

Bizzie Lizzies Nursery and Pre School.

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Pre school Ofsted URN – 2549120
RP number - 906327

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Outdoor Play

Early Years Outdoor Play Policy

Introduction

At Bizzie Lizzies we recognise the vital role outdoor play has in children's development, learning, and wellbeing. Outdoor play is an integral part of our daily routine and curriculum. Our large outdoor area provides a safe, stimulating, and varied environment where children of all ages—from babies to pre-schoolers—can explore, experiment, and thrive.

This policy outlines our approach to ensuring that outdoor play is accessible, safe, and beneficial for all children.

Outdoor Play Commitment

- Every child in our care will spend **a minimum of one hour outdoors daily**, unless weather conditions are extreme (e.g., severe storms, high winds, ice, or extreme temperatures that compromise safety).
- Outdoor learning is valued equally to indoor learning, with staff planning opportunities to enhance children's holistic development through outdoor experiences.

Safety and Supervision

We are committed to ensuring children's safety during outdoor play through the following measures:

- **Risk Assessments:** The outdoor area, equipment, and resources are **risk assessed daily** by staff. Any hazards are removed, reported, or made safe before use.

- **Sun Safety:** Children will be supported to wear sun hats, appropriate clothing, and sunscreen provided by parents or the setting. Shade is always available.
 - **Cold and Wet Weather:** Children are expected to have suitable outdoor clothing (coats, hats, gloves, waterproofs, wellies). The setting keeps spare items to ensure no child is excluded.
 - **Safe Environment:** Staff check surfaces, equipment, and play areas to ensure they are suitable for use and remain alert to risks during play.
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Risk and Challenge in Play

We believe that appropriate risk-taking is an essential part of children's learning and development:

- Children are encouraged to **self risk-assess** under staff guidance, learning to identify dangers and make safe decisions.
 - Physical challenges (e.g., climbing, balancing, jumping) are encouraged to develop **gross motor skills, resilience, confidence, and problem-solving abilities**.
 - Staff balance supervision with freedom, allowing children to test their abilities within a safe framework.
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Benefits of Outdoor Play

Outdoor play offers unique and invaluable benefits for children's learning and wellbeing:

Babies

- Opportunities for fresh air, sensory exploration, and developing early physical skills such as rolling, crawling, and cruising.
- Visual and auditory stimulation from natural sounds, textures, and changing environments.

Toddlers

- Developing coordination, balance, and strength through climbing, running, and riding equipment.
- Opportunities for imaginative play and early social interactions in larger spaces.
- Language development through shared experiences and conversations.

Pre-school Children

- Enhancing problem-solving and critical thinking through open-ended play.
- Building resilience, confidence, and independence through exploration and challenge.
- Supporting social skills, teamwork, and negotiation in group play.

For All Ages

- Promoting physical health, well-being, and connection with nature.
 - Supporting mental health by reducing stress and increasing happiness through outdoor activity.
 - Providing varied sensory experiences that enhance cognitive and emotional development.
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Outdoor Environment

Our large outdoor area is divided into a variety of spaces, each offering unique opportunities for play, challenge, and learning:

- **Active Play Zones:** climbing equipment, bikes, balancing structures to support gross motor development.
- **Quiet/Reflective Areas:** shaded spots, seating, and sensory gardens for calm play and rest.
- **Creative Spaces:** opportunities for role play, construction, mark-making, and messy play.
- **Natural Areas:** mud kitchen, planting beds, and wildlife-friendly zones to foster curiosity about the natural world.

These spaces are carefully designed to ensure a **balance of challenge, creativity, and relaxation**, catering to the needs of all children.

Monitoring and Review

- Staff complete daily risk assessments of the outdoor environment.
 - The outdoor provision is reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet children's needs and supports the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
 - This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if changes in legislation or practice require it.
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