



Little
Muddy me

Forest School
Handbook

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Statement of Understanding

This handbook is a revised copy and is frequently updated with relevant policies and procedures which ensure our Forest School programme is following good practice.

Below are staff members and volunteers who have read, understood, and agreed to the latest version:

Name	Role	Date	Signature
Victoria Egarr	Forest School Leader and Owner		
Liana Cook	Manager at Little Muddy Me, SENCO and Safeguarding lead		
Caroline Finlayson	Pre-school Practitioner at Little Muddy Me		
Lisa Keogh	Deputy Manager at Little Me		
Vikki Horn	Pre-School Practitioner at Little Me		
Elena Beal	Pre-School Practitioner and Forest school leader at Little Muddy Me		
Michelle Lane	Pre-school Practitioner at Little Me		
Louise Culcheth	Pre-School Practitioner at Little Me		
Gemma Everett	Pre-School Practitioner at Little Me		
Kishver	Lunch time assistant Little Me.		

Little Muddy Me Vision Statement

Little Muddy Me Pre-School recognises children's innate need to connect with nature, the rich learning environment that provides and the many benefits to children's wellbeing. Our Forest School programme supports this by:

- Offering the children in our care constant opportunities to enjoy and explore the natural environment.
- Building a love of the natural outdoor environment, through inspirational, stimulating, hands on experiences that develop self-esteem, confidence and responsibility.
- Using the woodland setting, various real tools and the natural resources will bring learning to life, creating an understanding of the balance of nature and the finite resources around us.
- Planning broad sessions for all participating children allowing the children to lead and extend the sessions through their interests and curiosity.
- Drawing on practitioner's knowledge to understand the individual requirements and learning styles of all participants, to provide a holistic and effective learning environment.
- Encouraging children to understand and evaluate risk and safe practice through measured exposure to risky environments and opportunities to partake in activities that require safe choices.
- All sessions will be led by a qualified Forest School Leader who will use their knowledge and understanding to be adaptable in meeting the needs and interests of participating children.

Behaviour Policy

During forest school sessions, children will be expected to abide by the forest school rules for their own safety.

Children will be taught to assess their environment for potential hazards and reflect and consider their safety.

Due to the types of activities we engage in during forest school session, we shall be consistent. No means no. Children will know where they stand, and that we mean what we say. Staff will need to feel confident that a child can be trusted with the equipment and tools needed for an activity before we decide the child is able to take part. If at any point a child does not listen, then they will be unable to take part in the activity.

If a complaint is made against a member of staff it will be reported to Ofsted and that member of staff will stop working until the appropriate investigations have been completed.

Forest School Rules

- We look after our Forest School
- We do not put our fingers in our mouths. (no pick, no lick)
- We stay within the marked boundary. We don't go over it, we don't go under it.
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- We care for all living things.
- We keep each other safe.

Environmental Policy

The policy consists of:

- Ecological Impact
- Landowner`s Agreement
- Woodland Management

Ecological Impact

	Wild Life	Bird Life	Soil	Ground Layer	Field Layer	Shrub Layer	Canopy Layer
People pressure trampling	1	1	2	2	2	1	1
Fire in fire pit	1	1	2	2	2	1	1
Removing dead wood	3	3	3	3	3	2	2
Use of dead wood on site	4	4	4	4	3	2	2
Cutting live wood	4	5	2	2	2	3	4
Using tree and shrubs for support	2	2	1	1	1	1	2
Bringing organic (dead) material on site	3	3	3	3	3	1	1
Collection of live herbaceous material	4	4	2	2	2	1	1
Mini-beast hunt	4	4	4	4	3	1	1
Bringing non-organic materials on to site	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Forest school Landowner Agreement

14th August 2019

Forest school Landowner Agreement

This Agreement is between London Sailboards (Bray Lake) Ltd trading as Bray Lake Watersports and Little Me Bray Limited.

Further to our meeting on 12th August 2019, I Simon Frost agree that Victoria Egarr at Little Me Bray Limited can use the woodland adjacent to the car park on the Eastern edge of Bray Lake to open an outdoor pre-school at the agreed rent of £360 per month inclusive of VAT. I agree that the area can be fenced, and a gated entrance installed so the site can be kept locked and a storage shed can be put up for forest school equipment and key made available to Bray Lake Watersports.

