

# Policy for Effective Learning Outdoors in Early Years

‘Together we unlock potential and learn for life’



# Moor First School

**This policy was approved by the Governing Body of Moor First School at their meeting on:**

**Chair of Governors**

**Sign:** .....

**Co-Head Teachers:**

**Mrs Susan Mayes**                      **Sign:** .....

**Mrs Victoria Atherton**              **Sign:** .....

**Practitioners:**

**EYFS - Miss Alex Whittaker**      **Sign:** .....

**Mrs Emma Butler**                      **Sign:** .....

**Review frequency  
every 3 years**

**Next review: July 2025**

## Effective Learning Outdoors In the Early Years

**Play** underpins the delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children must have opportunities to play indoors and outdoors. All early year's providers must have access to an outdoor play area which can benefit the children.

It is important that practitioners support children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. Play may be responsive or active, sometimes quiet and reflective.

### **Rationale:**

- “Outdoors should provide opportunities for children to engage in planned & freely chosen play experiences & should offer risk, challenge, variety & fun”. (Learning Through Landscapes).
- “Outdoor play is a vital element of young children’s Physical, Social & Emotional development & as every practitioner knows, play is a young child’s mechanism and medium for learning. Therefore, making the most out of outdoor play is essential, providing rich & varied experiences for children & early years setting are in a unique position to offer these”. (Learning Through Landscapes).

### **Aim:**

To enable children to experience the outdoor environment:

- For the outdoor environment to be an extension of the indoor environment with continuous provision available for all children including those with special needs.
- For the outdoor environment to be made available throughout the whole session providing a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led experiences to develop independent and resilient learners.
- To provide appropriate clothing encouraging children to experience the outdoors in all weathers.

### **Objectives:**

Through play, in a secure but challenging environment with effective adult support we aim to:

- Provide (free) access to the outdoor environment throughout the whole day.
- Provide continuous provision in order to encourage independent learners in the outdoor environment
- Plan for a good balance between child-led & adult-initiated experiences.
- Observe, access and record children’s learning in the outdoor environment to inform future planning.

- Ensure the outdoor environment is seen as an extension of the indoor environment.
- Explore, develop and represent learning experiences that help them to make sense of the world.
- Practice and build up ideas, concepts and skills.
- Learn how to understand the need for rules.
- Take risks and make mistakes think creatively and imaginatively.
- Communicate with others as they investigate or solve problems.

**Role of the practitioner** is crucial in:

Observing and reflecting on children's spontaneous play.

Building on this is by planning and resourcing a challenging environment which:

- Supports and extends all areas of children's learning so that the needs of all children are met through offering a wide range of exciting and stimulating experiences.
- Extends and develops children's language and communication in their play.
- Provide appropriate clothing for example rain coats, waterproof pants & wellies.
- Plan for a wide range of exciting and stimulating experiences, planning to meet all children's interests.
- Encourage children to be independent learners and to freely access the indoor and outdoor environment.

### **Health and Safety (See Health and Safety Policy) /Enabling Environments**

There will be a safe and stimulating environment which:

- Staff to check grounds daily and carry out litter picks; to be organised by the teacher.
- Regular grounds maintenance.
- Staff to do a visual check before children access outdoors.
- Child-Adult ratio maintained.
- Risk assessments to be carried out on enhanced provisions.
- Promotes physical, mental and emotional health and well being.
- Has enough space to play and opportunities to be outdoors with freedom to explore and to be physically active.
- Has dynamic and flexible systems of physical organisation that support personalised learning for all children, including the higher ability and children with SEND.
- Provides continuity of care that enables children to identify with key workers and develop relationships at all levels.

**Enabling environment** – The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's developments and learning.

- Provide equipment and resources that are sufficient, challenging and interesting and that can be used in a variety of ways, or to support specific skills.
- Allow sufficient space, indoors and out, to set up relevant activities for energetic play.
- Provide time and opportunities for children with physical disabilities or motor impairments to develop their physical skills, working in partnership with relevant specialist such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists.
- Use additional adult help, as necessary, to support individuals and to encourage increased independence in physical activities.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children will have access to the outdoor play curriculum regardless of gender, special educational needs, race, home or cultural background.

We recognise it is important to value the home background of all children in the school.