



Seed + Root Nature School CIC

Policies and Procedures

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Our Vision and Aims

Seed + Root Nature School aims to offer, encourage, and support participants in the following:

- To build a good sense of emotional well-being
- To build confidence, self-esteem, independence, and resilience
- Creative and artistic expression
- To build a connection to the natural world and care for the environment
- Knowledge and understanding of environmental issues
- Assess and manage own risk taking

Our vision for our forest school experiences and alternative services:

- To create an environment that is fun, inspiring, and emotionally safe
- To allow participants to express themselves freely and creatively
- Ensure no harm is caused and to safeguard participants
- To challenge racism, sexism, ableism, and childism and ensure all voices are heard
- To develop deep connections to the natural world and understanding of environmental issues through developmentally appropriate experiential learning activities



Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Ratio

The Forest School Leader may work alone so long as 1 adult to every 6 children under 10 years old is present and 1 adult to every 2 children under 3.

First Aid

- The Forest School Leader will keep an up to date First Aid Certificate with Paediatric and Outdoor elements.
- A first aid kit will be carried at all times
- The Forest School Leader will not be responsible for administering any medications except in an emergency situation eg. anaphylaxis

Sanitation and Hygiene

- Running water and soap will be available at all times for hand washing
- Hands must be washed before eating
- Reusable wipes will be provided and washed at 60° after every use
- Seed + Root Nature School CIC is not responsible for providing toileting facilities.

Food and Drink

- The Forest School Leader must keep an up to date Level 2 Food Hygiene Certificate
- Drinking water is provided at all times
- Food will be stored at appropriate temperatures in clean, closed containers
- Participants are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles but cups will also be provided and washed after use
- Participants may bring their own food to sessions
- Where allergies are known, we will share this with participants and ask to avoid bringing them to sessions
- **Meat** will not be cooked during sessions

Clothing and Skin Safety

- Weather appropriate clothing must be worn during outdoor sessions
- Kit list to be sent to participants prior to session
- If inadequate clothing is worn when participants will be invited to take what they need from our Community Closet.
- Sun cream must be worn in warm weather



- Tick repellent is advised

Severe Weather

Outdoor sessions will be cancelled at the discretion of the Forest School Leader or when:

- Wind speeds of over 35kph
- Temperatures over 35°C
- Lightning storms

Participants will be informed prior to the session where possible but cancellation may happen during the session if unexpected weather occurs.

Site Checks

The Forest School Leader is responsible for carrying out daily checks to ensure the safety of the site prior to each session. This includes: Identifying and resolving hazards; tools are in a safe and usable condition; medical information and contact details for each participant is up to date and in the file; DBS checks of all volunteers and parent helpers are complete; tree branches are checked for breakage or deadwood.

Dogs and the Public

Dogs and members of the public may enter sites with no physical boundary. In the case of a dog or member of the public entering the site, the Forest School Leader is to keep an eye on the dog or member of the public until they have passed through the site.

If the member of public is disrupting the session or refuses to leave the site, the police may be contacted by the Forest School Leader. Dog attacks are to be treated as a medical and criminal emergency and both ambulance and police will be called.



Managing Risk

Risk taking is an important aspect of forest school as it supports holistic development, including logical thinking, problem solving, cause and effect, anticipating consequences, physical and emotional well-being, managing own health and safety, resilience, confidence, and self-esteem. Participants are encouraged to manage their own risks and only participate in activity which they feel comfortable with.

Risk assessments will be verbalised every session, ensuring participants are aware of boundaries provided in order to keep them safe from harm, whilst recognising that small injuries such as scrapes, bumps, and grazes are okay and have positive consequences for learning.

A risk assessment for all activities and familiar environments are completed prior to sessions, however unfamiliar sites require risk assessments to be carried out on the day of the session prior to participants entering the site in order to keep risks to a minimum.

Some risks in forest school can be deemed high, for example fire and tools, but when appropriately managed the likelihood of accidents happening can and will be minimised to a safer level. A risk-benefit analysis is held for all activities where risk is involved to manage them appropriately.



Risk Assessment Policy

A 5-level risk assessment will be carried out for all activities and environments. Risk assessments are implemented as follows:

1. Identify and assess the risk
2. Determine appropriate action
3. Implement actions
4. Monitor the results
5. Review risk assessments

Dynamic risk assessments will take place for spontaneous learning opportunities and written up after the session.

Participants

Risk assessments are shared with participants (adults and children) at the beginning of the session and they must be followed at all times. The Forest School Leader is responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are followed by all participants. If participants refuse to follow risk assessment actions then they may be asked to leave the session. Further refusal to follow risk assessment or exhibiting dangerous behaviour could lead to the refusal of further sessions.

