

## Outdoor Policy

All children at summertime will be given opportunities to access the outdoor environment through offering children the chance to make their own choices of whether they would like to play indoors or out.

Children take part in experiences such as growing and planting, entering the wide world of sensory and tactile materials. We have a natural area with a mud kitchen where they can hunt for hunt minibeast and enjoy exploring the garden, playing in the sand, smelling and feeling the textures around them, and making mud pies

Babies access the outdoors during the morning and afternoon sessions and are encouraged to sleep outside in the evacuation cots during good weather. with the older preschool children.

**We will endeavour to provide and encourage all children by providing:**

- Knowledgeable and enthusiastic adults, who are crucial to unlocking the potential of outdoors
- Rich environments that are full of stimulating and challenging experiences where children can take risks while learning to be safe.
- An area that is dynamic, flexible and versatile where the child has the freedom to make their own choices, and develop harmonious relationships with others, through negotiation, taking turns and cooperation.
- Opportunities to promote a sense of confidence and well being, support and develop healthy and active lifestyles.
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We will try to keep your child clean BUT this is not always possible even if they are wearing waterproofs/aprons so please only dress them in clothing you are happy for them to play in. During extreme wet weather children can play in the covered outside area so they still get fresh air but not saturated.

### Staffing outside

Staff will be deployed around the garden when the children are outside. A member of staff should also be based at the water tray/paddling pool.

Staff will be responsible for ensuring the safety of **all** the children within the setting and will need to be extra vigilant when outside and ensure that other staff are aware if they need to go inside for anything. This is to ensure that ratios can be maintained, and staff and children are safeguarded.

**Risk assessments** are ongoing ensuring the main gates are always shut so that children cannot open them. The area is constantly checked for rubbish or dangerous toys/equipment. Risk of harm on climbing frames etc is minimised by ensuring that there is adequate supervision, correct positioning of the equipment and some 'rules' set by adults that are appropriate for the individual child's level of understanding.

**Risky play?** At Summertime we believe there is a huge difference between putting a child at risk and allowing a child to take risks. Within the structure of health and safety, we must always remember that risk-taking is a very important part of a child's development. There is always a risk that some children will fall, however it is important that children are able to expand their skills, as they risk climbing higher, reaching further or balancing for longer. Children will also learn how to fall, how to pick themselves up and start over again. Equally importantly, they will begin to understand the consequence of taking risks beyond their current ability.

Cathy White  
Manager  
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