



St Stephens Community Academy Outdoor Play Guidelines

The An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT) Company
An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee
Company Number/08156955

Status: Approved	
Recommended	
Statutory	No
Version	V2.0
Adopted (v2.0)	Sept 2023
Review (v2.0)	Sept 2024
Advisory Committee	Local Governing Advisory Body
Linked Documents and Policies	Safeguarding Policy Sun Cream guidance



Outdoor Play Guidelines

1. Purpose and Directions of the guidelines:

Here at St Stephens Pre-School we place great emphasis on outdoor play, ensuring that the children are actively involved in physical activities. Through outdoor play the children become healthier, happier and more physically competent. Outdoor play considers the provision of opportunities for children to connect to different skills, ideas, knowledge and materials which promotes social learning, creativity and problem-solving skills

St Stephens Pre-school provides a framework for the children to have the opportunity to:

- Have a more co-ordinated approach to outdoor play and increase the opportunities available to be physically active,
- Reinforce appropriate messages in relation to physical activity,
- Ensure quality of access and participation for all,
- Communicate shared vision, ethos and values to children, parents and the wider community.

Our overall rationale of outdoor play at St Stephens Pre-school is to ensure that the children are offered a wide range of activities while in the garden. We thrive on providing movement as it is a child's most natural form of expression and should be an essential part of their everyday experience. The growth and development of the brain, body and feelings are inseparable and in today's world where children no longer have the freedom to wander, make a noise, and enjoy boisterous play as they once did, it is even more important.

We ensure we provide a carefully planned environment, providing opportunities for 'risky freedom'; this helps all children to find out about themselves and their capabilities. It also helps develop self-confidence, independence and lays the foundations for a healthier life. The opportunity to play outside, throughout the year, in all different kinds of weather is as important as playing inside. Nearly everything that is provided inside can be provided outside and some of the best learning can only happen outside. For many children, the learning that happens outdoors is the most important.

Our aim is to promote enthusiasm, enjoyment and confidence while developing each child's physical skills and abilities.

2. The Main Priorities of the Outdoor Play Guidelines

General

Our outdoor learning environment provides a range of opportunities, sufficient space, time and resources to allow for effective physical development. The garden area has varied terrains which aids physical development and teaches children how to manoeuvre safely.

We ensure that children have access to outdoor play every day, all year round (Weather permitting). On occasions the grassy area may become too slippery for children to use safely, if this is the case, small groups of children will be supervised in the tarmac area where they can move around safely. We may also decide to use the school playground instead, allowing the children a bigger space to play in.

Daily health and safety checks of the garden area and equipment are carried out before taking the children out and any defects are removed. We ensure that children are provided with sun hats and sun creams during the summer period as well as plenty of fluid.

We have access to the grounds of St Stephens Community academy, we use them for woodland walks, nature hunts etc. The large tarmac play- ground area allows us to play games in a large, enclosed space.

The role of the adult is to:

- Provide planning and resources for a challenging outdoor area that is integral with overall planning and identifies practitioners to support lead activities
- set up and store equipment safely
- observe key children/focus children and plan appropriately
- be an active role model interacting and supporting children's learning and planned play
- provide varied opportunities for supporting and encouraging children to explore and extend their experiences
- extend and develop children's language and communication in their play
- consult and involve children in planning
- support our colleagues
- ensure appropriate ratios are maintained
- wear appropriate clothing and advise parents and carers on clothing suitable for outdoor learning.

All children are required to keep a pair of wellies at Pre-School; these will be used solely for outdoor play. Wet weather coats and trousers are provided. Parents are encouraged to dress children in older clothes suitable for outside play. Our mud kitchen area is accessible to children in all weathers and can become quite muddy, on these occasions children will be changed into their spare clothes before coming home.

When planning and organising the outdoor environment St Stephens Pre-School staff ensure they meet the requirements of the Development Matters (2023). Planning for outdoor learning should recognise the area as an extension of the indoor learning area well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a keyway in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

Through play in a secure environment with effective adult support, children can:

- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them make sense of the world;
- Practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills;
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules;
- Be alone, be alongside others or cooperate as they talk or rehearse their feelings;
- Take risks and make mistakes;
- Think creatively and imaginatively;
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems; Express fears or relieve anxious experiences in controlled and safe situations.

St Stephens Pre-school ensures that Equality of opportunity outside is covered by the following:

- Ensuring that all children have the ability or support to play and explore in the outdoor area.
- Monitoring how children use the outdoor area.

Next review will be: **September 2024**

Signed: *K. Barrett*... Pre-School Manager

Date: September 2023