I understand that the outdoor pre-school will be for 24 children and will operate Monday-Friday 8.30-4.30.

I confirm that we have appropriate permission to run businesses of this nature at Bray lake.

I agree to lease period of 12 months from the start of operation.

This Agreement sets out the terms and conditions of use of the woodland by the setting and serves as a clear understanding for the parties involved.

- The woodland will be used during term time only when Little Me pre-school is open 8.30am-4.30 Monday- Friday and will operate holiday clubs during some weeks of the holidays. Outside of these times Bray Lake reserve the right to continue to use the site for their own use.
- A level 3 qualified forest school leader (FSL) will always be running the forest school sessions.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken.
- The health and safety policy will apply. Staff have first aid qualifications.
- Any light management tasks necessary to maintain the safety of the site will only be undertaken with the agreement and following advice of the landowner or their nominated representative.
- FSLs will use a fire for some activities with the children when conditions permit. FSLs are responsible for ensuring the fire is sited correctly and thoroughly extinguished at the end of the session.
- FSLs will organise all sessions so the woodland is left tidy with minimal environmental impact.
- All participants are covered by Little Me Preschool Limited insurance and parental consent has been obtained.

Signed on Behalf of the landowner _____

Print name _____

Woodland Management Plan

Factors having an impact (activities, resources, access)	Level of impact (high, medium, low)	How will this affect the woodland? (compaction, denudation, pollution, corruption)	How will you manage this?
People trampling	medium	Soil compacted, eroded. Ground layer would struggle to grow, which would have an impact on the other ecological areas of the woodland.	Look into meshing and gravel and woodchip to prevent erosion in the winter months and give adequate load bearing ability
Fire Pit	Low	Denudation of deadwood. Soil compact around the fire	Fire only when appropriate when cooking and for warmth on a cold day. Harvest low value coppice product. Import woodland Dedicate one area for compaction to limit problems in wider woodland.
Cutting live wood.	High	Removal of habitats for animals (birds etc.) Small mammals heavily impacted because they use the trees to make connections and travel throughout the woodland.	Plant trees on site to the diversity of the woodland (birch). Coppice low value trees like cherry to encourage other trees. Minimise the use of live wood where possible.

		Corruption of the ecosystem preventing pollination and self-seeding/general growth of forest areas.	
Using trees and scrubs for support.	Medium	Damage to tree if not able to support tarpaulin. Erosion of bark. Disruption of animal habitat (birds nests/bats).	Check areas for signs of wildlife. Make sure size of tree is suitable for tarp. Rotating where tarp is placed. Check for signs of wear on trees.
Bringing organic (dead) materials onsite.	Medium	Introducing foreign materials to the woodland. Risk of fungus and bacteria which would have a diverse effect on all wildlife.	Source from local and reliable areas. Check on species that are coming in. Reject any species that are known to have fungus. Evaluating regularly. Limiting amount in trial period.
Bringing non-organic material onto site.	High	Introducing foreign materials to the woodland. Risk of fungus and bacteria which would have a diverse effect on all wildlife. Pollution. Could cause injury to wildlife.	Not knowingly allow any foreign materials to be put in the woodland area. Closely monitor and assess site regularly, clearing away any non-organic material.
Mini-beast hunt.	Medium	Disruption of habitat.	Lots of habitats – deadwood, nooks,

		Species becoming extinct from site. Diverse effect on other wildlife.	grassy glades, large fallen trees – maintain these. Ensure mini-beasts get put back where we find them.
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Equality Policy

We will value all children equally and treat them with equal concern and without discrimination.

We will endeavour to:

- Recognise and respect all types of different racial origins, religions, cultures, and languages, each child is valued as an individual without racial or gender stereotyping. We will also not discriminate against children on the grounds of disability, sexual orientation, age, class, or family status.
- Encourage children to treat each other with respect - discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated. Such remarks will be dealt with immediately with sensitivity shown both to the child making the remark as well as the child it was intended for.
- Provide equal chances for each child to learn and develop their full potential, considering each child's age and stage of development, gender, ethnicity, home language and ability.
- Provide medical, cultural and dietary needs wherever possible.