Insurance

Seed + Root Nature School is insured by Birnbeck Insurance Ltd



Accidents, Injuries, and Emergency Procedure

Minor Accidents and Injuries (eg scratches, grazes, minor falls)

- Minor accidents and injuries are to be treated with First Aid
- Minor accidents and injuries must be recorded in the first aid book and signed off by the parent/carer

Major Accidents and Injuries (eg broken arm, falls from height, major cuts)

- First aid to be administered as soon as possible
- An ambulance to be called if necessary or immediate medical attention advised
- The Forest School Leader or other named adult must stay with the injured participant until they leave the site for medical treatment
- All major accidents and injuries must be recorded in the serious incident book and a review must be carried out to ensure all policies and procedures were followed. Risk assessments to be updated if necessary
- Insurance must be notified

Emergency Procedure

eg. serious burns, unconsciousness, amputation

Seed + Root will not allow to participate anyone who has not consented to emergency medical treatment.

- Call 999 immediately
- Administer first aid
- Stay with participant and other adults to ensure safety and well-being of all other participants
- Session cancelled and all participants to leave the site
- Record in the major incident book
- Notify insurance

If the Forest School Leader gets hurt

If the forest school leader gets seriously hurt or is unconscious then responsibility to call 999 lands with any volunteer present. If no volunteer is available, then parent/carer participants are required to call 999. All participants must stop any forest school activity and advised to leave the session. Two adults should stay with the forest school leader until the emergency services arrive.



Medication

- Seed + Root Nature School is not responsible for administering medication unless it is life saving treatment such as an Epi-pen for anaphylaxis
- Participants must consent to emergency life saving treatment

Seed + Root Nature School Site:

Felingwm Isaf, Carmarthenshire.

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The closes defibrillator is located back on the main B4310.

What three words: `///scribbled.shorten.templates`

Phone signal may be gained by the entrance gate or on the B4310.



Fire and Tools Policy and Procedures

Fire locations

- Open and level ground
- Fire bowl positioned in the middle of the fire circle
- Inner boundary around the fire bowl made with logs

Position of participants

- All participants (adults and children) must sit around the fire circle or stand outside of it
- No one is to enter the fire circle unless invited by the Forest School Leader
- In order to move around the fire circle, participants must step up and out of the fire circle and walk around the outside
- Participants are advised to turn their head and cover their eyes if smoke is blowing towards them
- No throwing anything in to the fire or participants will be asked to leave the fire circle

Fire safety

- 10 litres of water to be next to the fire in a red bucket
- First aid, burns kit and fire blanket next to the fire
- Two additional adults must supervise fire sessions alongside the Forest School Leader
- Gloves or gauntlets accessible to remove hot cooking items from the fire
- Weather must not be too dry, too hot or too windy. No fires in heat waves.
- Never leave the fire unattended
- Fire to be fully extinguished and no hot embers left before leaving
- Children will be allowed in the fire circle at any one time when invited by the Forest School Leader
- Fires are kept within the fire pit, small and manageable
- In case of uncontrollable fire, participants to leave the site and fire brigade to be called immediately

Extinguishing

- Fire to be extinguished with water
- Participants are encouraged to put the fire out as a ceremonial practice by pouring one cup of water on the fire each
- No one is to enter the fire circle until instructed to by the Forest School Leader



- Try to allow all wood to burn down to ash before extinguishing
- Check with hand that there is no residual heat before emptying ash
- Leave no trace. Scatter ashes in plants or composting.

Tool Safety

- Two additional adults must supervise tool sessions alongside the Forest School Leader
- Parents/carers attending sessions are responsible for ensuring their children are following safety instructions of tool use
- Tools to be stored in a locked container
- Tools to be checked regularly for damage or rust, ensuring they are kept clean and sharp (where applicable)
- No walking around with tools unless to place them straight into the tool box



Safeguarding Policy

The Forest School Leader has a legal responsibility to safeguard all children and will keep up to date with Safeguarding training.

Ratios

Parents/carers are responsible for supervising their children at all times. If each child's parent/carer is not present, then there must be 1 additional adult to every 6 children present.

DBS Checks

- The Forest School Leader will keep an up to date DBS check.
- A DBS is required for any volunteer or employee working with Seed + Root Nature School CIC.

