

'Young children should be outdoors as much as indoors and need a well designed, well organised integrated indoor-outdoor environment preferably with indoors and outdoors available simultaneously.'

Learning Through Landscapes 2008

The Unique Child

- Every child has access to the outdoor environment in all seasons and weathers
- Outdoor provision offers all children experiences which have meaning to them and can be child led
- Key Persons know their children, including their likes and dislikes

Positive Relationships

- Opportunities are available for children to play sometimes alone and sometimes in groups
- All children are independent or appropriately supported when going outdoors, e.g. selecting and putting on appropriate protective clothing
- All children feel confident and secure enough to take risks, learn new things and be adventurous
- Practitioners support children's understanding of how exercise promotes good health

Enabling Environments

- Children and adults are equipped with appropriate all weather clothing
- Free-flow is enabled between the indoors and outdoors
- Risk assessments ensure every child is able to explore their outdoor environment safely
- All children are challenged and are able to take risks within a structure of security and safety
- Planning ensures all children's interests and needs are met
- Children are able to choose, create and change the activities and resources provided
- The environment is rich with exciting stimuli, real experiences, contact with the natural world and the local community
- Opportunities are provided for the children to work in different ways, for more extended periods and on a bigger scale

Learning and Development

- Children are involved in the organisation and set up of outdoor activities
- The environment encourages children to make connections in their learning
- Practitioners offer encouragement, clarify ideas and ask open ended questions as children explore their outdoor environment
- Children can move equipment freely, indoors and outdoors, to extend their own ideas for play
- Activities provide physical and mental challenges for all children to engage in, for sustained periods
- Children's thinking is extended as they engage with people, materials, objects and events
- Every child is able to make progress across all six areas of learning and development



Leadership and Management

- Statutory guidance: 'Wherever possible there should be access to an outdoor play area, and this is the expected norm for providers. In provision where outdoor play space cannot be provided, outings should be planned and taken on a daily basis.'
- Develop a whole staff policy on outdoor learning
- Adapt the environment and routines in order for children to have free-flow access, indoors and outdoors, for extended periods every day
- Promote a commitment in all practitioners that the outdoors is beneficial for all children's well being, learning and development and that it should be used to full potential all day, every day

A few tips...

- There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing!
- Boys learn much better when they are outdoors
- You can subscribe to the Learning Through Landscapes publication 'Outlook' which gives practical ideas, resources, special offers on outdoor equipment etc
Phone: **01962 845811** or visit: **www.ltl.org.uk**

Further Information

We have provided shortcuts to these documents on the EYFS page of our Publications section at **www.childrenscentres.org.uk**

C. Warden, Nurture Through Nature, Mindstretchers 2007
www.mindstretchers.co.uk

G. Richardson, Creating a Space to Grow, David Fulton Publishers 2005
www.fultonpublishers.co.uk

R. Bayley and L. Broadbent, Auditing the EYFS 3-5, Lawrence Educational Publications
www.educationalpublications.com

Learning through Landscapes, Outdoors for Everyone (DVD), Learning Through landscapes 2005
www.ltl.org.uk

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, DSCF 2008
www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/eyfs

Ealing Learning Environment Audit, Ealing Early Years
http://www.childrenscentres.org.uk/ey_independant_and_learning_environment.asp

S. Featherstone and K. Ingham, The Little Book of Outdoor Play, Featherstone Education 2001

S. Featherstone and S. Featherstone, The Little Book of Outside in All Weathers, Featherstone Education 2003

For further information visit **www.childrenscentres.org.uk**
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