

Outdoor Play at Blacklands Playgroup

We allow children to play outside in nearly all weathers. It is an Ofsted requirement for us to have an open door to the outside. This is so children can come and go indoors and outdoors whenever they want to.

How and what can your child learn outside?

Outdoors, children can choose to be very active, running, jumping, climbing, shouting, or they can enjoy watching others, reflecting, hiding, playing in a world of their own. Each individual can move and develop in their own way.

Some children have a more active style of learning than others, and find it difficult to concentrate on doing things inside. Offering them active outdoor opportunities which suit them, and their play is more focused and meaningful.

Of course, there are many learning opportunities that are only possible outdoors because they relate to the weather, to nature, the soil and living things. Many wonderfully sensory learning experiences like splashing in puddles, making sloppy sand 'cement', and mixing mud pies with sticks are activities that children engage in naturally. Finding a worm or a fat slug under a stone, watching a spider or a snail are fascinating opportunities that transfix children for hours and lead to unique understanding about the natural world. What about windy days and the thrill of flying a paper kite, or snowy days with no limit to children's imagination for using the amazing stuff?

Being outside encourages an active lifestyle and can continue as your child grows up, enjoying walking, running and cycling. More space outdoors can help children to join in and 'come out of their shells'. Giving children outdoor learning experiences offers them a chance to talk about what they have done with their friends, teachers and parents.

We encourage all parents to bring in wellies, coats and changes of clothes so that their child can enjoy all the benefits of being outside regardless of what the weather may be.

Weather has no effect on illness. There is no convincing evidence that even rain, sleet, or frigid temperatures cause, prolong or worsen routine illnesses. We avoid these because they make us feel miserable.

Cold weather does not cause "colds". The confusion stems from the days when weather was blamed for most diseases, before bacteria and viruses were discovered. Being outdoors makes most children feel better. Fresh air neither cures nor shortens illness. Many infants fall asleep outside, though sleep does not cure illness either. The respite provided by a sick child's nap does help calm parents' jangled nerves.