



Outdoor Play

June 2020

At YMCA Childcare 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.

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The outdoor areas, both within the childcare 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.

We obtain parental permission before any child leaves the childcare setting 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

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





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times. A trained paediatric first aider will be present when away from the main setting.

Objectives

- To enjoy outdoor activity throughout the seasons.
- To investigate and experiment with a variety of natural resources.
- To make discoveries using senses.
- To use language to describe, explain, predict, ask questions and develop ideas.
- To develop an appreciation of natural beauty and sense of wonder.
- To care for personal safety.
- To care for the environment of the garden, and create an awareness of wider issues.
- To provide meaningful activities in the outdoor environment.
- To encourage children to contribute to the maintenance of the garden (planting, watering, mulching, weeding, composting).
- To respect the need for tranquillity, solitude and spiritually.
- To model caring for the living things that share the outdoor environment.

This policy was adopted on:	Signed on behalf of YMCA Childcare:	Date for review:
18.06.2020	A.Spence	17.06.2021

