



Harvard Park Policies and Procedures:
**Harvard Park's Forest School Policies and
Procedures**

60. Harvard Park's Forest School Policies and Procedures

Policy Statement

Harvard Park will stay true to the principles and ethos described by the Forest School Association (FSA). All children will have the opportunity to experience and access Forest school before they leave to attend primary school. They will have the opportunity to engage in open ended, practical experiences set in a natural environment. We will ensure the children have the space and time to develop their confidence as well as their love of nature and learning.

The Forest School Leader will document all forest school experiences on the children's personal EyLog journals. Parents/Carers are provided with a 6-week learning plan before their child starts the forest school sessions. Parents/carers are asked for a written statement if they do not want their child taking part, explaining this decision. Parents/carers are informed of the dates forest school will be running for via email and will be informed of any cancelled sessions. The Forest School Leader is available to speak with via email, phone call or face to face should Parents/carers have any questions during their child's 6-week forest school programme.

Forest School Leader Responsibilities

- To ensure this policy is reviewed annually or before if there are changes in circumstances.
- Ensure all supporting early years educators and/or adults have read their handbook as well as the relevant policies.
- Undertake risk assessments, record any significant findings and review these annually or before if there is a change in circumstance. This includes the use of a visual risk assessment before each forest school session.
- Ensure there are evacuation procedures in place and tested where the forest school session is on site.
- To report any health and safety issues to a manager or director on a regular basis,
- Ensure there is adequate first aid provision available and kept up to date.

Accident and Emergency / Serious Incident Reporting.

Before each forest school session, all adults and/or early years educators will be given a full and comprehensive safety briefing. This will include, but is not limited to, areas where there is no access, boundary points, first aid, emergency procedures, any vegetation that maybe toxic and specific briefing relating to the tool or experiences being offered.

Procedure for accident and Emergency response

In the rare event of a serious incident or the need to alert the emergency services this procedure will be followed:

- FSL (Forest school leader) will signal to all participants that they need to return to the main area which will be known as 'base'.
- If a participant or supporting adult is injured the FSL will phone the emergency services whilst staying with the casualties, if required. Where there is another member of staff present, they will phone the main office and request additional adults on site.
- FSL will wait with the casualties while the emergency services arrive and accompany them to hospital if necessary.
- Any supporting adults will secure the site and return to the premises. Parents and carers will be contacted.
- FSL will complete a full and comprehensive account of the incident or injury.
- A full meeting with FSL, other members of the setting team, senior leadership team will be called to review and amend policies and procedures if appropriate.
- In minor cases, the Forest School Leader will arrange to contact the injured party's emergency contact so they can be collected and taken to hospital, doctor or home as appropriate.

Emergency contact numbers

Emergency Services: **999**

Day Nursery: **0208 890 3715**

Pre-School: **0798 4258 580** (sessions will be conducted onsite).

Requesting Attendance by Emergency Service

Dial **999** and ask for the relevant service/s: be ready with the following information:

- Phone number
- Post Code and address
- What 3 words reference – cubes.fleet.inch (Feltham Green – Day Nursery)
song.oils.asks (Day Nursery Premises)
caked.agent.twig (Forest Area – Smallberry Green, Pre-School)

First Aid

Newly qualified staff who achieved an early years qualification in Level 2 or 3 on or after 30th June 2016 must also have a paediatric First Aid certificate to be counted in adult: child ratios. In our setting, staff can take action to apply first aid treatment in the event of an accident involving a child or adult. All staff with current first aid training are on the premises or on an outing at any one time. The first aid qualification includes first aid training for infants and young children.

We have evidence of due diligence when choosing first aid training and ensure that it is relevant to adults caring for young children.

Procedures The First Aid Kit Our first aid kit complies with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and contains the following items only:

- Triangular bandages (ideally at least one should be sterile) - x 4.
- Sterile dressings: - Small x 3. - Medium x 3. - Large x 3.
- Composite pack containing 20 assorted (individually-wrapped) plasters x 1.
- Sterile eye pads (with bandage or attachment) e.g. No 16-dressing x 2.
- Container or 6 safety pins x1.
- Guidance card as recommended by HSE x1.
- Any lifesaving medication such as inhalers or EpiPens are taken with and returned to the correct place after each session.

