

Covid-19 Operating Procedure



Coronavirus Operating Procedure for Willow Banks Forest School

Date: April 2020 - V Predeth document created

Review: May 2020 - V Predeth updated after trial opening with new guidelines

Review: June 2020 - V Predeth updated with new guidelines as per government advice

Review: July 2020 - V Predeth updated for holiday club and September term time students

Review: August 2020 - V Predeth updated for term time students

Review: October 2020 - V Predeth updated with new guidelines as per government advice

Review: January 2021 - V Predeth updated for term time students

Introduction

We are working towards reopening the forest school for our most vulnerable students from April 2020. We are working in line with the DFE's for educational and alternative settings, we have updated some of our operating protocols to ensure that we can minimise the spread of Covid-19.

This document sets out how we will minimise the risk and spread of the virus at forest school. These protocols will operate in addition to or take priority over these existing policies.

- Risk assessment policy
- Hygiene policy
- Food and drink policy
- Missing child policy

Future Closure

If at any time that it is felt necessary to prevent the spread of coronavirus (Covid-19) and to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employee's, children and their parents, we will consider future closure. We will continually monitor the risk factor of keeping our setting open and may at any time revert to a closed status, with no children permitted on-site, to a partially closed status, where setting places will be limited to, but not excluding, vulnerability, age, need of care, critical key worker status of parents, special educational needs.

Emergency Closures

In the event of two or more confirmed cases of Covid-19, Public Health England and the Local Authority Team will work with us to assess the risk and advise us on what action to take. We may be advised to fully close the building and partially or fully close the whole site to minimise the risk of an outbreak in our local community. We will communicate with all parents and providers to keep them updated on the actions being taken.

Opening Forest School Safely

We are doing everything we can to provide a safe environment at forest school in relation to Covid-19. At this stage there is always a degree of risk. Excluding the classroom building, the forest school site and woodland area are outdoors, so there is more space for social distancing, fresh air available, as well as less contact with surfaces that can transmit the virus. If all of the measures here are implemented, we will be limiting the risk of infection.

Who Should Not Be At Forest School At This Time

In addition to our normal sickness policy, the following points must be adhered to:

- Staff and children should not attend if they have symptoms or anyone in their household has symptoms. To check your symptoms use this link [Check if you or your child has coronavirus \(COVID-19\) symptoms](#)
- If your child or a member of staff lives with someone who is clinically vulnerable (but not clinically extremely vulnerable), including those who are pregnant, they can attend their education or childcare setting.
- If your child or a member of our staff has been classed as clinically extremely vulnerable due to an underlying medical condition, then they should not attend forest school at this time.
- If you live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable, the government advice can be found here [Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19](#)

What Happens If Someone Becomes Unwell Whilst At Forest School With Either A Temperature Or A Cough?

They will be sent home. Whilst awaiting collection by a parent or carer, they will be moved away from others and the adult caring for them will be wearing PPE.

If symptoms develop at home, adults or children cannot come into the forest school.

If a temperature of 37.8 or over is detected on arrival by use of a contactless forehead thermometer, children and adults will be sent home immediately. They will need to self isolate for 7 days and will need to request a Covid-19 test.

From the 1st June 2020 tests will be available to all key worker staff and to children attending school. Test results must be requested and sent via text to individuals, this message must be shared with forest school before a child or staff member can return.

Where someone living in the same household as the child or staff member has been tested, we will ask to see the test result before the child or staff member can return.

- Staff can arrange a test here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested#how-to-arrange-a-test> requesting their results via text.

- Families who need to test their children need to call 111 to arrange their child's test, requesting their results via text.

If the test is negative then the child or staff member may return to forest school as soon as their symptoms have disappeared. If they test positive, they must self isolate with their family for 14 days.

If a child or staff member tests positive within the forest school, anyone in the 'group' (no more than 12 children and 3 adults) with the child or staff member will need to self isolate for 14 days. In this instance Willow Banks Forest School will notify Public Health England to discuss the case and assess whether the entire forest school will need to close for 14 days.

