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LITTLE EXPLORERS FOREST SCHOOL MAGICAL ADVENTURES HANDBOOK

OUR HANDBOOK WHICH INCLUDES;

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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WHAT IS FOREST SCHOOLS AT LITTLE EXPLORERS NURSERY?

Forest Schools is an ongoing programme aimed to develop and build the confidence through supporting self-esteem for all the learners in our setting.

We follow the Forest School ethos of six principles which is their criteria for good practice;



1. Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a natural environment.
2. Forest School natural environment supports the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
4. Forest School offers learners the opportunities to take supported risks appropriate to their environment and to themselves.
5. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
6. Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

For more information see <http://www.forestschoollassociation.org>

At Little Explorers Forest School Nursery, we encourage learners to have hands on experiences and challenges, to discover new magical adventures in our natural environment and to explore who they are and their place in our world. We are deeply passionate that

- children are given the right exposure to risk and freedom;
- they can receive support and advice;
- all children are holistically nurtured and equally valued.

We will do this by facilitating and modelling magical, positive experiences and adventures through story and games, by being at one and connecting with nature. We will lead and practice in a non-judgmental way, where every child and adult in our setting is equal and where everyone in our community gets the same opportunities to achieve and experience. We aim to build resilience for children through raising and securing strong self-esteem at an early age in order for them to be able to manage challenges in life as they grow up.

Self-esteem is very important to children in order for them to achieve their goals in life. By supporting self-esteem through forest schools we can also increase positive brain development, allowing children to learn and make good decisions throughout their lives. We are able to encourage and teach higher levels of thinking through trial and error and problem solving.

We can achieve all this by giving your children magical adventures and experiences!

Forest Schools magical adventures will be led by Gillian Lee & Stacey Trigg Dudley (qualified Forest School Level 3 practitioner) and supported by assistants on duty on the day.



DAILY OPERATING PROCEDURES

Our Forest School setting is located on school grounds and there are no additional travel restrictions to our location. The School is located next to a main road where cars and buses can use. There is also a pavement by the road for those who walk to setting.

Before a Forest School Session:

1. GL/STD to carry out a daily risk assessment of the area and take any necessary action to ensure the site is safe before use.
2. GL/STD to check the resources and tools.
3. GL/STD to provide activity risk assessment to all staff and volunteers at the session, to ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of any hazards associated with an activity and the measures in place to control the risk.
4. GL/STD to brief staff on structure of session and their responsibilities.
5. Children and adults to change into appropriate clothing and footwear.

During a Forest School Session:

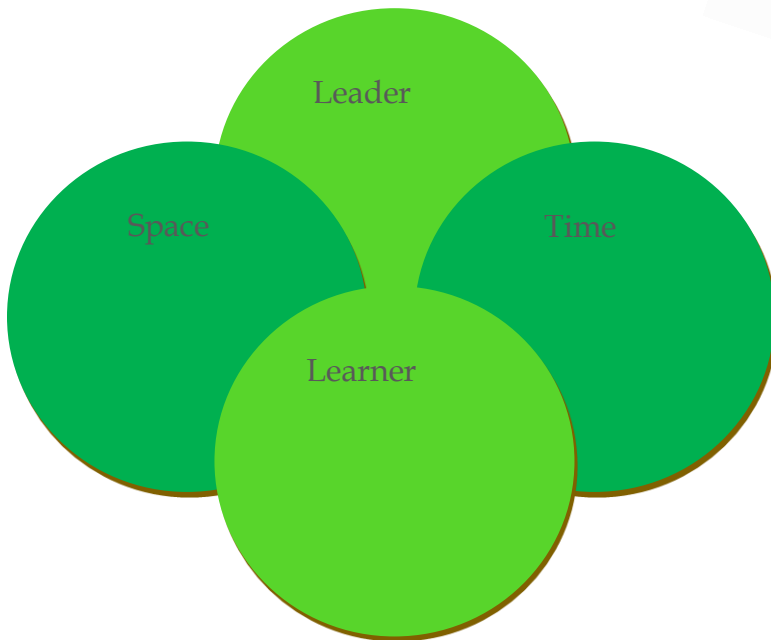
1. GL/STD to explain shape of the session.
2. GL/STD to Lead with a game.
3. GL/STD to Recap on rules and boundaries.
4. GL/STD and staff to undertake ongoing risk assessments and observations.
5. GL/STD to end session with reflection game.

After a Forest School Session:

1. GL/STD to ensure all resources and tools are cleaned and stored safely.
2. GL/STD to evaluate, discuss observations and plan next steps with support staff.

PLANNING, OBSERVATIONS AND EVALUATIONS...