In addition to the first aid equipment, each box should be supplied with:

- 2 pairs of disposable plastic (PVC or vinyl) gloves.
- 1 plastic disposable apron.
- a children's forehead 'strip' thermometer.
- A supply of cool packs is available.

The first aid box is easily accessible to adults and is kept out of the reach of children. The Forest school leaders responsible for replenishing and checking the contents of the first aid boxes before and after each session.

- Medication is only administered in line with our Administering Medicines policy
- In case of minor injury or accident, first aid treatment is given by a qualified first aider.
- In case of minor injury or accidents we normally inform parents/carers when they collect their child, unless the child is unduly upset or we have concerns about the injury. In which case we will contact the child's parents/carers for clarification of what they would like to do i.e., Collect the child and/or take them to their own GP.

Extreme Weather: Harvard Park is accessible to all children aged over 3 years and throughout all seasons and weather. In the event of extreme weather, at the discretion of the Forest School Leader, forest school can be cancelled. In the event of a cancellation, children will remain in the setting and continue with learning. The cancelled session will be re-arranged for the same week or will be extended for a week.

Procedure for extreme weather: Forest school leaders will assess the weather before each session. This will include a visit to the site. Weather assessment will include but is not limited to:

- Wind Speed
- Wind chill
- Local weather reports
- Early Years Advice
- Government Advice

Forest School will be cancelled in all cases where there is an electrical storm present.

Clothing Policy: All children, early years educators and supporting adults must be wearing the correct clothing and footwear before attending forest school sessions. The forest school leader can refuse to take a child if they are dressed inappropriately. We have a bank of spare clothing which we will use to help the child dress appropriately before refusing their attendance. This is to ensure that all children have access to this activity in accordance with our equality policy.

Examples for suitable clothing for a session in autumn or winter: cold/wet weather

- Waterproof boots or wellingtons
- Thick Socks
- Long trousers, long sleeved tops and jumpers
- Layers of clothes for warmth
- Hat, Gloves, Scarf
- Fleece and waterproof coat

Examples for suitable clothing for a session in Spring or summer: warmer/dry weather

- Long light trousers, long sleeved light tops and jumpers
- Light waterproof coat
- thin socks
- trainers or sturdy Velcro shoes
- Sunhat or cap
- Suncream to be applied before coming to start their nursery or pre-school session

Toileting: During our forest school session, there will be no toileting facilities. All children and adults are encouraged to use the toilet before we leave the setting. Under no circumstances will children or adults be using any part of the forest school area to urinate. If necessary, an additional staff member will be called to come and collect the child to take them to the day nursery.

At pre-school, the supporting adult will ask for an early years educator to come and let the child back into the setting and out again once they have finished in the toilet. Under no circumstances will children or adults be using any part of the forest school area to urinate.

Forest School Leader and Supporting adult must:

- Make sure all children go to the toilet before they leave the building
- Make sure you have spare clothes in your emergency bags for accidents
- Make sure you have nappies available
- If local to the setting i.e. forest garden (Pre –School only), call for someone to take a child to the toilet if necessary – use nursery phone if Day Nursery has gone offsite.
- If on a longer trip look out for toilets on your way to maybe use if necessary.

Insurance cover: We have public liability insurance and employers' liability insurance. The certificate for public liability insurance is displayed on the wall at both settings.

Conservation Policy for children and adults

Whatever area we use, we must: -

- Look after the surroundings
- Respect all the living and non-living – growth, animals and equipment
- Make sure we look after all plants and growth
- Look after resources
- We must make sure we add to new growth
- Where old growth, we can make pathways if there aren't any visible
- Tidy up after ourselves

Manual Handling: At forest school, there are experiences which will involve moving or lifting heavier objects. We recognise how easy it is to injure oneself when moving objects of a natural nature.

PPE Requirements for collecting and moving natural materials:

- Long sleeves and trousers to protect limbs from cuts
- Closed shoes to protect feet in case of dropping natural materials
- Protective glove if moving or collecting spikey vegetation

Parents/carers are informed of the clothing requirements required for children to participate safely.