Photographs and Videos

- Photographs and videos of participants, both children and adults, will not be taken unless permission is given by the parent/carer or adult for themselves
- Permission also needs to be gained to use them in marketing and social media
- When permission is not given for photographs and videos, the Forest School Leader may capture the back of their head only or body parts such as hands and feet where they are not identifiable
- Photographs and videos are to be deleted from personal devices once they have been used for the purpose of which they were intended

Disclosures

- All safeguarding disclosures are to be taken seriously and dealt with immediately by recording them in the safeguarding incident book. Where parent/carer is present and witness to the disclosure, they will be informed that the disclosure has to be recorded and what will happen with the information
- Parent/carers should be informed of the disclosures should it be deemed safe to do so, otherwise Social Services may be contacted
- No promises will be made to children who make disclosures
- All safeguarding training procedures will be followed, ensuring not to lead children

Signs of Abuse

- Where signs of abuse or neglect are present, they will be recorded in the safeguarding incident book and the local safeguarding authority will be notified



- Disclosures and signs of abuse will not be shared with anyone other than the relevant authorities

Allegations made against the Forest School Leader

- Allegations made about the Forest School Leader may be taken to the relevant safeguarding authority by the parent/carer
- The Forest School Leader will also contact the relevant safeguarding authority if an allegation is made against them

Physical Contact

Safe physical touch is often needed, especially by very young children, for warmth, comfort, and safety.

Safe physical contact must always be initiated by the child and consent must be verbalised by the Forest School Leader, volunteers, or employees once it is initiated (regardless of child's verbal ability).

For example: A child is feeling upset at a birthday party and struggling to engage. Their parent/carer is not present to seek comfort from, so they lean in towards the Forest School Leader who is offering comforting words. The Forest School Leader then says, "do you want a hug?" The child then wraps their arms around the Forest School Leader, displaying consensual physical contact.

This can support a child in feeling safe, secure, and comfortable to engage in activities and can improve their well-being.



Behaviour Policy

Behaviour Ethos

We follow a 'gentle'/authoritative ethos when dealing with children's behaviours, which means empathising with them and their age and level of development, providing a supportive and nurturing relationship, whilst setting clear boundaries and upholding them in a respectful way.

We do not use punitive, controlling, shaming, or coercive methods in dealing with behaviour issues. We make the boundaries clear and follow through when they are challenged by moving the child away from the situation.

We will provide specific praise to children but be mindful of not over-praising to the point where children seek external rewards or praise. We encourage a growth mindset by praising the process and the effort rather than the product or outcome.

Parents/carers are primarily responsible for dealing with their children's behaviour but we will not tolerate any form of abusive or threatening behaviour towards any child.

Boundaries

Boundaries and expectations are clearly set at the beginning of each session, including consequences of not following the boundaries. This is usually for health and safety reasons.

Learners are also reminded to be aware of their personal boundaries, whether it be personal, social, or physical and how to tell when they or someone else is crossing their boundary. The Forest School Leader and volunteers are able to check in with learners to see if they are comfortable and not overstepping any of their personal boundaries.

Rules

Group rules will be decided democratically in order to respect everyone and for learners to better engage with them. These can be added to the following group rules that everyone must adhere to at all times:

- Listen to the Forest School Leader
- Be respectful of everyone
- Use kind words and gentle hands
- Do not leave the site unattended
- When the Forest School Leader says "STOP" you must stop straight away
- Do not cause damage to the environment. Be mindful when collecting natural materials.



- Do not eat anything you find unless the Forest School Leader has confirmed it is safe to do so
- Follow the fire and tool safety instructions
- Long sticks are always dragged along the floor

Play

Free, unadulterated, child-led play is of utmost importance at our forest school. Children need to make their own decisions and be able to test out their ideas without being interrupted by adults. Free play supports children's holistic development and supports all areas of learning. In a carefully thought out environment with open-ended resources, children can take their ideas to many levels and depths.

At forest school, children have the right to choose where they play and what they engage in, and how long for. The role of the adult in forest school is to observe and facilitate, by providing opportunities for children to take their ideas further, without intervening or changing the child's ideas. Seed + Root recognises that it is the *process* of play that is important, not the outcome or product.

We understand that children need to test boundaries, we will positively encourage that need, managing a balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm. We recognise that children will naturally create and or seek out challenging situations; while making the most of their play some children may have accidents, get dirty or wet or upset. We recognise that any potential risk of harm to children needs to be balanced with the potential for good that may come from their taking part in a particular form of play. We will do our best to avoid children coming to serious physical or emotional harm by following risk assessments and carefully monitoring the free play that is observed.

Where appropriate, adults may join in with games and activities, whilst respecting children's play boundaries. We encourage adults to have just as much fun as the children, but please be mindful not to take over their play.

