

Poor Weather Policy



Weather Conditions

Assessments of weather conditions will be taken prior to a visit and if the weather is too extreme the session will be cancelled. Where possible, alternative indoor provision will be arranged. If the weather deteriorates suddenly during a session, the staff will decide whether to leave the site or use alternative accommodation. When windy and there is a danger of falling branches, the children will be taken to an alternative setting or the session will be cancelled.

The participants are asked to bring Wellington boots and suitable warm/waterproof clothing. A clothing list will be available on the website. The nature of woodland means that Forest School sites are quite sheltered, and most will have a shelter on site. Participants will experience hot, cold, and wet weather but this will harm no one if they are properly dressed. If cold, they will be more active to maintain warmth. In extreme heat, care will be taken to stay in the shade and plenty of water for drinking will be available.

Forest school is all about play outdoors in all weathers. We have a parachute and shelters for rain and cold. However, there are certain weather conditions that will affect the running of our Forest School.

High Winds

High winds can be dangerous in woodland because of the dangers of falling branches and damage to shelters. We monitor the forecast and our site closely. Our site is fairly sheltered from Southerly and Easterly winds, is exposed from the other directions. This means that we will have to close if winds are:

- Gusting 39mph from North or West
- Gusting 45 mph from any direction

However, there may be times where we make an additional risk assessment based on recent weather conditions, the woodland canopy and the needs of the group. In these cases, we will need to close in lower wind speeds and will inform the group with as much notice as possible.

Electrical Storms

Electrical storms can be dangerous in a woodland due to lack of indoor shelters and risk of electric shock from lightning, both direct and through tree roots. We follow the Rospa 30/30 rule: if there is a direct lightning strike within 30km of our site, we seek shelter in vehicles and stay in for at least 30 minutes after the last thunderclap. Staff have an app on our phones which alert us if there is a strike within 30km. If electrical storms persist, we will make the decision to end the session early.

Snow and Ice

Our site may also close if snow and ice make the roads too dangerous for travel. The staff will stay informed of the weather conditions via the Met Office Web Site. We will always try to give 24 hours' notice of closure; however, we may need to cancel on the day if weather changes suddenly / overnight. We will inform parents by text and email.

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