Prevent Duty

As part of our role as Early Years Practitioners, we have a duty to keep all staff up to date with all legislation involved with Safeguarding the children in the pre-school.

Most recent documentation includes the new Prevent Duty Guidance which childcare providers must comply with as of July 2015. The document can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance> Please note: the relevant documentation is the second one on the list titled 'Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales'.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on Early Years setting to “have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

The new documentation will be used and referred to alongside other safeguarding documents such as “Working Together to Safeguard Children” and information referring to British Values.

Health and Safety Policy

As a registered childcare setting our absolute priority is to keep children safe while they are in our care. We will take appropriate steps to ensure that all hazards to children on the premises, both inside and out, are minimised.

- The premises have been inspected by Ofsted and has passed the safety standards.
- We are first aid trained and have a valid First Aid Certificate.
- A least one member of staff qualified Level 3 Forest School Leader.
- Regular risk assessments are carried out to ensure that it is a safe environment for the children, the risk assessment includes using tools, fire and other forest school activities.
- We have public liability insurance which includes running forest school activities.
- We have a no smoking policy.
- We have a Fire Evacuation Policy, Lost Child Procedure and Emergency Plan.
- We keep an Accident/Incident record book.
- Use maintain and store equipment and tools safely.
- Ensure that all staff are competent in the activities in which they are engaged.

Minimising risks

Responsibilities of the Forest school leader and supporting Staff are to identify, assess and manage hazards and risks within the forest school area and during activities. This is necessary in helping to reduce accidents and incidents.

We will make sure: -

- All hazardous substances or chemicals will be out of reach.
- Hazardous or sharp objects will be kept safely when not in use and children will expected to follow the forest school rules always. All children will be taught how to use our forest school tools safely.
- We have procedures in place in the event of an emergency. These are practised regularly with the children and staff.
- We carry a properly equipped First Aid kit and fire blanket/equipment.

Security

- Gates on the premises are secured and locked always.
- Children are only permitted to leave Little Muddy Me with authorised individuals.
- We have a Lost Child Procedure that will be followed if necessary.
- All visitors and volunteers must sign in the visitor's book before accompanying us to the forest.
- Regular volunteers will be asked to undertake a DBS check and complete a Health & Safety Induction before accompanying us to the forest.
- A minimum of two members of staff will always be present at the forest school site at least one qualified Forest School Leader when conducting forest school activities.
- We have an accident book for incidents to be recorded and signed by the parents.
- In the event of a serious accident we will call for an ambulance ensuring every effort is made to contact the parent/guardian.
- Emergency contacts are kept on the Pre-School site and all staff in the forest school area will carry walkie talkies.

Outings

Occasionally Little Muddy Me may go on an outing. In the event of this:

- A risk assessment will be undertaken.
- A permission form is to be signed by parent/guardian.
- A First Aid kit, mobile phone (with emergency contact numbers) appropriate clothing, toiletries, food and drink will be taken.
- We will never leave your child unattended when out.
- We have a lost child procedure in place.

Fire

- Little Muddy Me sessions will include the lighting and use of a fire.
- We will take steps to prepare the children for this prior to it being introduced.
- The children will be expected to adhere to our forest school rules at all times.
- A risk assessment will be in place.
- We will carry a fire blanket, fully equipped first aid kit and a bucket of water in case of emergency.

Accident and Emergency Procedure

All staff will be informed of what to do in the event of an emergency.

If the whistle is blown all children will meet around the fire circle area and adults will begin to gather the children to meet together. As well as any casualties or missing persons you must remember to protect the rest of the group.

The gate into Little Muddy Me is kept closed. In the event of forest school sessions running offsite, the emergency procedure would need to be reviewed in the context of the new location and any changes to the procedure noted alongside the risk assessment.

Staffing

At Little Muddy Me there must be a minimum of two pre-school staff, one of which must hold a level 3 Forest School Leader qualification.

The leading member of staff will be located centrally, directing and supervising any forest school activities.

The secondary member of staff will supervise the boundaries and provide any additional assistance to the children or the forest school leader.