Play Disputes and Rough Housing

The open-ended nature of forest school fosters social interaction and collaboration. Occasionally, disputes between children will occur and we encourage them to negotiate these disputes independently as far as possible. Adults should step back and allow them to work together to come up with a solution to their problem, until adults feel that it is absolutely appropriate to step in and support them in finding a solution. If physical



behaviour occurs, the Forest School Leader or volunteers may intervene to keep everyone safe, although primary responsibility lies with the parents.

Young children attending the sessions are often drawn to rough housing, as the open nature of the outdoors gives them freedom to move their bodies in a grossly physical way. Seed + Root will allow roughhousing with very clear boundaries and always take into consideration parental ideologies. The personal and social benefits of roughhousing often outweigh the risks, so long as all parties follow the safety rules as follows:

- You *must* ask someone if they want to roughhouse before starting.
- NO punching, kicking, biting, pulling hair, touching faces, or touching the pants area
- When someone says stop, everyone involved must stop immediately.

Repeated disruptive behaviour

Repeated disruptive or harmful behaviour will be taken seriously and will be treated with a 3 step process:

1. An informal conversation with the parent/carer regarding the behaviour, offering support and coming up with a plan together
2. A formal conversation via email or telephone with the parent/carer to discuss next steps in dealing with the behaviour and any other strategies to try. The parent/carer will be informed that if it continues then they may not be able to attend further sessions.
3. The child is no longer able to attend further sessions due to the effects on other children's learning and/or potential harm to others. Telephone/email support will be available in order to find alternative services which could support the child and their needs



Equality, Anti Racism and Anti Sexism Policy

Seed + Root Nature School CIC will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, bullying, victimisation, or abuse of any participant attending the sessions, the leaders, volunteers, parent helpers, or the public passing by. We aim to challenge any discrimination, prejudice, or unconscious bias that may occur by any service users. We attempt to make all sessions, policies, procedures, and permissions accessible to those with disabilities, additional needs, and English as an additional Language.

Inclusion and Access

We endeavour to make sites as accessible as possible and make reasonable adjustments to support the needs of everyone to be able to engage and participate in the activities provided. We understand that it may not always be possible to make sites accessible for those with disabilities but we may be able to offer additional sessions at more accessible sites.

Any learners with diagnosed or suspected Additional Learning Needs or Disabilities are welcome in our Forest School sessions. Parents/carers should make the Forest School leader aware of any ALN, disability, or suspected additional needs prior to their attendance in order for a personal risk assessment to be carried out and for any special measures to be put in place. The parent/carer remains responsible for the care needs of their child at all times and ultimately access needs must be assessed by the parent/carer when visiting a site.

The Forest School Leader we undergo additional training in order to best support learners with additional needs and keep up to date with relevant information, providing as much access to Forest School activities as possible.

Anti Racism and Anti Sexism

Seed + Root Nature School CIC is actively anti racist and anti sexist. Being anti racist and anti sexist results from a conscious decision to make frequent, consistent, equitable choices daily. The Forest School Leader, employees, and volunteers will consciously reflect on the inclusivity of the sessions and any subconscious biases that we may be able to consider. In the absence of making anti racist choices, we (un)consciously uphold aspects of white supremacy, white-dominant culture, and unequal institutions and society. Being racist or anti-racist is not about who you *are*; it is about what you *do*. Similarly, anti sexism requires us to consider stereotypical gender roles and challenging these in order to change the narrative.



We choose to be anti racist and anti sexist, we will strive to be actively conscious about race, racism, and gender stereotypes, and take actions to end racial and gender inequities in our practice. We believe that racism and sexism is everyone's problem, and that we all have a role to play in stopping it.

We acknowledge and understand our privilege, and will continually interrupt racism when we witness it. We will not tolerate discrimination, racist or sexist abuse and participants will be asked to leave immediately.



Environmental Policy and Procedures

Environmental Considerations

During all forest school activities and during the session, the environmental impact will be considered prior to carrying out any task. The environment is a vital resource in the forest school and learners will be involved in caring for it and understanding the importance of sustainability in the woodland. Good practice will always be modelled by Seed + Root Nature School.

Re-using, Recycling, and Single-Use Products

All products brought on site should be re-usable where possible, including wipes, bottles, dinnerware and cutlery. Any rubbish will be split into recyclable and non-recyclable waste preferably with the learners involvement to show that we can always do more to reduce single-use waste. Seed + Root will always encourage participants to bring reusable products with them where possible.

