



Making memories together...

The importance of the outdoors and
nature to babyroom parents

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Introduction to the authors

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Nicola works as Director of Insight and Impact for The Froebel Trust and is a Visiting Reader in Education for Sustainable Futures at Canterbury Christ Church University. With an academic background in rural and environmental geography, her research interests include children's connection with nature, outdoor learning and sustainability education. She led the Froebel Trust funded research project 'The potential of a Froebelian inspired pedagogy "in, with and for nature" in urban babyrooms' on which this report is based.



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Executive summary

This report is the fourth in a series that explores opportunities for the youngest children outdoors based on research projects funded by the Froebel Trust. Relationships - of every child with themselves, their parents, carers, family, wider community and the wider world - are at the centre of Froebelian educational philosophy and practice. Despite this, very little is known about parental perspectives about spending time outdoors and engaging with nature from birth.

The focus of this report are the attitudes and behaviours of babyroom¹ parents to the outdoors and nature. An online survey was sent out to all parents with a child aged under 24 months attending a Bright Horizons setting. A total of 233 valid responses were recorded. Whilst respondents came from across England and Scotland, the majority live in relatively affluent areas, identify as White ethnic origin and are geographically clustered in the Southeast of England and East Anglia. Although the findings are not generalisable, they do provide new knowledge about some of the challenges and opportunities faced by parents of babies and toddlers in accessing and spending time outdoors.

Access to outdoor spaces: Almost a third of parents of babies do not have access to a private garden. Most parents go outdoors with their baby or toddler at least several times a week spending 1-5 hours on average each week but would like to be able to spend more time. Nursery is seen as having a significant role in providing regular access to outdoor environments for their babies and toddlers by parents.

Being outdoors: For many parents, spending time outdoors with their baby/toddler is part of their everyday routines either alone or with others. Parents note changes in behaviour and demeanour of their child when outdoors. Many babies and toddlers appear to be happier, calmer and more observant outdoors and enjoy touching, looking and listening to nature. Babies and toddlers often indicate their desire to be outdoors to their parents.

Parental attitudes and beliefs: Spending time in nature is more important to parents of toddlers than babies. When outside parents feel the priority for toddlers is being active whilst for babies it is being healthy and sensory engagement. Being sociable is less significant, in part because parents feel that the nursery offers this.

A place where memories are made: Parents took the opportunity to comment on how much their child enjoys being outside. Time spent enriches their lives and is where special family memories are made.

¹ Babyroom is the commonly used term to describe provision for children up to two in English Early Childhood and Care (ECEC) settings

Implications and recommendations

Understanding the outdoor experiences that babies and toddlers have with their families is a rich starting point for developing more inclusive outdoor pedagogies in settings. Further research is needed to understand how these experiences may be influenced by social and cultural factors.



1. Introduction to the project

This report provides new knowledge and understanding about the attitudes and behaviours of parents with a baby or toddler that attends an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) setting in relation to the outdoors and nature. It is part of a research project funded by the Froebel Trust that is exploring the potential of a Froebelian inspired nature pedagogy in urban babyrooms.

Very little is known about the extent to which parents with very young children spend time outdoors both in the home environment and beyond. Given the increasing numbers of parents accessing babyrooms in the UK, it is important to understand parental attitudes to the outdoors, the different challenges and opportunities they face in accessing suitable outdoor spaces and the connections that could be fostered between setting and home. Previous research has suggested that parents might rely on settings to provide outdoor time for their child – for example Carsley et al. (2016)² carried out a study in the context of Canada and found that 1-2-year olds attending day care experienced a shorter duration of outdoor free play at home by an average of almost 15 minutes per day – but it remains an under-researched issue in the UK.

1.1 What we did: An online survey

An online survey was developed by the Research Project Team and was sent to all parents of babies (from birth to 12 months) and Toddlers (aged between 13-24 months) who attend a Bright Horizons nursery. This survey was developed using Jisc online surveys and distributed by Bright Horizons at three points between October 2024 and April 2025. The survey consisted of five sections (see Appendix 1)

- Section 1 consisted of demographic questions
- Section 2 focused on access to outdoor spaces
- Section 3 covered what parents do when spending time outdoors with their child
- Section 4 asked about attitudes and beliefs about the outdoors and nature
- Section 5 gave parents the opportunity to provide any additional comments.

The survey yielded qualitative and quantitative data that was analysed by the project team. This report includes an overview of the whole dataset as well as comparisons between the minority (18.5%) of respondents whose youngest child is a baby (birth to 12 months) and those for whom it is a toddler (13-24 months). This is to challenge the pervasive problem of babies being marginalised in discussions about the outdoors.

² Carsley, S., Liang, L., Chen, Y., Parkin, P., Maguire, J. and Birken, C. (2016) 'The impact of daycare attendance on outdoor free play in young children', *Journal of Public Health* 39 (1), pp.145-152

2. What we found out

2.1 About our respondents

A total of 233 valid responses were recorded. Although respondents came from across England and Scotland, the majority live in relatively affluent areas, identify as White ethnic origin and are geographically clustered in the Southeast of England and East Anglia (Map 1). Analysis of parental postcodes³ using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI)⁴ showed that only a minority of respondents were from areas of notable deprivation (17.5% lived in IMD decile 1-5, 28.4% lived in IDACI decile 1-5).

Decile ⁵	IMD	Variance from English population ⁶	IDACI	Variance from English population
1			0.7% (1)	-9.3%
2	2.2% (3)	-7.8%	5.1% (7)	-4.9%
3	2.2% (3)	-7.8%	3.6% (5)	-6.4%
4	3.6% (5)	-6.4%	4.4% (6)	-5.6%
5	9.5% (13)	-0.5%	14.6% (20)	+4.6%
6	19.0% (26)	+9.0%	19.0% (26)	+9.0%
7	13.9% (19)	+3.9%	9.5% (13)	-0.5%
8	13.9% (19)	+3.9%	10.9% (15)	+0.9%
9	13.1% (18)	+3.1%	16.1% (22)	+6.1%
10	22.6% (31)	+12.6%	16.1% (22)	+6.1%
Total	100% (137)		100% (137)	

Table 1: Percentage of respondents' household in each decile of IMD and IDACI compared to English population

Understood in the context of England, 45.7% of our respondents live in the three least deprived IMD deciles (8-10), compared to 30% nationally. Conversely, only 17.5% of respondents live in the five most deprived IMD deciles (1-5), compared to 50% nationally.

