

Twyford Playgroup EY484175
Outdoor Play Policy

Date Ratified: September 2026

Date Reviewed: Annually

Manager Signature: Rachel Knott

Chair of Committee Signature: Pamela Lawrence

Review Date: September 2027

Outdoor play is essential for the healthy growth and development of children. Children at Twyford Playgroup can access the gardens daily throughout the year through free- flow continuous provision. Outdoor play is an integral part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS January 2024) Curriculum. It enhances the child's learning in all areas of development.

Aims

- All areas of our curriculum are planned and delivered indoors and outdoors, accessible in all weathers.
- We aim to provide all children with a wide range of opportunities for outdoor play which promotes the development of confidence, co-ordination, wellbeing and strength.
- We endeavour to create an atmosphere where children can learn to take risks in a safe and secure environment.
- All children will have the opportunity to learn about their environment and be able to observe and experiment with natural resources, creating a sense of wonder about the world around them and learn about looking after themselves, others and taking care of the environment.

Objectives

- To provide a safe and supportive outdoor environment which provides challenges, stimulation and enjoyment.
- To promote social skills such as sharing, turn taking, decision making and co-operation.
- To provide learning experiences outdoors that build on children's interests and their stage of development.
- Resources and learning experiences will be suitable for children's stage of development and accessible to every child building on what they can do and providing challenge.
- Practitioners will use their knowledge of the children, observation and assessment to plan learning experiences, which supports development in all areas of the EYFS.

Procedures

- Staff will ensure that the garden is secure and checked daily following the risk assessment for safety, cleanliness and hazards. Hazards will be reported.
- Staff will ensure that child ratios are met and staff will move indoors and outdoors dependent on need.
- Staff will ensure that all children are appropriately dressed for the weather (e.g. sun hats, coats, waterproofs). Children are encouraged to develop their self-help and independence through this.
- Outdoor play equipment will be monitored for safety and removed if unsafe.
- Sun cream should be applied by parents for those children attending sessions. Where a child attends all day sun cream will be applied to children with permission from parents.
- Drinking water will always be available to children. In colder weather this is kept inside.

The benefits of outdoor play

- enhanced immunity
- enhanced bone density and Vitamin D levels
- reduced myopia
- improved concentration and attention
- better mental wellbeing
- improved sleep
- improved co-ordination and physicality
- opportunities to master skills not feasible indoors
- improved energy and enhanced opportunities for movement
- reduction in cases of obesity, diabetes etc.
- enhanced interpersonal skills and negotiation
- build strong attachments to places and people
- gain a moral understanding and awe of the importance of nature
- gain a symbolic inspiration from the world around for imaginative and creative exploration and learning
- chances to make sense of and learn more about many concepts which underpin learning for life such as gravity, speed, gradient, life, death, reproduction and excretion

(Kathryn Solly, January 2019)

The role of the adult

- to model, observe, provide, facilitate, interact, intervene and evaluate
- to identify the potential learning possibilities of experiences and develop these through enhancements and interaction
- to ensure that storage and provision is arranged so that children can access equipment and set up activities themselves developing their independence
- enhance learning to raise the quality of play and to support development in all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage including the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning
- to provide opportunities for challenge, stimulation, risk taking and progression
- to identify any health and safety concerns and take appropriate action