



SOP_20_2024_EY_Outdoor Provision within DCS EY Settings References:

1. Introduction

This SOP details that DCS Early Years Settings will provide a healthy environment in which all children can learn and develop as well as make sense of the world around them.

2. Context

The Early Years Setting's aim is to enhance all children's appreciation of the natural world and extend and broaden their learning experiences.

3. Scope

This SOP will take effect from 14th October 2024 for all DCS EY locations, DCS EY Personnel and Contractors

4. Procedures

At all MOD Schools and Settings, the aim of outdoor play is to provide a stimulating and enriched learning environment for all children to engage in all areas of the EYFS curriculum. Staff are all responsible for setting up, maintaining and tidying away equipment. Safety is paramount for all children. A security and safety check of the outdoor play area must be completed before children go out. This will be performed by the staff in the morning and before afternoon session. A specific Risk Assessment is written that all staff are aware of that identifies and minimises risks in the learning environment. This includes factors that need to be taken into consideration, staffing ratios required for safe access, as well as daily checks to ensure equipment and area still viable to safely access.

Key Practitioners in the Early Years will encourage all children to be confident in the outdoor learning area, but it is acknowledged that the children will set and discover their own limitations in their own time, our role as supportive practitioners is to facilitate creative and exploratory learning.

5. Responsibilities

Early Years Practitioners

- Staff will read and understand the overall Outdoor Risk Assessment for areas they will be accessing with their children.
- Staff will complete the daily checks of the garden before entering with their children. They will look for broken objects, litter, hazards, damages, animal faeces. All hazards will be reported immediately to the SHEF Lead and actioned accordingly.
- Staff will plan for the outdoor area to ensure all areas of development are resourced for all children by planning and implementing activities with different focuses of the curriculum.
- In the outdoor environment staff will be a play partner alongside the children.
 - This includes interacting with children during planned and child-initiated play and activities such as- - communicating and modelling language,
 - showing, explaining, demonstrating,
 - exploring ideas,
 - encouraging, questioning, recalling,
 - providing a narrative for what they are doing,

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

- facilitating and setting challenges.
- The staff will ensure all areas are safe and secure through close supervision.
- Once outside a dynamic risk assessment may be undertaken due to weather conditions for example and mitigating factors must be put into place e.g., limit how any can access at a time or specialised apparatus required such as welly boots and rain suits.
- Staff will always be aware of the safety of the children in the outside areas in their care, they must be always vigilant and staff to work as a team, if a need for a member of staff to leave the outside area. They must let other staff know and ensure ratios of staff to children are maintained.
- All staff to allow all children to experience different seasons, to consider the most appropriate ways to be able to access outside in all weathers from snow to sunshine.
- It is vital that staff ratios are maintained in the outside learning area and staff are effectively deployed to support children, this will ensure the outdoor area is adequately supervised. Each member of staff will work in areas to ensure so that no space is unsupervised and will work collaboratively with colleagues to ensure the needs of the children are met.
- All staff will ensure all climbing apparatus (if available in your setting) is supervised that will be according to the age of the children accessing it.
- All staff to ensure outside learning environment is cleaned appropriate to allow children to access safely and all resources are put away at end of the day.
- Water trays must be emptied and washed out daily.
- Staff will monitor UV index and outside temperature and limit the time the children spend outside in adverse weather.
- All staff and children will promote Sun Safety by wearing hats during hot weather.
- Staff and children will have access to cold drinking water throughout the outdoor play session.

Parents

Parents must ensure children have appropriate clothing for outdoor learning such as

- Wellingtons
- Sunhat
- Warm, waterproof coat/waterproof suit
- Named water bottles
- Appropriate outdoor footwear