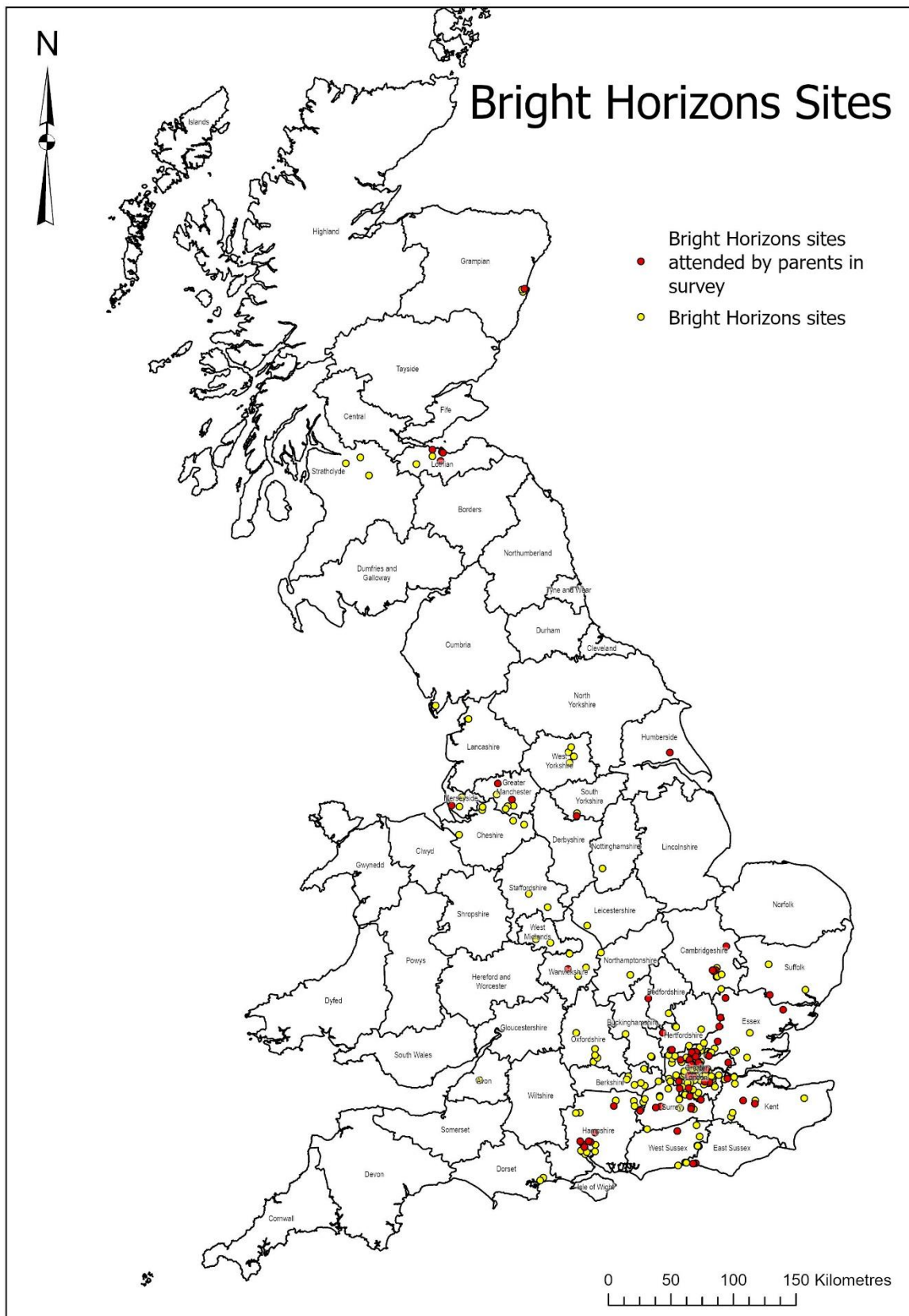
This suggests our findings reflect the experiences of parents in relatively affluent areas, which should be considered when interpreting results. However, the high cost of babyroom provision means that demographic of parents accessing it more generally is likely to be similarly skewed.

³ 137 of 233 parents provided valid postcodes

⁴ Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (2019b) *The English Indices of Deprivation 2019*. Available at: <https://imd-by-postcode.opendatacommunities.org/imd/2019> (accessed: 9th June 2025).

⁵ Decile 1 being the most deprived and Decile 10 being the least.

⁶ Variance calculated as sample percentage minus 10% (the expected percentage if our sample matched the English population distribution)



Map 1: All Bright Horizons Settings & Respondent Settings against IMD data

Most respondents (86%) live in urban areas

Urban/Rural	Description	Classification	% (n)
Urban	Major Conurbation	A1	24.5% (35)
	Minor Conurbation	B1	0.7% (1)
	City and Town	C1	60.8% (87)
	City and Town in a Sparse Setting	C2	
Rural	Town and Fringe	D1	7.7% (11)
	Town and Fringe in a Sparse Setting	D2	
	Village	E1	2.8% (4)
	Village in a Sparse Setting	E2	
	Hamlets and Isolate Dwellings	F1	3.5% (5)
	Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings in a Sparse Setting	F2	-
		Total	100% (143)

Table 2: Urban and Rural classification of parental addresses using Office for National Statistics tool (ONSPD)

Most respondents (82.8%) describe themselves as having a White ethnic origin.

Ethnicity	% (n)
White: English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	65.2% (152)
White: Irish	2.1% (5)
White: Other White background	15.5% (36)
Mixed: White and Asian	2.1% (5)
Mixed: Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background	3.0% (7)
Asian or Asian British: Indian	2.1% (5)
Asian or Asian British: Chinese	4.3% (10)
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian background	3.0% (7)
Black or Black British: Other / Black / African / Caribbean background	0.4% (1)
Arab	0.4% (1)
Prefer not to say	1.3% (3)
Missing	0.4% (1)

Table 3: Ethnic origin of parents who responded to the survey

For the majority of respondents (81.5%), their youngest child was a toddler with the mean age being 16.7 months. Only around a third of parents used ECEC full-time, with most children attending on a part-time basis.

2.2 Access to outdoor spaces

2.2.1 Outdoor spaces at home

Most respondents (80%) have access to a private garden, although this figure is lower for those with babies (70%) as opposed to toddlers (82%).