If the test result is unclear, void, borderline or inconclusive, then a repeat test must be done and self isolation must continue for 14 days or until a negative test result is obtained.

The Use Of PPE At Forest School

We have sought guidance from the Government's advice implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings. Wearing a face covering or face mask in schools or other education settings is not recommended and face coverings (or any form of medical mask were instructed to be used for specific clinical reasons) should not be worn in any circumstance by those who may not be able to handle them as directed (for example, young children, or those with special educational needs or disabilities) as it may inadvertently increase the risk of transmission. Schools and other education or childcare settings should therefore not require staff, children and learners to wear face coverings.

Willow Banks Forest School currently provides gloves for personal care and these will continue to be used in the usual way, but with the addition of a mask. We will provide all staff with enough PPE and additional PPE may be required in certain instances for example:

- If a child becomes unwell with symptoms of coronavirus while in the forest school and needs direct personal care until they can return home. A face mask must be worn by the supervising adult if a distance of 2 metres cannot be maintained. If contact with the child or young person is necessary, then gloves, an apron and a face mask should be worn by the supervising adult. If a risk assessment determines that there is a risk of splashing to the eyes, for example from coughing, spitting, or vomiting, then eye protection should also be worn.

Protective Measures for our Staff

- All staff will be provided with surgical masks for journeys to work, if they travel to work on public transport.
- We will identify anyone who may be clinically extremely vulnerable (confirmed with a letter from GP) and who may not be able to return to work.
- Anti-bac gel will be provided at the entrance of forest school. Every staff member will use anti-bac gel before entering forest school and have a supply of anti-bac gel in the office area at their work stations.

- Every staff member will have their temperature taken at the forest school entrance and recorded as safe before entering the forest school.
- Staff on entering the forest school will wash hands and wrists thoroughly with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Staff to remain vigilant about the symptoms and to immediately inform their manager if they show any symptoms.
- We will identify any staff members that are in higher risk categories. There are two levels of higher risk people. The “clinically vulnerable” and the “clinically extremely vulnerable” who are people with certain conditions who have been contacted by the NHS. The clinically extremely vulnerable group has been told to shield and will not return to work at the forest school. The clinically vulnerable group can return to work but a risk assessment will be completed to ensure protective measures in their working environment.
- All staff will sign this policy and complete training on the virus and what symptoms to look out for.
- Staff will complete a self-declaration daily to confirm they and their household are symptom free.

How will Drop-off and Pick-Up work?

There will be some changes to our drop-off and pick-up arrangements. We will no longer be allowing parents/carers to access this site to ensure the lowest level of risk to our children and staff we will operate exclusively outdoors; this will mean that when we reopen the following changes will be in place.

Daily arrangements:

Willow Banks Forest School will be open from 9.00am-3.00pm term time with drop-off and collection for both full day and sessional children at a designated point in the car park. Half day sessions will have drop off and collections at 12pm. Each child will be scanned with a non-contact thermometer and the temperature recorded. Once all children have been cleared, the group will then walk the short distance to the forest school.

We ask that all parents respect the following protocols during Drop-off and Pick-Up times;

- All families to uphold 2 metre distance if approaching staff.
- Children are to remain in the vehicle with parents/carers/taxi drivers until approached by a member of staff.
- Children will have their temperature taken by a staff member in the car park a self-declaration completed that they and the household are symptom free.
- Once on the forest school site, children will go immediately to wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, they will then be given anti-bac gel to rub into their hands and wrists. Parents will not be permitted to enter the Sherborne Equestrian site.
- Parents must not congregate at the Equestrian entrance.
- Handovers to parents at the end of the day will take place from 2 metres at a specified collection time. If you need to talk for longer about your child, please email to arrange a telephone conversation with the manager.

