EYFS Outdoor Continuous Provision Areas

Outdoor provision is an important part of the EYFS curriculum and should be seen as an extension of the indoor learning environment. A well-planned outdoor area provides opportunities for children to develop across all seven areas of learning through active play and exploration. Outdoor learning particularly supports physical development by allowing children space to run, climb, balance and develop coordination. It also promotes personal, social and emotional development as children work together, take turns and build confidence. Outdoor provision encourages curiosity, independence and learning through meaningful experiences.

Mark Making Area



The **outdoor mark making area** is an organised area giving the children independence and tools to develop their mark making. Centered on **Literacy (Writing)**, this provision inspires children to write for real-world purposes, such as making labels, signs, cards and recording scores on a clipboard, or mapping out a treasure hunt. The physical freedom of the outdoors enhances **Physical Development**, utilizing both gross motor shoulder control (using large chalks or sweeping water brushes) and fine motor finger precision to build fluid writing movements. This area is also good for **Communication and Language**, inviting collaborative storytelling, role-play notes, and phonetic experimentation with peers. It boosts **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)** by giving children a high-confidence, low-stakes environment.

Outdoor Area Continuous Provision

In our Early Years outdoor area, children's ideas and interests play a key role in shaping what we teach and explore. Practitioners carefully observe children's play, listening to their questions and noticing their fascinations, and use these observations to plan meaningful outdoor experiences that build on their curiosity. This child-led approach promotes active exploration, problem solving and collaboration in a rich outdoor environment. Some resources in our continuous provision are kept the same so that the children's learning possibilities and independence is high. We understand that the opportunity for children to self-manage, to take initiative and self-direct their learning is a vital factor in our early years setting. Enhancements are added when needed based on the children's interests, core text or topic to promote their next steps in learning.

Number



The **outdoor number area** brings mathematical concepts into a physical, real-world context. This provision explicitly expands **Mathematics (Number and Numerical Patterns)** as children can take their learning outdoors with different manipulatives. Moving and arranging these mathematical resources enhances **Physical Development** (Fine and Gross Motor coordination and spatial alignment). It builds positive attitudes toward math within **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, turning mathematical learning into an interactive, trial-and-error game. This area relies heavily on **Communication and Language**, prompting mathematical reasoning, predictions, and the vocabulary of comparison (e.g., *more than, fewer, matching, double*).



Creative Area

The **outdoor creative area** provides a liberating space for messy exploration. This area helps with **Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials)** as children mix potions, paint on large upright sheets, chalk board or engage in transient art using natural loose parts. It is an exceptional environment for **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, offering deep sensory processing opportunities that aid self-regulation, emotional expression, and extreme pride in individual creation. As children manipulate unfamiliar textures, they refine their **Physical Development** through sensory exploration, hand control, and tool use. The area prompts advanced **Communication and Language** as children can discuss their creations talk through their choices.



Stage area

The **outdoor stage area** is a vibrant, performance-based zone that supercharges children's confidence and narrative thinking. It acts as a powerful driver for **Expressive Arts and Design (Being Imaginative and Expressive)**, encouraging children to experiment with music, role-play, dance, and collaborative performance. This public-facing play dramatically accelerates **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)** by boosting self-esteem, building stage presence, and teaching children to cooperate, share the spotlight, and value an audience. The area is inherently rich in **Communication and Language**, demanding clear speaking, expressive storytelling, active listening, and the recall of familiar scripts, songs, or rhymes. Movement across the stage also tests **Physical Development**, challenging children's spatial awareness, balance, rhythm, and body coordination.