Part of the Forest School ethos is that the experiences are Learner-led therefore, Leaders need to be able to accurately and effectively observe, plan and evaluate for present as well as future sessions. The long-term Forest School Planning Mandala depicts the essential criteria for this as below:



The 4 bubbles within the Forest School Mandala encompass the full ethos of Forest School. Observations will be made by the child's Key Person and/or overseen by a qualified Leader who is present at Forest School Sessions. Observations will be made on individual children over the Forest School session/s to gain an accurate picture of the individual children's interests, level of development and overarching long term goals. These observations will be used to adapt, inform, and evaluate experiences of individual children to ensure that the maximum potential for learning and participation may be achieved. Observations will be published on the Little Explorers Tapestry site (once consent is gained) in order that parents are able to share in these experiences, offering both the opportunity for parents to engage with the Key Person as well as talk freely to their children about their experiences.

RISK MANAGEMENT



“The more risks you allow your children to make, the better they learn to look after themselves”

by Roald Dahl

WHY?

Research proves that children need and want to take risks. Therefore, within our Forest School we support the children to learn how to manage risk.

Through this they will benefit and gain in new skills, confidence and learn to better develop their own ability to recognize and manage risk throughout their lives appropriately and successfully. Hence, through Forest School magical adventures they will understand their own limits and know how to keep themselves safe.



Our 5 steps to managing risk set out below;

1. **Identify Hazard:**
'What has the potential to cause harm?'
2. **Identify who could be harmed and how:**
'Children and staff; Potential hazards: Weather or allergies'
3. **Evaluate Risk:**
'Decide on level of risk – high/medium/low (using risk matrix)'
4. **Implement control actions:**
'Proportionate action to risk'
5. **Review and Update:**
'Ongoing during session'



TYPES OF RISK ASSESSMENTS:

SPECIFIC: unique to activity

GENERIC: repeated activities

ONGOING: Professional judgement in response to changing situations.

FREQUENCY OF RISK ASSESSMENTS:

- DAILY – daily risk assessments are recorded and reviewed on the day.
- ACTIVITY – activity risk assessments are collected in the forest school files and updated appropriately.
- INDIVIDUAL – individual risk assessments are recorded on individuals who may need additional support to achieve, access or be safe to take part in the activity.
- DYNAMIC – dynamic risk assessments are undertaken as the session progresses and new hazards arise.
- SEASONAL SITE INSPECTION – Site risk assessments are undertaken at the beginning of every term checking the site and boundaries.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of our children is of paramount importance. We do everything we can to make our setting safe. Our staff are fully trained and the environment and activities are fully risk assessed before sessions take place. Regular inspections of the site are taken place with emphasis on Hazards, fences, trees, plants, tools, hygiene and resources to ensure they are safe for appropriate use with anything dangerous or deemed a hazard repaired or discarded. For full Policies and Procedures including Fire, Tool and Rope Risk Assessments please ask a member of staff who will be able to send copies of these to you or consult our Risk Assessment folder for hard copies.

PPE AT FOREST SCHOOLS

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a Health and Safety requirement by Law enforced by the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 which states that:

‘Employers should provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and training in its usage to their employees wherever there is a risk to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled by other means.’ (www.hse.gov.uk)

PPE is equipment that will protect the wearer against safety whilst at work. The law states that employees their welfare be protected and safe whilst they their work. This means ensuring the workplace and within it as safe as possible. PPE should be as a last resort where the risk itself cannot be maintained through other protective measures. If required, the employer should provide this free of

PPE may consist of items such as (but not limited disposable gloves, aprons, appropriate shoe covers, safety goggles, face shields, visors, safety helmets, hairnets, PPE must also be regularly inspected and maintained to ensure its protecting the wearer.

It may be necessary for staff to wear Personal Protective Equipment at our Forest School Nursery. Times that this may be necessary are such as: during assisted toilet requirements such as nappy changing, when administering First Aid or if other safety measures are required such as in a crisis or pandemic situation. The PPE we may be required to wear may consist of (but is not limited too) disposable gloves and aprons, eye goggles, face shields or face masks.

KIT AND CLOTHING FOR CHILDREN AT FOREST SCHOOLS

It is important that children and adults alike have adequate kit and clothing to access Forest School both safely and enjoyably to its full potential. Some of this will be provided by parents and families as agreed in our Settling In Pack such as appropriate outdoor clothing for all weathers. However, much of the kit will be provided by the setting.

Within our Settling In Pack we ask that families provide their children with appropriate outdoor coats, hats, wellington boots, waterproofs, sun cream and sun hats as required in order that there child can safely access our outdoor learning environment in all weathers. As detailed above however, we do have a supply of waterproofs and wellington boots as well as sun hats and winter hats as spares for use if required.

We at Little Explorers Forest School Nursery will provide the kit including resources such as tools and equipment, a safe and inclusive environment, knowledgeable staff, appropriate and planned activities which are inspired and led by the children they are accessed by.



risks to their own health or can expect to be safe and complete the roles considered

PPE is charge.

