

Outdoor Play Policy (Updated EYFS September 2025)

Policy Statement:

At Butterflies Nursery, we recognise the importance of **outdoor play** in promoting children's **physical, cognitive, and social development**. This policy outlines our approach to providing **safe, enriching, and engaging outdoor play experiences** that align with EYFS 2025 guidance.

Importance of Outdoor Play:

- Outdoor play provides children with opportunities for **exploration, physical activity, creativity, and connection with nature**.
- Engaging in **active play outdoors** supports **gross motor skills, problem-solving abilities, and social interactions**.
- We ensure that outdoor play is **inclusive, accessible, and developmentally appropriate** for all children.

Outdoor Play Environments:

- Our **outdoor play areas** are designed to be **safe, stimulating, and age-appropriate**.
- Outdoor equipment and materials are **regularly inspected, cleaned, and maintained** to ensure **safety and hygiene**.
- Natural elements such as **plants, sand, water, and logs** are included to support **sensory exploration and imaginative play**.

Weather Considerations:

- Outdoor play will be **accessible in all seasons**, except in cases of **extreme weather conditions** that pose a safety risk.
- Children will be dressed **appropriately for the weather**, including **waterproof clothing, sun hats, or warm layers** as needed.
- Sunscreen will be applied as necessary, following **parents' preferences and health guidelines**.

Supervision:

- **Active supervision** will be provided by staff members to ensure **children's safety and engagement**.
- Staff-to-child ratios will be maintained in accordance with **EYFS regulations** to ensure appropriate support.
- Supervision will encourage **independent exploration** while ensuring **risk management and safeguarding**.

Risk and Challenge:

- We provide opportunities for **manageable risk and challenge** to **foster resilience, confidence, and problem-solving skills**.
- Children are encouraged to **assess and navigate risk safely**, with childminders guiding them in **decision-making**.
- Risk assessments are conducted **regularly** to balance **safety and developmentally appropriate challenges**.

Sun Safety:

- Sun safety is a priority, and we will:
 - Apply **parent-approved sunscreen** when necessary.
 - Encourage children to wear **hats and protective clothing**.
 - Provide **shaded areas** for rest and cooling down.
- Parents will be informed about our **sun protection policy** and are encouraged to provide **sun-safe clothing**.

Outdoor Play Curriculum:

- Outdoor play is **integrated into the curriculum**, providing **structured and free-play opportunities**.
- Activities include:
 - **Nature exploration** (bug hunts, gardening, water play).
 - **Physical development** (climbing, balancing, running).
 - **Creative play** (role-playing, storytelling, music).

Outdoor Play Schedule:

- Children will have **regular, scheduled outdoor play** sessions to promote **physical activity and well-being**.
- Outdoor time will be **adapted** to suit children's **ages, preferences, and developmental needs**.

Nature Connection:

- We will incorporate **nature-based learning** into outdoor play, helping children:
 - Understand the **environment and sustainability**.
 - Develop an **appreciation for wildlife and plants**.
 - Engage in **gardening and outdoor creative activities**.

Outdoor Safety:

- Regular **safety assessments** of the outdoor play area will be conducted, with **hazards promptly addressed**.
- Emergency procedures, including **first aid, incident reporting, and evacuation plans**, will be in place for outdoor activities.
- Children will be taught **outdoor safety rules**, such as safe climbing, road awareness, and respecting boundaries.

Communication with Parents:

- Parents will be informed about our **outdoor play policy** and **planned outdoor activities**.
- Any **concerns, allergies, or medical conditions** affecting outdoor play will be discussed with parents.
- Parents are encouraged to provide **weather-appropriate clothing and footwear** for outdoor activities.

Alignment with EYFS 2025 Changes:

- This policy aligns with **EYFS 2025**, which places an **increased emphasis on outdoor learning and nature-based activities**.
- The policy supports **EYFS objectives for physical development, problem-solving, and emotional well-being** through outdoor experiences.
- Our approach reflects the **EYFS focus on child-led exploration**, allowing children to develop **independence, risk awareness, and resilience** in a safe outdoor setting.
- The inclusion of **sustainability, environmental awareness, and outdoor STEM activities** aligns with **EYFS 2025's educational goals**.

Review and Monitoring:

- This policy will be reviewed **annually or more frequently if required**, ensuring compliance with **EYFS updates and local authority guidelines**.
- We welcome **feedback from parents, staff, and external agencies** to continuously improve our **outdoor play provision**.

Signed: Chrissie Day

Date: 2nd July, 2025