When conducting fire related activities, one member of staff is to supervise the fire area and ensure that safety procedures are followed within that area.

Essential Items

- Outdoor first kit
- Emergency whistle
- Welfare kit (wipes, tissues, hand gel, carrier bags)
- Register
- Medication for individuals
- Snacks, drinks and cups
- Walkie Talkies

Missing Children

Please refer to our Lost Child Procedure

First Aid

All members of staff hold a 12-hour paediatric first aid certificate and will administer first aid when needed. The casualty will be assessed and monitored, staff will complete an accident form and inform parents.

A first aid kit specific to forest school sessions will be kept in the rucksack in the forest school area at all times.

If additional help is needed or in the event of a serious injury

Administer first aid, another member of staff to alert help or call emergency services.

A member of staff to gather all children

A first aider will remain with the casualty, continue to monitor and follow first aid guidelines.

Ensure someone directs emergency services to the casualty.

Inform parents and carers as soon as possible.

Complete all accident forms.

When calling 999 be ready with the following information

You name

Little Me Telephone Number: 07940207089

Site Location

Bray Lake Watersports,
Monkey Island Lane,
Windsor Road,
Maidenhead,
Berkshire,
SL6 2EB

Description of the casualty, accident, injury and symptoms.

Safeguarding Children

Little Muddy Me Pre-School Safeguarding Children's Policy and Procedures must be followed at all times. This can be found in the Policies and Procedure file in the main entrance or on our main website www.littleme-preschool.co.uk

Intruders

Inform a colleague an intruder is present, ask them to gather the children in a safe area and make an informed choice on whether to contact the police. If possible and you feel safe to do so, greet the intruder politely, remain a safe distance, ask them their business and redirect them. Remember your own safety as well as the children's, do not approach the intruder if they seem angry or agitated. Remain calm and try to keep the intruder away from the children without coming into physical contact with them.

Weather

"There is no such thing as poor weather, only poor clothing."

However, if the weather is dangerous and high winds we may have to close or relocate as branches and trees may fall.

Parents need ensure children are dressed correctly for the weather.

Halls to relocate too in a emergency

Braywick Nature centre, office located at this site and is available for our use.

Cooking including food hygiene Policy

Snack time and cooking on a fire is a regular feature at Little Muddy Me, everything from having bread sticks to cooking meals.

Staff to apply food hygiene controls in line with Food Standards Agency guidance and good practice. This will include:

- Staff acquire the Food hygiene certificate.
- Food/ingredients will be stored at correct temperatures prior to the session and checked to ensure they are in-date and not subject to contamination by pests, mould etc. A cool box will be used to transport and store any ingredients requiring refrigeration prior to use at the session.
- All cooking utensils, crockery etc. will be checked to ensure they are clean before use.
- Preparation area set up ideally under tarpaulin to prevent physical contamination.
- All hair will be tied back, and loose clothing secured prior to cooking on a campfire.
- Food to be cooked must be kept cold until required and cooked to a temperature at or above 63° C.
- Prior to any eating of snacks or meals all participants required to wash their hands using the washing facilities set up.
- Serve food and drink at a temperature and consistency that is safe and suitable for consumption.
- All medical records must be checked to ensure that no food item or ingredient is given to a child or adult with an allergy to it.
- Cooked food will not be re-heated.
- Waste food will be disposed of promptly and preferably off site to minimise the impact.

Fire Management

Forest School is an ideal way to introduce fires in a safe, controlled, managed and rewarding way. It can be a highlight of a Forest School session but should only be introduced when the Forest Leader is confident that the children can follow the fire safety procedures/rules.

Learning where a fire can, or cannot, be lit, seeking land owners permission, ensuring proper supervision, learning how to manage a small fire, how to extinguish it thoroughly and leave no trace are all important elements of the outdoor fire process.

Fires should only be considered an activity if there is a genuine purpose for it and this might include heating water, cooking and keeping warm!