Junk Modelling Area



The **outdoor junk modelling area** gives opportunity of trial, error, design, and structural engineering on an unrestricted scale. It sits perfectly at the intersection of **Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials)** and **Understanding the World**, as children manipulate boxes, tubes, and plastic bottles to form unique 3D structures, testing how different materials adhere to one another. As children tear tape, use glue spreaders, and cut thick card, they develop their **Physical Development (Fine Motor Skills)**, grip strength, and coordination. The engineering develops **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, specifically building critical thinking, intense focus, and the resilience to try a different strategy when a design collapses. It also commands rich **Communication and Language**, requiring children to carefully articulate their complex design plans and explain the functions of their inventions.



Reading Area

The **outdoor reading area** provides a place that reading can be a relaxed as well as a social activity. This area supports **Literacy (Comprehension and Word Reading)** by allowing children to connect with texts and using non-fiction to help with their learning. It is a place for **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, giving children a safe space to retreat to, self-regulate, or enjoy quiet companionship away from high-intensity physical play. It can also high-quality **Communication and Language** exchanges, encouraging deep thinking, sentence structure development, and text-to-life connections.





Large Construction

Resources include: Tyres, crates, planks, bricks, buckets, wheelbarrow stones, tubes, wooden planks, tools.

The large construction area serves as a high-impact learning environment with a powerful focus on the Prime areas. As children lift, carry, and maneuverer large blocks, crates, and loose parts, they significantly develop their **Physical Development** (Gross Motor Skills), core strength, and spatial awareness. The open-ended nature of the resources helps towards **PSED** as children negotiate space, share resources, collaborate on large-scale designs, and build resilience when structures collapse. This collaborative play acts as a rich catalyst for **Communication and Language**, prompting high-level discussions, vocabulary acquisition, and descriptive language as children explain their ideas. Furthermore, the area directly drives Specific areas of learning; children explore early **Mathematics** through hands-on experiences with shape, size, weight, balance, and relative position, while simultaneously engaging in **Understanding the World** by acting as scientists and engineers who test hypotheses and explore the physical properties of materials.

EYFS Outdoor Continuous Provision Areas

Mud kitchen

The outdoor mud kitchen is a sensory area that serves as a learning environment where all areas of the EYFS curriculum blend seamlessly together. This zone explicitly champions **Expressive Arts and Design (Being Imaginative and Expressive)** as children engage in rich, open-ended role-play, transforming natural elements into "mud pies," "potions," and culinary masterpieces. It provides profound support for **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, offering a deeply therapeutic, sensory experience that aids emotional regulation, while demanding high levels of cooperation, resource sharing, and collaborative negotiation. As children lift heavy buckets of soil, pour water from watering cans, and vigorously whisk, scoop, and mix, they refine both their **Physical Development** (Gross Motor shoulder stability and Fine Motor hand-eye coordination). The mud kitchen is an exceptional catalyst for **Communication and Language**, generating a torrent of descriptive vocabulary related to textures and processes, alongside complex narrative talk. Furthermore, it grounds **Mathematics** in a physical context through hands-on sizing, weighing, and measuring capacity, while driving **Understanding the World** as children act as early scientists, investigating the physical properties of earth, water, and changing states of matter.





Sand Area

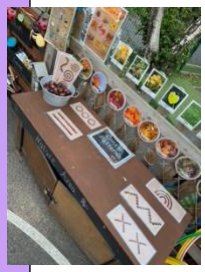
The outdoor sand area offers a deeply sensory, open-ended environment that supports holistic development across all areas of the EYFS framework, particularly enhancing children's Prime skills. Engaging with sand on a large scale serves as a powerful therapeutic tool for **PSED**, allowing children to practice self-regulation, sustain deep focus, and collaborate on shared goals like digging vast trenches or building complex waterways. As children scoop, pour, pat, and transport sand using heavy buckets and spades, they refine both their **Physical Development** (Gross Motor Skills through digging and lifting, and Fine Motor Skills through precise tool manipulation and mark-making). The area is a natural catalyst for **Communication and Language**, rich with new vocabulary related to textures, actions, and weights as children narrate their play and negotiate roles. Additionally, the sand area directly underpins **Mathematics**, providing concrete opportunities to explore capacity, volume, weight, and shape, while driving **Understanding the World** as young researchers investigate the changing properties of materials when water is introduced.