Flora and Fauna

Exploration of flora and fauna is a vital part of forest school and in building a loving connection to the woodland. All participants will be made aware of the importance of the flora and fauna onsite and the need to protect the biodiversity of the environment. They will be reminded to pick flora for crafts or foraging sparingly and only take a little from each area, leaving plenty for wildlife. Possible disturbance to fauna will be considered and minimised, reminding participants and learners to leave any habitat undisturbed such as mole hills and rabbit dens. Invertebrate investigation will be allowed so long one area is investigated for a short time and all insects are put back where they were found.

Environmental Stewardship

The Environmental Impact Assessment is to be followed and reviewed accordingly. The procedures outlined in the plan will be followed and considered when carrying out any activity within the forest school, for example, when considering which trees to take branches from for whittling, ensuring it is a tree that thrives from coppicing.

We will aim to reduce the environmental impact of all activities and consider how to offset the impact that we have by using the site. Any trace left must be reduced as far as possible for example, not leaving charred logs in a pile on the ground.



Session Routines and Procedures

Equipment

The Forest School Leader is responsible for bringing the following to each session:

- First Aid & Burns Kit
- 10 Litres of Water
- Fire blanket
- Additional water for drinking and hand washing
- Forest School Bag including all folders & files
- Mobile Phone
- Reusable wipes

Setting up

The Forest School Leader is responsible for:

- Carrying out pre-session checks, removing litter and glass as much as possible
- Checking trees for broken or weak branches
- Checking phone signal
- Setting up activities in preparation for the group and carrying out risk assessments as appropriate

After the Session

- Check fires are fully extinguished and any charred logs or ash is dispersed
- Tidy away activities and remove any swings
- Check for litter or dropped food waste
- Note use of any first aid kit that needs replacing
- Paperwork to be reviewed and checked and interests for next session to be logged



Party Terms and Conditions

General

- At least 2 Adults must attend the party alongside the Forest School Leader.
- A maximum of 12 children may participate in the party. Any siblings attending will not be able to participate due to health and safety ratios.
- Parents/Carers of each child must fill out a permission form which is to be returned at least 10 days prior to the date of the party. Any children with missing forms will not be able to attend the party.
- Please allow 30 minutes prior to the party start time for us to set up.
- Health and safety instructions given must be followed by all on site regardless of whether they are in the party group or not.

Payment and Cancellations

- Party's are charged for up to 12 children even if less children attend.
- On confirmation of booking, customers will be invoiced for the full amount.
- Bookings may be cancelled at no charge within a 72 hour cooling off period.
- Cancellations made after the 72 hour cooling of period will not be entitled to a refund but will be offered to reschedule.
- In the unlikely event that Seed + Root Nature School cancel the booking then the customer will be entitled to a full refund or offered to reschedule.

Location

- It is advised that you host the party at your own house
- Parties must be held outdoors. Please ensure you have sufficient space for the party.
- If you wish to hold a party at an additional location, eg. community hall, private woodland etc. then you must first seek permission from the business holder and email proof of permission. Public Liability must be held by the location and they must give written permission to have campfires at the location

Food

- Party food is not provided by Seed + Root Nature School. If you would like to add a 30 minute break to the middle of the party session to serve food then please include this in your booking form.
- If you book Party 2 or 3 then one campfire snack will be provided per child. Alternatives will be provided for any allergies or dietary requirements.



Clothing

- Parties will be held outside in most weather conditions except heavy rain, winds, or storms. You must ensure that all children are dressed appropriately for the weather.
- Long hair must be tied up for Party 2 and 3.

Travel

- Travel to and from the party location is included in the cost of the party
- Travel included in the cost is to/from the following areas: Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Swansea.

Data protection

- We will not sell or disclose your personal information to any other persons or agencies.
- Contact details will only be available for Seed + Root Nature School to contact you regarding bookings and events held by us.



Workshop Terms and Conditions

General

- Workshops follow the same health and safety considerations as detailed in the Policies and Procedures handbook
- Instructions given by Seed + Root Nature School must be followed
- You agree to understand that the products made in workshops may degrade overtime and that the focus is on the process over the end product
- Workshops may be constrained by the 3rd party or location of the event and their own policies
- Workshops are limited to a maximum of 12 participants per session

Payment and Cancellation

- Payment for a workshop will be taken upon booking
- You may cancel a workshop and a full refund will be given up to 48 hours in advance of the workshop date
- In the unlikely event that Seed + Root Nature School needs to cancel then notification and a full refund will be given

Data protection

- We will not sell or disclose your personal information to any other persons or agencies.
- Contact details will only be available for Seed + Root Nature School to contact you regarding bookings and events held by us.