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DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS ONSITE

Due to Little Explorers Forest School Nursery being on the site of Fleggburgh Primary School we adhere to the guidance set by the School. This details that no dogs or family pets will be permitted on School Grounds.

Within our outdoor environment, we do sometimes have visiting wildlife such as rabbit, mice, pheasants, many bird species (including Owl) and occasionally neighborhood cats. We embrace the visits to our site from surrounding wildlife and encourage this by providing bird feeders, bird boxes, log piles and other smaller habitats to accommodate this. We encourage the children to help us support the diversity of our wildlife as they the observation and exploration of these species as Forest School Sessions.



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With regard to Health and Safety, our outdoor procedure for checking Site Safety includes the monitoring and, if necessary, the removal of any inappropriate byproducts of this such as faeces or animal carcasses.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT FOREST SCHOOLS

Health and Safety at Forest Schools is important because we promote higher (appropriate) risks within Forest School learning. 'Risk is an important part of Forest School Learning and Development'. *"It is argued that taking risks can have positive implications in terms of children's developmental, social and emotional needs, as well as their overall health. By providing the opportunities for children to manage their own risks in a controlled environment, they will learn vital life skills needed for adulthood, and gain the experience needed to face the unpredictable nature of the world."* (Gill, 2007)

At Forest School we want to give all children the opportunity to take part and engage in potential hazards as part of their play without causing any serious harm. Therefore, we encourage children to feel confident and safe to experience new opportunities. We never leave a child alone, as all children are supervised appropriately and adults are always present in the session. It is important that play is managed for children to grow physically and mentally stronger through taking risks. We need to manage risk through good risk assessments to avoid any serious harm to children that could cause permanent injury and long term illness. However, it is recognized Scrapes, bumps and bruises, minor cuts, possible small burns, getting wet or muddy is all part of learning and growing up.

At our Forest Schools we have ratio's of how many adults work with how many children. This varies for each activity depending on the level of risk and how experienced the child is at each activity. Each child is given individual training and support before they are given access to be independent in each activity. At this stage all children are given a 1:1 ratio with an adult until we can apply normal ratio's guide as follow:

Forest School free play - adult ratio to children 1:6
Tool work – adult ratio to children 1:2
Fire activity – adult ratio to children 1:3
Climbing and playing from heights – adult ratio to children 1:4
Den Building – adult ratio to children 1:6

Also children with additional needs will always have a 1:1 additional adult to the above ratio's.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:



FOREST SCHOOL LEADER:

To plan and lead Forest School activities, ensuring inclusivity and complete risk assessments. To ensure first aid supplies are adequate for activities. To ensure all participants are adequately dressed for the weather and assistants and helpers are aware of the roles.

The Forest School Leader is responsible for Child Ratio's. Ratio's vary depending on the risk of the activity. Therefore, tools and fire activities are at least one adult to three children and other activities are one adult to six children.

FOREST SCHOOL ASSISTANT:

To read and sign Forest School handbook, policies and procedures in place. To read the plans for the session and related risk assessments. Alert Forest School Leader immediately if first aid is required or an emergency arises. Follow all policies in place including tools, fire, foraging and working at height policies. Report any concerns about equipment or environment straight away to Forest School Leader. To wear appropriate clothing, footwear and PPE.

FOREST SCHOOL CHILDREN:

To take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. To listen to and follow safety information given to them and wear appropriate clothing and footwear.

ANTI-BULLYING PRACTICE

Forest School is a non-judgmental environment to ensure both children and adults alike feel safe in the physical sense as well as the emotional sense. All participants of Forest School will be encouraged to share their own feelings in our open and non-judgmental setting in a way in which they feel comfortable. Any disagreements or judgmental practices that are observed or reported will be dealt with in an open

and honest way, encouraging children to participate in discussions around their feelings and actions. This encourages children to explore how their own feelings and actions have impact on others and to highlight the significant and important differences that we all have in our day to day lives. We will foster a relaxed atmosphere to encourage children to be able to share their thoughts whilst highlighting the importance of respecting other's views in an appropriate way.



VISITORS AT FOREST SCHOOL

Visitors at Forest School may sometimes be present. We have stringent procedures in place to ensure this occurs in a safe and appropriate way. Visitors will be pre-arranged where possible with full names, organization details, contact details and times being taken. Visitors will be advised regarding arrival onsite with such things as where to park and where and how to enter the site. As the site is shared, there is an intercom for security which will need to be accessed before admittance. Visitors will be required to sign in upon their arrival and will be asked to surrender their mobile phones and any bags into the lockable cupboard prior to entering the session.

Prior to arrival, visitors will be advised as to the structure of the sessions and the expectations we have of them whilst in attendance with regard to Safeguarding, Health and Safety procedures and their conduct. Visitors will be signed out on their departure.