Activities may include: - Using a fire steel - Charcoal making - Small fire in a pot - Kelly kettles - Large campfire for cooking activities

Little Muddy Me has:-

- Obtained landlord's permission to have fire activities on the site.
- The site for the fire is away from low canopy branches.
- If winds are high consider wind direction when choosing the site for the fire. Fire Safety Equipment Before any fire activity can be undertaken it is essential that the following equipment is easily available and next to the fire site (not in the fire circle). The equipment consists of: Fire blanket, Bucket of water, Heat resistant gloves, Burns kit

We have a Fire Circle For a campfire, a fire circle should be established with the aim of preventing children's close access to the fire whilst having the ability to enjoy it.

Children are encouraged to invent a name or phrase to remind each other of the rule of not entering the fire circle for example at Little Me we say "red dragon"

Fire Preparation Children will be encouraged to collect fire wood – "If its snappy we are happy" or "If its bendy its unfriendly!" and to sort dry stick (no longer than elbow to finger tips) into three piles outside the fire circle.

Wood not suitable for burning or cooking with children nearby includes Elder, Rhododendron, and Leylandii.

Fire should be constructed in a fire pit. Vaseline and other natural fire aids can be used in wet conditions.

Fire Safety Rules

- Fire should always be supervised by an adult at all times.
- When the fire is in use children are not permitted within the fire circle unless they are invited by the adult.
- Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.
- Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the children: they are advised to turn their bodies/heads to one side, placing their hand across the face, to close their eyes and count to 30 (or ask an adult/peer to count for them)

Fire Lighting

- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader.
- Fires are lit using cotton wool and a fire steel.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision.
- wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire.

Using the Fire

- Long hair, scarfs or any items of clothing dangling should be secured away.
- When an adult or a child is using the fire they should adopt the “Respect” position with one knee down and the other up to allow rapid exit from the fire.
- The number of children accessing the fire should be limited to prevent joshing etc
- Once fire activity is over (i.e. cooking marshmallows) the children should leave the fire circle.

Extinguishing

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.
- Water should always be to hand during campfire sessions.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.
- “Feeling” for the heat should be used to ensure no heat is present if so douse with more water.
- All traces of the fire should be removed and leaves etc used to cover fire site or fire pit removed.

Fire steels

Using a Fire Steel Children can practise using fire steels and most of the above applies with the addition consideration given:

- Practice striking a fire steel down away from themselves and others
- Practice it onto fluffed up bud of cotton
- When lit children are responsible for that mini fire until it has burnt out

Storm (Kelly) kettles

- Only adults are to light the fire in the fire pan unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader.
- The storm kettle must be placed on flat, clear ground or paving slab
- Children must be seated at least 1.5 metres away from the storm kettle.
- Children can feed the fire with one to one supervision, but they must have been shown how to do so safely. (stick held at the end and dropped in from the side; hand should never be placed over the top of the kettle)
- Fuel should burn itself out, but if it doesn't it must be extinguished with water
- Storm kettles should never be boiled with the cork in.
- Kettles should only be removed from fire by an adult wearing fire safety gloves (hold each side of handle and lift off. Take care not to put hand above chimney of kettle or over spout)

Manual Handling

The purpose of this policy is to introduce procedures and provide training designed to ensure that our employees apply an ergonomic approach whilst carrying out tasks and operations that involve manual handling, to prevent injury.

Responsibilities of Employees:

- Follow appropriate systems of work laid down for their safety;
- Make proper use of equipment provided for their safety;
- Co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters;
- Inform employer if they identify hazardous handling activities;
- Take care to ensure that their activities do not put others at risk.

Common Tasks and Operations involving Manual Handling Operations include:

- Lifting and carrying children
 - Nappy changing routines.
 - Lifting and moving indoor play equipment.
 - Lifting and moving outdoor play equipment.
 - Lifting and moving furniture.
-
- Employees should not attempt to lift or move a load which is too heavy to manage comfortably. Employees should ask for assistance if there is any danger of strain
 - When lifting an object off the ground, employees should assume a squatting position, keeping the back straight. The load should be lifted by straightening the knees, not the back
 - Employees should not attempt to obtain items from shelves which are beyond their reach. A ladder or stepping stool should be used.

Lifting and Carrying Children as part of our nursery care routine, there are times when we are required to lift children, e.g. to give comfort etc. We advise all our staff to sit or crouch with the child to comfort them rather than standing or walking around.

