

8.12 Garden Policy

Policy statement

At Duxford Preschool we believe in the importance of free flow play between the indoor and the outdoor space. We recognise how outside play is as important as inside play and facilitate this at all times by ensuring our door to the outside garden area is kept open. We do however close the door when we are tidying up at the end of a session, prior to carpet time or when an incident in the setting might require all children and staff to be together in one place.

Procedures

- With all new starters we recognise we have to teach the children the rules regarding when the door must remain shut, and we support them to understand how to safely access the outdoor space.
- The garden must be risk assessed prior to any children entering the garden, including checking that the gates are secured. Further details can be found in the Risk Assessment policy.
- At all times there **must** be at least one practitioner in either the decking or garden areas. Where possible, we aim to have 2 practitioners in the garden.
- Staff must be mindful of the need for adequate deployment of staff to ensure there is a good line of sight across the garden area, with particular regard to area at the far end of the garden.
- If children are playing in water, a member of staff must be in close proximity to minimise any potential risks.
- Any member of staff who needs to leave the garden must ensure they call another member of staff to replace them.
- All staff will ensure that before playing outside, the children have suitable footwear (either shoes or wellies) and suitable clothing and outer wear depending on the weather. Children who run outside without suitable clothing or footwear will be redirected back to collect the appropriate clothing.
- In very cold weather, staff will not allow children to play with the water feature to help ensure the children don't become too cold and to prevent the pebbled area from becoming too slippery. Warm water should be provided inside when this happens.
- In very warm weather, access to the garden will be limited to avoid the very hot midday period and children will be encouraged to remain under the covered area to minimise their exposure to the sun.
- After playing in the garden, children will be encouraged to wash their hands.

Version	Changes Made	Author	Date	Review Date
1.0	Baseline version	P Eccleston	24 th April 2018	April 2019
1.1	Amended the minimum qualification requirement of staff on duty	P Eccleston	18 th October 2018	April 2019
1.2	Minor formatting changes	N Hanlon	18 th April 2019	January 2020
1.2	Reviewed – no changes	N Hanlon	24 th January 2020	January 2021
1.3	Minor changes to reflect the new premises	N Hanlon	30 th January 2021	January 2023
1.4	Minor changes to wording	N Hanlon	7 th July 2021	January 2023
1.4	Reviewed – no changes	N Hanlon	22 nd January 2023	January 2025
1.5	Minor changes to reflect new premises	N Hanlon	8 th September 2023	January 2025