



Play and Outdoor Learning Policy

1. Introduction

At Fields Farm Nature Play & Therapy CIC, we believe that play and outdoor learning are essential for the physical, emotional, and cognitive development of children and adults alike. Our approach promotes engagement with nature, creativity, problem-solving, and wellbeing through hands-on experiences in the outdoor environment.

This policy outlines our commitment to providing safe, inclusive, and enriching play and learning experiences in outdoor settings, ensuring that all participants benefit from nature-based exploration and therapeutic activities.

2. Purpose of This Policy

This policy ensures that Fields Farm Nature Play & Therapy CIC:

- Provides high-quality, nature-based play and learning experiences.
- Encourages child-led and experiential learning in outdoor environments.
- Promotes physical activity, creativity, and emotional resilience through outdoor play.
- Ensures safe, supervised, and inclusive access to nature and outdoor spaces.
- Follows health and safety guidelines to minimise risks while allowing freedom to explore.

3. The Benefits of Play & Outdoor Learning

- **Physical Development:** Improves strength, coordination, and motor skills.
- **Cognitive Growth:** Encourages problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity.
- **Emotional Wellbeing:** Reduces stress, anxiety, and promotes confidence.
- **Social Skills:** Fosters teamwork, communication, and cooperation.
- **Environmental Awareness:** Instils a sense of responsibility and connection to nature.

4. Our Approach to Play & Outdoor Learning

4.1 Child-Led & Experiential Play

- Activities are designed to be exploratory, creative, and led by children's interests.
- We use natural materials and loose parts to encourage imaginative play.
- Children are given freedom to take measured risks, enhancing learning through experience.

4.2 Structured & Free Play Balance

- We provide a mix of guided activities and unstructured play, ensuring children can learn at their own pace.
- Planned activities include forest school principles, horticulture, sensory play, and outdoor crafts.

4.3 Outdoor Learning & Nature-Based Therapy

- We integrate gardening, animal care, and mindfulness into outdoor sessions.
- Animal-assisted interactions encourage empathy, confidence, and social connection.
- Sensory-rich environments (e.g., mud play, water play, textures in nature) enhance learning experiences.

5. Health & Safety in Outdoor Play

Fields Farm Nature Play & Therapy CIC is committed to balancing adventure with safety.

5.1 Risk Assessments & Supervision

- All outdoor activities are risk-assessed before taking place.
- Staff and volunteers provide age-appropriate supervision while encouraging independence.
- First aid kits are readily available, and at least one paediatric first-aid trained person is present during children's sessions.

5.2 Appropriate Clothing & Weather Considerations

- Sessions run in all weathers, except in extreme conditions.
- Participants must wear weather-appropriate clothing and footwear.
- Sun protection and hydration are encouraged during hot weather.
- Warm clothing and waterproofs are essential for cold and wet conditions.

5.3 Boundaries & Safe Play Guidelines

- Children are taught safe movement and behaviour expectations in outdoor spaces.
- Tools (if used) are introduced in controlled, supervised settings.
- We ensure no access to hazardous areas (e.g., deep water, unsafe structures).

6. Inclusion & Accessibility

- Outdoor play and learning experiences are adapted to suit all abilities.
- We make adjustments where needed to ensure equal access to nature-based activities.
- We foster an environment where everyone is valued and encouraged to participate.

7. Reviewing & Improving Outdoor Learning

- Feedback is collected from service users, families, and staff to continually improve sessions.
- Risk assessments and safety procedures are reviewed annually.
- We stay up to date with best practices in outdoor learning and play-based therapy.

8. Contact Information

For queries about outdoor learning and play at Fields Farm, please contact:

Emailing: fieldsfarmcic@hotmail.com

Calling: Charlotte – 07584045836 or Kate - 07969472087

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