

Nettlesworth Primary School



EYFS Outside Play Policy

Policy Reviewed September 2026
L.Morton

Definition:

For the purposes of this document the School Outdoor Learning Environment comprises all areas which children use outside the school building, and that are conducive to Early Years multi-sensory learning experiences.

Rationale:

Rifkin 1997: 'The younger the child the more child learns through sensory and physical activities; thus the more varied and rich the natural outdoor setting, the greater its contribution to physical, cognitive and emotional development.'

As children increasingly spend leisure time indoors it is important that schools are able to provide outdoor learning, with opportunities for creativity and child initiated activity.

School Vision

1. Set high individual standards in all areas of the curriculum.
2. Have high self-esteem and confidence - respecting themselves and others and celebrating one another's achievements.
3. Develop skills and knowledge to make their own unique contribution to the world and be able to live and work independently and collaboratively.
4. Be flexible, creative and adaptable for life in the modern technological world.
5. Become successful, self-motivated life-long learners, with a positive attitude.
6. Develop skills to form effective relationships.
7. Develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith and scriptures.
8. Seek to extend themselves in mind, body and spirit, developing creativity, imagination and a curiosity and passion for learning.
9. Live a healthy life style and care for the environment.
10. Have happy memories of their time at our school.

We believe that each child will succeed through:

1. A commitment to each child and member of the school community being valued in a nurturing, security and inclusion.
2. A broad, enriched and challenging curriculum that recognises children's different talents and different needs and provides appropriate individual learning experiences.
3. A learning ethos of support, challenge and encouragement.

4. A nurturing atmosphere, with a strong sense of calm, order and purposefulness where each child is valued as an individual.
5. An attractive, stimulating, happy learning environment where learning is fun and effort and achievement are celebrated.
6. A safe and secure place that provides opportunities to work in a spirit of cooperation, partnership and mutual respect.
7. Provision of a rich range of learning resources and extra-curricular activities and visits.
8. Positive learning partnerships between school, home, church and the wider community.

Introduction

At Nettlesworth Primary School we value outdoor play as an intrinsic part of the curriculum. The Curriculum Guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage actively promotes the provision of outdoor play. By ensuring outdoor play is an integral part of the school routine we consciously seek to transmit a positive attitude to the outdoors and enrich the child's understanding of the world around him/her. Active learning experiences outdoors are essential for young children. They give children opportunities to practise their developing skills, to explore their world and make them feel good. It is also important for children's physical, mental and emotional development. We believe that children should begin to take risks and face challenges outdoors.

Nettlesworth Primary School will make provision for young children to be active and interactive, and to improve their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Staff will support their development by helping children to use all their senses to learn about the world in which they live, and to make connections between new information and what they already know.

Children will be supported in developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices about their bodies. Children will grow in confidence and be able to manage risks in their play.

Staff will provide time to support children's understanding of how the effects of exercise, affect our bodies and what we do in response to it. The following guidelines have been developed to ensure a balance of children's safety and children's development. Before and after Nettlesworth Primary School sessions, parents are responsible for the supervision of their children.

Younger Siblings and pupils on outside play equipment before and after school

The School's Insurance provision does not cover unsupervised siblings use of outside equipment (the child has not been taught how to use the equipment safely, or may have incorrect dress). No permission is given to siblings to play on outside equipment. Signs are displayed which inform and remind the parents of this.

Staff Supervision

At all times children will be supervised by qualified staff.

Adults must make health/safety issues a priority when outside and remain vigilant. Staff will interact with children to help develop all areas of Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

Security

An adult will check that the playground gate is closed before the children go out to play. Once session is underway, children are not allowed through the gate. (Adults to collect balls etc.)

Staff will make a judgement on the weather/suitability for climbing.

The Health & Safety group (inc Governor) will include the EYFS outdoor area in their half termly risk assessment walk and then report and respond to any risks identified. Site Manager to make monthly premises checks which include outdoor play equipment. A daily risk assessment check to be completed by staff and records to be kept in file in the EYFS unit. Any actions to be taken to be communicated with all staff and as necessary to the pupils.

Appropriate footwear must be worn

Pupils must wear appropriate footwear that provides good traction between feet and climbing equipment.

If staff feel that footwear is unsuitable they will use their discretion to restrict a child from a particular area of the playground or wooded area.

Appropriate clothing must be worn for outside play

Scarves should be worn inside coats and staff will be vigilant with items of clothing that have hoods (protruding objects).

Gloves removed for climbing.

Sun Hats - notice to parents re: sun safety.

Children are not allowed in the shed.

Shed doors to remain closed with bolt across to prevent access, when children are playing outside.

Sand

Cover removed prior to session and replaced at the end of the day.

Rules about use of sand: Dug out not thrown

Damp down when drying out

Awareness of shade (heat from sand)

Encourage children to keep sand in designated sand area

Children to help tidy the sand pit

Sweep sand around perimeter of sand pit playground after each session

Children will be asked to come out of the sandpit - if play is inappropriate after explanation of safety rules.

Outdoor Water Play Water

aprons to be worn.

Water emptied at the end of each day - at home time to allow water to drain away and dry up.

Staff need to be aware of the inherent danger of water play.

Track

Bikes/scooters kept in 'track' area of playground Adult intervention to reduce speed/risk of collisions.

Discourage bumping

Encourage correct use of bikes

Clothes - laces/pull cords risk of catching in wheels.

Bikes/ Scooters to be lined up against the shed at tidy up time

Staff to remove from use, any bikes that fall into disrepair, notify administration staff.

Planted Areas

Prickles etc. to be removed .Shrubs to be trimmed to make a safe route - around the garden when necessary.

Storage of Outside Play Resources

Small resources are stored in boxes.

Resources that become unsuitable for good quality play will be removed by staff.

Small PE apparatus in boxes in the storage unit.

Construction equipment is stored in the shed.

Gross Motor Skills

Balls and other small equipment to be put out without other toys/equipment being put out in the same area, so that space is available to practice skills.

General Issues

Staff to be vigilant in ensuring all children including those with additional needs are given equal access to outside play.

Policies to refer to:

Health and Safety All curriculum policies.

Risk Assessment

New equipment and changes to the play area will require a risk assessment. All outside play fixed equipment is checked annually and recommendations are implemented. See appendix A for half termly risk assessment.

Nettlesworth Primary

EYFS Risk Assessment Checklist

Term: Aut 1/ Aut 2/ Spr 1/ Spr 2/ Sum 1/ Sum 2 Date:			
Date:	Room	Risks	Actions
Checked By			
Outside classroom			
Gates and fences	Y	Gates closed if not in use/supervised by adult	
Surfaces	Y	Managed by staff daily	
Play equipment, including sand and water tray	Y	Risk assessments carried out. Managed by staff daily form completed	
Water (taps, tray and drains)	Y	Risk assessments carried out. Managed by staff daily	
Out buildings, including contents of (sheds and stage)	Y	Checks carried out. Managed by staff daily	
Plants	Y	Outdoor premises, regular checks	
Hands-on equipment	Y	Checks carried out. Managed by staff daily	