FIRST AID

Our First Aid procedures are; 'All first aid qualified staff and helpers can access and deliver first aid.' As soon a person requires first aid, a first aid qualified adult will access the nearest first aid kit to apply first aid. The majority of first aid given to children is for scratches, grazes and bumps. However, we have procedures in place for emergencies. In a rare case of needing medical attention, the child (depending on injury) will be left where they fell, made warm and comfortable, with a first aid adult staying with them, whilst another member of staff make the phone call for medical support in the form of information or to ask for an ambulance. All incidents and near misses are recorded and logged in the first aid folder, which is assessed and monitored after each incident.

First aid kits are kept by the fire pit area and undercover in the tool work area. All other first aid kits are located by the back door on shelves next to wellington boots.

Our first aid Outdoor kit contains:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| ▪ Complete first aid kit, | Roll mat, | Gloves, |
| ▪ Ice pack, | Sterile water, | Sting spray, |
| ▪ Burn gel, | Torch, | Fire kit, |
| ▪ Whistle, | Clean water (jerry can) | |

Gillian Lee has specialist outdoor first aid training and all other staff have Pediatric First Aid certificates.



ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event a child or adult becomes injured from an accident or incident, who will require more specific medical attention than first aid. Then the first aid person will initially assess the injured person and make a decision on the severity of their injury(s). If the injured person needs more than first aid like as in 'walking wounded' (e.g. broken arm) then first aid to make person safe and then either take child to hospital and meet parents there. In very serious injuries an ambulance will be called followed immediately by calling child's parents. The address will be given as Little Explorers Nursery, Fleggburgh Primary School, Main Road, Fleggburgh, NR29 3AG. If an adult or leader is injured depending on how serious, if minor the adult will be treated with first aid and carry on if more serious than the session will cease on that session and children will go back into nursery for normal Early Years learning. In a very serious situation the session will be closed and all parents will be called to collect their child.

RIDDOR

RIDDOR is the Health and Safety Executive run by the Government. We follow RIDDOR for reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. RIDDOR is the department for reporting an incident to like; accidents resulting in death, specific injuries, injuries requiring hospital treatment and any other dangerous occurrences. It is important we identify, record and highlight near misses as these are normally the less obvious hazards and by doing this we can identify where a problem is developing. In these events we would review our risk assessments to prevent near misses happening again.

For reporting serious 'Accidents and Incidents' must be reported alongside Ofsted and RIDDOR immediately and no longer than 14 days. RIDDOR contact number: 0345 300 9923, Ofsted contact number: 0300 123 1231.

CANCELLATION OF OUTDOOR LEARNING

Our Forest School programme takes place throughout the year. We will only stop outdoor learning due to safety. Therefore, using BBC weather if there is a weather warning like wind above 25mph, thunderstorm, ice or extreme temperature (high or low), absence of Forest School Leader.

Cancellation of outdoor learning will usually be on the day of the session, however, some aspects of the learning that they have been doing at Forest School could be developed indoors. For example, learners could use leaves and sticks to create a story, produce art work or patterns with. We could also use natural resources to be creative like using these items to make music or bring them to life creatively, like making the leaves dance by floating them in the air.



PARENTAL CONSENT

All parents are required to sign a disclosure at the start of their child / children's time in our nursery to allow photographs to be taken and placed on Tapestry Learning Journey recording programme. Photographs could be shared with the nursery website and facebook page but no names are used. If a parent chooses not to sign the agreement, photos will be taken but not shared beyond their own child's learning journal on Tapestry.

We will put all available measures and procedures in place as per risk assessment to minimize the risk of injury, however, accidents can happen. Therefore, we will ask you to sign to show you understand that your children are taking part in some risk learning and may come home with nettle stings, cuts, bumps, bangs, burns due to taking part in activities.

We will also need you to sign for us to administrate mediation and emergency treatment. This is in the event that we are able to take care of your child to the fullest of our abilities at all times.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION

Our setting is an inclusive community which is committed to equality for all. The child led learning promoted by Forest Schools Principles enables all children to succeed, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background.

All children, even with exceptional needs, will take part in the forest school sessions with prior consultation between parents, Senco, and Gillian Lee. The forest school programme recognizes the wide range of additional needs of children and will consider what part it can play in meeting those needs. In the case of a wheelchair, we will arrange suitable paths. The needs of any individual child would be considered and every effort will be made to ensure they have access to forest school learning. Other examples are; adapting our environment, adapting numbers in the session or make smaller groups,

adapting activity and resources. Therefore, we will ensure every child can access the same opportunities as their peers by adapting the circumstances to support them.

