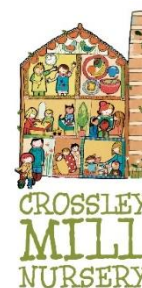


Outdoor Play Policy



Last reviewed: 29 July 2025

Approved by: Nursery Management

Next review: 28 July 2027

At Crossley Mill Nursery we recognise the importance of daily outdoor play and physical development and are committed to ensuring all children have daily access regardless of their age or stage of development. We provide an inclusive outdoor play environment with areas for non-mobile children to freely explore. We make reasonable adjustments where required, in line with the Equality Act 2010. We go out to play with all children in all weathers (unless it is deemed unsafe).

We understand the vital role that learning outdoors has on children's learning and development as well as the importance of regular access to outdoor play in order to keep fit and healthy, develop children's large and fine motor skills, experience learning in a natural environment and access sunlight in order to absorb vitamin D more effectively.

The outdoor areas, both within the nursery grounds and in the local community, have a wealth of experiences and resources, which help children to learn and develop in a variety of ways, including independence, exploration and investigative skills, risk taking and self-esteem, all of which support children to develop skills now and for the future.

We take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of children through risk assessments whilst balancing the benefits to learning through providing an element of 'risky play.' This type of play allows children to explore and find their own boundaries in a safe environment with supportive practitioners. Staff are informed of the importance of safety procedures and are trained appropriately to ensure these procedures are followed effectively.

We ensure outdoor play is adequately supervised and we have robust safety checks in place, including regular head counts.

We obtain parental permission before any child leaves the nursery during the day. This includes short outings into the local community. There is more information in the Outings Policy.

We plan all outdoor play opportunities and outings to complement the early years curriculum. This includes providing children with purposeful activities and quality resources that support and follow their individual interests and the seven areas of learning and development. We plan both adult-led and child-initiated opportunities to enable children to learn and practice new skills, knowledge and behaviours. Where possible and in line with the children's needs we will also often have snacks and meals outdoors and some children will sleep outdoors (see Sleep policy).

Where activities take place away from the setting (e.g. in the local wood) then a mobile phone and first aid kit will be taken to ensure the safety of children at all times. A trained paediatric first aider will be present when children are away from the main setting.

Outdoor play at Crossley Mill is important to children and the staff for the following reasons:-

- Promotes health
- Physical development
- Fine/gross motor skills
- Exploration
- New environment

- Links to indoor play and home

What we would like our children to achieve from outdoor play:-

- Promotes good self esteem
- Encourages play and social skills
- Promotes a lifelong enjoyment of the outdoors
- Develops healthy bodies and good motor skills
- Develops knowledge and understanding of the world
- Develops a sense of community
- Captures imaginations
- Learning how to take risks safely

Staff responsibility outdoors

- To risk assess the area ensuring it is safe and clean
- To remove any broken or dangerous equipment
- To rotate around the playground, monitoring and observing the children at all times
- To deal with any accidents appropriately
- To provide a fun stimulating environment for all ages and stages
- To ensure the children have access to the provisions outside
- To be enthusiastic about outdoor play during all seasons
- To be confident in introducing new experiences to children outdoors (e.g. forest activities)