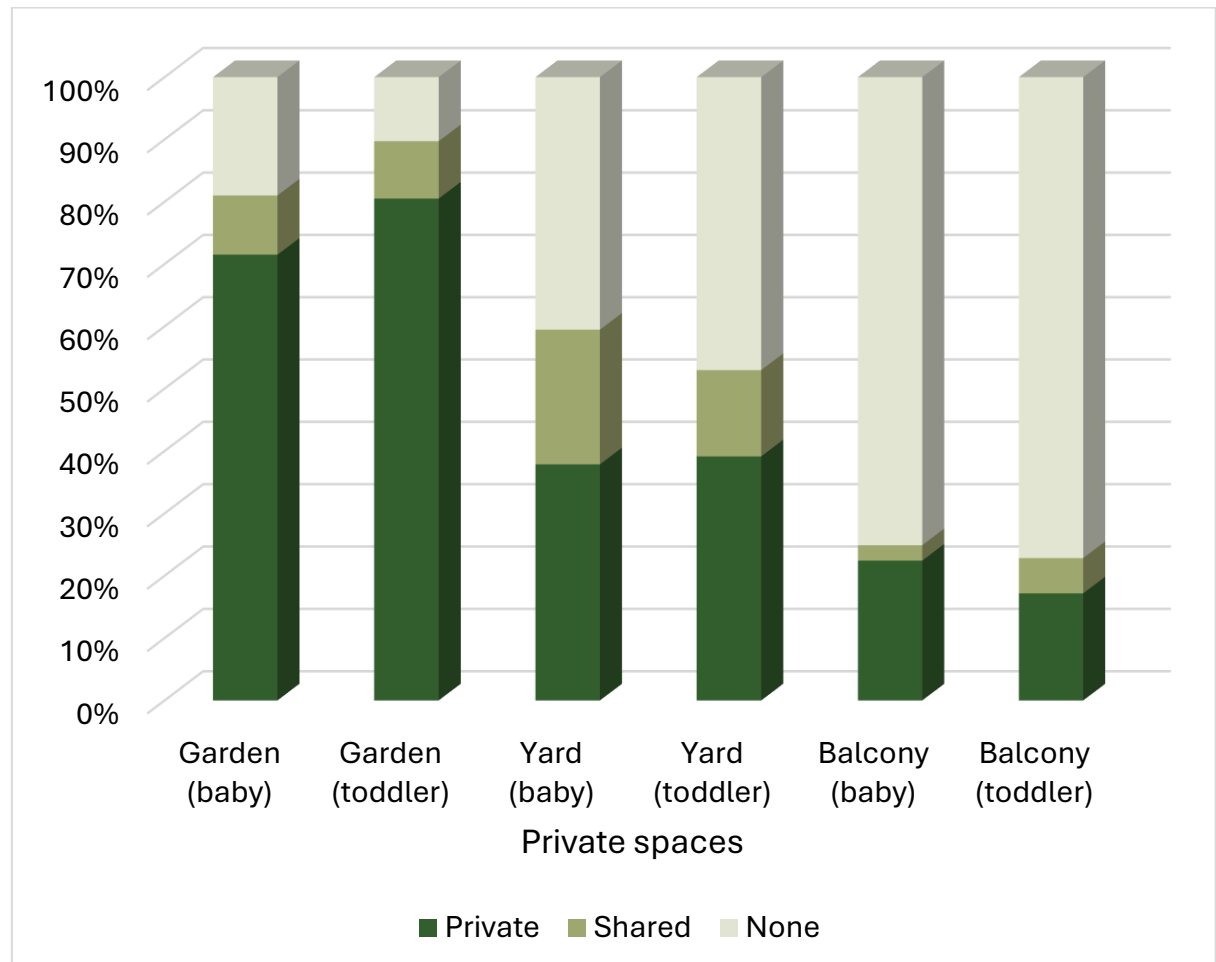


Figure 1: Access to outdoor spaces at home⁷

Although most families have access to some private outside space, some did not. Just under 5% can access only a shared outdoor space whilst a similar percentage indicate they have no access to outdoor spaces at home.

We applied for a balcony so we could have more access to outside space, but our application was declined. We recognise the need for our toddler to go out more and so feel we need to move house.

(Upper Norwood, parent of toddler)

⁷ Respondents could tick multiple responses. The percentage is of total respondents for this question.

2.2.2 Outdoor spaces outside the home

Parents access a variety of outdoor spaces with their child and favourite places to visit include parks, playgrounds and 'anywhere with ducks!' Playgrounds and wooded areas are more likely to be visited with toddlers, whilst visiting coasts, farms, wildlife parks and zoos are more favoured by parents with babies.

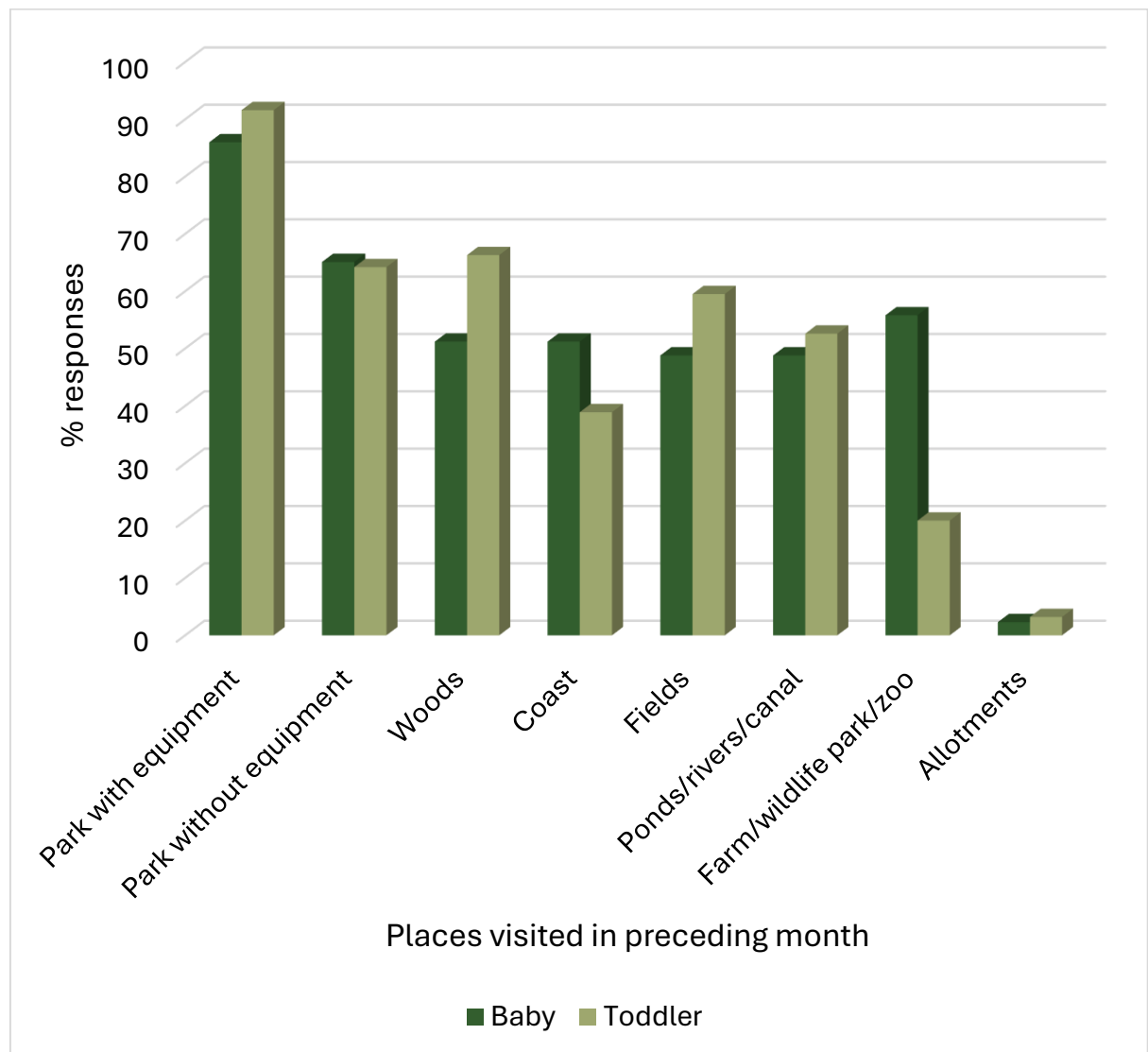


Figure 2: Outdoor spaces visited in the last month

2.2.3 Frequency and duration of time spent outdoors with babies and toddlers

Most parents spend time outdoors with their children several times a week or more. However, almost a quarter (23%) of parents' report that they spend time outdoors at home with their baby once a week or less. The figure drops to 16% for visits to outdoor environments beyond the home suggesting some parents find it easier to access these spaces.

We don't have any safe spaces at home to play outside - we live in a flat and the outdoor space is a car park. If we had outdoor space, I would encourage the use of this

(Bournemouth, parent of a toddler)

I wish we had an easily accessible garden, but we are on the 4th floor and our neighbours are mean, so we prefer to go outdoors to the park, heath

(Blackheath and Kidbrooke, parent of a toddler)

