



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

09/24



WFS Health and Safety Policy

Health and Safety of the children, staff and visitors is our primary concern. While Rose Hoare & Lisa Bicker (hereafter referred to as the Managers) are responsible for the day-to-day safe running with a duty of care for the children, ALL adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children and adults are safe. Before a session commences all leaders/facilitators involved in the sessions have access to activity plans and risk assessments associated with the activities.

WFS is committed to ensuring the Health, Safety and Welfare of its employees and it will, so far as is reasonably practicable, establish procedures and systems necessary to implement this commitment and to comply with its statutory obligations on Health and Safety.

For WFS to run Safely all FSL's will.

- Ensure that at least one qualified outdoor first aider is on site at all times.
- Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment.
- Follow policy and practice found in the Handbook.
- Make sure all adults on site have knowledge of all guidelines.
- Ensure that all adults are familiar with all emergency procedures, reporting and recording.
- Make and share risk assessments before sessions.
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of their responsibilities towards the children.
- Fully investigate any accidents and use information for future risk assessments.
- Make sure all safety equipment is in good working order.

The Managers are responsible for the maintenance of the first aid kits and any tools that are used on site.

WFS is committed to ensuring that all setting practices are carried out within the requirements of the Health and Safety and Work Act 1974 and the Management of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1999.

WFS recognises that a systematic approach to health and safety, based on risk assessment procedures and will provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment with the objective of minimising the number of instances of occupational accidents, incidents, and illnesses.

WFS is committed to:

- Maintaining the workplace in a safe condition and providing adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.
- Developing the appropriate setting structure and culture, that supports the concept of risk management by all members of the staff team.
- Providing a safe means of access to and from the workplace.
- The provision and maintenance of equipment and systems of work which are safe.
- Arrangements for ensuring safety to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- The provision of such information, instructions, training, and supervision, as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of its employees and other persons.



- Continual monitoring and evaluation of health and safety requirements in line with current legislation, including the review of all policies and practices to ensure that WFS continues to improve standards of performance.

WFS also recognises its duty to protect the health and safety of all visitors to the Forest School, including contractors, temporary workers and members of the public who might be affected by the Forest School's work operations.

This policy will be issued to all staff as part of the induction process.

It is the responsibility of all staff, parents/carers and visitors to adhere to this policy.

Responsibility

While WFS will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of its employees, health and safety at work is also the responsibility of the employees themselves.

It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care of their own and other people's health, safety, and welfare and to report any situation which may pose a serious or imminent threat to the well-being of themselves or of any other person.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that health and safety regulations are adhered to and that the health and safety of the children and other members of staff are not compromised in any way.

It is the responsibility of the Managers to ensure that the health and safety of the setting as a whole remains within legislative requirements and that the health and safety of all setting users, including children, staff and parents and carers is not compromised in any way.

If an employee is unsure how to perform a certain task or feels it would be dangerous to perform a specific job or use specific equipment, then it is the employee's duty to report this as soon as possible to the Managers.

Alternatively, an employee may, if they prefer, invoke the Forest School's formal complaints procedure.

Risk Management, Assessments, Benefit analysis

The 5-step approach to risk assessment for all activities:

1. Look out for hazards.
2. Decide who may be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done.
4. Record findings, including daily amendments to standing risk assessments based on site visits and observations.
5. Review assessments on a regular basis (or if circumstances change, which may affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise if necessary.

Duties of the Managers:

- Rose Hoare will carry out site risk assessments on site where the activities will take place on a seasonal basis, assisted by the Warden of Wheatfen Nature Reserve.



