



Leafy Legends Forest School Health & Safety Policy



Purpose

This policy outlines how Bramble Wood Forest School ensures the physical and emotional safety of all children, staff, and visitors during outdoor learning experiences. It reflects our commitment to **safe exploration**, **gentle boundaries**, and **responsive care** in nature-rich environments.



Guiding Principles

- **Safety through clarity and trust:** Children feel safest when boundaries are clear and adults are calm, present, and attuned.
- **Risk as a learning tool:** We embrace managed risk as essential to resilience, confidence, and real-world skill-building.
- **Responsive planning:** Health and safety measures are adapted to seasonal changes, group dynamics, and individual needs.
- **Emotional safety is physical safety:** We recognise that a child’s sense of safety includes their emotional state, relationships, and sensory experience.



Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Forest School sessions, events, and off-site activities
- All staff, volunteers, and visiting practitioners
- All tools, equipment, and natural materials used on site
- All children attending Bramble Wood Forest School



Child-Centred Safety Practices

Practice	Purpose
Visual boundaries	Use of ropes, flags, or natural markers to define safe zones
Tool safety rituals	Gentle, consistent routines for handling tools with care
Fire safety protocols	Clear rules around the fire circle, with visual prompts and adult supervision
Seasonal adaptations	Adjustments for mud, ice, heat, or wind to ensure comfort and safety
Emotional check-ins	Daily rituals to notice and respond to emotional wellbeing



Staff Responsibilities

- Conduct daily site checks before sessions
 - Follow and review risk assessments regularly
 - Carry first aid kits and know emergency procedures
 - Model safe behaviour and calm responses
 - Record incidents, near misses, and adaptations
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Equipment & Site Safety

- All tools are age-appropriate, well-maintained, and stored safely
 - Structures (e.g. dens, mud kitchens) are checked for stability and hazards
 - Natural materials are assessed for safety (e.g. fungi, berries, sharp branches)
 - Fire pits are managed with clear boundaries, water buckets, and adult oversight
 - Toileting areas are clean, private, and emotionally safe
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Medical & First Aid

- At least one qualified first aider is present at every session
 - Medical needs and allergies are recorded and reviewed termly
 - First aid incidents are documented and shared with families
 - Emergency contacts and procedures are accessible on site
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Emotional Safety

- Children are never shamed, isolated, or punished harshly
 - Staff respond to distress with presence, not pressure
 - Quiet spaces are available for regulation and reflection
 - Emotional safety is embedded in planning, not treated as an afterthought
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Emergency Procedures

- Fire, injury, or missing child protocols are rehearsed and documented
 - Emergency services are contacted when necessary
 - Families are informed promptly and compassionately
 - Incident reviews are used to improve future practice
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Related Policies

- Risk Assessment Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Behaviour & Emotional Wellbeing Policy
 - First Aid Policy
 - Inclusion & Accessibility Policy
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