



EYFS Outdoor Play Policy

We are committed to safeguarding and ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all pupils in accordance with safeguarding procedures and guidance for staff outlined in the schools' Health and Safety, Child Protection, Security and Safeguarding policies.

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Document Information

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1.Aims

At The Trust Oak Partnership, we recognise outdoor play as an essential and integral part of the EYFS curriculum.

We aim to:

- Support children’s intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development through outdoor learning.
- Provide children with a stimulating environment rich in language and physical activity.
- Foster curiosity, creativity, exploration, and engagement with the natural world.
- Promote a healthy, active lifestyle.

2.Legislation and Statutory Responsibilities

This policy is underpinned by the following statutory documents and guidance:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE)
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Equality Act 2010
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004

3.Roles and Responsibilities

- The Early Years Strategic Lead is responsible for coordinating outdoor provision, supporting planning promoting high-quality practice.
- EYFS staff are responsible for supervising children, planning purposeful outdoor activities, completing risk assessments, and ensuring children’s safety and wellbeing. • All staff must contribute to the ongoing evaluation and enhancement of the outdoor environment.
- Parents and volunteers may support but must never be left in sole charge of children.

4.Equal Opportunities

We are committed to ensuring equality of access and inclusion in outdoor play:

- All children, regardless of gender, ability, cultural background or additional needs, are given equal access to outdoor learning opportunities.
- Differentiated resources and adult support ensure every child can participate safely and meaningfully.

5.The Outdoor Environment

The Trust Oak Partnership provides a well-resourced and structured outdoor area that supports holistic development. Features include:

- Large physical play apparatus (e.g., climbing equipment, tricycles)
- Creative and sensory play areas (e.g., sand, water, messy play)
- Natural resources (e.g., leaves, sticks, soil)
- Literacy and numeracy resources for outdoor mark-making and games
- Role play and small world resources
- Secure perimeter fencing for safety

8.Planning for Outdoor Play

Planning outdoor provision must:

- Reflect children's interests and the EYFS areas of learning
- Include opportunities for solitary, parallel, and cooperative play
- Promote the acquisition of new skills, knowledge, and positive attitudes
- Ensure appropriate deployment of staff and use of resources
- Include adjustments to meet the needs of all learners
- Be flexible to allow for spontaneous exploration

9.Learning Opportunities Outdoors

Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Exposure to diverse environmental sounds Opportunities for storytelling, singing, and performance
- Enhancement of muscle control for speech and handwriting development

Physical Development

- Space for vigorous movement, climbing, balancing, and coordination
- Understanding personal health and safety
- Use of tools and equipment in real-life contexts

Personal, Social, and Emotional Development

- Fosters independence, risk assessment, and resilience
- Provides shared experiences to develop empathy, turn-taking, and negotiation
- Builds self-esteem and responsibility through nature care and challenge Specific Areas

Literacy

- Access to books, storytelling props, and outdoor mark-making tools
- Use of phonics and visual displays to support early reading

Mathematics

- Use of natural materials for sorting, counting, and pattern-making
- Practical applications of number and measurement concepts

Understanding the World

- First-hand exploration of living things, weather, and seasonal change
- Development of geographical and technological awareness
- Observing growth cycles and changes in the natural environment

Expressive Arts and Design

- Opportunities for imaginative role play, movement, and music
- Use of natural and open-ended materials for art and construction
- Development of design thinking and critical exploration

10 .Safety Procedures

- Daily risk assessments conducted by staff before outdoor access
- Staff vigilance and appropriate adult-to-child ratios at all times
- Safe and orderly storage of resources
- Suitable clothing for weather conditions, including sun hats and sun cream in summer
- Prohibition of hot drinks unless risk-assessed
- Staff mobility across the space to ensure constant supervision
- First aid incidents dealt with promptly, documented, and communicated to parents
- Teaching children to manage equipment and assess personal limits safely

11.Observation and Assessment

Outdoor observations contribute to building a holistic understanding of each child's development. • Practitioners assess children's abilities, interests, and progress through active observation

- Observations inform planning and support individualised learning
- Documentation of learning outdoors is used to track development in line with EYFS goals