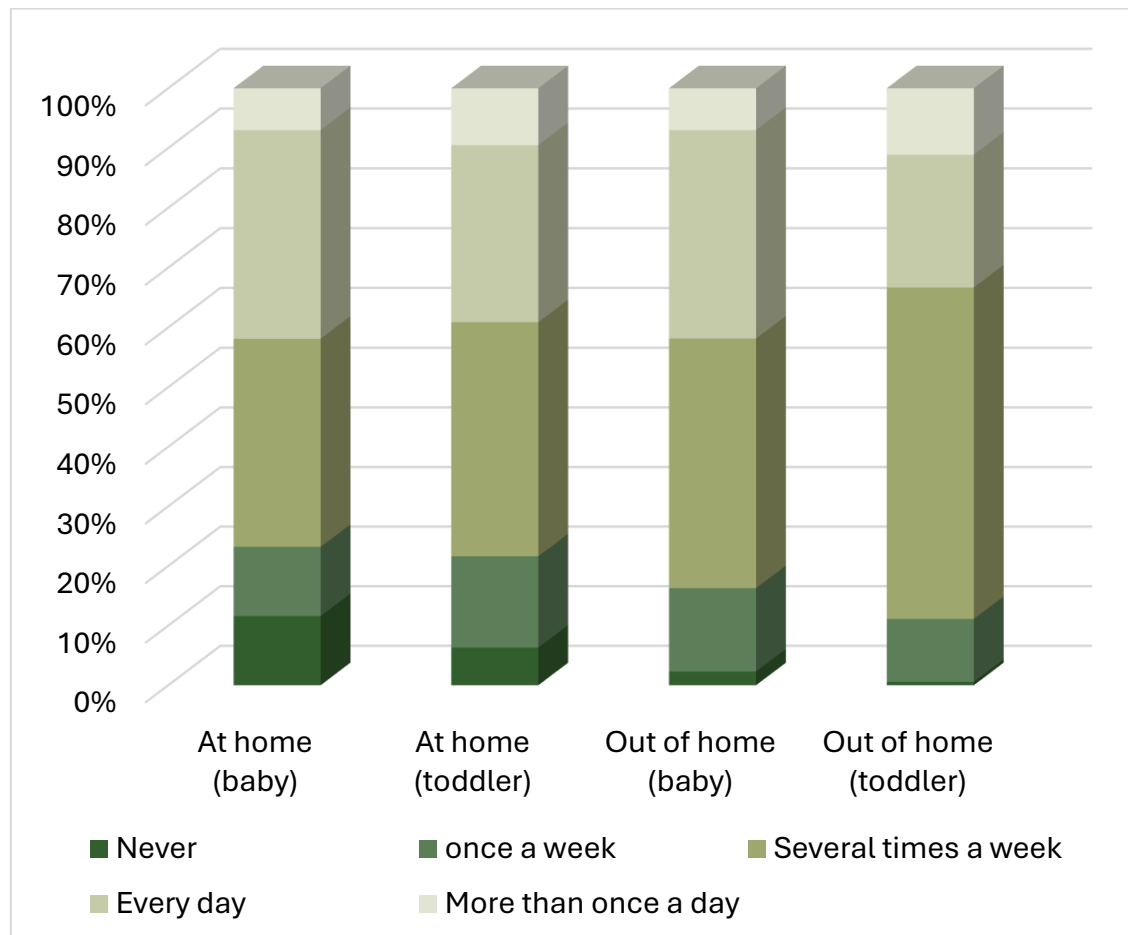


Figure 3: Frequency of time spent outdoors with child

The most often reported amount of time parents spend outdoors with their baby or toddler is 1-5 hours per week.

Some parents reported spending no time outdoors with their child outdoors (particularly babies at home), whilst a minority spend more than 11 hours a week (particularly toddlers out of the home).

		No time	Up to an hour	1-5 hours	6-10 hours	More than 11 hours	Total % (N)
At home	Baby	11.6% (5)	20.9% (9)	46.5% (20)	20.9% (9)	-	100% (43)
	Toddler	6.4% (12)	21.8% (41)	52.7% (99)	11.7% (22)	7.4% (14)	100% (188)
Out of home	Baby	2.3% (1)	2.3% (1)	55.8% (24)	27.9% (12)	11.6% (5)	100% (43)
	Toddler	0.5% (1)	2.1% (4)	50.8% (96)	28.0% (53)	18.5% (35)	100% (189)

Table 4: Number of hours per week spent outdoors

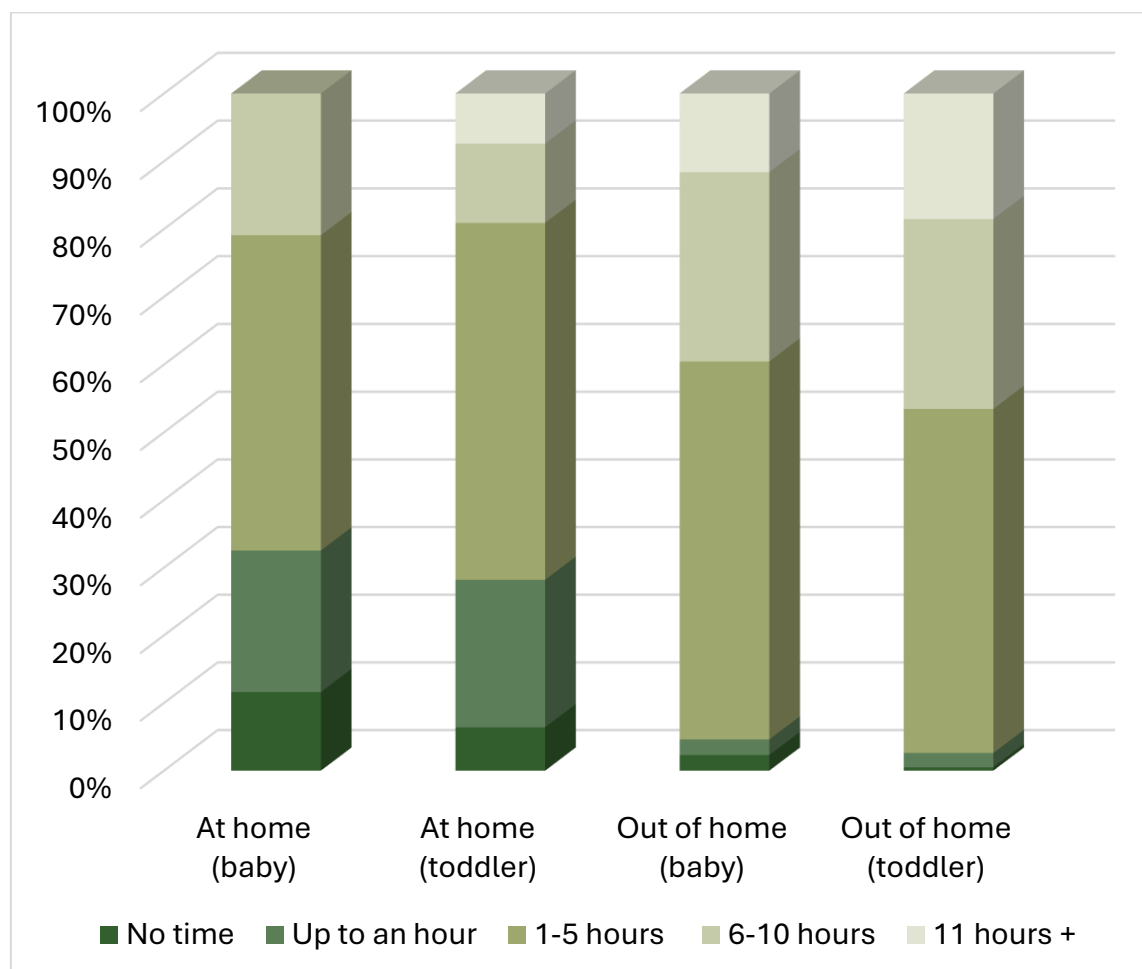


Figure 4: Number of hours per week spent outdoors with child

Almost three quarters of parents (73%) said they would like to spend more time outdoors; this figure was higher for parents with babies (77%) than parents with toddlers.

There are a range of constraints that limit parents spending time outdoors with their babies and toddlers including (in order of reported significance) weather, time, lack of appropriate facilities/equipment, accessibility, safety and health concerns.

