

Forest School Policy

The Acorn Nursery School's Equal Opportunities policy sets out clear statements of intent regarding the nursery's approach to Equal Opportunities. We are committed to giving each child every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

Provided below is a list of additional points and measures which relate directly to our Forest School sessions.

We will ensure equality of access for all children. This might include carrying out additional risk assessments for children with challenging behaviour or disability or planning for an additional adult to be present.

We will employ a range of styles, including collaborative learning, so that children can value working together.

We will seek to involve all parents in supporting the child's education.

We will take account of the performance of all children when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets.

We will make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of children.

Designated person responsibilities

Forest School Leader: Rachael Nicholson

First Aiders in setting: All staff

Personal Protective Equipment/appropriate clothing

No person will be permitted to attend Forest School or take part in tool use unless adequate protective clothing is worn:

- Closed toe shoes/boots

- No loose materials or cords

- Waterproofs

- Gloves (to be worn as instructed when using tools)

In cold weather appropriate clothing will comprise of:

- Layers (no all in one suits)

- Waterproof coat and trousers

- Warm socks and boots

- Gloves and hats

In warm weather appropriate clothing will comprise of:

- Sun hat

- Sun cream

In all weathers appropriate clothing will comprise of:

- Long sleeve top

- Full length trousers

- Closed and sturdy footwear

Risk assessment guidelines

A site risk assessment and check will be made prior to every Forest School session. In addition, an activity risk assessment will be established prior to any activity which may require it. Additional risk assessments may be carried out for those children whose medical condition or whose behaviour requires it.

When carrying out risk assessments the Forest School Leader will be looking for:

- Potential hazards and who it may harm

- Worst case scenarios

- Evaluate current level of risk

- Decide on course of action or set of precautions that will be put in place

- Re-evaluate risk after actions and weighing up against benefit of activity

- Inform adults accompanying group and ensure they have read risk assessment's/actions.

- Regularly monitor and review each risk assessment

Poor weather procedure

During severe weather we will not attend forest school but endeavour to carry out inside activities such as sensory/team games, tracking and so on.

Severe weather includes:

- High winds

- Thunderstorms

- Extreme cold

The manager and the Forest School Leader will make this decision using the met office forecasts.

During wet weather a shelter will be erected immediately, or before the session, by a trained adult to ensure a safe, dry area for the children.

Behaviour

Please refer to the settings policy regarding our general approach to behaviour management. In the case of unwanted behaviour at forest school the Forest School Leader or key person assisting will:

1. Talk to the child involved
2. Remove peers if necessary
3. Call for help from setting
4. Supervise and monitor behaviour
5. Log incidents and inform parents/guardians
6. Create risk assessment if necessary

Serious incident

1. First aid / Emergency procedures to be followed
2. Remain with casualty and remove peers in group from situation, ensuring they are safe.
3. Immediately notify setting
4. Report to Ofsted, RIDDOR and Early Years

First aid, Health and Safety Policy

The Acorn Nursery School's Health and Safety policies set out clear statements of intent regarding their approach to the health and safety of its children, staff and visitors to the setting. Additional points which relate directly to forest school are as follows:

A named and trained Forest School Leader will be in charge and have duty of care during each session. However any and all adult helpers are to take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety and well being of all children attending each session.

All adult helpers are to read any relevant documents.

The Forest School Leader will ensure they have means to contact the setting.

The Forest School Leader will be responsible for maintenance and checking of tools prior to each use.

The Forest School Leader will be responsible for training the children to use the tools and equipment safely and appropriately. Ratios when using tools will be 1:1 with the exception of whittling with potato peelers, which will be 1:2.

A well equipped first aid kit will be on site whenever it is in use and can be utilised by all staff.

All staff attending will hold a current paediatric first aid certificate.

Any accidents or first aid administered, however minor, will be recorded on an accident or incident form by a member of staff and reviewed and signed by the parents/careers.

Details of any allergies or medical conditions relevant to participants should be made known to the Forest School leader and other attending staff.

Children will be counted out and counted in when moving from site to setting and vice versa.

Parent communication and involvement

Any parent is welcome to help with forest school sessions providing all relevant procedures have been read and compliance agreed.

All parents of children attending forest school will be asked to read the handbook and sign a consent form.

Policies, procedures and risk assessments will be available to read on request.