Our strategies to offer an inclusive environment for our children with additional needs will comprise of, initial access to sessions where we invite parents to be part of their initial settle in session, we provide safe routines to follow using visual time table, we can set up small cozy areas set up in quieter areas of the woodland with dens, sensory areas and clear signs to support outcomes. We will support and encourage every child to achieve in their own way. Adults will also support individuals with accessing their environment on a personal level of need. It is our intention all children will be able to have a go at all learning including tool work and measures being put in place to make it safe for everyone. based on risk assessments



We recognise some children can display challenging behavior and as an inclusive setting we do everything we can to keep the child included in learning in our setting. Children who struggle are given one to one support through an adult. We use visual supports with children and use sign language. With children with challenging behavior a 'Positive Behaviour Plan' is put in place on strategies' to support the child which is agreed with parents/careers. Our staff are all fully qualified in Safe handling and managing behavior through Norfolk County Council training course. There are no exclusions at our forest school as we are committed to supporting each child.

For all our children we offer spare clothing including waterproof kits and wellington boots in all sizes for children that do not have the right clothing on the day. The list of appropriate clothing is issued to parents at the time of registration and parents/careers and can get copies of what they need at any time. We also provide all resources for forest school to ensure every child can have equal access to everything.

Communication Strategy:- we recognise in line with Forest School 6 principles, it is an essential part of our ethos to create a community for development and learning; therefore, we aim to keep our stakeholders up to date with what we are doing and future plans for the site and learning. Our stakeholders are; Fleggburgh school, School Governors, Staff, Parents/careers, Fleggburgh Parish Council and Fleggburgh community. Our communication will vary between conversations, emails, letters, newsletters, attending meetings, open days and updating websites. It is important to keep everyone up to date with our plans so everyone can have a say on how the site is progressing and support the forest school to succeed and give better opportunities to the children's learning and experiences.

SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE:

We recognize the responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and young people and this is paramount to us regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation their identity. All children/persons all have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse, and we expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



Our recording and reporting procedures follow Norfolk County Councils advice and training; we record information on our Safeguarding Child Protection form (sample - Appendix 2), by the person who witnesses the disclosure, which is passed onto and evaluated by Safeguarding Lead Practitioner (SLP) and when appropriate we refer to CADS on 0344 8008021. *A disclosure is something a child/adult says, which is of concern, therefore; potentially could cause harm to this or another child/adult, we recognize that there could be a possible higher increase in disclosures at forest schools, this is due to the Forest School ethos of what we inspire our children through a non-judgmental and trusting relationships. We model how 'significant others' qualities look like so children can aspire to become a 'significant other'. Therefore, when a child feels comfortable around their 'significant other' and has developed the confidence, independence and self-esteem, this will normally result in increased disclosures at Forest Schools due to our strong ethos.*

Missing Child: Children's safety is our highest priority, both on and off the premises. If a child is reported or noticed missing, the setting manager/leader is notified immediately. All children are gathered to check register and ensure there are no other children missing. The manager/leader will do a search of the premises to look for child or open gates/doors. The initial search will be completed no longer than 5 minutes. If the child is not found the manager/leader will call the police immediately and report the child missing. The parents will be notified and a photo of the child will be given to the police. Once the child has been found the manager/leader will carry out a full investigation of what happened,

Intruders/Lockdown: Initially, staff will need to assess the unwanted visitor quickly and then make a decision if the intruder does not leave to lockdown immediately. As a duty of care to ensure the safety of our children, parents and staff in the event of a local threat or emergency situation we could result in our setting being placed into 'lockdown'. The procedures for this are; everyone comes together in a group quickly and enters the nursery locking doors behind them. The threat levels range from Low, Moderate, Substantial, Severe, Critical. Police are contacted on: 999 and anti-terrorist on: 0800 789 321. Non-emergency calls to the Police can be made on: 101.

Our purpose of safeguarding (as set out in our nursery Safeguarding policy; who to contact, named LSP, who are suitable adults, details of signs and symptom of abuse) is to ensure every child is safe and protected from harm. This means all our staff, students and helpers are all DBS checked and we take every precaution to ensure they are kept safe from hazards or harms within the setting and people they come into contact with in their lives.



INTRODUCING SAFEGUARDING TO OUR CHILDREN

As well as our staff, parents and volunteers being aware and actively compliant to our Safeguarding procedures, in some circumstances, it is equally important for our children to be aware of this. We encourage the children to be aware of boundaries and limitations and highlight the reasons for this as part of our work in encouraging the children to take appropriate risks and how to manage them.

We build relationships with the children in our care as well as their families based on getting to know them as well as using shared interests. The Forest School Ethos supports this and evidences that children who have positive relationships with adults as well as their peers, are more likely to take calculated risks and feel safe to share their thoughts and feelings which not only means they are more likely to learn through their own exploration but also they feel safe to share if there are situations that make them feel uncomfortable or in danger.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND GDPR

Confidentiality: is an important and legal part of our setting. We are covered by the legislation of General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and registered with ICO. We ensure that all information is kept confidential and only used for the use it is intended for. We store all confidential information in a locked draw in a locked cupboard in the inside part of our setting. This is overseen by the manager and supervisor of the setting. Staff and customers have the right to view their information and must keep the setting informed of any changes.