Risk Management

Little Muddy Me actively develops children's awareness of risk as well as their confidence in managing risk. One of the first activities children do at Forest School is to take an adult around the boundary of the site showing them all the things we need to be careful of. This exercise uses all their senses to think, see, feel, and share their perceptions of risk.

Therefore, risk is not an abstract concept that children are being asked to understand, rather it is something they approach with their whole being and can consider as a direct experience before deciding what action to take. This is a very holistic approach to learning about risk that is applied throughout Forest School. As much of Forest School is child led this method of risk management is continually developed. Initially as children stay close to the adults tentatively exploring and seeking reassurance the adults can sensitively encourage consideration of the hazards, to facilitate opportunities for children to engage with and experience risk.

As the children's confidence and ability to manage risk grows they can explore more independently and put into practice their own judgements, trying the consequences out for themselves. Often the best learning happens, and we are most acutely alive in situations where we are at the edge of our comfort zones but retain the power of choice whether to step forward or back.

Safe Use of Tools

General Rules:

- No one should use a tool without permission and a briefing from a trained member of staff.
- After briefing, tools should be used under supervision until trained staff are sufficiently satisfied with the safety and responsibility of that person.
- After use, tools should be counted back in to ensure none are missing.
- Tools should be stored safely and well maintained
- Gloves must be thick enough to protect hands sufficiently

Bow Saw Safe Use	PPE	Storage
<p>Only remove guard when ready to start sawing and replace when finished.</p> <p>Check correct blade attached for green/dead wood.</p> <p>Kneeling position with legs out of the way of the blade and wood off the ground.</p> <p>Saw with writing hand.</p> <p>Three starter cuts before beginning to saw.</p> <p>Option: place supporting hand through the bow of the saw for extra stability. When not sawing, place on the ground with the blade towards yourself to reduce risk to others.</p>	<p>Glove on non-sawing hand.</p> <p>If sawing in a pair, both people need gloves on non-sawing hand</p>	<p>Keep blade guard on when not in use.</p> <p>Dry blade before putting away</p> <p>Check blade for rust regularly</p> <p>Replace blade when necessary</p>
<p>Knives- Sheath should be kept on until ready to use and replaced after.</p> <p>Sit sturdy, legs apart and with a safe space around (distance blade can reach)</p> <p>If someone enters your safe space, stop and sheath the knife until they leave.</p> <p>Hold knife in writing hand, firmly on handle and only use downwards and away from yourself.</p>	<p>No glove on hand holding knife, but glove on hand holding wood.</p>	<p>Keep Sheath on when not in use.</p> <p>Dry blade before putting away.</p> <p>Check blade for rust regularly.</p> <p>Replace when necessary</p>

<p>Only pass the knife between people when sheathed</p>		
<p>Palm drill - Be aware of drill bit as it is sharp. Place wood for drilling on hard stable surface and keep there until finished. Hold wood steady and press firmly down on drill and twist, reverse to remove drill. Check progress to avoid drilling into surface underneath.</p>	<p>Glove on hand holding wood steady, no glove on hand using drill.</p>	<p>Dry bits before putting away. Check blade for rust regularly . Replace when necessary</p>
<p>Vegetable peelers - Be aware of peeler blade as it is sharp. Whittle sitting down. Ensure a safe area before beginning. Hold stick pointing downwards between legs or beside legs. Whittle downwards and away from body.</p>	<p>Glove on hand holding stick, no glove on hand using peeler</p>	<p>Dry blades before putting away. Check blade for rust regularly. Replace when necessary</p>

Welfare

Toileting

The following procedures have been proven to work effectively and to comply with current child protection recommendations:

- We will use a portable toilet on site which will be cleaned and emptied weekly.
- We will also use a portable toilet in a toilet tent. At all times the emphasis needs to be on discretion and encouraging participants to do as much as possible independently.
- Some hand washing facilities will be available always as well as wet wipes and cleaning gel if necessary. All wet wipes should be placed in bags and disposed.

Toileting kits contain:

- Toilet paper
- Wet wipes and cleaning gel
- Portable tent
- Toilet tent

Nappy changing

We will change nappies in the preschool cabin using a changing mat which will be cleaned after every use. Staff will wear gloves and dirty nappies disposed off in the provided nappy bin.