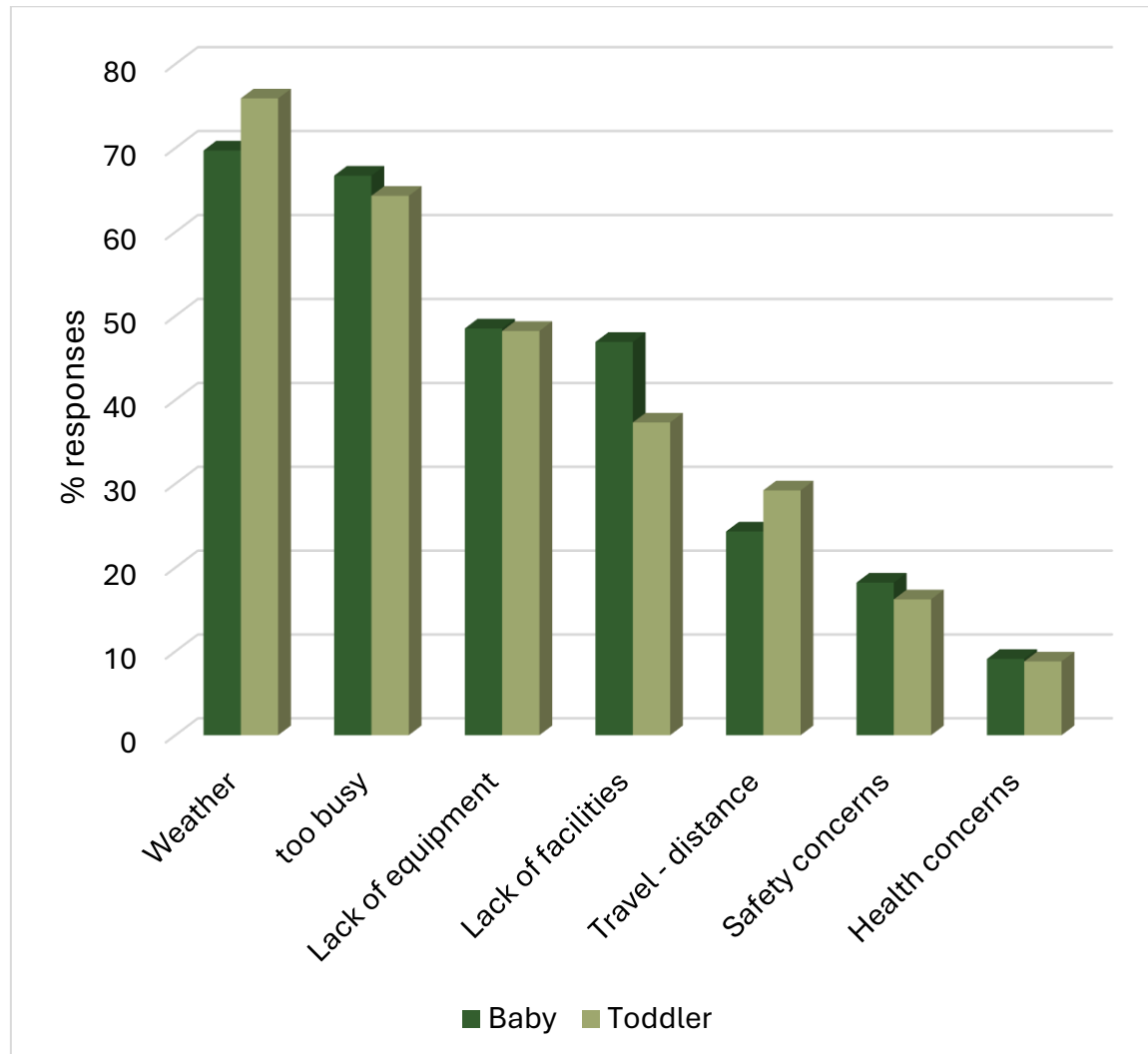


Figure 5: Barriers to going outdoors with babies and toddlers (Strongly Agreed and Agreed)

I would like to share two of the challenges of raising a toddler in an urban environment and trying to get them outdoors, in case this study is ever able to influence local council decisions for early years: traffic and dog mess

(Edinburgh, parent of a toddler)

The nursery is seen as having a significant role in providing access to outdoor environments for babies and toddlers by working parents:

In the winter months especially, we lack the daylight hours/time when we arrive home from work and it's our child's bedtime so it's hard to get out unless it's the weekend or days off. Nursery provides the much-needed opportunity for our son to get out in the daytime when we can't do it.

(Romsey, parent of a toddler)

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I would love for my child to spend more time outdoors at nursery. She is always happy when she is outdoors.

(Blackheath and Kidbrooke, parent of a toddler)

It's really important to me, especially as my kids both were/are in full time nursery, that the nursery promotes outdoor play and fresh air WHATEVER the weather.

(Saffron Walden, parent of a toddler)

2.3 Spending time outdoors with babies and toddlers

For many parents, spending time outdoors with their baby/toddler is part of their everyday routines and may be with other children (30%), family members (84%), friends (45%), alone (40%) or with pets (20%)

We walk the dog, go to the swings and slide, look for ducks on the river, have a picnic,

(Colchester, parent of a baby)

I talk to my baby about what we can see if she is awake. If she is asleep, it gives me opportunity to relax in nature or have a coffee and read a book outside

(Tower Hamlets, parent of a baby)

Of the sensory opportunities being outside offers, parents particularly recognise the value of touching, looking and listening to nature.

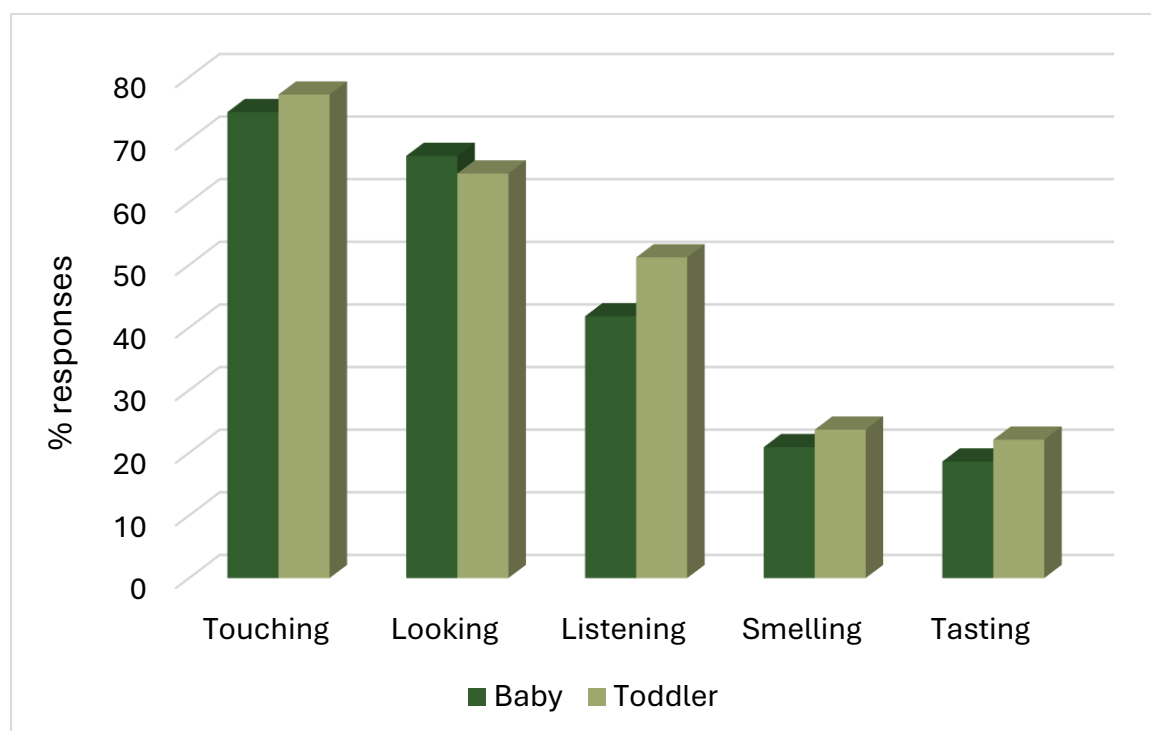


Figure 6: How parents engage their babies and toddlers outdoors

Parents commented how much their child enjoys being able to engage their senses when being outside.

