

Cornhill Nursery ~



Outdoor Play Risk Benefit Policy

At Cornhill Nursery we aim to provide a safe and stimulating outdoor environment, which allows children to develop their physical skills, explore a range of natural materials and experience their immediate world with hands-on experience.

We offer activities to develop skills and confidence across the whole curriculum. Our emphasis is to ensure that the children are actively involved in physical activities as this benefits the children to become healthier, happier and more physically competent when playing outdoors.

Outdoor Play considers the provision of opportunities for children to connect to different skills, ideas, knowledge and materials which promote social learning, creativity and allows children to develop their problem-solving skills. Young children are naturally curious and want to make sense of their world. Therefore, to assist in this and their well-being, it is necessary to encourage involvement and exploration through high quality play in the outdoor environment.

Through Outdoor Play, children are:

- Learning
- Creating
- Being Healthy
- Developing Social Skills
- Enhancing their Wellbeing
- Becoming Independent
- Exploring

"Let nature be your teacher."

(William Wordsworth)

Risk Benefits to Outdoor Play

On a daily basis, the children are involved in risk assessing the garden area before free flow to the outside begins. The awareness of recognising risks should continue throughout the duration of their time outdoors.

All children at Cornhill are encouraged to learn through the awareness of risky play and the risk benefits it brings. It is essential that children are allowed the freedom (under supervision) to self-assess their own limits and capabilities. Risks allow children to push themselves to the limits of their capabilities and allows them space to progress. It enables and encourages children to explore their surroundings naturally through movement, and it provides opportunities for the freedom of risk whereby children can play and interact freely using their initiative and imagination.

Children have the opportunity to be in control of their actions, while learning and playing. They learn boundaries in a safe, secure environment where they can be supported directly or indirectly by practitioners. At Cornhill Nursery children are allowed to take risks under the close supervision of staff. Staff make sure all possible steps are taken to prevent accidents.

- Any accidents that may occur are recorded following the accident procedures.
- Children should be supervised at all times with the correct adult to child ratio 1:10.
- At least one adult should have an overview of the whole outside area

Health & Safety

The nursery is committed to providing a safe and secure outdoor space. The safety of the children is paramount and it is essential for each child's wellbeing. Staff must check the outdoor area before the start of the session, for litter and any other debris.

- N1/2 staff will ensure the padlock on their gate is opened and that the garden is checked before children enter it.

N3 staff must ensure their gates are closed at all times.

- At the start of each morning session, a member of staff will be responsible for outdoor Health and Safety checks of equipment/resources etc which must be completed before children enter the garden.

- Staff and children will use a picture board on the outside door, which displays the registration picture cards of those who are outside, so adults are aware of how many children are present at any one time.
- Children will be encouraged to place their picture cards on the board and remove them as appropriate.
- Adults will supervise children at all times in all areas of the garden, particularly when children are using the climbing frame/climbing on pallets. Staff will supervise and encourage the children to explore and further develop their large motor skills, meanwhile developing strategies for risk benefit play.
- When returning in from the garden areas, staff will do a headcount using the picture register on the door and will check the outdoor area again before the door is closed.
- The adult will ultimately be responsible for tidying the garden, but will encourage all children to help tidy up too and develop respect for their outdoor space.
- At the end of the day the area must be cleared of resources and the resources stored appropriately.

Weather

As a nursery we are committed to ensuring that all children are kept safe from the risks of sun and understand the damage sunburn can have to a child later in life. Staff will ensure that outdoor play will be limited in extreme hot weather (between 11 am – 2pm) to ensure children are not exposed to the sun at its hottest. Wearing of sun hats will be encouraged. Staff must provide shaded areas during the hottest part of the day and provide plenty of fresh water for children and encourage them to drink. This also applies to staff and adults.

Parents will be asked to provide a labelled/named bottle of sun cream for their child. Nursery will provide sun cream if needed, however it should be noted that this will only happen if consent from parents has previously been given during completion of the care plan, in case of allergic reactions.

We ask parents to support our policy by sending children to nursery already prepared, with sun cream applied in advance. Nursery staff will apply if necessary and reapply in the case of full time nursery sessions.

Clothing

At Cornhill we aim to go outside in all weathers, every day. Parents/Carers should dress their child appropriately to ensure they have the best experience and can take part fully in all activities. All parents will be asked to provide suitable clothing for all weathers which would include sun hats, winter hats, gloves and a waterproof jacket and trousers which can be kept in your child's tray.

It is essential for all children in the nursery to have named wellington boots which can be left at nursery all year in your child's tray/ welly stand or under their peg.

Staff are also encouraged to wear suitable and protective clothing and to lead and participate in a range of outdoor activities, in all weathers. (We have a small amount of waterproof trousers which can be loaned if required).



"At the end of the day,
your feet should be dirty,
your hair messy and your
eyes sparkling".
(Shanti)

Stimulating Outdoor Play

The children should have free choice and be able to access the resources independently. Resources should be added to and changed in line with children's interests and should be age/stage appropriate. Staff should interact with children when children invite them in to their play.

Outdoor Snacks

Children will have the opportunity to make and eat snacks outdoors from time to time. Guidelines from our Indoor Snack policy will be adhered to, ensuring that Health & Safety and Food Hygiene is never compromised.

A reminder for adults:

- Risk assess the areas used daily
- Ensure Health & Safety procedures and policies are being followed
- Make sure all children are being protected in all weathers
- Ensure equipment is safe and age and stage appropriate
- Join in when invited into children's play
- Be enthusiastic about being outside
- Plan fun and exciting play experiences
- Make sure all children are included and can take part
- Develop activities to the needs of the child and their next steps
- Wear appropriate clothing for outdoor learning
- Ensure ratios are maintained
- Being actively involved in the child's outdoor experiences, the staff have a chance to ensure the children in their care have happy, worthwhile and meaningful experiences while developing their skills and having fun together.

Equipment and Resources

- Ensure that all loose part resources are safe for the children to use and dispose of any that are broken.

- Teach children to respect the equipment and resources and tidy them away at the end of their play session.
- Provide equipment and resources made of natural and recycled material.
- Have resources well labelled so it is easier for children to find/tidy resources.
- Supervise water areas/ check mud and sand regularly for any unwanted objects.
- All garden resources should be cleaned daily (Mud Kitchen)
- Empty the outside bin on a regular basis/ take indoors for cleaners to take away unwanted rubbish.
- Put all resources away in the container (N1/2) or shelter (N3) at the end of the day including bikes, scooters, etc.
- Close all gates after each session in the garden if you are the last one out, and put the padlock on the gate at the end of the day.
- Tidy up the garden but encourage all children to help tidy up and develop respect for their outdoor space. (Ensure boxes are labelled to help children tidy where possible).

General points to remember

- Involve children in all aspects when developing an area of the garden, using children's voice and mind maps.
- Involve children in risk benefits so they understand the safety rules and display these where appropriate.

- Ensure the outdoor environment is as numeracy and literacy rich as the indoor classroom.
- Involve the community and parents to source Loose Parts etc
- Make sure resources are regularly washed and kept clean.
- Ensure that a variety of multicultural resources for all families attending the setting.

Most of all, have fun outdoors!

Policy Written May 2020

Reviewed