GEMS TINEY HOME NURSERY

HOME FROM HOME CHILDCARE

Outdoor Play Policy

Purpose

Outdoor play is part of everyday learning at Gems tiney Home Nursery. We provide daily access to outdoor play or planned outdoor activities unless circumstances make this inappropriate. Children develop movement, communication, confidence and curiosity through well-supported exploration.

Learning and inclusion

Outdoor experiences include free play, movement, stories, construction, creative activities, gardening and noticing nature. They can support all seven EYFS areas, including literacy and mathematics as well as physical development and understanding the world.

We adapt resources, access, communication and activities for children's ages, interests, health and additional needs. Adults balance manageable challenge with protection from harm and support children to participate without expecting identical skills or responses.

Checks and supervision

Before use, adults check boundaries, gates, surfaces, play equipment and the garden for hazards including animal waste, harmful plants, litter, loose parts and standing water. Unsafe items are removed or areas closed until safe. Checks continue as play and conditions change.

Permitted ratios and effective supervision are maintained, including across indoor and outdoor areas. Adults agree who is responsible for each area and child, make name checks at transitions and control access to exits. Free-flow play is offered only when safe supervision can be maintained.

Water play is directly supervised and emptied or secured after use. Tanks, ponds, containers, tools, chemicals, batteries and small objects are inaccessible or controlled according to risk. Equipment is stable, maintained and suited to the children using it.

Weather clothing and changes to plans

We consider forecasts and warnings, heat, cold, wind, lightning, air quality where relevant, ground conditions and each child's wellbeing. Outdoor experiences can take place in varied weather when suitable controls are available. A planned activity is never more important than safety.

Parents should provide suitable coats, waterproofs, footwear, hats and spare clothing. We use appropriate shade, hydration, sun protection and warm or dry layers, following related policies and agreed product permissions.

If conditions are unsafe, or children arrive without suitable clothing and appropriate spares are unavailable, we change, shorten, postpone or move activities indoors. Decisions protect every child and all staff and consider reasonable adjustments. Children are not left cold, wet, overheated or inadequately supervised to continue the plan.

Nature animals and hygiene

Adults help children treat living things gently and avoid unknown plants, fungi and animal waste. Pets are managed under the Pet Policy and are not allowed to interfere with safe play. Children wash hands after animal contact, soil or messy outdoor activities and before food.

Outdoor food and drinks follow the same food safety, allergy and safer eating rules as indoors. Children do not eat while running, climbing or playing on moving equipment. Potties, toileting and personal care are managed hygienically with appropriate privacy.

Outings and emergencies

Local walks and visits are assessed separately for route, venue, travel, staffing, first aid, consent and individual needs. Adults carry necessary emergency contacts, attendance details and essential medication and follow our transport and outing arrangements.

Accidents receive first aid and are recorded and reported under the relevant policy. If a child cannot be located, we act immediately under the Lost Child Policy and call 999

promptly for a missing young child. Evacuation and emergency plans account for children outdoors.

Partnership and review

We help children learn simple boundaries and practise independence such as putting on coats with support. Parents receive information about outdoor experiences and are asked to share health or clothing concerns. Gemma briefs assistants and reviews this policy annually and after significant changes or incidents. References: current EYFS childminder framework, outdoor access, risk assessment and supervision. Related policies cover adverse weather, sun protection, outings, pets and health and safety.

Policy owner: Gemma Bayley
Reviewed: November 2026
Next review due: November 2027