I try and encourage my little boy to enjoy spending time outdoors, in the garden or local areas. I like him to get his hands dirty, play with safe plants and help me do the gardening.

(Sudbury, parent of a toddler)

My daughter loves being outdoors and it is an excellent sensory experience. She's curious about sounds and the wind and loves collecting leaves/sticks etc...

(Tadworth, parent of a toddler)

He likes to watch the birds and any other wildlife around us, he likes to watch what they do and how they move, we also touch the plants gently and focus on the colours and textures when they're in our hands.

(Romsey, parent of a toddler)

Look at the trees. listen to the sounds. Say "good morning" to things. Notice colours.

(West Hampstead, parent of a baby)

The first time we visited a park my baby was scared to touch the grass and didn't touch the ground at all. He always kept his hand high up despite our efforts to let him touch a leaf or a plant. However, as time passed by, he started to love the grass...

(North London, parent of a baby)

There is a sense of the agency of the baby/toddler in indicating their desire to be outdoors

She likes to have me close, usually holding her hand, but given that caveat she's quite adventurous. She quite often asks to have her shoes or wellies put on so that she can go outside.

(Ely, parent of a toddler)

He loves it and would be outside all day if he could.

(Kilburn, parent of a toddler)

Does not want to go back inside. As soon as the wellies are out, we don't have a chance! Usually, we have to bribe him to come in from the garden with the prospect of a snack.

(Romsey, parent of a toddler)

Parents note changes in behaviour and demeanour of their child when outdoors. Many babies and toddlers appear to be happier and calmer, and parents report that they are more observant outdoors and may be more physically active (particularly toddlers).

Thematic analysis of qualitative comments shows that parents associate these four key qualities – happy, observant, calm and active – with their baby/toddler when they are outdoors. Table 5 evidences these qualities using selected comments from the whole dataset.

Quality	Examples from qualitative responses
Happy	<i>He's happy and adventurous</i> (Rochester, parent of a toddler) <i>My child is happy and deeply engaged, he needs no guidance and will explore for hours independently</i> (Cambridge, parent of a toddler) <i>If she's having a hard day, we know taking her to the garden or play park is a total reset and she is instantly happier.</i> (Edinburgh, parent of a toddler) <i>They are happier, they have more freedom which again makes them happier</i> (Godalming, parent of a baby) <i>Their much happier and confident than indoors. They're more likely to explore and try new things. It helps improve their motor skills</i> (Barnet, parent of a toddler) <i>My baby loves birds, and he loves the swings at the playground. He loves to be outside looking at the world, and I can clearly see him full of joy when we go outside</i> (Peterborough, parent of a toddler)
Observant	<i>He goes from play mode to watch mode</i> (Hove, parent of a baby) <i>Our child loves to observe and stays very quiet but restful</i> (Cambridge, parent of a toddler) <i>She loves following bees from flower to flower.</i> (Reigate, parent of a toddler) <i>He is very vocal when he sees birds and other animals, I like to imitate the sounds they make. He enjoys touching/picking up things and studying them and showing them to us. We discuss what these things are, and he repeats the names to us</i> (Romsey, parent of a toddler)
Calm	<i>She is more calm and can regulate emotions better</i> (Winchester, parent of a toddler) <i>Makes them both a lot more relaxed, nicer to be around as in mood (my son has some extra needs)</i> (Godalming, parent of a baby)
Active	<i>My toddler is very active and would rather climb or run exploring her surroundings</i> (Saffron Walden, parent of a toddler) <i>He loves having the freedom to run around</i> (Winchester, parent of a toddler)

Table 5: Parents observations about their baby/toddler outdoors

2.4 Attitudes and beliefs about the outdoors and nature

2.4.1 Nature Connection

We asked parents questions about their attitudes and beliefs about nature using the Nature Connection Index⁸ which asks parents to respond to 6 statements where 1 is completely agree and 7 is completely disagree. Parents of both babies and toddlers had positive attitudes toward nature, with only small differences between them.

Spending time in nature is slightly more important to parents of toddlers Conversely, parents of babies were more likely to agree, when compared to those of toddlers, that 'treating nature with respect' and that 'being in nature made them happy' when compared to parents of toddlers.

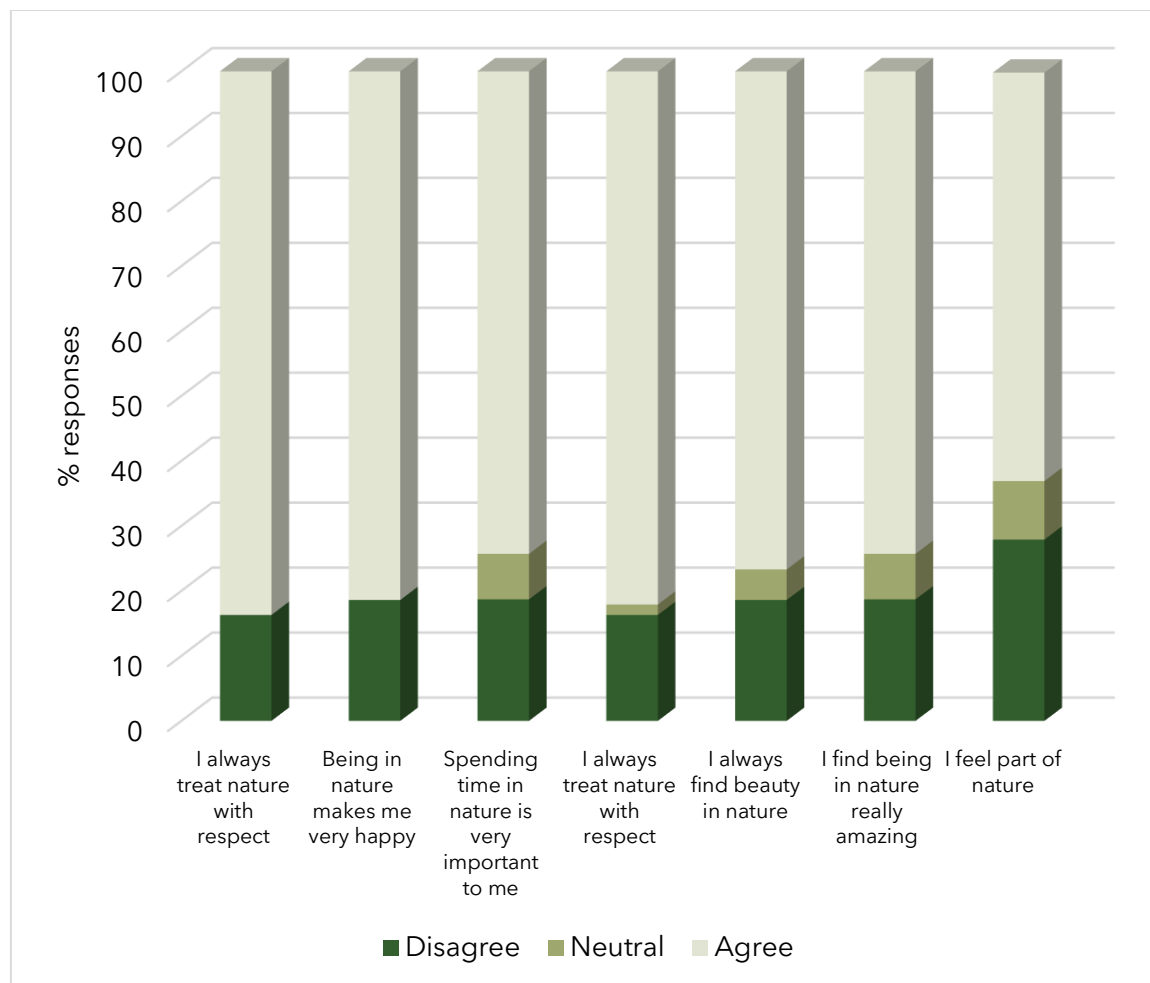


Figure 7: Attitudes to nature of parents of babies

⁸ Richardson, M., Hunt, A., Hinds, J., Bragg, R., Fido, D., Petronzi, D., Barbett, L., Clitherow, T. and White, M. (2019) 'A measure of nature connectedness for children and adults: Validation, performance, and insights', *Sustainability*. 11 (12), p. 3250. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11123250>.

