



## THE POWER OF OUTDOOR PLAY



## Learning At All Ages

At Apple Ridge Academy, we believe children grow best when they're immersed in hands-on experiences—especially in the great outdoors. Outdoor learning isn't just a break from the classroom; it's a vital part of how children explore, discover, and thrive.

From infants feeling grass between their toes, to preschoolers creating mud masterpieces, to school-age children leading nature scavenger hunts—every age benefits from time spent outside. The natural world sparks curiosity, builds confidence, and supports growth in every area of development.

At every stage, outdoor play helps children connect, wonder, and truly come alive.



## What are the Benefits ?

### HEALTHY BODIES & ACTIVE MOVEMENT

OUTDOOR PLAY HELPS CHILDREN BUILD STRONG MUSCLES, COORDINATION, AND MOTOR SKILLS THROUGH ACTIVITIES LIKE RUNNING, CLIMBING, AND BALANCING. IT SUPPORTS OVERALL PHYSICAL HEALTH AND ENCOURAGES LIFELONG HABITS OF MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITY. TIME SPENT OUTDOORS ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO BETTER SLEEP PATTERNS AND CAN HELP BOOST IMMUNE FUNCTION.

### SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL GROWTH

PLAYING OUTSIDE PROMOTES ESSENTIAL SOCIAL SKILLS SUCH AS TEAMWORK, COMMUNICATION, AND EMPATHY. IT ALSO HELPS CHILDREN DEVELOP EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE AS THEY TAKE AGE-APPROPRIATE RISKS AND TRY NEW THINGS. THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT PROVIDES A CALMING SPACE THAT SUPPORTS EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND STRESS MANAGEMENT.

### SENSORY-RICH LEARNING

THE OUTDOORS OFFERS A MULTI-SENSORY EXPERIENCE FILLED WITH TEXTURES, SOUNDS, SIGHTS, AND SMELLS. THESE EXPERIENCES SUPPORT SENSORY INTEGRATION AND HELP YOUNG CHILDREN BETTER UNDERSTAND AND NAVIGATE THE WORLD AROUND THEM. NATURE-BASED PLAY ALSO FOSTERS CURIOSITY AND EXPLORATION—TWO KEY DRIVERS OF EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT.

### ACADEMIC SKILLS IN ACTION

OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS PROVIDE REAL-WORLD OPPORTUNITIES TO APPLY ACADEMIC CONCEPTS. CHILDREN PRACTICE MATH BY COUNTING OBJECTS, EXPLORE SCIENCE BY OBSERVING INSECTS OR WEATHER CHANGES, AND ENGAGE IN LITERACY THROUGH STORYTELLING AND IMAGINATIVE PLAY. THESE HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING, PROBLEM-SOLVING, AND INQUIRY-BASED LEARNING, REINFORCING WHAT THEY LEARN IN THE CLASSROOM.

### CONNECTION TO THE NATURAL WORLD

SPENDING TIME OUTDOORS NURTURES A CHILD'S CONNECTION TO THE NATURAL WORLD. IT FOSTERS A DEEP RESPECT AND APPRECIATION FOR LIVING THINGS, INSPIRES A SENSE OF WONDER, AND BUILDS A FOUNDATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITY AS THEY GROW.