



## Daily Outdoor Play and Paddock School in Warwick Class

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum, which covers children aged birth to the end of the Reception year places strong emphasis on the importance and value of daily outdoor experiences for children's learning and development.

Learning outside the classroom supports the development of healthy and active lifestyles by offering children opportunities for physical activity, freedom and movement, and promoting a sense of well-being. It gives them contact with the natural world and offers them experiences that are unique to outdoors, such as direct contact with the weather and the seasons. Outdoor play also supports children's problem-solving skills and nurtures their creativity, as well as providing rich opportunities for their developing imagination, inventiveness and resourcefulness. And, of course, the outdoor environment offers more space than indoors and therefore is particularly important to those children who learn best through active movement. For many children, playing outdoors at their early years setting may be the only opportunity they have to play safely and freely while they learn to assess risk and develop the skills to manage new situations.

Everyone who works with young children in early childhood settings and schools knows how quickly bacteria and viruses spread in these environments. One way to reduce the spread of infection is through lots and lots of fresh air. Outdoor play enables the infectious agents to spread out and be dissipated; it also enables children to get fresh air and exercise and be less constrained than they are in the classroom (Aronson, 2002, Excerpted from *Play, Development and Early Education* by Johnson, Christie and Wardle) In addition to the health and developmental benefits, outdoor education also helps increase an awareness of the environment. Outdoor environments fulfill children's basic needs for freedom, adventure, experimentation, risk-taking, and just being children. Children need the opportunity to explore the unknown, the unpredictable, and the adventurous. All the Warwick children seem to really enjoy their time on the paddock whatever the weather. You must of heard the saying 'There is no such thing as bad weather just unsuitable clothing' and we always try to make sure your children are suitably clothed when outdoors.

I hope this explains a little of why we do what we do in Warwick Class but if you have any questions or concerns about outdoor play please do discuss it with me.

*Mrs Lock and The Warwick Team*