

01 Health and safety procedures

01.5 Forest School

Our Forest School sessions operate in accordance with policy 01.5 and all other policies (01-10) implemented for the safe and smooth operation of Ascott-under-Wychwood

Preschool

Supervision of children at Forest School

All parents sign a separate form to allow their child to attend Forest School. The Forest School Leader takes out first aid equipment to every session. There will always be a minimum of 3 adults at a Forest School session. Children are supervised at all times. Extra staffing is provided for those who need 1:1 supervision.

Safeguarding

All current staff hold a valid DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. At annual staff appraisals and supervision meetings, the supervisor checks that circumstances have not changed within the year.

Volunteers/temporary staff members/ Committee members used as a backup all hold a valid DBS check - which the Health & Safety Officer ensures has been obtained for work. If there are any allegations about a child, member of staff or volunteer the setting must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Jo Lloyd 01865 815956, 07584 581180 or email: jo.lloyd@oxfordshire.gov.uk. See safeguarding file for further details.

Health & Safety/Risk Management

During the session the Forest School Leader is responsible for issues involving health and safety. The landowner has public liability insurance for the estate; a copy of the certificate is kept in the Forest School handbook. All Forest School Leaders are trained in 16 hour Forest School First Aid and Level 3 Paediatric First Aid (12 hours). There is always at least one Forest School Leader present.

Risk Assessment

All risk assessments for Forest School are in the Forest School Handbook. These are reviewed regularly and when necessary.

Fire Safety and Evacuation

If there is any concern of an uncontrolled fire during a Forest School session all participants will leave the site immediately, assembling in an open glade area away from the trees. The Emergency services are contacted.

Recording & Reporting of Accidents & Incidents

If any accidents/incidents occur the Forest School leader will inform the Supervisor/Chairperson. A report will be completed and it will be acted on, evaluated and procedures reviewed if necessary. The report will be filed in the accident/incident book. The Supervisor/Chairperson will notify Ofsted if necessary.

In an emergency, a contingency plan will be worked out, with all adults in the group taking on specific roles.

This should include who:

- assesses and deals with injuries
- looks after the other participants
- informs base contact/parents/emergency services
- directs emergency services
- accompanies participant to hospital
- arranges transport back to the setting

The following points should also be considered:

- An adult accompanying a child to hospital should be known to them, and arrangements should be made to meet the child's parents at hospital if possible.
- If a participant requires emergency hospital attention, then the rest of the group should wait for an ambulance to reach them.
- All necessary information will be gathered about the injured person for the emergency services if necessary.
- A person trained in first aid will tend any minor injuries and decide on further action if needed. The other adults in the group will look after the rest of the children. Parents would be informed.
- If it is a minor accident it should be written in the Pre-school accident book and the child's parents/carers informed, signing the accident book at the end of the session.

Lost Children

On discovering a child/children is/are missing:-

- All children are called back to base camp where a staff member will remain with them. A register is taken and a head count is completed to ascertain how many and who is missing?
- The Forest School Leader searches the site inside the boundary rope and then the immediate vicinity outside, calling the missing child's name. Report back to the staff member/volunteer and carry on with the search, keeping in contact with the staff member.
- The staff member who is with the children will call Matt Childs (Estate Manager- 07760198005) to ask if he can arrange a search of the area.
- The Police/Pre-school Supervisor (01993 832671) are called to advise who is missing. Ask the person in charge at Pre-school to contact the relevant parent/s – asking them to come to the Bruern Estate, park by the gate on the Bruern Road & wait for a member of staff/emergency contact person to meet them.
- A full search of the area will be conducted by available adults.
- The remaining children will be driven back to Pre-school.
- The Supervisor will contact the chairperson and report the incident to the appropriate bodies.

Uncollected Child

Normal procedures for uncollected children would apply.

Assessment/recording & reporting:

Any observations by staff are updated on to the Tapestry online learning journal. A register is recorded each session for children, staff and volunteers. A record of the safety sweep at the site is also recorded. Any concerns about the site are reported to the Estate Manager.

Behaviour

Children are supervised at all times and are reminded of their own and each others' safety during the session. Children under three do not go to Forest School. When necessary a risk assessment may be carried out for an individual child for behaviour.

Communication Strategy

All personal contact and emergency details for children and adults are carried by the Qualified Leader of the Forest School session at all times. These details are also held at Pre-school. All Accompanying adults/visitors have completed "a health form" in case of an emergency which is taken to the site, along with "The Emergency Action Plan". All details about Forest School are kept in the "**Ascott Forest School Handbook**" which is at Pre-school. All communication with Parents/ Volunteers/ Landowners/Helpers for Forest School is through phone calls, texts, newsletters & e-mails, as well as through the website. The Forest School Leader will have a fully charged mobile on them during a forest session; this number is given to all parents/carers of children attending Forest School. The two other adults at Forest School also carry their charged mobiles with them to the site.

Confidentiality (medical records/assessments)

All parents/carers are given an emergency medical treatment form to fill out before their child Starts Forest School. This must be returned before any child can attend Forest School so the leader is aware of any specific allergies or medical conditions beforehand. Any adults attending Forest School including the Leader must complete an Adult Health Form that will be taken to the site & used in an emergency if needed. Any children requiring ongoing medication will be risk assessed and procedures put in place. Parents sign a consent form for giving Piriton in case of an allergic reaction. Parents would be called before administering it. The medication book is updated on return to Pre-school.