Snack Time

A snack and drink will be provided during a forest school session, children will be involved in the preparation after following the correct handwashing procedures.

Forest school Safeguarding Children Policy

Key contact personnel in the setting

Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead Persons: Victoria Egarr and Liana Cook

Level 3 leaders Victoria Egarr and Elena Beal

Contact details for Education Safeguarding Team and LADO

The LADO receives concerns, complaints and referrals regarding the conduct of adult professionals or volunteers working with children, not child protection referrals. Child Protection referrals are made to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Early years Team: 01628 796684 / 01628 796534 RBWM MASH: 01628 683150 Slough Referral & Assessment: 01753 506418 / 01753 506420 Reading MASH: 01189 373641 Bucks CC: 0845 4600001 or 01296 383962 Out of Hours Duty Team: 01344 786543 RBWM LADO Team contact number: 01628 685325 (Sharon Richards)

Police: 999 / 101 NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000 Parentline plus: 0808 800 2222 Ofsted Whistle blowing hotline: 0300 1233155 (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm) NSPCC Whistle blowing helpline: 0800 0280285

The contents of this forest school safeguarding policy must be used in conjunction with Little Me Pre-Schools Safeguarding Policy.

Our aim

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right.’ (EYFS 2017 p5) We believe by providing the opportunity for children to take part in forest school sessions this enhances their learning and development.

The Proprietor of Little Muddy Me considers all those directly involved with our setting have an essential role to play in making it safe and secure. Our setting aims to create the safest environment within which every child has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and we take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

Staffing

A minimum of two pre-school staff, one of which must hold a level 3 Forest School Leader qualification.

The leading member of staff will be located centrally, directing and supervising any forest school activities.

The secondary member of staff will supervise the boundaries and provide any additional assistance to the children or the forest school leader.

When conducting fire related activities, one member of staff is to supervise the fire area and ensure that safety procedures are followed within that area.

Adults without DBS clearance will not be left alone with any child.

Toileting

During forest school sessions the children will use our secluded toilet area in the natural environment, Only Little Muddy Me staff will accompany children to this.

Missing Children

Please refer to our Lost Child Procedure

First Aid

All members of staff hold a 12-hour paediatric first aid certificate and will administer first aid when needed. The casualty will be assessed and monitored, staff will complete an accident form and inform parents.

A first aid kit specific to forest school sessions will kept on site at all time.

Intruders

Inform a colleague an intruder is present, ask them to gather the children in a safe area and make an informed choice on whether to contact the police. If possible and you feel safe to do so, greet the intruder politely, remain a safe distance, ask them there business and redirect them. Remember your own safety aswell as the childrens, do not approach the intruder if they seem angry or agitated. Remain calm and try to keep the intruder away from the children without coming into physical contact with them.

Prevent Duty

As part of our role as Early Years Practitioners, we have a duty to keep all staff up to date with all legislation involved with Safeguarding the children in the pre-school.

Most recent documentation includes the new Prevent Duty Guidance which childcare providers must comply with as of July 2015. The document can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance> Please note: the

relevant documentation is the second one on the list titled 'Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales'.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act places a duty on Early Years setting to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

The new documentation will be used and referred to alongside other safeguarding documents such as "Working Together to Safeguard Children" and information referring to British Values.

Attend training / awareness courses

We have successfully completed training related to child protection issues to ensure that we are able to recognise the symptoms of possible physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse.

All staff have completed a full Paediatric First Aid course and one member of staff hold Level 3 Forest School Leader qualifications.

Behaviour

During forest school sessions, children will be expected to abide by the forest school rules for their own safety.

Children will be taught to assess their environment for potential hazards and reflect and consider their safety.

Due to the types of activities we engage in during forest school session, we shall be consistent. No means no. Children will know where they stand, and that we mean what we say. Staff will need to feel confident that a child can be trusted with the equipment and tools needed for an activity before we decide the child is able to take part. If at any point a child does not listen, then they will be unable to take part in the activity and may be withdrawn from the forest school session.

If a complaint is made against a member of staff it will be reported to Ofsted and that member of staff will stop working until the appropriate investigations have been completed.

