



Policy for Learning in the Early Years Outdoor Area

At Awbridge School our aim is to provide a rich and varied environment both indoors and outdoors that supports children's learning and development. This outdoor environment will give the children the confidence to explore and learn in a secure and safe, yet challenging space. All areas of learning will be available outdoors and children will have free flow access to the outdoor environment at all times. The outdoor environment will be checked regularly to ensure there are no hazards or security risks. An up to date risk assessment will be carried out annually.

We recognise that:

- Learning outdoors has a positive effect on children's sense of well-being and helps all aspects of children's development.
- Learning outdoors offers opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors.
- Learning outdoors enables children to experience first hand changes in the weather, seasons and the natural world.
- Some children prefer to learn outside rather than inside.

We will ensure that:

- The area is stimulating and welcoming, reflecting all areas of learning and specific interests of the children.
- All practitioners recognise the importance of outdoor learning and participate regularly in activities both indoors and outdoors.
- All practitioners are involved in planning and resourcing the outdoor environment with the EY Teacher taking the lead in this area.
- Children opportunities to develop their gross motor skills through large construction, balancing equipment, bikes and scooters, large scale art work and imaginative play.
- Practitioners understand the importance of engaging the children in stimulating learning experiences, interacting with the children and encouraging the use of language to extend their understanding. Children will be encouraged to communicate with one another and with the adults in the setting at all times.

- Practitioners encourage children to ask questions and find answers through first hand learning experiences. Through sensitive questioning the children will be encouraged to think deeply and to extend their learning.
- Activities will be a balance of adult- led and child initiated learning.
- Adults model good language skills and encourage children to participate in role play activities and scenarios which will stimulate and excite their imagination. Adults may need to play a particular role in order to encourage less confident children to become involved.
- All children are encouraged to show respect towards one another by sharing, taking turns, using language such as “please” and “thank you” and showing consideration towards others.
- The children are encouraged to be independent learners, following their own interests, accessing their own resources and helping to tidy the environment at the end of each session.

Adults and children will ensure that at the end of each day:

- All the equipment is placed in the correct boxes
- The floor is free of toys, chinks, etc.
- All resources are returned to the sheds
- The sheds are securely locked
- The floor is swept and the area is left tidy for the next day

Mark Ward
Head of School

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