Equality of Opportunity

Wherever possible we try to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the requirements of a child with special needs when attending Forest School. A risk assessment is carried out and an extra staff member may be needed for this child to attend the session.

Food & Cooking

Every member of staff has a food hygiene certificate and follows safe procedures accordingly. If a fire is lit for cooking purposes a member of staff supervises at all times. During a session the children will have a snack and hand washing facilities are taken.

Staffing

Forest School is staffed by a minimum of 3 adults including a Forest School Leader.

Toileting

Procedures:

Children are taken to a specific area for toileting purposes, to maintain their privacy. Any solid waste is removed from the site and disposed of appropriately. If a child is in a nappy they will be changed on a tarpaulin for their comfort. Other staff are always within sight.

Tool Use

Staff members will use tools with children on a 1:1 ratio. All tools during the session will be stored safely and children do not have unsupervised access to them.

Transport & Minibus

All necessary safety measures are upheld when using the minibus, the children's safety is paramount. The Minibus is supplied by The Villager and is fully insured and maintained. The drivers are all DBS checked. There is a risk assessment completed for travelling on the bus.

Sustainability

The forest site will have a safety sweep done every week, any erosion or damage to the forest site will be reported. If necessary the site area may need to be moved, allowing the site time to regenerate. The toilet area will be moved every year to minimise any possibility of contamination.

Site Management Policies/Plans

The forest site is within the Bruern Estate, owned by David Astor & managed by the Estate Manager (Matt Childs). A copy of the Estate's Public Liability is held on file at Pre-school and is Updated each year. The Forest School site will be checked by a qualified person as and when necessary e.g. after a storm. The Estate Manager will be informed of the work that needs to be undertaken.

COSHH

Control of substances hazardous to health. At Forest School hand wash is only used under the supervision of a staff member, environmental factors are taken into account when purchasing, using and disposing of soapy water. A data control sheet for soap we use is held in the setting.

Extreme Weather

There are some occasions where it may not be safe or practical to go ahead with a planned forest school session due to extreme weather; in the case of high winds determined by the Bruern Estate Manager to be unsafe, in the case of electrical storm, in the case where driving conditions are considered hazardous, or in the case of extreme cold a session will be cancelled. Children will then attend normal preschool session.

Manual Handling

Correct handling techniques must be followed to minimise the risks of injury. A variety of injuries may result from poor manual handling and staff must all be aware and adhere to the Preschool's guidance. The Forest School Leader is responsible for modelling safe manual handling to the children and assessing their age and ability whether it is safe and appropriate for them to move

loads such as logs or rocks, due to the weight, size and shape, taking into consideration factors such as weather conditions.

Risk Benefit Analysis

Risk assessment is a fundamental part of life and is a skill needed for young people's safety and well-being. The staff have a duty of care towards our children, however, this certainly does not mean not trying something new. Therefore we have a responsibility not only to keep children safe, but also to enable them to learn to manage risks for themselves.

Ascott Preschool recognises that all risks cannot be reduced to nil, therefore risk assessments prioritise the significant risks. Significant risks are those which pose risk of serious injury, chronic injury, disability or death, or risks that are overly common in interrupting our staff and clients normal work. For all activities, the Forest School Leader will dynamically assess risks and put in place control measures and record as required, but always within agreed and recorded RBAs. Concerns, changes in risk management practice or minor injuries that are seen by staff to be significant should be reported to the Forest School Leader and the Ascott Preschool manager.

Welfare

Clothing

Forest School takes place outdoors all day, come rain or shine! To ensure our children are comfortable and prepared, parents /carers are given a Kit List. Waterproof trousers are provided by Ascott Preschool for all participants.

Food and drink

Children will bring a packed lunch and water bottle packed in their named Forest School rucksack. A drink and a biscuit will be provided by staff, taking into account known allergies as well as preferences.

PPE

Safety gloves are available for adults using tools. This will be identified in the activity risk assessment. Welders gauntlets should be worn at all times by adults attending a fire.

Safeguarding

Forest School follow the Preschool safeguarding policies.

Vulnerable Child/Adults Protection

Forest School follow the Preschool safeguarding policies.

Data Protection and personal data handling

We treat any personal information in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act. Under this Act, we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect. Any amendments to this policy will continue to be in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018. In line with the GDPR guidelines as of 25 May 2018, we are committed to protecting data.

Disclosure/accusation

Forest School follow Preschool safeguarding policies and procedures.

Social Media

The preschool does not have a social media account.

Visitor Protocol

If there is unwanted attention from a member of the public, the Forest School leader will ask the person to leave the area. If they fail to do so the Forest School Leader will phone the setting and speak to the Manager or Deputy Manager as to the next steps taken. If the situation is causing concern regarding the safety of the children, the police will be phoned. The incident will be logged and shared with the Manager.

Other useful Early Years Alliance publications

- Daily Register and Outings Record (2015)
- Managing Risk (2009)