

## **Outside Learning Policy**

### **Policy Statement**

At Monty's Daycare we are incredibly fortunate with our beautiful countryside location. Our large gardens, woodland and meadow provide an array of outstanding facilities for children to explore, make discoveries and investigate new mysteries.

Outside learning sessions provide children with the opportunity to explore and experience the natural world through practical activities in the outdoors which will in return help promote confidence, independence and self-esteem. By using the natural resources available in the wood and the children's interests we hope to stimulate their imagination, creativity and enquiry skills. Pre-School children will have the opportunity to attend outside learning sessions weekly, throughout the year and in all weather!

### **Outside learning encourages children to:**

- Develop personal and social skills
- Work through practical problems and challenges
- Discover how they learn best
- Pursue knowledge that interests them
- Learn how to manage failures
- Build confidence in decision making and evaluating risk
- Develop practical skills
- Understand the benefits of a balanced and healthy lifestyle
- Explore connections between humans, wildlife and the earth
- Regularly experience achievement and success
- Reflect on learning and experiences
- Develop their language and communication skills
  - Improve physical motor skills
- Become more motivated
- Improve their concentration skills

### **Ecological Impact**

Whilst using the outside learning site in the woodland and meadow, we shall try and minimise the harm caused to local plant species and wildlife. The site is also likely to incur a higher level of erosion due to increased use. During the outside learning sessions the children shall be encouraged to be more responsible for the protection of plants and wildlife. We shall also work to improve the site by adding bug hotels and hedgehog houses to encourage further wildlife. We shall abide by The Countryside Code.

### **The Countryside Code**

The Countryside Code is dedicated to helping us learn how to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside:

- Being safe, planning ahead and following any signs
- Considering other people

- Leaving the countryside as you find it
- Protecting plants and animals and taking your litter home

### **Outside learning rules**

- Look after your outside learning area
- Do not pick anything growing
- Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth
- Stay within the boundaries marked, 'we don't go over it and we don't go
- look above, below and around for hazards

### **Clothing**

**We work on the principle that 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only unsuitable clothing.**

With this in mind we ask that all children come prepared with suitable clothing. If your child does not have this, they will have to remain behind in the setting and not experience the outside learning provision.

### **Warm weather clothing**

- Long sleeved tops
- Full-length waterproof trousers/splash suit
- Light weight waterproof jacket with a hood
- Wellies
- Sun hat
- Emergency set of clothes and carrier bag for dirty/wet clothes

### **Cold weather clothing**

- Waterproof trouser
- Waterproof jacket with hood
- Warm socks and a spare pair
- Wellies
- Gloves and warm hat
- Emergency set of clothes and carrier bag for dirty/wet clothes

### **Essential equipment to be taken at all times**

- Fully equipped First Aid bag, including survival blankets
- Children's medication and Health Care plans
- Emergency contact list
- Full register of children and staff attending
- Nursery mobile phone and walkie talkie
- Drinking water and cups
- Wipes
- Sterile gloves
- Sun cream
- Spare bags for rubbish/clothes

### **Risk Assessment**

A site risk assessment is undertaken half termly and a daily risk assessment is carried out prior to every outside learning session in the woodland/meadow area.

Hazard	Action
Footpath	Ensure children and adults stay to the footpath and that they take care with regard to projecting roots, trip hazards and low branches
Nettles, brambles and thistles	Long sleeved tops, long trousers and suitable footwear to be worn at all times
Poisonous berries/fungi	Give verbal warning not to eat anything or put things/fingers in their mouths. Seek medical assistance if ingested. Wash hands carefully when returning from the outside area
Low branches	Give verbal warning to take care
Dead branches, stumps and roots	Regularly inspected and felled where necessary. Dead wood on low bushes pruned. Old stumps and roots exposed are pointed out or removed
Rabbit holes	Regular sweep of area to check for new holes
Bee/wasp stings Snakes	Regular sweep to check for nests. Follow first aid procedure. First aid bag and child's medication is always to be taken
Children going out of sight/ missing	Advise children on boundaries. Adults to keep visual contact at all times. Correct ratio of adults: children will always be adhered to. The missing child policy will be follow in case of an emergency.
General public	Avoid contact with strangers and animals where possible. ask owners to control their animals if passing.
Dangerous litter (i.e. fly-tipped waste, broken glass, syringes)	A risk assessment sweep is to be carried out before children facilitate the outside learning area.
Sun exposure	Children will have sun cream applied regularly and must wear suitable sun hat
Electrical storms or gale force winds	Check weather websites for the latest information and severe weather warnings. Outside learning will be cancelled if weather too severe

**The outside learning policy runs in conjunction with the following Monty's Daycare policies:**

- First Aid policy• Risk assessment• Outings policy
- Missing child policy• Health and Safety policy
- Fire Safety and evacuation policy• Lockdown policy
- Acceptable use policy• Sun safety policy •Medication policy

*This policy was revised at a meeting in September 2019. Kerry Allen (Nursery Manager), Naomi Washer (Deputy Manager) and Rachel Whitley (Director) were present.  
(Policy and procedure to be revised in the month of January 2020, Spring term).*