Parents/Carers: are given GDPR paperwork on registration to read and sign to confirm they understand our legislation position and what we do with their private information.

Photography/Digital media policy: Our policy states that we only take and keep photographs and video footage for learning observation recordings only. We will only use these to upload onto Tapestry learning journey or for wall displays. Once photographs have been uploaded, they are then deleted once they are no longer required usually within one week.

BEHAVIOUR PROCEDURE:

The aim of our behaviour policy and procedures are to ensure everyone is safe, to ensure 'continuity and to ensure understanding of expectations' required to take part in our Forest School programme. The procedures are there so every adult, staff or volunteer, is aware that all our children follow the settings rules; listening, kind hands, being kind to each other. Children are reminded of our rules when If a child continues not to adhere to the rules, then an adult will try to work with the child to find out how they are feeling and how we can meet their needs in a safe and appropriate way.

All staff are trained through Norfolk County 'Step on' positive handling behavior training, are qualified in de-escalation techniques like, 'I'm getting upset, shall we talk about it, and see if I can and positive safe handling as a last resource to keep a child safe, we would use a technique called mitten gloves to move a child to a safe location.



other, sharing and helping them if they forget to follow them. An adult will try to understand the child's feeling and respond in an appropriate way.

Council where we can see your help you'; or children to a safe location.

We support behaviour through forest schools which is supported through the forest school ethos; where children are supported to become independent learners through building confidence and self-esteem from a non-judgmental way, which the adult models when building relationships and becoming their significant other. Adults allow children to learn and discover in their own time and there is no right or wrong at forest schools it's just a way of learning. These are some other ways we support positive behavior;

- **Motivating children and raising self-esteem;**
We work alongside children to discover the things they enjoying doing. In a non-judgmental way we communicate how their learning and how they can extend it in a positive way. Like 'tell me about your sculpture you have made from clay', 'is there anything else we can add to it that you would like to?'
- **Valuing achievement;**
Ethos for our children is to value their holistic development through children taking risk and achieving and completing learning which they set out to do. Then support children to extend their learning which is our way of valuing their achievements.
- **Encouraging children to take responsibility for their own actions;**
As part of our behavior we try and talk with children to find out how we can meet their needs. In doing this, it is still important that children also understand they need to take responsibility for how they behavior and work with others.
- **Providing great positive role models to learn from and aspire to;**
It is important children have great role models to look up. Therefore, adults need to display and show behavior of what they want from the children. This would look like, soft kind voice. Listening to children and being patient, being kind and helping children when they need help. Using appropriate clear language like please, thank you etc.

WELFARE PROCEDURE:

It is the responsibility of every member of staff, volunteer and regular visitor to our setting and within our Forest School sessions to ensure that they work in a way that will safeguard and promote the welfare of all of the pupils at our setting. Any concerns should be reported immediately to Gillian Lee.

1. Toilets and Hand washing: Children have independent access to indoor toilets located inside the nursery building with clean warm water at all times during the session. Water is also provided outside in a bowl filled with warm water and soap for cleaning hands, this is changed every break day. 3 times a
2. Drinking water: Children have access to fresh clean water cups of which is located on the drinks trolley and have access to milk and (cooled down) tea during the session, provided and handed out by adults.
3. Clothing: Children can bring in their own clothing kits to borrow when required. Appropriate clothing for outdoor learning should be made up of several layers in winter with long sleeved and thermals, vest, t-shirt, warm top, fleece jumper and then coat and two to three layers of trousers. Waterproof top layer essential for winter and wet conditions with wellington boots needed.



TOOL USE:

There are many benefits Children can achieve through using and experiences took at forest schools like; improved fine and gross motor skills, confidence from achieving something from using tools, creativity, communication skills, teamwork, co-ordination and designing and planning skills. This gives children the opportunity to respect and value the safety aspect that they need to be handle with care. Tools are so important for children to learn at a young age so they can learn to understand risk and which will reduce their taking dangerous risks when they are older. These are all skills needed to instill confidence, independence and support self-esteem as children learn and develop.



Our Tool Rules!!!

Children are taught these and they are reinforced at the beginning of each session.

1. Ask an adult before you take a tool from the tool area.
2. You must have a purpose for your tool.
3. You must make sure you choose a safe working area.

