

## Wildlings



### Adverse Weather Policy

#### **Policy statement**

This policy outlines emergency action plans to take in the case of adverse weather conditions for both hall based and Forest School sessions. Adverse weather can pose many dangers during and traveling to and from forest school sites. Weather can be unpredictable, and each situation may be different through changing seasons and site locations.

Practitioners will use their best judgment to risk assess the best course of actions in each individual circumstance.

#### Strong wind/lightning storms

High winds impose the risk of falling trees and branches. If gusts are forecast to reach Beaufort scale 7 (32-38 mph), the session lead will assess conditions in the woodland and choose a safe site to run the session from considering wind strength, direction and effect on the area. If gusts are forecast to reach Beaufort Scale 8 or above (39mph+), the session will be relocated to the hall. Parents/carers will be informed via Family, our communication platform, with as much notice as possible. Sessions will still reflect our forest school approach and practice. If gusts are below 46 mph, children may still go out from the hall to a safer location, such as Ambergate Recreation Ground, Cricket pitch or The Birches woodland site off Holly Lane.

Should strong winds or lightning occur unexpectedly during session, the session lead will risk assess to decide if evacuation is needed. Parents will be called and must arrange immediate collection of their child from the site evacuation point at Shining Cliff Hostel Car Park.

#### Snow

In event of heavy snowfall, the practitioners will risk assess and may decide to cancel the session. Staff may deem it too unsafe for families to travel to and from our hall or our forest school site. We will endeavour to give as much notice as possible via Family, our communication platform.

If there is heavy snowfall during a session staff will risk assess and may cancel the session as necessary. If in the woods, they may evacuate children to the entrance to the woods track if the hostel car park will not be safe for vehicles. Parents will be called and must arrange immediate collection of their child from the site evacuation point. Kit may be left until it is safe to return and collect.

#### Extreme cold

In some circumstances practitioners will use their best judgment to decide whether it is in the children's best interest and emotional wellbeing to continue a session outside. If an individual child is too cold, staff will call parents to arrange collection immediately. If it is in the best interest of the whole group, staff will return to the hall for the remainder of the day. Staff cars may be used to transport children back to the hall. On days off extreme cold staff may begin the session at the hall and travel to a site by foot and return to the hall when they deem it appropriate.

### Extreme Heat

We have signed up to receive Weather Health Alerts from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Met Office and follow UKHSA advice on keeping Children safe in Extreme Heat.

### **When Outdoors:**

Children should not take part in vigorous physical activity on very hot days.

We inform parents that Children should wear loose, light-coloured clothing to help keep cool and sunhats with wide brims to avoid sunburn.

We encourage children outdoors to stay in the shade as much as possible.

We ask families to apply an all day sunscreen in the mornings before the children arrive and to supply a sunscreen with their name on, in their bags for reapplication as needed. We recommend to apply sunblock or broad-band sunscreens with high sun protection factors (of at least SPF 30 and ultraviolet A (UVA) rating of 4 or more stars) to protect skin.

Sunscreen should be applied generously and reapplied every 2 hours if not an "all day" variety, and always after activities that can remove the product, such as water play or towelling.

We provide and encourage children to drink plenty of water and encourage them to drink more than usual in hot weather.

### **When indoors**

During periods of high temperature we:

- open windows early in the morning to allow stored heat to escape from the building

- close windows during the day when it is hotter outside than inside whilst considering the need to maintain [adequate ventilation and air quality](#)
- shade sun-facing windows if possible, and close indoor blinds or curtains to keep the heat out
- switch off all electrical equipment, including computers, monitors and printers when not in use – we do not leave equipment in ‘standby mode’ as this generates heat
- use cooling oscillating mechanical fans to increase air movement
- encourage children to eat normally and drink plenty of water

### Icy roads

Due to the rural location of our woods site, surrounding roads may be dangerous to travel on during winter months. Staff will risk assess the situation and may feel it is safer to run the session from the hall or use a site which can be accessed by foot. Weather will be checked the day before but there may be occasions when notice will be given on the morning of the session.

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