Duties of FSLs:

- Daily pre-visit checks will be carried out by the FS group leader on site to be used prior to a day's activities, as near to the start of the activity as is reasonably practicable. The finding will be recorded on a Daily Risk Assessment form.
- Complete an Activity Risk/benefit assessment for every activity to be undertaken at Forest School.
- Ensure all staff and volunteer helpers have read the relevant Site and Activity risk assessments prior to the session.
- Stop activities, if in the opinion of the Forest School Leader, weather conditions such as high winds or the threat of electrical storms make practice unsafe.
- Inform staff, volunteers and children of potential hazards and methods of working in order to minimise their risk further.
- Involve staff, volunteers, and children in risk assessment, as appropriate, as part of learning.
- Ensure legal guidelines regarding off site activities, adequate insurance and parental permissions are met.
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers, and children are aware of the emergency procedures for the Forest School site.
- Be responsible for teaching children adequate skills in order to keep themselves safe, particularly in relation to the use of hand tools and fire.
- Ensure children and adults will have access to drinking water during sessions.
- Ensure a nil-by-mouth policy is adopted in all Forest School sessions – except for food cooked as part of a fully risk assessed Forest School activity.

Supervision Requirements

Children are supervised at all times whilst in the setting. WFS uses three levels of supervision dependent upon the activities that are taking place and the location that they are occurring.

- Constant Supervision: Being with the children at all times, actively supporting them using a physical presence or playing with them directly. This level of supervision is most often required when the children are playing high-risk games or using equipment or materials that have a high-risk assessment.
- General Supervision: Being in vicinity of the children but not having an active part in their play, being on hand to support if the children require help or guidance. Being on hand to respond to play cues and observant of the behaviour of the children. This is the most common form of supervision and allows for an overview of the play setting, most commonly used with play activities that have a medium level of risk.
- Low Supervision: Keeping a watchful eye on the children from a distance and making sure that they are playing safely but freely. Keeping an overview of what the children are doing while not interfering. This is most commonly used with low -risk activities.

Daily Site Risk Assessment

Before set up begins, a Daily Risk Assessment is carried out by FS Group Leader in charge. This includes a sweep of all areas used, to ensure that there are no changes to the site which could cause harm. For example, loose branches after high winds. Following the Daily Site Risk Assessment, the FS leader will carry out anything that is needed to make the site safe (e.g., remove any hazards,



mark off any unsafe areas). At the same time, they will consider specific circumstances which make it appropriate to cancel a Forest School Session.

Activity Risk Benefit Assessment

When planning activities for Forest Schools, any hazards associated with that activity, that are at risk of causing harm, should be considered. These should be recorded on an Activity Risk Benefit Assessment with suitable control measures taken to control and minimise the risk. Due to the nature of Forest Schools the children may come up with a new activity during a session and therefore reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the activity is safe. This will either be in the form of dynamic risk assessment or using a blank RBA which FS leaders carry in their folders. An Activity Risk Benefit Assessment form will be completed asap following that session and shared with all staff on Basecamp platform prior to sessions.

Risk Assessments

All Risk Assessments are kept securely and able to be accessed by FSL's via Basecamp.

Child Protection / Safeguarding

All members of staff will receive training in child protection as part of their induction training.

All members of staff are instructed in the specific procedure for WFS, especially as regards to disclosures and suspicions of child abuse. (See the Safeguarding Policy for further information).

Accident & Emergency

In the event of a serious incident, which could arise as a result of an injury, illness or threat, emergency services should be contacted, and the following procedures will be followed:

- 1. Secure the safety of the whole group from further danger.** The FSL will use the whistle retreat to halt activities and call the group in, as agreed with group in advance. If possible, they will remove whole group from any further danger or threat of danger.
- 2. A trained First Aider will attend to any casualties** with an adult helper and with regard for maintenance of required supervision ratios for the rest of the party. A record of changes in casualties' state and anything administered to them to be made if possible using the casualty card in the group leader's folder.
- 3. Emergency services will be contacted as necessary** by an adult helper. A charged mobile phone is carried by the group leader along with walkie-talkies (up to 10km radius) to mitigate for poor reception in rural area. An adult helper will be dispatched to meet emergency vehicle at the Wheatfen Foerst School car park where necessary.
- 4. The Safety of the rest of group will be maintained** by the remaining staff and adults, away from the scene of the incident.
- 5. Next of kin or school will be informed as soon as practicable** after the incident by the forest school leader.
- 6. The landowner will be informed** of any major incident as soon as possible.
- 7. Incident and/or accident report** will be filled in on site if possible and then stored confidentially at the WFS office. Report forms are kept in the group leader's folder and replenished termly. This should be filled in whenever the emergency plan is used even if no one was harmed and it was just a near miss.