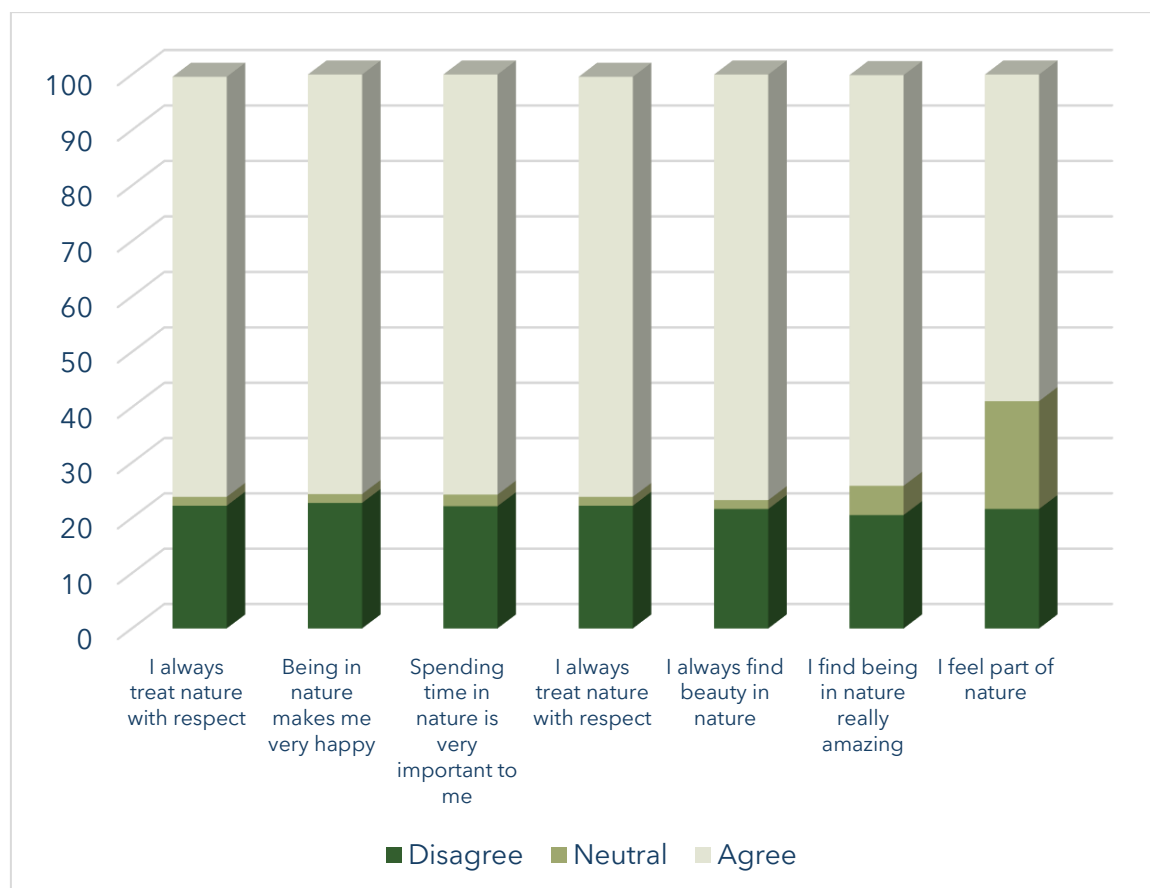


Figure 8: Attitudes to nature of parents of toddlers

2.4.2 Importance of spending time outdoors with babies and toddlers

Nearly all parents believe it is important for children to spend time outdoors and in nature. However, it is seen as more important for toddlers than it is for babies to spend time outdoors.

	Very important	Quite important	Neither important nor unimportant	Quite unimportant	Very unimportant
Babies	70.8% (165)	25.3% (59)	2.1% (5)	0.4% (1)	1.3% (3)
Toddlers	92.3% (215)	5.6% (13)	0.4% (1)	0.4% (1)	1.3% (3)

Table 6: Parental attitudes to the importance of spending time outdoors for babies and toddlers

When outside parents feel the priority for toddlers is being active (83.7%) whilst for babies it is being healthy (88.4%) and sensory engagement (86%). Being sociable is less significant, in part because parents feel that the nursery offers this.

We believe playing and being outdoors is integral to healthy child development.

(Guildford, parent of a toddler)

As she attends nursery social aspect outdoors in the evenings / weekends are nice but not essential for her.

(Aberdeen, parent of a toddler)

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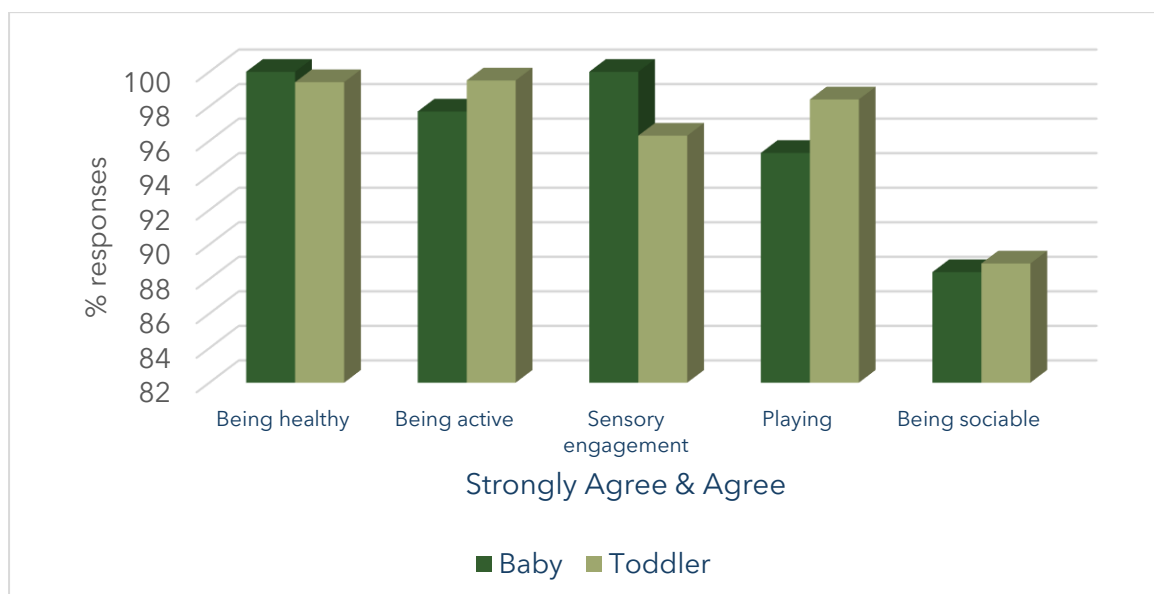


Figure 9: Parental perceptions of the benefits of spending time outdoors for babies and toddlers

2.5 The outdoors as a place where family memories are made

Parents took the opportunity to comment on how much their child enjoys being outside, but the time spent enriched their lives and produced special memories for them and their parents.

