

# **Ashgate Nursery Forest School Weather Policy and procedures**

## **Statement of intent**

**Ashgate Forest Schools believes  
'There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing'**

The management of Health and safety at work Regulations 1999 requires employers to assess the risks of activities; Introduce measures to control these risks and to tell their employees about these measures

So far as reasonably practicable the forest school staff and management will take all reasonable steps to identify and reduce hazards to a minimum. However all staff, parent helpers, volunteers, students, governors and children must appreciate that their own safety and that of others also depends on their individual conduct and vigilance while on the Forest school visit. Forest School is an outdoor 'classroom'; and as such, weather can be the most influential element in what and how things happen. Please refer to general weather risk assessment.

## **Procedures**

The Forest Leader is responsible for checking local weather conditions on the morning of a forest school visit.

There is no such thing as bad weather...however, wind can be a dangerous element in a woodland due to potential falling limbs, branches etc.. Therefore if strong winds (measuring over 5 on the Beaufort scale or above 19-24 mph) or thunder and lightening, the session will not take place in the woodland other options will be considered dependent on conditions these include;

- Activities to take place on the fields adjacent to the woods
- Group removed to the evacuation point of 'little explorers' to await transportation
- Session at Broomfield college cancelled, use of minibus for museum visit with group

Particular attention to the canopy layer should be paid at the first dynamic risk assessment after strong winds to check for hung up trees/branches and fallen/damaged trees.

All children will be kitted up in appropriate clothing before leaving the setting this may be; fleece salapettes, gloves, wellies, waterproof jacket and coats, sunhats. Adult helpers are advised to be appropriately dressed and where possible wellies/hats/gloves/spare socks and additional coats will be found if necessary.

Planned themes and activities need to be very flexible and able to be adapted due to weather conditions.

In cold weather children will be more encouraged to be more active. More sedentary activities such as woodland medallions, memory sticks will take place in warmer conditions.

Snacks and drinks will always be provided.

Storm shelter and a tarpaulin rain cover are carried by Forest School Leader  
In severe cold weather sessions times will be reduced accordingly and children taken for a warming drink of hot chocolate at 'the hub' if appropriate.  
Additional clothing including socks and gloves are carried by Forest School staff.

**Duties of the management (school clerk, head teacher and governing body)**

To monitor the project and the safety measures put in place

To be aware of the risk assessments

To be available as a contact base, for group leader to contact as part of emergency procedures.

Periodically assess the effectiveness of the policies and procedures put into place.

Review the effectiveness of the use of this site and the cost effectiveness.

Sarah Leivers  
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