A laminated copy of this emergency procedure is kept in the emergency kit is always accessible to all staff and volunteers.

If an adult is hurt during a session, the above procedure still applies, with the welfare of the casualty and the rest of the group appropriately delegated and disseminated. If the leader is injured, the assistant/ other designated adult will contact parents or school for children to be collected as soon as is practical.

An accident form will be completed later. A RIDDOR record will be created, along with an Accident report for any death, serious injury or 7 day injury.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm>

RIDDOR - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

In the event of an injury

If anyone sustains an injury or illness which cannot be treated by first aid on site and requires medical assistance:

- In serious cases, the Emergency Services will be contacted (see below) using the Forest phone carried by the WFS Leader. The WFS Leader will contact the family.
- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger, will be moved to safety.
- One member of staff will meet the ambulance at the woodland entrance and direct the crew to the incident site.
- If the injured party is taken to hospital, one member of staff will go with them, and the injured party's emergency contact will be updated about the situation by the school office staff.
- In minor cases, the WFS Leader will arrange to contact the injured party's emergency contact so that they can be collected and taken to hospital, doctor or home – as appropriate.

Emergency Contact Numbers:

Ambulance/Fire Brigade = 111 / 999

Requesting attendance by Emergency Services

Dial 111 / 999 and ask for ambulance or fire brigade. Be ready with the following information:

Wheatfen Forest School post code – NR14 7AL, Wheatfen Nature Reserve car park, The Covey, Surlingham, Norfolk. What3Words: skies.quilt.compliant

First Aid

A First aid kits is accessible to the adults in the emergency bag, with a smaller dedicated kit for the tool area.

The forest school leader will ensure this is adequately stocked and replenished.



All accidents are recorded with the treatment given using an accident form from the group leader's folder. The group leader returns all forms to the WFS office after the session where they are filed securely.

Rose Hoare will also ensure a mobile phone and walkie talkie are available in the area during each session.

In every session there will be at least two members of staff who have up to date outdoor first aid and paediatric first aid training, including the group leader. All staff will be working towards or qualified in paediatric first aid. In addition, all members of staff are instructed in the correct procedures for dealing with accidents and incidents including completion of documentation.

All staff are made aware of where the First Aid kit is stored. Emergency medication, such as epi-pens, must be stored somewhere out of reach of children, but easily accessible to staff.

As per the WFS Incident policy, the following procedure should be followed in the event of an accident or incident:

- Notify the group leader immediately.
- The group leader will assess the situation and take the necessary action.
- Notify Lisa Bicker (in situ) or in her absence, Rose Hoare (in the nearby office).

All accident/incident forms to be completed as soon as is safe to do so. The procedure for such events is:

- all accidents / incidents are recorded by the member of staff who witnessed the event.
- Parents/carers/guardians are notified.
- The Managers will review accident/ incident forms on a half-termly basis, in order to implement any further actions or highlight any trends or problem areas.

Administration of Medications

All administration of medications is strictly controlled and done in accordance with the WFS Medicine Administration Policy and Procedure.

Illnesses

WFS uses guidance from Public Health England (PHE) to determine the exclusion guidance for contagious illnesses.

If a child becomes unwell during the course of the session, members of staff will ensure that the child is comfortable but does not pose any risk to the other children in the setting. The member of staff will contact the child's parent/carer and observe the child closely until they are collected.

Personal Hygiene

All members of staff and children are encouraged to maintain an acceptable level of personal hygiene.

