

4.1 Garden Use Policy

At Heather we value our garden as an important and integral part of our learning environment. It is available to the children for the majority of the time they spend at the Playgroup. This policy sets guidelines to ensure that children and adults are kept safe without restricting the development of learning, discovery, exploration and imagination. The garden is generally in use from after circle time until story time, unless special events are taking place.

Wheeled Toys

Bikes and wheeled toys to be checked for safety each time they are brought out of the shed as part of daily risk assessment.

Bikes and cars should only be used on the tarmac playground area, leaving the other spaces free for children to play safely on the ground.

Bikes and other wheeled toys to be used appropriately. Children must not stand in trailers. Children must not use wheeled toys when wearing long dressing-up clothes or unsuitable footwear.

Climbing.

The climbing frame is available for use each day. The climbing frame is checked for safety as part of daily risk assessment. A crash mat will be provided if children wish to jump from the slide. Children will be encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety, to ask for the mat and to only jump where a mat is in place

No climbing on any of the playhouses as they are not secured to the ground.

Suitable clothing must be worn when climbing. No long dressing up clothes or unsecured mules/flip flops. Children must be encouraged to monitor their own safety whilst using the climbing equipment.

Gates and Sheds

The front gate will be locked on both sides before children use the front outdoor area. The rear gates are checked as part of daily risk assessment. Sheds are only accessed by adults. Children may enter the large shed to select toys, with adult supervision, but must not enter the bike shed. Sheds are kept closed and secured.

Messy Play

Children should come to playgroup in old clothes as messy play is encouraged. We have a supply of spare clothes for children to use if they get wet or muddy. Children must wear wellies to play in the mud, water or on the grass when it is wet or raining. Aprons are supplied for use in the mud kitchen and digging area. Sand and mud must not be thrown.

We collect rainwater in our water butt to use for watering the garden and playing. During exceptionally dry periods or after excessive use this may run out. Adults will not refill it from the tap so the children can learn how precious water is during dry weather. The outside tap and hose are used only under adult supervision or during adult led activity.

Waterproof trousers are available for children to use in wet weather and we have a supply of spare wellies of various sizes that children can borrow.

Sun Policy

We take sun safety seriously at Heather Playgroup, so we have developed the following policy to enable children to get the safest use of our outdoor area during the summer months. We have based our policy on guidance from Cancer Research UK's Sun Protection Policy Guidelines for Nurseries and Preschools.

Further information and advice for parents/carers can be found at www.sunsmart.org.uk

Sun Cream

- Parents/carers must apply sun cream to their child thoroughly in the morning before attending Playgroup. Staff cannot apply sun cream in the mornings.
- Sun cream must be supplied by parents/carers and will only be applied to the named child.
- Sun cream will not be applied to any child where the permission slip hasn't been signed and returned or sun cream has not been supplied by the parent.
- Sun cream will be applied after lunch only to children who attend all day.
- It is the parent/carers responsibility to check sun cream is within expiry date and has not been opened for more than the number of months recommended on the packaging
- Sun cream must be at least SPF 15 (UVB) and 4 **** (UVA)
- Parents/carers must confirm that they have used it previously on my child and they have not had any allergic reaction
- The child's sun cream must be clearly named
- Staff will only apply sun cream to a child if the child's sun cream is placed in the box (not in bag/drawer etc)
- It is the parents/carers responsibility to ask for the sun cream at home time if they need it returned daily.

Clothing

Parents/carers should provide a sunhat on sunny days. This should be named and left on your child's peg. If a hat is provided, staff will encourage your child to wear it. Playgroup have a limited supply of sunhats, which will be offered to your child if one is not provided from home.

Children should come to playgroup dressed in appropriate clothing that offers protection from the sun. Loose, cool clothing with sleeves is best, strappy tops and dresses should be avoided to protect shoulders from burning.

During hot sunny weather staff will where possible move activities into the shade and encourage children to stay out of the sun and drink plenty of water. Water activities and quiet gentle activities will be provided to enable your child to stay cool. Staff follow the advice from West Sussex County Council and the Met Office.

Staff will regularly talk to the children about sun safety, reminding them to have plenty to drink and wear their hat in the garden. We will educate them about the importance of applying sun cream, staying in the shade in the middle of the day and appropriate clothing. We encourage parents to reinforce this at home.

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