

GARDEN POLICY

Our Vision and Aims

- To create a visually stimulating, green environment where children can engage in physical activities freely and safely
- To involve children in environmental responsibilities
- To provide children with an outdoor learning experience that supports equality and inclusion
- To provide a creative space where children can enjoy role-play and imaginative play using various resources. The space can be transformed into different sections, ranging from building and construction, imaginative play, climbing and balancing, wheeled toys, investigative play, planting and growing, quiet/reflective time and creative activities
- To promote the growing and harvesting of vegetables and fruits for use in cooking activities

We hope to provide an outdoor space that will enhance children's learning and familiarise them with a natural environment where they can learn about environmental responsibilities from a young age. Our garden functions as an outdoor classroom where children can be engaged in experiences that are both enjoyable and secure, supporting their learning in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

Practitioners should

- Assess the garden before use and report any safety issues to a member of the Management Team
- Ensure that staff ratios are met at all times, with at least two staff members of staff supervising the children at any given time
- Support children in learning, exploring, and problem solving through interaction to promote quality play
- Ensure that all children are given an equal right of access to the garden
- Be a role model in caring for the garden and any outdoor resources
- Set up challenges to broaden the children's learning experiences
- Have a specific purpose for outdoor play and plan activities in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum
- Be flexible to meet individual children's needs as they arise during the sessions
- Record children's achievements through written observations, and document milestones by taking photographs
- Evaluate observations to plan further steps

Health and Safety in the Garden

- Risk assessment to be carried out in the garden by all staff before using the area
- Remove and report any object(s) that may pose a danger
- Check that all gates are closed
- Never leave children unattended in the garden. Staff ratios must be met at all times
- When in use, all areas of the garden must be completely supervised
- Parents or students must not be left in charge of any children in the garden
- At the end of each outdoor session the area must be tidied, ready for the next group of children. All equipment should be stored away sensibly and carefully
- Check through the garden rules with the children, especially rules pertaining to the climbing of any gates
- If a child is injured, s/he should be brought indoors as quickly as possible for treatment. The other teacher should remain in the garden area to supervise the rest of the children. A First Aid Kit can be found in the Starlight room, next to the garden door. Members of staff should follow the Nursery School's Incident and Accident Procedure in the event of any child injury situation
- Children must be dressed appropriately for the weather
- On cold days, a ground sheet, with a layer of woolen blankets laid on top, should be used to allow any babies to crawl safely
- Tissues and wet wipes are available in the outdoor garden box for children's cleanliness. Gloves, bin bags and blue cloths are also available in the box for other cleaning purposes
- Children and staff must always wash their hands before returning to any classrooms

Curriculum Planning

Staff must plan for the use of the garden in our weekly planner, through close observations of the children's interests and needs.

The outdoor curriculum planning may include:

- Gardening activities for different seasons
- Use of the climbing wall to promote improved motor skills and strength building
- Moveable sand and water trays, and other malleable play equipment
- Use of the trampoline and balancing beam
- Obstacle courses
- Relay games with hula-hoops, balls, beanbags, cones, dens, role-play, pop-up tents and tunnels

Observation and Evaluation

- Documentation of the process and outcome of outdoor activities in digital print format are displayed within classrooms and children's Journey Books
- Written observations of the children are carried out and shared with parents
- Evaluation is recorded, and plans made, for the following week to further the children's interests in learning and exploration

Reviewed on: October 2019

Signed on behalf of the Nursery School:


Next Review Date: October 2020