Procedures

- Forest school leaders will demonstrate and use appropriate and safe techniques. This includes bending of the knees and keeping a straight back when lifting objects.
- All participants will be encouraged to think about special awareness when moving or carrying objects.
- Any female adults who may be pregnant will be advised not to lift heavy items at any time including children.
- Any adults who have risk assessments in place for injury or illness will be advised on the nature of their risk assessment as what they will be able to or not able to do. In some cases, another suitable member of staff will be asked to step in as a replacement.

Risk Management

All aspects of a forests school experience carry risks. At Harvard Park all experiences will have been assessed through risk assessment to ensure the children are kept safe during every session.

In addition, the Forest School Leader will complete:

- A full and comprehensive visual risk assessment will be conducted before every session.

- Risk Assessments for all experiences will be completed.

All risk assessments will be reviewed annually or before an incident arises.

All forest school participants, parents/carers and staff must understand that risks can be minimized but cannot be eliminated altogether, and health and safety concerns need to be balanced against the potential benefits of any activity.

Children, young people and adults will suffer occasional bumps, bruises and cuts which are a part of everyday life. The application of exposure to simple risks with the training of forest school leaders will ensure everyone is as safe as they can be whilst enjoying Forest School and learning.

Tools and Equipment

Using tools and equipment is a key part for forest school and offers experiences that children may not get through other educational channels. Tools will only be used with children in accordance with the risk assessments. During Forest school, children will be presented with, but is not limited to peelers, scissors, knives and/or carving tools, mallets and gardening tools.

Tools and equipment will always be introduced to children on an age and stage appropriate basis. Under no circumstances are children ever left unattended with tools or can leave the site with tools. All tools are counted in and out by the Forest School Leader and remain on their person in the rucksack until back on the premise.

Points to remember when introducing tools to children.

- Risk assessment to be completed or added to the risk assessment
- Ensure the tools are age appropriate
- You know your children - each needs to be treated as individuals and consideration given for their suitability to handle tools
- Demonstrate how to use the tools safely, naming each tool
- Supervision is a key element to introducing tools
- Explanation of what to do
- Small groups with maintaining adult child ratios for small group

Safety Briefing for tools including PPE

During activities where tools will be in use, children will be given a safety demonstration by the Forest School Leader and will be adjusted based on the language level of the group. This demonstration will include, but not be limited to:

- Children will need to always be at arm's length from their peers.
- All cuts or cutting actions are made away from the body – never towards or without safety gloves.

- Cut down to a hard surface such as a chopping board
- To only work with one tool at a time.
- All tools not being used need to be given back to the forest school leader or supporting adult.
- Tools are never left on the floor and never leave the tuff tray.
- Tools always face the floor and are never waved around in the air.
- Adults are here to help so if you need help – ask and wait for one of us to come and support you.

Procedure for walking to the forest school site – Day Nursery

All children, early years educators and/or supporting adults will be walking to the forest school area from Harvard Park. The forest school site is located on Feltham Green is the fenced area, on occasion we will use the unfenced area.

All participants will:

- Leave the setting via the door or back entrance.
- Walk in pairs with high visibility vests with a qualified adult at the front and a qualified adult at the back of the line.
- Walk along the high street using the Green Cross Code at appropriate crossings.

Forest School Leader will:

- Head count all children and adults before leaving the premises.
- Fill in the appropriate outing form with the relevant information including current contact number.
- Inform the office when we are leaving.
- Head count all children and adults on entering the Forest School site
- Head count all children and adults on during the forest school session
- Head count all children and adults on re-entering the premises.

This policy and procedure should be referenced against the following policies:

- Valuing diversity and promoting inclusion and equality.
- Child Protection and Safeguarding young people and vulnerable adults
- Missing Child
- Health and Safety General Standards
- Manual Handling for those employed by Harvard Park
- Risk Assessment
- Supervision of Children on outings and visits
- Medication Administration and First Aid

These additional policies and procedures will be worked with while conducting forest school sessions and will be referenced and adhered to throughout.

This Policies and Procedures pack was adjusted by Harvard Park.

Date meeting was held on 30/04/2026

Signed on behalf of the Directors and Proprietors

Nicki Saunders and Tracey Milstead