What protective measures are in place day to day?

- A daily COVID-19 specific risk assessment to be completed for the forest school before the children arrive.
- Employees are always advised to practise strict hygiene and cleanliness procedures ensuring waterproofs and clothing are clean before entering the classroom.
- Employees are advised to cough or sneeze into their elbow when a tissue or other vessel cannot be reached in time and are then to always wash their hands afterwards.
- Employees are advised to wherever possible, avoid contact with others, such as handshakes and are to maintain a social distance of 2 meters (6ft).
- For the majority of the day, the children will be outside. This is to ensure the lowest level of risk to staff and children. The children will only be given access to the classroom for handwashing, snack and lunch times and in bad weather..
- We will separate the children into smaller groups if we should need to. Each group will have the same two adults looking after the children each day, there will never be more than 6 children within their group. Groups will remain socially distant from each other with different set-up learning environments around the site.
- Please be aware that your children will meet both staff members and other children while attending forest school. Although every measure will be taken to ensure that your child has minimal contact with others, children of the early years age group will inevitably want to hug and touch others through play or when needing comfort. Therefore, it is vital that we adhere to best practise hygiene policies throughout the day. If your child needs comfort, our staff will comfort them and will do their absolute best to make sure that all their social, emotional and wellbeing needs are met.
- Within children's groups at lunch and during seating times social distancing will be encouraged through the placing of log seating/ picnic rug seating with distance between children. Through the creation of songs and routines each group will be encouraged to maintain social distancing. However, it is to be expected and indeed needed for children's wellbeing and mental health that during much of playtime children will not be fully socially distanced within their groups.
- All Children and adults will hand wash regularly (minimum once an hour and always upon arrival in the morning, after using the toilet, after coughing or sneezing into hands, before and after eating, after physical contact with others)with a handwashing station in each 'group' area. No baby wipes or washing cloths will be used.
- Resources will be carefully selected to be as natural as possible with no smooth artificial surfaces. No plastic to be given to children to play with. We will further remove any laminated books or resources with smooth surfaces which will hold the virus for longer. All pencils, pens, paintbrushes or other resources used will be cleaned with an anti-bacterial solution each day.
- Groups will not share resources being used unless they have been deep cleaned beforehand.

- During any personal care duty, as usual gloves and masks to be worn. Children should be assisted/cleaned from the side in order to prevent any bodily fluid spills, or sneezes going towards adults faces. Careful sterilisation of hands between each personal care duty, new gloves to be worn as per our standard protocol.
- Where possible adults are advised to stand slightly behind and above children as they play. The greatest risk of contagion is if the virus is coughed or sneezed out from one person, into another's face (eyes, nose or mouth).
- When not playing directly with children but talking or observing, we encourage staff to try to develop a habit of holding their hands in front of them to reduce the amount of times they touch their face.
- During the day, any item that children and adults touch regularly will be sprayed and antibacterially wiped. This will take place at least once before the day begins, during the day, after the children leave and also between groups using it. This includes toilets and toilet flushes in addition to staff equipment such as phones, kettles and laptops. Phones and other equipment should be labelled so no more than 2 staff use the same equipment each day. Whenever a phone or other equipment is passed between staff it should be anti-bacterially wiped.
- All indoor spaces used by staff to resource for the day should then be thoroughly cleaned.
- No soft toys or soft furnishings will be used unless they can be sterilised every day.
- All resources should be sprayed with anti-bacterial spray and wiped down at the end of each day. Any resources not easily wiped and cleaned should be not used during the time of the pandemic and stored securely in cupboards.
- Disposable cloths used for wiping surfaces and drying hands to be placed into small bags and sealed before placing into a black bin bag for disposal at the end of each day.
- No toys or equipment can be brought in from home by any children. This includes books, toys, mobile phones, iPads etc. If any children require phones and/or iPads for use during transport to and from site these may be brought in but will be locked away securely and sterilised by staff each day. Children will be returned the items again sterilised at the end of their session.
- Staff may be required to take phones, laptops and any other electrical equipment home with them each day for use at home and to be charged before returning each day. All items will be sterilised and stored securely.