Maintenance and Storage of Equipment



WFS has a wide variety of equipment and materials that are used by the children in the course of their play and enjoyment at the setting. All equipment is bought from approved suppliers and is checked to ensure compliance with the British Safety Standards.

All equipment is well maintained and checked on a regular basis to ensure that it presents no risk to the health and safety of the children. Equipment and materials which do pose a hazard, but which have an evidenced benefit for the development of children are used under constant supervision and stored securely after use.

The Woodland

The area of woodland that WFS operates from is not open to the public, but is set within a wider wood that is open to the public. Members of staff check the forest school area each day to ensure that there are no risks or hazards that would compromise the health and safety of the children, parents and carers or staff.

At the end of the session members of staff ensure that the premises are left clean, safe and tidy.

Safety and Security

WFS feels that the safety and security of the children, parents and carers and staff are paramount to the running of the setting.

Visitors, other than parents and carers collecting their children, must pre-arrange their visits and carry identification; all visitors must make themselves known to a member of staff upon entry, stating their name and reason for visiting. Visitors are required to sign themselves in and out using the visitor's book, and must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

Smoking

WFS operates a strict no smoking policy, this means that there is no smoking at any time on any part of the premises.

All staff members are entitled to a 30-minute break for more than 6 hours of work. If a member of staff wishes to smoke during these times, they are required to leave the premises and the grounds of the setting and remain out of sight of the children.

The no smoking policy also applies to parents, carers, and visitors to the setting. WFS has this policy in the best interests of the children and staff.

Accident Reporting & Investigation (RIDDOR)

All injuries, however small, sustained by a person at work must be reported to the Rose Hoare & Lisa Bicker and recorded on an accident form. Accident records are crucial to the effective monitoring of health and safety procedures and must therefore be accurate and comprehensive. Rose & Lisa will inspect the accident forms on a regular basis and all accidents will be investigated and a report prepared, with any necessary action being taken to prevent a recurrence of the problem.

Managers will investigate any accidents if necessary, and the appropriate enforcing authority will be notified under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR), where necessary.



Cooking- including food hygiene

Everyone who prepares or cooks food for other people have Food Hygiene level 2 Certificates.

Everyone involved in WFS should be involved in food safety and follow the food hygiene rules as follows:

- Wash hands before and during cooking
- Not handle food if they are ill with stomach problems, such as diarrhoea or vomiting
- Cover sores and cuts with a waterproof dressing
- Avoid handling food when possible, and instead use spoons, tongs or other suitable implements
- Tie hair back
- Keep food that is waiting to be cooked separate from food that is ready to be eaten.
- Use separate chopping boards for preparing different foods, especially raw and ready-to-eat food.
- Prepare food on a suitable surface, e.g. chopping board, cup, saucepan and not on the ground.
- Ensure food is cooked thoroughly before serving
- Food should be cooked right through and piping hot in the middle
- Not reheat food more than once
- Keep utensils clean and regularly wash tea towels and cloths
- Store food in clean plastic containers with non-leaking lids
- Take all rubbish and food scraps away (to compost or feed chickens) at the end of the session to avoid attracting vermin to the site.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

COSHH is the law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health and includes nanomaterials. Prevent or reduce workers' exposure to hazardous substances by finding out what the health hazards are; deciding how to prevent harm to health (risk assessment).

As an employer, we have a duty under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 to prevent employees from coming into contact with substances hazardous to health.

Chemicals and Material: It is WFS policy to, wherever possible; avoid the use of substances that have the risk of being hazardous to health. Safety data sheets under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) or Chemical Hazard Information Packaging (CHIP) information supplied by manufacturers will be held on file for all substances and available for staff reference purposes and risk assessment. Staff who use these chemicals and materials have the duty of care to make themselves aware of the potential hazard, contradictions and treatments.

Measures and Provisions:

We have conducted a risk assessment in relation to all substances used on our premises and concluded that no substance presents a high risk.

The majority of substances used within the provision are of domestic standard for household use and therefore do not present any threat to health and are safe to use.