Investigation Station

The **outdoor investigation area** is a living, changing area that naturally inspires awe, wonder, and scientific inquiry. It directly champions **Understanding the World (The Natural World)**, enabling children to observe lifecycles first hand, investigate seasonal changes, care for living things, and interact closely with wildlife and plants. Using magnifying glasses or planting tools enhances both gross and fine motor **Physical Development**. The calming atmosphere provides immense support for **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, instilling a sense of responsibility and environmental empathy while supporting emotional well-being and mindfulness. The nature area is a playground for **Communication and Language**, generating sophisticated vocabulary (e.g., *decay, organic, habitat, nocturnal*) as children observe, question, and hypothesize about the world around them.









Water Area

The **outdoor water area** offers a highly dynamic, problem-solving environment centered around gravity, flow, and volume. It strongly delivers on early **Mathematics (Numerical Patterns and Measure)** as children intuitively explore capacity, full and empty concepts, weight, and conservation of fluid through pouring and filling. Introducing water walls, guttering, and pipes bridges directly into **Understanding the World**, allowing children to act as young physicists testing flow, speed, siphoning, and the properties of materials. The physical element of pouring and tipping water develop essential **Physical Development** (Gross Motor strength and hand-eye coordination). Crucially, the collaborative nature of redirecting water streams promotes outstanding **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)** and **Communication and Language** as children must communicate clearly together.





Gross Motor Skills

The **outdoor gross motor area** is a vital, high-energy environment dedicated to establishing the core physical foundations required for a healthy, active life. This zone directly targets **Physical Development (Gross Motor Skills)** as children learn to negotiate space, navigate obstacle courses, climb, balance, and test their physical limits. The inherent risks and triumphs of big movement directly nurture **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, explicitly building self-regulation, body confidence, and resilience when facing physical challenges. Socially, children practice collaborative turn-taking and teamwork during active games. The area also fosters rich **Communication and Language** as children call out instructions, narrate their movements, and use directional vocabulary. Furthermore, it supports early **Mathematics (Spatial Reasoning)** as children estimate distances, judge speeds, and physically experience concepts of height, weight, and trajectory.

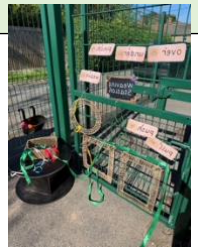




Fine Motor Area

The **outdoor fine motor area** offers unique, large-scale opportunities to develop intricate physical control and hand-eye coordination. This area heavily supports **Physical Development (Fine Motor Skills)** by offering tactile tasks like threading, squeezing spray bottles, or manipulating. These strength-building activities directly underpin **Literacy (Writing)**, as children build the essential finger strength, pincer grip, and shoulder stability required for early mark-making. It serves as a soothing, focused area for **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development (PSED)**, where children practice sustained attention, focus, and independent goal-directed behaviour. Engaging with diverse materials also provides a platform for **Communication and Language**, prompting descriptive talk regarding textures and mechanics.





Our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) outdoor provision offers a seamless, open-ended, and continuous learning environment that supports all 7 areas of learning in the EYFS framework, allowing children to investigate on a large scale, take manageable risks, and follow their own interests.

Core Principles of our Outstanding Outdoor Area

- **Free-Flow Access:** Children should be able to move freely between the indoor and outdoor environments throughout the day in all weathers.
- **Not a Mirror of Indoors:** The outdoor space provides physical, sensory and scale-based experiences that cannot be easily recreated inside
- **Loose Parts & Open-Ended Resources:** We use crates, planks, gutters, tyres, logs, shells, and fabric to ignite imagination and problem-solving.
- **Intentional Adult Role:** Practitioners actively extend learning, model vocabulary, and provoke curiosity without taking over child-led play.