



Forest School Policy

(To be read in conjunction with the Extra Curricular and Sports activity policy)

EDITION 5

Summary

Forest School offers children learning through experience in a `hands on` manner. Being outdoors provides a healthier lifestyle where the children can develop a positive attitude to learning.

The children will take part in activities using natural resources which will provide them with physical skills and they will learn how to recognise and manage risk.

Learning and playing in local woodland enables the children to develop an inquisitive and positive relationship with the natural environment whilst developing confidence, self esteem and respect in preparation for an ever changing world.

Forest School aims

- To provide an opportunity for individuals to develop, learn and to enjoy themselves.
- To provide a safe and non-threatening environment in which children can take supported risks, make choices and initiate their own learning.
- To provide ways of developing practical life skills in an outdoor environment.
- To develop self-esteem, confidence and a positive disposition to learning through the completion of small, achievable tasks.
- To meet the needs of children with all learning styles.
- To develop communication, social and team working skills.
- To enable children to be independent, self-motivated and considerate.
- To be true to the forest school ethos and approach.
- To develop a secure, happy, inclusive and welcoming environment.
- To provide stimulation and varied learning activities appropriate to the child's needs and stages of development.
- To help each child build independence, self-control and interpersonal skills.
- To help children understand, appreciate and care for the natural environment.



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Our Procedures

How does Forest School operate?

Forest School is a long term process of frequent and regular sessions taking place in a woodland or natural environment which is within reasonable distance of our settings. Each week for 10-12 weeks the same group/s of pre-school children (Maximum 12 per group) take part in Forest School from each setting. The group/s are led by a Forest School leader who has achieved an accredited Level 3 Forest School qualification and specific outdoor first aid training in addition to paediatric first aid. Another member of staff with paediatric first aid training will accompany the group, where possible this will be the same person.

The Forest School site is:

Hinchley Wood Telegraph Hill

Surbiton High Sports Ground

Manor Road South

Esher

KT109AZ

Health and Safety

We believe that Forest School sessions play an important and enriching role in the programme of activities that we provide for the children, however, during such outings the safety of the children remains paramount.

Each Forest school site is visited by a Forest School leader who will assess it`s suitability and a written risk assessment is then completed. Travel too and from is also assessed as part of the Nursery Outings form which is completed for every trip away from the nursery premises. In addition to the general Forest School risk assessment, all activities and any equipment that the children have access to are risk assessed on an individual basis.

All children and staff taking part in Forest School activities must know and abide by the rules, staff will explain to children the aims and objectives of the trip together with what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour and contribution. Staff will discuss any



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potential safety hazards with the children and they will be told to remain within the boundaries of the Forest School area at all times.

Illness, Accidents and other Emergencies

We are committed to encouraging and promoting good health and to dealing efficiently and effectively with any illness, accident or emergency that may arise while the children are in our care, our procedure for incidents such as this form part of the general Forest School risk assessment, as with any accident or incident it must be recorded and the relevant agencies notified if applicable. Please read the forest school risk assessment and related policies for more information.

First aid trained staff and a suitable first aid kit accompany all forest school trips.

Clothing

To ensure that the children are sufficiently protected from the weather and the forest environment we require them to be wearing appropriate clothing and footwear, long sleeves and trousers are essential in summer and winter. There is more information regarding this on our web site.

Forest School leaders will ensure that all children are appropriately dressed before leaving for our Forest School locations.

The Forest School will take place in all weathers unless conditions are extreme. Dicky Birds will supply sun cream and waterproof dungarees for use as appropriate.

Equality and Inclusion

All persons taking part in Forest School are treated equally, we aim to provide a secure environment in which children can flourish and in which all contributions are valid, inclusion is a thread which runs through all of the activities enjoyed by the children at Forest School. In circumstances where children with special educational needs require 1-1 care this will be provided to ensure the safety and welfare of the group during the excursion.

Hand Hygiene

A supply of antibacterial wipes is taken on Forest School outings, hands must always be cleaned after using the toilet, before eating and following activities using natural



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resources/paint/glue etc. (removed info about hand gel as we haven't had it, have always used the wipes)

Toileting

A toilet tent is erected away from eating areas but within clear sight of staff. Children are accompanied when using the portable potty, staff may wait outside the tent to give the child privacy but will check the child frequently. All staff must have DBS and be fully aware of our Safeguarding policy. All waste is put into nappy sacks, hung in a tree out of reach of the children and disposed of in an appropriate bin on the way back to nursery.

Food and Drink

The nursery will provide water (and a warm drink in winter) which will be available to the children throughout the day.

A simple picnic lunch will be made at Forest School using the approved Forest School picnic menu and ingredients list.

Children with allergies will be catered for separately, using appropriate ingredients as per the individuals allergy substitutes list, separate utensils will be used to ensure that there is no risk of cross contamination.

Cancellation of Forest School Outing

Every effort is made to ensure that planned outings take place; however, there may be occasions where the trip has to be cancelled, for example if the Forest School Leader is ill or there are severe weather warnings in place.

If cancellation is unavoidable the Forest School group will take part in specific activities which may take place on or off the nursery premises, please ask the nursery Manager if you would like more information regarding the activities on offer.

Woodland Conservation

One of the principles of Forest School is to promote environmental awareness and encourage sustainability, the children are taught to appreciate, respect and share responsibility for the world around them.



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The Forest School leader and other Forest School staff will ensure that their visits to the woodland area do not have a detrimental effect on the natural environment and they will ensure that all rubbish and belongings are removed after the session.

Linked Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Mobile Phones, Cameras (Any camera enabled device)
- Extra Curricular and Sports activities
- Outings
- Accidents and First Aid
- Sickness and illness
- MPV

To be used in Conjunction with the following Nursery Forms, Documents & Resources

- Forest School risk assessment
- MPV Risk Assessment
- Outings Form
- Forest School Picnic menu (Allergy substitutes list)

Written by	<i>Lisa Turpin</i>
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