

# Health and Safety Policy

At The Willows we strive for children to be confident in taking and managing their own risks, while in a safe outdoor environment. Health and Safety underpins our ethos throughout our sessions. We consider all the potential risks of our site, the activities and the needs of individual children before each session. Guidance is provided to parents/carers about the sessions and permission is sought.

The Forest School Leader, Rebecca Dodman is responsible for the Site Risk Assessment. This involves identifying hazards, associated risks and implementing control actions for each area of the site. Each Forest School activity will be thoughtfully risk assessed; taking account of the hazards, but also the benefits the children will gain from participating in the activity. These Activity Risk Benefit assessments are shared with the children and they are taught how to use specific tools using associated 'tool procedures'. Older children (8+) attending The Willows are also involved in assessing the risks on site, through the Daily Site Check. Both the site risk assessment and activity risk benefit assessments are reviewed annually or if there are any changes that may impact provision at The Willows.

We adhere to Our Health and Safety aims:

- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy outdoor environment for all children to learn (see **Daily Operating Procedure, Risk Assessment and Risk Management**)
- Ensure two adults or more are always present when groups of children are on the site (see **Ratios and Lone Working Policy**)
- Children are closely supervised at all times, especially when using water or tools (see **Lost or Missing Child Procedure, individual Risk Benefit Assessments**)
- Ensure that the premises and equipment are maintained safely and are regularly inspected (see **Tool Storage and Maintenance**)
- Establish and maintain safe working procedures amongst staff, children and parents (see **Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, Equality and Diversity Policy, Behaviour Policy, Disclosure Policy**)
- Have robust procedures in place in case of emergencies (see **First Aid, Emergency and Incident Procedure, Fire and Campfire Cooking and Food Hygiene Procedures**)

## Insurance

The Willows Forest School is covered by the appropriate Public Liability Insurance, which is reviewed annually. Available on our website <https://www.thewillowshorringer.com/resources>.

## Manual Handling

Care should be taken when lifting heavy equipment, bending from the knees. Staff should ensure they do not lift anything that feels too heavy. Children should only be lifted when deemed necessary.

## COSHH

At The Willows the Forest School Leader takes measures to ensure all on site are protected from coming in to contact with substances that have a risk of being hazardous to health. Most substances used within the sessions are of domestic standard and kept out of reach of children. Personal Protective Equipment can be used to protect staff.

**Signed and dated:** *Rebecca Dodman January 2025*