

POLICY NO.16 OUT DOOR PLAY, OUTDOOR POLICY & ACTIVITY POLICY**Rev 7 DATE: 18.07.2022**

In accordance with Pre-School Regulations 2006, we provide opportunities on a daily basis for outdoor play. We promote outdoor play and fresh air for the health and well-being of the children in our care.

Outdoor play - general

As a service, we are committed to ensure that all of the children in our care spend as much time as possible utilizing our various external outdoor areas. There are obvious challenges to making this happen namely our Irish weather but with good partnerships and understanding from parents, Scamps & Scholars will operate initiatives to ensure that children get a minimum amount of play time outside each day.

Outdoor play times:

Opportunities for outdoor play are available most days. Each section is scheduled with a time to make the most of the areas available outside.

Supervision plans

All staff will supervise the playground outdoor areas utilizing a supervision plan that all staff adhere to. The plan is modified for the number of staff and /or the number of children. These plans are available to parents on request.

Fresh Air:

Children in all sections have access to fresh air while indoors by provision of open windows / doors in all rooms and by provision of open windows during sleep time.

30/30 initiative

This initiative is to ensure that the children at Scamps & Scholars will get a minimum of 30 minutes outdoor play time in the first half of the day (8.30am – 1pm) and that this will be repeated again in the later half of the day (1pm – 5.30pm). We are committed along with our parents to ensuring that the weather over all, will not inhibit this initiative (parents bring wellies, coats etc.... to facilitate this initiative) unless the weather conditions provide a risk to the children or staff.

Fit in 10

This initiative recognizes that the 30/30 initiative above is a great start to keeping the children in our care active, with this extra initiative we are ensuring that children will be active for a minimum of 40 minutes per day. This "Fit in 10" can involved indoor exercise or yoga or relaxation techniques.

Supervision

A defined supervision plan is in place for all staff in relation to the supervision of all our outdoor play areas. Staff are inducted on these plans when they join the service and will receive occasional refresher training as required.

Staff responsibilities to ensure outdoor play can occur safely and with regularity.

The following general Outdoor Play Policy is common to all Sections:

- Ensure the staff:child ratio is correct
- Ensure roll taking is facilitated
- Ensure access and egress is controlled around the play area where appropriate
- Ensure equipment and toys are clean and in a good state to use
- Check area in advance for any hazards that may be present and then are controlled or removed entirely
- Make sure that the shed key is hanging up on hook outside and when toys are taken out the shed is locked while children are playing
- Check all outdoor toys are safe to use
- Observe, supervise and interact with children while playing
- Ensure that the children have proper age appropriate well maintained play equipment to engage with

When returning inside:

- Store toys away in a manner that protects their integrity
- Where necessary, clean down area / equipment for the next groups arrival
- Ensure that no risks are present for the next group that may utilize the area.
- Ensure the shed is locked and the key put back inside the designated lock box
- Line children up and do a roll/ head count outside
- Do a roll/head count inside building
- Wash all hands, children and staff
- In an effort to prevent cross contamination from one group / one pod to another, all play surfaces, where possible should be sprayed with the relevant disinfectant product.

During summer / warm weather:

- During the summer months, parents are expected to provide the Centre with labeled sunscreen for their child, as well as a sunhat and suitable clothing. These must be put on the children before going outside
- Sunscreen must be applied each time the children go outside to play. We would ask that parents apply sunscreen in advance of arriving at the centre if the weather lends itself to same being appropriate
- Sunscreen must be reapplied after excessive physical exercise, running or water play.
- If parents refuse to apply sunscreen or prevent us from applying sunscreen, then their child may be excluded from certain activities and may have to be temporarily accommodated in a different room. This decision will be at the discretion of the manager and will take into account the health & safety risk to the child in question
- Parents must inform staff members if children have not had sunscreen applied and/or if it is their wish that, the staff member does not apply that sunscreen.
- In the absence of the parent supplying sunscreen staff may apply a generic version held at the center for the child's protection, where deemed necessary.

- We will ensure that children engage in drinking as much liquid as is required on hot days to ensure they stay hydrated.
- We will engage with parents of children that present a challenge relative to keeping them hydrated during hot spells of weather

During winter / colder weather:

- Make sure hats and coats are worn
- Make sure wellies are worn for wobblers and toddlers
- We may request parents provide and leave wellies for their children at the center permanently.

APPROVAL DATE: _____

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: _____

SIGNED: _____
(On behalf of the Board of Directors)