

## **Aldersbrook Primary Forest School Risk Assessment Policy**

Aldersbrook Primary forest school aims to develop children's self-esteem, independence and motivation to learn in a safe environment.

In order that these aims can be met, the forest school leader will:

- Consistently apply the five-step approach to risk assessment for all forest school settings and activities:
  - 1) Look for any hazards
  - 2) Decide who may be harmed and how
  - 3) Evaluate the risk and decide whether more needs to be done. Forest schools sessions/activities should only proceed if the existing controls are adequate or if the remaining risk is deemed to be a low risk rating.
  - 4) Record findings, including daily amendments to standing risk assessments based on site visits or observations.
  - 5) Review assessments on a regular basis (or if circumstances change which may affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise as necessary.
  
- Carry out a full risk assessment on each site where any forest schools activity will take place. These will be filed in the forest schools file. Daily pre-visit checks will be carried out by the forest schools leader on all sites to be used prior to a day's activity, as near to the start of the session as is reasonably practical.
- Postpone all forest schools activities if, in the opinion of the forest schools leader, weather conditions such as very high winds or the threat of electrical storms make any outdoor session unsafe.
- Note any risk relating to a specific activity on the appropriate lesson plan.
- Inform all staff/volunteers and children of any potential hazards and method of working in order to minimize their risk further.
- Involve staff and children in risk assessment, as appropriate, as part of the learning.
- Ensure legal guidelines regarding off site activities, such as adequate insurance and parental permissions are met.
- Ensure that all adults and children are aware of the emergency procedures.
- Be responsible for teaching the children adequate skills in order to keep themselves safe, particularly in relation to the use of any hand tools and fire lighting.
- Ensure that adults and children will have access to drinking water or squash during every session.
- Ensure a nil-by-mouth policy is adopted in all forest schools sessions, except for any whole day sessions when a packed lunch and snacks may be required. These foods can be consumed within the forest school setting.

***Policy agreed September 2021***

***Policy to be reviewed September 2022***