

# Outdoor Play at Emergency Childcare Settings

## Guidance on COVID-19 restrictions

Children attending emergency childcare hubs should be encouraged to go out every day, using the private outdoor spaces attached to their settings.

Spending time outside, engaged in active play, is good for the mental and physical health of all children. This exercise and time outdoors is especially important to maintain during the COVID-19 restrictions, which we know may cause high levels of stress and anxiety to children.

As this outdoor space is private, and not accessible to the general public, children are not limited in how many times they go in and out of the setting during the time they attend. Think of this outdoor space in the same way that you would your own garden.

However as with inside the childcare setting, it is important that children try to maintain a social distance of 2 metres from one another where possible. This distancing should be easier to achieve outdoors where more space is likely available. Any outdoor equipment or toys should also be cleaned with the same regularity as those inside the playroom.

The number of children who can go out at any one time in a childcare setting has no formal restriction. Settings should risk assess these numbers as they would for any other time spent outdoors, whilst taking account children's need to remain 2 metres apart. This is likely to be fewer children than you would normally have outside at one time.

Children should be encouraged to wash their hands before and after any outdoor activities.