I think many of my key memories with my little boy have been outdoors! We recently went to the zoo and had our lunch watching the orangutans, shared an ice cream in the sun and he went on a ride on train for the first time. He really enjoyed touching the steering wheel and was bobbing up and down with excitement. He tried to kiss the steering wheel and kept shaking his head when I asked if he was finished. He hasn't done this much yet so was lovely to see him telling me he was having so much fun he wasn't ready for it to be finished!

(Sudbury, parent of a toddler)

We went to an amazing park and the weather was beautiful, so we took our socks and shoes off and felt the grass. He was so happy and was running around smiling and laughing. It's really important to me that he spends time outside.

(Brighton, parent of a toddler)

Stomping in puddles is a big favourite with all the family.

(Guildford, parent of baby)

Spent a gorgeous day at a local farm park yesterday and my son would have stayed all day long if he could. I want my kids to be outside as much as possible because I cannot provide them a garden to roam free in on a daily basis.

(Horley, parent of a toddler)

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3. Conclusion and recommendations

This report highlights how much the parents of babies and toddlers attending ECEC value spending time outdoors and in nature. There is evidence of the Froebelian principle of unity and connectedness in their understanding that spending time outdoors can support the development of mutually beneficial relationships between oneself, others, nature and the wider world from birth.

Although they express a desire to spend more time outside with their children themselves, a combination of lifestyle and structural and environmental factors can make it challenging to do this in practice, particularly during winter months.

Nurseries are perceived by parents to play a key role in ensuring that babies and toddlers get regular access to outdoor environments to support their health and wellbeing. This is particularly important for families who lack access to appropriate and safe outdoor spaces at home. It is not just being outdoors that is important, it is also the opportunities to engage with nature that parents value.

Understanding the outdoor experiences that babies and toddlers have with their families is a rich starting point for developing more inclusive outdoor pedagogies in settings. Further research is needed to understand how these experiences may be influenced by social and cultural factors.



Appendix 1: Attitudes to the outdoors and nature survey⁹

Attitudes to the outdoors and nature

Introduction

This survey is part of ongoing research conducted by Canterbury Christ Church University and the Open University in conjunction with the Froebel Trust. The aim is to understand how families spend time outdoors with their babies and toddlers and their perceptions of the benefits.

By 'outdoors' we mean open or green spaces in and around your home, town and city, including the countryside, coast, rivers, canals and ponds.

To complete this survey, you must be a parent or guardian with at least one child aged birth to two, attending a Bright Horizons nursery. It should take no longer than 10-15 minutes.

We are defining a baby as a child between birth to 12 months and a toddler between 13-24 months old.

We won't share any personal information you provide with your Nursery / Bright Horizons. The anonymised results / outcome of the research will be shared as outlined in the participant information sheet, which can be found by clicking on the link below.

[Click here for more participant information for this study](#)

The survey will close by 30th April 2025.

All eligible entries will then be entered into a free prize draw. Three lucky winners will receive a set of Community Playthings Mini Unit Blocks worth £115

To be eligible, you must complete the full survey and provide your name, address and mobile number (you will not be contacted for any other purpose)

Your name:

Your Mobile:

Your address:

I confirm that I have read and understand the participant information for the above project and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that any personal information that I provide to the researchers will be kept strictly confidential and in line with the University Research Privacy Notice

I understand that my participation is voluntary*

☐ Agree

⁹ The survey here is presented in an abridged version for ease of reference.

Section 1: About you

Research shows that access to the outdoors can be influenced by where you live, your age and your ethnic/cultural background. By answering these questions, it will help us to understand more about the factors that affect the outdoor experiences of babies and toddlers.

How many children do you have? (Please tick all which apply)

- ☐ 1 baby (0-12 months)
- ☐ More than one baby (0-12 months)
- ☐ 1 toddler (13-23 months)
- ☐ More than one toddler (13-23 months)
- ☐ 1 or more children over 24 months

What is the age (**in months**) of your youngest child who attends the nursery?

(this is the child we will be asking you to think about when answering all subsequent questions)

Age in months:

On what basis, do they attend nursery?

- ☐ Full time
- ☐ Part time

What is the **name and location** (town or area) of the **Bright Horizons Nursery** your child attends?

To help us understand more about your proximity to local outdoor spaces, please provide your residential **postcode**. *(this information will not be used to identify or contact you).*

Your Postcode:

How would you describe your ethnic group? *[Drop down]*

Section 2: The outdoor spaces you access

Outdoor spaces include public spaces available to other people and private spaces attached to your home.

Which of the following outdoor spaces do you have access to at home? *(Please tick all which apply)*

	Private	Shared	None
Balcony	☐	☐	☐
Garden	☐	☐	☐
Yard (paved, concrete, tarmac etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Other (please state):			

In the last month, which, if any public outdoor spaces have you visited with your child?
(please tick all which apply)

- ☐ Allotments
- ☐ Coast
- ☐ Farm/wildlife park/zoo
- ☐ Fields
- ☐ Grassed parks with play equipment for children
- ☐ Grassed parks without play equipment for children
- ☐ Playground (non-grassed)
- ☐ Ponds/rivers/canal
- ☐ Wooded areas

Other (please state)

Thinking about the places you most regularly access with your child, who, if anyone, goes with you?

(please tick all which apply)

- ☐ My other children
- ☐ My friend(s)
- ☐ Other family members
- ☐ Organised group
- ☐ Pets
- ☐ We go alone

Does your child have a favourite outdoor place? If so, where?

In a typical week, **how often** do you go outdoors with your child?

	Never	Once a week	Several times a week	Every day	More than once a week
At home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Out of home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

In a typical week, how **much time** do you spend outdoors with your child?

	No time	Up to an hour a week	Between 1-5 hours	Between 6-10 hours	More than 11 hours
At home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Out of home	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How do you feel about the amount of time you spend outdoors with your child?

- ☐ I would like to spend more time outdoors with my child
- ☐ I would like to spend less time outdoors with my child
- ☐ I do not want to change the amount of time I spend outdoors with my child

What, if anything, prevents you from spending more time outdoors with your child?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am too busy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health concerns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of appropriate equipment for under twos	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of facilities (toilet, changing)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Safety concerns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Travel - distance from home or lack of accessible travel options	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Weather	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Any additional comments

Section 3: Attitudes and Beliefs

People have different beliefs and attitudes toward nature, and this can affect whether and how they choose to spend time outdoors. There are no right or wrong answers, we are simply interested in understanding your views.

How do you feel about nature?

1 = Completely Agree. 7 = Completely disagree

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I always find beauty in nature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I always treat nature with respect	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being in nature makes me very happy	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Spending time in nature is very important to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I find being in nature really amazing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel part of nature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How important do you think it is for babies and toddlers to spend time outside?

	Very important	Quite important	Neither important or unimportant	Quite unimportant	Very unimportant
Babies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Toddlers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please explain your answer

Thinking of your child, how important are the following when you take them outdoors?

	Very important	Quite important	Neither important or unimportant	Quite unimportant	Very unimportant
Being healthy (fresh air, sunlight, quality of sleep)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being active (physical development, coordination and skills)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being sociable (friendship and communication)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Playing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Experiencing nature (sensory engagement)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

Section 4: What do you do when you are outdoors?

When spending time outdoors with your child, what do they like to do?

When spending time outdoors with your child, how much do they like to do the following things?

	Very much	Somewhat	Not at all	Not applicable
Listening (e.g. to the wind, birds, sounds of leaves)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Looking closely (e.g. to clouds, leaves, trees)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Smelling (e.g. flowers, herbs)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Touching (e.g.
sticks, pine cones,
grass)

☐☐☐☐

Tasting (e.g. edible
plants, fruits)

☐☐☐☐

Section 5: Additional Comments

Is there anything else you would like to share with us about your outdoor experiences with your child?

For example, you could tell us the last time you visited an outdoor space and made a memory with your child.