The Forest School has general hygiene measures in place, together with the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) to further ensure the safety of employees.

- Cleaning substances are of domestic standard.
- All substances are correctly stored in clearly labelled containers.
- Cleaning substances are safely stored in child-safe cupboards.
- Adequate washing facilities are available in designated areas.
- PPE Aprons and rubber gloves are provided where required.
- All waste products, including medical waste is disposed of safely in accordance with statutory regulations.
- COSHH information sheets are accessible to all staff (stored in lockbox) and provide information such as:

Product name, Ingredients, First Aid information and Safety requirements.

FireLighting

Training has been provided to the WFS staff regarding the correct way to construct and light a fire.

Safety and Responsibility

- A Fire Blanket, bucket of water and Burns kit are sited close to the campfire.
- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of a FS Leader
- Fires are lit using cotton wool and natural tinder.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one-to-one adult supervision.
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire.
- A hand should never go near the fire.

Extinguishing

Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.

The WFS Leader should ensure that any large remains of wood, especially when using logs, are separated from one another.

At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water using a watering can and rose and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.

Large build ups of potash, from several fires, need to be dispersed. This must only be done when it has totally cooled, preferably the following day. It should be finely scattered through the woodland to enable natural decomposition.

Manual Handling / Tools

The FS Leader is responsible for overseeing safe use and maintenance of all tools.

Toolboxes which contain sharp tools such as knives and axes, are locked away at all times in the shed when not in use. The FS leader is responsible for the safekeeping of the box.



The FS leader ensures all PPE is used when necessary eg. gloves

Activity Risk Assessments are completed for all activities involving the use of tools.

Tool specific information sheets can be found in the WFS Risk Assessment folder on Basecamp and a hard copy can be found in the RBA folder in the emergency bag.

Staff and facilitators are given Manual Handling training. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended in 2002 ('the Regulations') apply to a wide range of manual handling activities, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, or carrying. The load may be either animate, such as a person or an animal, or inanimate, such as a box or a trolley.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf>

- Consider the risks from manual handling to the health and safety of children and facilitators.
- Consult and involve the people involved.
- Avoid the need for hazardous manual handling.
- Assess the risk of injury.
- Reduce the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable.

Waste Disposal

Waste disposal within the Forest School is managed by procedures in accordance with the COSHH Regulations as follows. WFS seeks to minimise the generation of waste as much as practicable and recycles wherever possible.

General business waste: This is taken to the local recycling and general waste centre.

Kitchen food waste: Where possible, food waste is used to make compost which is then used in the garden. If this is not possible, the food waste is disposed of general waste.

Welfare including clothing, PPE, toileting

Clothing policy

We advise every season on appropriate clothing. For their own comfort children are encouraged to provide their own extra layers in winter. No person will be permitted to come to Forest School without appropriate clothing that will protect them from extremes of heat or cold, keep them covered to reduce the likelihood of cuts and scrapes, that fits appropriately for comfort. Children and parents/carers are encouraged to think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities, and to be aware they are likely to take some of our mud home with them after a session. In the forest it can often be cooler than expected under the shade of the trees.

Clothing list: Waterproof trousers. Waterproof coat, with a hood. Long sleeved top. Full length trousers Warm boots (wellies can be very cold during the winter) ·Warm Socks, and a spare pair Gloves and Woolly hat –Cold weather Sun hat: that fits well to ensure good visibility–sunny weather WFS has a supply of spare clothing (waterproof coats, socks) in situ.



Welfare - Toilet Policy

The toilet is located a short walk from the FS site in the Wheatfen Nature Reserve car park. Children will be accompanied to the toilet following the correct safeguarding ratios. If an adult needs to escort children to the toilet, the FS group leader will be informed.

If in the rare occasion a child should have a toileting accident on site, then the adult and child will advise the FS group leader who will advise on action.

PPE

PPE is equipment that will protect the user against health or safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. Typically, at WFS this includes Fire Gloves, Gloves for sawing or wood working.