

Outdoors and Sun Safety Policies and Procedures

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement; Safety and Suitability of Premises, Environment and Equipment:

Providers must provide access to an outdoor play area

Policy Statement

Parkfield Montessori Pre-school values outdoor play and learning as an intrinsic part of the curriculum. By ensuring that outdoor play and learning is an integral part of the preschool routine we seek to encourage a positive attitude to physical activity and to being outdoors, and enrich the child's understanding of, and respect for, the natural world. Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to face challenges and to take safe "risks". Such opportunities are an integral and essential part of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

We aim to provide a safe, stimulating outdoor environment where space is used effectively to enable children to explore a broad and balanced curriculum using a range of interesting resources suitable to their individual needs. As part of our Montessori ethos, we look upon the "outdoor classroom" as an integral part of the learning experience that we offer. We ensure that the children have use of the outdoors as a context for learning throughout the year and that opportunities provided outdoors cover all areas of the EYFS curriculum.

Policy

The outdoor area is resourced and available for the children to access on a daily basis.

We aim to offer free-flow (whereby children are able to choose to play and work either indoors or outdoors) each day.

As is the case with indoor activities, time spent outdoors includes free play, independent choice, and adult-led or adult-directed activities.

The outdoor environment is an extension of the indoor classroom. Staff interact with children, provide learning experiences (both planned and unplanned) and make observations to inform future planning and progress in EYFS when working outdoors with children.

Unless the weather conditions are unusually extreme, all children will spend some time outdoors at every session. Therefore, parents are asked to provide children with suitable outdoor clothing for the weather. This includes, but is not restricted to:

- Waterproof coat
- Hat and gloves
- Shoes that are suitable and appropriate for climbing and for active outdoor play
- Wellies
- Sun cream and a sun hat
- All-in-one waterproof

We believe that access to the outdoors is beneficial to the health and wellbeing of young children. As such we will not restrict a child's choice to play and learn outdoors. Children who are not well enough to go outdoors (and are, therefore, not well enough to fully participate in the daily routine of the setting) should be kept at home until fully recovered.

Safety & Supervision

Safety is a prime consideration when playing outdoors. The following procedures are applied to outdoor play:

- All outdoor areas are thoroughly checked daily as part of the Daily Risk Assessment. Any identified problems are either dealt with there and then or reported to the senior staff member on duty who will put measures in place to ensure the safety of the children until the problem can be rectified.
- Children are always supervised when using the outdoor area.
- The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) states that: *3.28 Children must always be within sight or hearing of staff.* When the outdoor area is being used for free flow (i.e. To allow children to flow freely between indoors and outdoors), staffing ratios must be maintained. This area may be supervised by one member of staff with up to 8 children provided the door to the classroom always remains open. If more than 8 children choose to go outside at any one time, then an additional member of staff per 8 children must go outside. If the setting has 2 year old's present this number drops to 4 children per adult.
- All staff members participate in the supervision of children during outside play.
- If, when supervising outdoor play, a staff member needs to go indoors, they must make another member of staff aware that they are going indoors.
- If, when supervising outdoor play, a staff member needs to take a child indoors (e.g. to the toilet or for first aid), they must inform another member of staff that they are going indoors and that they are taking a child with them. If the member of staff taking the child indoors is the only staff member indoors, then another member of

staff watches through the window to safeguard both child and adult. (*See Nappy Changing and Intimate Care Policy*)

- Children play at their own level on the play equipment.
- Staff closely supervise children who are climbing and using the slide and assist if a child gets into difficulty. Children are regularly reminded of the safety rules for using the climbing frame and slide.

Sun Safety

At Parkfield Montessori Pre-school we understand that young skin is delicate and very easily damaged by the sun and that this damage may develop into skin cancer in later life. All children, no matter whether they can tan easily or not, should be protected from the sun, and sun cream should be applied generously and regularly as it can easily be washed, rubbed or sweated off.

At the start of each summer term parents are reminded by newsletter to:

- Bring in a sun hat for their child
- Bring in a bottle of sun cream that is clearly labelled with their child's name using a stick-on label. (Permanent marker rubs off the bottle when it comes into contact with sun cream).
- Apply sun cream to their child before bringing them to preschool.
- Permission for staff to apply sun cream is sought at registration with parents/carers signing permission slips.

For those children who stay for the whole day, staff will re-apply sun cream after lunch.

Staff will also reapply sun cream when

- children have been playing with water
- a child changes or removes clothing (e.g. removes a cardigan) thus exposing skin that was previously covered
- it is noticed that, despite having had sun cream applied earlier, a child's skin is beginning to look red.

When applying sun cream to children staff will only apply to exposed skin.

We expect that parents will supply a bottle of sun cream for their child. However, a bottle of sun cream supplied by the setting will be kept on the premises during hot weather for use in 'emergencies', for example if a child's own supply of sun cream has run out. Unless we have been informed of any allergy or of any other reason why particular brands of sun cream

should not be applied to a child, we consider that the risk of allergic reaction is minimal compared to the risk of sun burn. Therefore, unless we have been instructed not to, we will, if necessary, apply sun cream supplied by the setting to a child rather than risk exposing them to the sun unprotected.

As well as ensuring that all children are well-protected with sun cream, Parkfield Montessori Pre-school seeks to protect children from the sun by:

- being vigilant about ensuring that children wear sun hats outdoors in hot weather
- providing shaded areas for children to play in hot weather, either by using naturally occurring shade or by erecting covers or gazebos to provide shade
- encouraging children to play in the shade in hot weather
- ensuring that children drink lots of water in hot weather by regularly bringing the group together for 'drink breaks' when playing outdoors
- educating the children about sun safety, including the importance of using sun cream, the importance of drinking lots of water, the importance of wearing a sun hat, covering up with a T-shirt and the benefits of playing in the shade

Further Guidance

<https://www.hct.nhs.uk/media/1921/staying-safe-in-the-sun.pdf>

This policy is reviewed annually, or as deemed necessary.

Policy reviewed and updated.....(date)

Signed.....