



# Netherlee Nurser



## Outdoor Play and Learning

### Aims

- To ensure that children attending Netherlee Nursery Class have access to the outdoors on a daily basis to enable them to learn through energetic play, exploration and investigation in line with National Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS 1.32)
- To promote "Right to Play" Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

### Objectives

- To ensure that staff are aware of the importance and benefits of outdoor play on a daily basis

### Rationale

In addition to outdoor play and learning we also access the woodlands of Linn Park regularly. Staff at Netherlee are committed to outdoor play and understand that it is fundamental for children to thrive in health, wellbeing and development. CLPL such as Virtual Nature School, RtA Challenge Questions and Froebel principles have reinforced staffs skills and knowledge.

*"All children and young people should enjoy high quality play opportunities, particularly outdoor free play in stimulating spaces with access to nature, on a daily basis in school, nursery and early learning and childcare."*

Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Action Plan (2013) Scottish Government.

### Background

#### Why does outdoor learning matter?

For children, particularly those in the early years, each day holds the potential for new experiences and learning. Spending time outdoors supports this learning and development in different ways from those in the indoor playroom.

The benefits of outdoor play are widely recognised and understood. It helps children begin to understand the world that they live in, gives them fresh air and exercise, develops communication, imagination and thinking and builds confidence and resilience - all whilst having fun. The outdoor environment, including temperature, light, weather, colours, changes on a daily basis, providing children with a



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never-ending range of resources and challenges. We know that there are aspects of children's development which are better supported in the outdoors: they are able to be more active, imaginative and purposeful, and can develop a more positive attitude to learning. Children who may, indoors, be quiet and reluctant to join in often become more confident outdoors. Children often behave differently outdoors, becoming more respectful of rules and boundaries and developing their social skills and relationships with staff and other children

### What will children learn outdoors?

Children will learn progressively about different places through exploration, play, direct experience of natural materials, and the natural and built environment and through a series of planned and structured learning experiences. They will learn about curriculum areas, for example studying the weather for science and social studies. Outdoor experiences take place through all seasons and in a wide range of weather conditions, thus fostering adaptability and resilience. Different outdoor learning experiences offer a breadth of opportunities for personal and learning skills development in areas such as communication, problem solving, and information technology, working with others, creativity and thinking skills. These transferable skills are required to meet the opportunities and challenges of a rapidly changing world. Being outdoors offers challenge and enjoyment through learning about different aspects of the curriculum in an engaging and relevant way.

### Care Inspectorate statement on risk in play

"The Care Inspectorate supports care service providers taking a positive approach to risk in order to achieve the best outcomes for children. This means moving away from a traditional deficit model that takes a risk-averse approach, which can unnecessarily restrict children's experiences attending registered services, to a more holistic risk-benefit model. For example, we encourage services to use risk assessment to support children to enjoy potentially hazardous activities such as woodwork using real tools, exploring nature and playing in the mud and rain. We do not expect written risk assessments to be carried out for daily play activities."

30 October 2015



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### Twitter

You can view our outdoor experiences on our school and nursery twitter page available from the following link.

[https://twitter.com/sand\\_nc](https://twitter.com/sand_nc)

### References

- Health and Social Care Standards (2019) Care Inspectorate.
- My World Outdoors (2016) Care Inspectorate.
- Out to Play (2019) Scottish Government.
- Outdoor Play and Exploration (2017) Froebel Trust.
- Play Strategy for Scotland: Our Action Plan (2013) Scottish Government.
- Realising the Ambition: Being Me (2020) Scottish Government.