during the day.

The role of the adult in children's learning outside will be to:

- Risk assess the outdoor space and all activities before allowing children to participate in any play.
- Supervise children at all times in all areas of the garden including when children who use the climbing frame.
- Interact with the children and model how to keep safe in the garden and how to safely use equipment.
- Set up the outdoor learning space with a range of activities, in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance.
- Answer children's questions and develop children's knowledge of the outside environment and the natural world they live in.
- Shut down the garden but encourage all children to help tidy up and develop respect for their outdoor space.
- Ensure all children are kept safe in the sun and other adverse weather conditions.

This policy is developed to work alongside the nurseries Health and Safety policy, Babies and Toddlers policy and Parents/Carers as partners, to ensure the wellbeing of children is maintained at all times.

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