Our Tools available to use at our Forest School:-

Our tool area for all learners and adults is under the fixed shelter area set up safely for tools. This is where all our tool work will take place. However, if we are den building and required the tools for this purpose an adult will supervisor one tool in use at a time, after the activity and area have been risk assessed first before proceeding. *Please be assured tool use and forest schools only proceed with a fully qualified leader running it.*



Tool Item	Instructions how to use tool and for what activities	Adult:Child Ratio
Mallet	Wooden hammer to be used for banging on a knife blade to break down wood.	1:1
Drill	Drill is to make holes in wood by turning the handle in a circular motion.	2:1
Bow Saw	This is to saw bigger wooden branches into smaller blocks moving the saw backwards and forwards.	1:1
Loppers	The Loppers need to hands on the handles to push together to cur tree forage of the main branch.	2:1
Knives	These are sharp, which allows you to make objects and toys from wood by using the blade to shape the wood how you want it.	1:1
Potato peeler	For children who are younger or who are not ready to use a knife, the potato peeler gives them experience of how to start using a safe sharp tool on vegetables in a safe confident manner.	2:1

All our tools are stored safely in our tool bag zipped up and only one tool is removed at a time when being used. Each tool is checked and inspected before use and after use the tools are cleaned with WD40 oil before being stored at the end of each session.

We work to the following Acronym “ACADEMICSSUC”, before using tools to ensure we are safe. This is part of our Risk Assessment we do before beginning a tool activity.

A	APPROPRIATE TOOL – Must be correct for the job and the user
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C	CONDITION OF THE TOOL – Must be clean and sharp
A	AREA IN USE – Ensure a safe working area
D	DISTANCE – Ensure a safe working distance
E	ERGONOMICS – Positon your body so it is SAFE, STABLE and COMFORTABLE . 3 point stance (knee and foot from one leg and other foot on the ground)
M	MATERIAL – Check that material is appropriate for job and for the tool chosen
I	INSTRUCTION – Repeat safety instructions on use of tools and techniques
C	Carrying & Storage – Tools to be counted in and out during sessions and checklist signed by Gillian Lee or assistant. Tools to be stored on high shelf or locked away in labelled boxes. All tools to have cases and sheaths attached at all times when not in use. Tools to be carried below waist height, with sheath or protective cover on.
S	Safe clothing – All children and adults to be dressed appropriately
S	Supervision - Ratios to be determined for each activity. New tool techniques to be taught 1:1.
U	User – Tool user to be observed at all times

C	Cleaning – Tools will be cleaned and checked after every session
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ROPE AND STRING USE:

To teach knots for a purpose. Knots to be checked by before being used. Ropes and string must not be used Everyone to be aware that ropes can cause friction

Knots used are in our “Knot book” which we have in All staff practice the appropriate knots before the to ensure safety and knowledge.

Gillian Lee or an assistant on people burns.

setting session



FIRE:

Fires are so important at Forest Schools for children to learn the safety so they can learn to understand risk and which will reduce their taking at a young age dangerous risks when they are older. They need to learn they are hot and how to respect the heat. Fires are also good for social gatherings like communication, reading stories round, singing and sharing/cooking food. It is also great for children to spark their creativity, curiosity and focus. It also supports their behavior and teaches them to follow rules for their own safety and the safety of others. Therefore, teaching them respect for themselves and others.

Our procedures for the fire are:-



Site: - Fire to be set up in a clear area away from big trees and bushes, avoiding tree roots, stones, paths and peaty soil. We surround fire with wooden logs (rocks can explode).

Weather: - Fire NOT to be lit in very windy or very dry conditions.

Distance:- Seating area appropriate distance back from fire. Exit routes known to children and staff.

Ratios:- Forest School leader to supervise and stay by the fire with another adults to support (1 adult : 3 children). As a small setting we find all children like to join in together, however, if any child/ren decide to engage in another activity instead then a member of staff would support them. If we didn't have the staff available on the day, then fires and tool activities would be postponed.

Water:- Water for extinguishing the fire. Clean water for burns and fire blanket.

Behaviour:- Children to practice behaviour around a fire before fire is lit. Through circle games and adult modelling.

Children:- to be sitting on seats and if they need to move, this must be done in a circular movement around fire.

Clothing:- NO loose clothing or hair around fire activity.

Extinguishing Fire safely:- Fire can be extinguished using water from the watering can or big bucket. There is a fire blanket for extinguishing fire on clothing.

FIRE - COOKING:



Food Hygiene and Procedures;

Little Explorers Staff are all Level 2 Food and qualification to handle, store food. This means we hands before preparation of food and it appropriately, like in a sealed tight container,

below 5 degrees and all raw meat if used stored away from other food. We are also registered with our Local Authority for Environment Health, which gives us permission to supply food.

Food eaten will be provided by Little Explorers Nursery which has been delivered directly from the supermarket.

There are daily food hygiene and refrigerated tick list checks to be completed before food is prepared and given to children. Children's hands to be washed inside school building/or outside in washing bowl provided, before any food is handled or eaten. Food / ingredients prepared inside school and transported in clean and sealed containers. Sell by dates checked. Waste food to be placed inside a plastic container and disposed of inside setting.

Food:- No food to be eaten on site unless provided by Gillian Lee or an assistant. Gillian Lee or assistants to check food is thoroughly cooked before being eaten. Children to sit when eating.