What will happen with lunch and snack times at forest school?

- We will not provide breakfast, lunch, or snacks at this time.
- No shared plates, bowls or utensils will be provided for children.
- No food will be prepared on site for children.
- Families will be asked to provide a healthy packed lunch for full days for their children along with a full water bottle. Parents may provide a plastic fork and spoon or spork which must be clearly labelled with the child's name. We politely request that parents do not send in plastic knives.
- We ask that families also provide snacks for those children attending full or half day sessions.

- Staff will make one hot drink during each morning and afternoon session for children during snack time, older students will no longer be allowed to make their own drinks. Cups with hot drinks must be kept with the child throughout consumption and sat at the table, until placed into the sink to be washed immediately in hot water by a staff member, then left to air dry on the drainer. Taps/sink area/kettle/table and chairs will all be sterilised after each use.
- We will have disposable water bottles in case of a child forgetting their own bottle, otherwise their own bottles will be refilled if needed by a staff member, taps/sink area must be sterilised after each use.
- Staff will have up to date allergy information for all the children and will supervise the lunches to ensure that children do not have access to any food that may be harmful to them.

What will happen if my child requires medication whilst at Forest School?

- Staff will still be able to administer any prescribed medication at this time. So at this time, we can still accept children at the forest school who require medication, this includes the use of epipens, inhalers and prescribed skin cream.
- Preventative inhalers should be administered at home prior to the child arriving at forest school. Blue inhalers which may be required can be brought to forest school and staff can assist in administering these if needed whilst wearing PPE.
- Epi-pens can be brought to forest school and administered in line with our usual first aid policy and procedure.
- Prescribed skin cream will be administered with staff wearing PPE in the form of gloves and mask.
- All other medications will be administered at 2 metre social distance where possible.

What happens if a child goes missing whilst visiting an off-site woodland?

If a child goes missing during our risk assessed outings to our Forest sites:

- As soon as it is noticed that the child is missing, staff alert the other staff of an emergency situation and notify the person in charge (Manager or Deputy). The children will remain in their group and stand with one adult.
- A head count is carried out for the group and relayed to the person in charge. The person in charge will designate a team to search specific locations within the local vicinity, whilst maintaining social distancing (2 metres apart). The children will remain with one designated staff member from the group, but within sight and sound of the other staff.
- Staff will be careful not to create an atmosphere of panic.
- Staff will remain vigilant of any potentially suspicious behaviour or person in or around the forest site.
- If after 5 minutes of thorough searching for the child the child is still missing the person in charge will inform the police and the parents of the missing child.
- The person in charge will then contact the Manager for their site and they will arrive at the site as soon as possible if not already in attendance.
- The allocated staff will continue to search for the child whilst awaiting the arrival of the police and the remaining children will stay with their allocated adult and in their group, but within sight and sound of the other staff.

- The person in charge will write an incident report as per the Willow Banks Forest School Missing Child Policy.

What we need from our Forest School families:

- Parents to read and sign the final page to say they have read this Coronavirus Operational Procedure document.
- To give consent for us to take your child's temperature on a daily basis.
- To provide an honest daily declaration when dropping your child off, that your home is symptom free.
- To provide your child with a healthy packed lunch, snacks and their own water bottle, full of water.
- To not send any toys from home into the nursery with your child.
- To not send in mobile phones or iPads, unless agreeing to them being sterilised and put away securely in a locked cupboard on a daily basis.
- To wipe down waterproofs daily and to change children into different clothing when they return home, placing the clothing from that day in the wash.
- Wherever possible, to travel to your nursery by car, foot or bike rather than public transport.
- To ensure the safety of our children we must ensure they have only been at Willow Banks Forest School, which is a low risk setting in conjunction with their feeder school if appropriate and time spent at home. If you require additional days for your child to allow them to just attend Willow Banks Forest School, please do get in touch and we'll do our best to accommodate. Please note that this applies to children attending numerous activity groups outside of the forest school for example swimming, karate, playball or football clubs that may not be held in an outside setting.
- We ask that parents please apply long lasting suncream to their child before they arrive at the forest school. Please provide your child with easy to apply suncream (stick, block, spray or roll on) in their backpacks, with their name on. Staff will encourage each child to re-apply this themselves but will be there to assist where a child may need help. Staff will be provided with PPE for this.
- We ask that parents please apply insect repellent cream and /or an insect repellent bracelet to their child before they arrive at the forest school if needed for allergies. Please provide your child with insect repellent cream in their backpacks, with their name on. Staff will encourage each child to re-apply this themselves but will be there to assist where a child may need help. Staff will always be provided with PPE for this.
- Parents are not permitted to enter the Equestrian Centre grounds to access the forest school at the present time.
- Following updated Government guidance released this week, we can confirm that research has now been carried out to identify groups that may be at higher risk of contracting Covid 19 than others. Willow Banks Forest School advise from the report that following the research there are 4 key groups with a higher risk of contracting Covid 19:
- Those who are over the age of 50, with the contraction rate higher for women.

- Those with severe underlying medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertensive diseases, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and dementia then all cause death certificates.
- Those from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority groups
- Those working in jobs where they come into close contact with people such as care workers, hospital staff, taxi and delivery drivers and bus drivers.

Our risk assessments for Covid-19 have been updated to include the latest guidance as evidenced above. Staff returning to work in the categories above complete an individual risk assessment prior to return to work and are offered appropriate PPE and guidance.

For families who are concerned that their child has an underlying medical condition as listed in the report or is from a Black, Asian or Ethnic Minority background who would like to discuss the protective measures we have in place, the forest school manager will be more than happy to discuss any concerns or questions you may have.

Track and Trace

The Government Covid-19 Track and Trace System is now up and running so we wanted to provide you with some additional information and guidance around this:

- If **your child** develops Covid-19 symptoms (a temperature above 37.8 and/or a new continuous cough) then you must immediately self-isolate them and arrange for a test to be carried out. Your child will not be able to attend forest school.
- If the test results are **negative** then your child can return to forest school as soon as their symptoms have gone.
- If the test result is **positive** then your child must remain in self-isolation for 7 days minimum from the day that they first developed symptoms.
- Anyone living in your household must **also** self-isolate for 14 days.
- If someone in your household develops symptoms then the whole household will need to **self-isolate for 14 days** and the person with symptoms will need to arrange to be tested for Covid-19.
- If **their** test result is **negative** then neither they nor anyone else in the household needs to remain self-isolating. If their test result is **positive** then they will need to continue to self-isolate for a minimum of 7 days or until their symptoms have gone.
- If their test result is **positive** then everyone else in the household will need to continue to self-isolate for 14 days.
- If you receive a text or call from the NHS test and trace service then it will be because someone in the household has been in contact with someone that has tested positive for Covid-19.

- You will be advised you will need to self-isolate for 14 days. It is very important that you adhere to this. Other members of the household do not need to self-isolate unless they begin to display symptoms.

With all of the scenarios above please can you inform us as soon as possible. We will need to notify the NHS that we have a family where one or more people in the household has tested positive for Covid-19.

Can the parent/carer please sign and return this slip or email the forest school manager at:

willowbanksfs@gmail.com or call: 07399998388

to confirm that you have read and understood this Coronavirus Operational Procedure Document.

I the undersigned have read and understood the Willow Banks Forest School Coronavirus Operational Procedures Document.

I agree to my child's temperature being taken on arrival and that I will give an honest daily declaration of the health of my child/children and the family within the home.

Signed.....

Print name.....

Dated.....