**Outdoor Play Policy**

**Statement of Intent**

The importance of outdoor play is well recognised. It is seen as an integral part of early year’s provision that must be always available to children.

The outdoor environment is a special place for all children and offers the type of learning most appropriate to young children; space to be active and learn by moving and doing, using a combination of experiences and play opportunities drawn from and building on the child’s own personal world.

**Outdoor Play Offers the Following:**

•A chance to develop large and fine motor skills and cardiovascular endurance this helps keep children healthy.

•It provides the chance to explore and discover the natural world.

•It offers the children the opportunity to explore space around them, to learn, to share and to negotiate space.

•Outdoor play stimulates the senses offering different sights, sounds, smells and touch/feel opportunities.

**Aims**

•Outdoor play is an active form of learning that unites the mind, body and spirit; children learn well when the whole-self is stimulated.

•Outdoor play reduces the tension that often comes with trying to achieve or needing to learn; outside children are more free and relaxed.

•Children who learn to enjoy outdoor play are more likely to become adults who enjoy physical exercise and outdoor pursuits.

•Outdoor play offers the chance to learn and cooperate with others building social skills.

•Outside is a different learning environment which promotes creativity through new challenges and tasks.

•Outside children will learn to be aware of risks and hazards, learning safety as they play.

**Methods (How we achieve these Aims)**

•Our outdoor area is checked for safety and cleared of rubbish before it is used.

•Parents are advised that children need to wear appropriate clothing for:

**Summer/Winter.**

•Sun protection - see Sun policy attached.

•All outdoor activities are supervised at all times following government guidelines for staff and child ratios.

•Adults will observe the children outdoors to see how they play what interests them and how to support their play.

•Children need to be encouraged to engage in self-paced play, unstructured outdoor play and be free to use their imagination.

•Different kinds of outdoor play will be encouraged using rides, construction with boxes or crates, crawling, climbing, balancing, using parachute etc.

•Good use of small equipment will be encouraged e.g. balls, bats, beanbags, etc.

•An outside activity can be contrasted with an activity indoors, small-scale painting inside can be contrasted with the use of large sheets of paper and decorating brushes outside.

This policy has been adopted by Branston Little Pickles Pre School

Signed on behalf of the setting by:

Holly Murphy (Chairperson) Date: ……… February 2023………………………….

Jodie Cook (Manager) Review Date: February 2024