



EYFS OUTDOOR LEARNING POLICY

September 2026

Policy review date: September 2027
Signed by the Chair of Governors _____

Signed by the Headteacher _____

Outdoor Learning Policy

Rationale

There must be access to an outdoor area and that outdoor activities must be planned on a daily basis. A well-planned learning environment, indoors and outside, is an important part of pedagogy (Development Matters, 2021)

- Being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development.
- Being outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.
- It gives children first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world.
- Outdoor environments offer children freedom to explore, use their senses, and be physically active and exuberant (EYFS).

Aims

To enable children to experience the outdoor environment we will ensure it is a continuation of the indoor environment with continuous provision available for all children in the setting including those with special needs.

The outdoor environment will be made available throughout the whole session providing a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led experiences.

EYFS Lead responsibilities

- Ensure more than one staff member is Paediatric First Aid trained and that there is always a PFA trained member of staff on-site. A list of PFA trained staff will be displayed.
- Ensure staff are aware of any associated conditions of any allergies or illnesses, e.g. asthma
- Communicate to staff on measures to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction (allergy avoidance)
- Ensure there is always a first aid box accessible
- Fire exits and doors are free from obstruction
- Ensure there are suitable staff ratios outside
- Maintain secure boundaries
- Communicate with staff how the outdoor area should be planned for
- Regularly evaluate with staff how the quality of learning outside maximises the impact of the achievement, personal development and wellbeing of the child (Ofsted recommendation).
- Audit and purchase resources for outdoor learning

Outdoor Learning Policy

Staff responsibilities

- Staff will ensure they are ever watchful, even if they are engrossed in an activity with a group of children
- Ensure access gates remain closed and locked as appropriate.
- Maintain the correct staff to child ratios
- Ensure children are always safe and ensure consistent rules for behaviour are adhered to
- Model appropriate behaviour outside
- Communicate with other staff if you need to suddenly leave the area you are in e.g. assisting with individual needs (first aid, toilet, clothing etc).
- Ensure children are always wearing shoes
- Make sure any food or drink is covered.
- Ensure current paediatric first aid remains in date and update every three years.
- The key person must ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs (in accordance with paragraph 1.16), to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parents.
- Plan for the outdoor area
- The role of the adult outside should be much the same as the role of the adult inside; to scaffold learning, observe and record
- Children should be encouraged to make their own choices and lead their own learning with appropriate support from an understanding adult
- Through observation, staff should have a deep understanding of how individual children learn best, their interests and personal motivations and are therefore able to offer appropriate individualised support to them
- All staff are responsible for setting up and clearing away equipment
- Staff should be enthusiastic about the outdoors and understand the importance of outdoor learning. Staff need to display qualities that we would like young children to develop such as enquiry, motivation, willingness to try and a positive attitude.

Health and Safety

At St. Anne's we ensure that children have access to outdoor learning every day, all year round. A daily health and safety check of all outdoor learning areas and equipment is carried out before taking the children out and any hazards are removed. We ensure that children wear coats, hats, gloves etc

Outdoor Learning Policy

in the winter and sun hats and sun cream during the summer period (Parent/Carer's responsibility to send to school).

"Physically the area has to be safe but still allow risk and challenge. Safeness is about enabling things to happen, not shutting down opportunities". (Learning outdoors in the early years - A Resource Book)

All staff will regularly discuss with our children about safety, taking risks and achieving goals and challenges in the outdoor environment.

Allergies and the Outdoor Environment.

Parents are required to keep school fully informed of any allergies known to their child or known allergens within the environment that may affect their child. This must include symptoms of reactions, treatment and response. School will act in accordance with medical and health advice around this information, ensuring that a child's access to learning within the outdoor environment remains risk assessed, safe and accessible - wherever necessary.

Outings

Children must be kept safe while on outings. The following must be considered:

- A risk assessment must be provided, hazards identified, steps taken to remove and minimise the risks and hazards.
- Where school considers it necessary for the safety of a child and others, individual risk assessments will be carried out for children in full consultation with their parents. If a child requires an individual risk assessment for an outing, due to SEND or medical needs, the SENDCO will also contribute and meet with parents and the EYFS Leader. If external health practitioners need to inform the risk assessment, this will be arranged by the SENDCO.
- Ratios must be considered and adhered to at all times.
- Transport and insurance must be in place
- What the intended learning or outcomes of the trip will be must be communicated
- All risk assessments and trip information must be recorded by the class teacher on EVOLVE as per school procedure.

Outdoor Learning Policy

Equality of opportunity

At St. Anne's we ensure that equality of opportunity outside is covered by the following:

- Ensure that all children have the ability or support to play and explore in the outdoor area.
- Monitor how children use the outdoor area.
- Provide opportunities suitable for all genders to ensure enjoyment and enthusiasm for all children.
- We will adapt the facilities and learning opportunities whenever possible, to enable all children to use them.
- We aim for our outdoor spaces to be accessible for wheelchair users.

Links with other Policies

- Medicine and Illness Policy
- Sun Safety Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- EYFS Policy
- SEND Policy

Please see below for further information, initiatives and projects:

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment - <https://www.ltl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/25-year-environment-plan.pdf>

Learning outside the classroom (Ofsted) - <https://www.ltl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ofsted-learning-outside-the-classroom.pdf>

Natural Connections Demonstration Project, 2012- 2016: Final Report: <https://www.ltl.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/necr215 edition 1.pdf>

Signed Headteacher _____

Chair of Governors _____

Date _____

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