FORAGING:

All growing forage, wild food & herbal medicine to be prior investigated for identification where possible from our onsite survey; for fungi, nuts and berries using magnifying glasses and comparing to charts and seeking professional advice if we cannot identify. Children are taught to ask an adult before touching or picking forage to stop any risk of sickness or poisoning. The adult will supervise children picking and collection of forage into a basket for identification before washing and eating. It is really important for children to be able to enjoy a wider range of nature foods safely like, nettles, dandelions, elderberries and so on.



Nursery qualified in Hygiene prepare and wash our is stored temperature get

WORKING AT HEIGHT:

Climbing Trees is vital to children to be able to take and analysis their own risks in a safe way. It supports their physical, balance, co-ordination, concentration, emotional and confidence building. Children are given support and guidance from adults to learn what is safe and how to check a branch first before moving onwards, they will need to always have at least one ‘Strong hold’ as in one hand or foot secure position. All adults and volunteers are given a demonstration of how to support children safely in line with our risk assessment. Basic guidelines are: One child per tree / ladder /bridge. Children taught how to climb if suitable for climbing) appropriate (Wellies not appropriate)

Adult supervision (below tree or within easy reach as for child).

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS:

At Forest School we promote environmental and encourage sustainability. The children are respect and responsibility for the world around them. encouraged to respect their environment and to be aware of issues of the woodland around them, promoting respect for wildlife.



awareness taught about Everyone is conservation

IMPACT TO ENVIRONMENT	WAYS TO MINIMISE THE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT
<p>Damage to plants, animals and habitats;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ through footfall continual use, damage to ground layers including nesting and habitats. ➤ Tree climbing and shelter making 	<p>Take care to use different areas of ground. Children to learn to recognize signs of damage to woodland layers and wildlife. Using different trees and appropriate knots and equipment.</p>
<p>Fire;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Exhausting the fuel supply b) Use of too much dead wood c) Fire not extinguished and spreading to the wider woodland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Collection limited to appropriate times when wood is available and does not harm the environment. b) Collection of dead and fallen wood must be limited as habitat for many insects plus growth of fungi to thrive. c) Fires to be totally extinguished with water then checked before leaving / covering with leaf litter or other natural resources.
<p>Timber, seed and fruit harvesting;</p>	<p>Ensure that only resources needed are collected with no wastage.</p>

Too much harvesting and collection may prevent succession and wind and animal dispersal.	
Cooking: Food waste could attract animals or increase the number of certain species, e.g. Rats and foxes, potentially leading to adverse changes in biodiversity.	Any evidence of food waste to be removed from site and safely and appropriately disposed of.

HELPER'S DO'S AND DON'T'S

Do's:

- ✚ Helpers to read and sign our Handbook before joining in with group sessions.
- ✚ Understand the plans for current session they will be engaging with.
- ✚ Listen and follow instructions from Forest School Leader and staff assistants.

Don't's:

- ✚ Jump in and take over session or activity.
- ✚ Join in with tool or fire activities etc without prior instruction from the Forest School Leader.
- ✚ Instruct children to use equipment the way you feel it should be done as they would have previously been trained by Forest School Leader correctly and safely.



COMPLAINTS:

Complaints or concerns will be encouraged to be raised with a member of staff either over the telephone or via face to face discussion. Where a complaint cannot be resolved, this will be passed onto either the Deputy Manager or Nursery Manager whom will conduct appropriate investigations if necessary. Depending on the nature of the complaint, if necessary, the relevant authorities will be informed for example, OFSTED, LADO etc. Please see our complaints Policy for further information.

Written and produced by: Gillian Lee BA Hons and Stacey Trigg-Dudley, Level 3 Forest School Leader

Signed: *G. Lee & S. Trigg-Dudley*

Dated: 05/03/23

Review date: June 2024



Handbook Read in Full		
Stacey Trigg-Dudley	Deputy Manager	Date:
	Supervisor	Date:
	Childcare Assistant	Date:
	Childcare Assistant	Date:
	Childcare Assistant	Date:
	Childcare Assistant	Date:
	Childcare Assistant	Date:
	Helper	Date:
	Helper	Date:

APPENDIX 1 – TERMS & CONSENT

I have read the handbook and terms for Little Explorers Forest School Nursery;

**I agree for my child _____ to participate in Forest School
Magical Learning Adventures;**



PHOTOGRAPH CONSENT

**I give permission for my child's photograph to be taken and used on Tapestry
for my child's learning journey.**

**I give permission for my child's photograph to be used in media like our website
page and facebook (No child's names will ever be used in our media).**

FIRST AID AND MEDICAL TREATMENT

**I understand that my child may at some point require first aid from engaging in
forest school activities; such as minor burns from the fire, bumps and bruises
from falling from small heights, cuts and scratches from using tools which
could result in your child requiring emergency medical treatment. I consent to
medical authorities including anaesthetic.**

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print name: _____ Relationship to child: _____