

Forest School - Poor Weather Conditions Policy and Procedure

The 'Poor Weather Conditions' are snow, rain, wind, thunder/lightning storms and heat.

At Bus Stop Pre-School we believe children should experience learning in their environment no matter what the weather, however we understand that it is our responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults and it is our responsibility to end a Forest School session and return to the Pre-School woodland site, where there are appropriate shelters, if the weather becomes unsafe to continue.

Designated Health and Safety Officers

Kate Rice - Forest School Leader and Health and Safety Officer (HS) for Forest School activities.

Kelly Haines, EYP - Deputy Health and Safety Officer for Forest School.

It is the responsibility of the Forest School Leader and HS Officer to ensure local weather information is up to date before preparing/leaving the Pre-School woodland site, this is through viewing the Met Office website/BBC weather App. The Forest School Leader is responsible for continuing or deciding to cancel a Forest School session if the weather is poor.

The table below details the procedure and risk assessment undertaken by the Forest School Leader in the event of poor weather conditions:

Weather Condition	Reason to Continue	Reason to Cancel
Snow	Snow has settled and children have arrived prepared for session in snow.	Snow still falling, freezing and slippery conditions. Parents to be called if snow fall increases.
Rain	Light rain, forecast is good.	Heavy rain, forecast to continue, possible flooding.
Wind	Light Wind	High wind. Danger of falling branches and trees. Refer to the Beaufort wind force scale 1-12.
Thunder Storm and Lightening	Low rumbles of thunder heard in the distance. Clear skies.	Rumbles of thunder grow louder. Bolts of lightning visible in the distance.
Heat	Medium heat. Children wearing sun protection. Keep to shaded areas.	Too hot. Risk of sun stroke and heat exhaustion.

On joining Bus Stop Pre-School parents/carers are informed of our Forest School approach and reminded to ensure their children arrive dressed appropriately for Forest School activities. In the event that a child is dressed inappropriately for the weather condition we can provide the following all-weather clothing and footwear:

- Waterproof trousers,
- Gloves,
- Warm hats,
- Scarves,
- Socks,
- Welly socks,
- Warm coats,
- Rain coats,
- Sun hats,
- Long sleeved t-shirts,
- Long trousers,
- Wellington Boots,
- Trainers,
- Snow boots.

This list should not be viewed as exhausted.

Before going out to Forest School practitioners ensure that children and adults are wearing appropriate footwear and clothing for the weather conditions.

In the event that the weather conditions worsen during a Forest School session, all children and adult will return to the Pre-School woodland site or be taken to the nearest place of safety for example the Polesden Lacey House/ Restaurant. If we are unable to return to the Pre-School woodland site children's parents/carers will be contacted and informed of our location to ensure children can be collected safely. Please see Emergency Closure Policy and Procedure and Forest School Emergency Procedure.

Before each Forest School session, the settings mobile number is displayed clearly on the main gate. This informs parents/carers that the Pre-School is out at Forest School and gives parents/carers the settings mobile number to call if the Pre-School group needs to be contacted.

Forest School Training

Forest School training may need to be postponed/rearranged with the students due to adverse weather conditions and or if the Polesden Lacey Estate is closed. Please see Emergency Closure Policy and Procedure.

Useful Resources

- www.bbc.co.uk - search Weather
- www.metoffice.gov.uk - search Bookham/Leatherhead/Dorking weather
- Beaufort Wind Force Scale - www.metoffice.gov.uk

This policy was adopted in June 2012, to be reviewed annually.

This policy was reviewed in September 2024, to be reviewed in September 2025

Signed by Owner/FS leader _____ Manager _____