Keeping records

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children. All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing. Further advice is available in the document Information Sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners (2015). 'Child Protection - Dealing with Disclosures in Early Years Settings' provides advice on dealing with disclosures.

Use of cameras and photos

We will seek your permission to allow a camera or other digital device to take and store photographs for record keeping or display purposes.

If using a camera or other digital device to take photographs of your child, the photographs will be used for observations, or from time to time advertising purposes, the photographs will then be removed from the devices.

We will not distribute or publish any images of your child without your consent.

We will always be able to justify to Ofsted the reason for taking the photographs.

We will always ensure children are appropriately dressed.

We are registered with the Information Commissioners Office - the Data Protection Act.

Responsibilities

Online safety

We occasionally use iPad's and laptops as part of the children's learning. It's important that children understand how to use and keep themselves safe online, we will have basic rules and parental controls to stop children from seeing unsuitable or harmful contents. Children will also be supervised always.

Lost Child Policy

Statement of intent

At Little Muddy Me, it is our intention to maintain children's safety as the highest priority always both on and off the premises.

Aim

We aim to ensure that every attempt is made to ensure the security of children is maintained always. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our lost child policy is followed.

Method

If a child goes missing

- The person in charge will gather all children together and inform all adults in the group
- The register is checked to establish who is missing and that no other child has also gone astray.
- We will establish when the child was last seen, what they were wearing and note the time.
- One member of staff will remain with the children, all remaining staff will locate the lost child, beginning a search in the most dangerous locations and the last known location. All staff will maintain contact via walkie talkies.
- If the child is not located after ten minutes we will inform the police and parents, then the search will continue.
- The supervising staff will contact the manager and reports the incident.
- When the child is located ensure all parties are informed
- No social media should be used during or after the incident and only the Manager will engage with the press.

The investigation

- Staff keep calm and do not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The manager carries out a full investigation, taking written statements from all the staff present at the time.

- The key person/staff writes an incident report detailing: - the date and time of the report; - what staff/children were in the group; - when the child was last seen in the group; - what has taken place in the group since then; and - the time it is estimated that the child went missing.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- If the incident warrants a police investigation all staff co-operate fully. In this case, the police will handle all aspects of the investigation, including interviewing staff. Children's Social Care may be involved if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address.
- The incident is recorded in the incident book; the local authority health and safety officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- OFSTED is informed.
- The Insurance provider is informed.

Managing people

- Part of managing the incident is to try and keep everyone as calm as possible.
- Staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person or designated carer responsible for the safety of that child. They may blame themselves and their feelings of anxiety and distress will rise as the length of time the child is missing increases.
- Staff may be the understandable target of parental anger and they may be afraid. The supervisor needs to ensure that staff under investigation are not only treated fairly but receive support while feeling vulnerable.
- The parents will feel angry and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others. When dealing with a distraught parent, there should always be two staff members. Aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated and the police should be called.
- The other children may too be worried. The remaining staff caring for them need to be focused on their needs and must not discuss the incident in front of them. They should answer children's questions honestly but also reassure them.
- In accordance with the severity of the outcome, staff may need counselling and support.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without taking advice.

Staff, ratios, roles and responsibilities

Forest School Leader Responsibilities

- To plan and lead all Forest School activities
- To ensure the safety of children and adults on site always, including completing risk assessments for all planned activities, as well as dynamically assessing risk on the day
- To ensure that other adults know and understand their responsibilities
- To provide all staff with an update and complete Handbook
- To regularly review the Handbook and policies within to ensure they are relevant and up to date
- To have an up to date First Aid qualification and appropriate insurance cover
- To consider the personal needs and abilities of the participants when planning sessions to make the activities as appropriate as possible
- To ensure effective communication with staff regarding any major change to the planned sessions
- Provide appropriate resources and equipment that adhere to good standards and health & safety regulations

Staff Responsibilities

- To take responsibility for discipline during Forest School sessions
- To have read the Handbook and be familiar with the emergency procedures
- To ensure that the children are adequately dressed for the weather
- To ensure that required medication (e.g. epipens/inhalers) and is available at every session and assist with any first aid incidents
- Accompany any children wanting to go the toilet Children Responsibilities
- To take personal responsibility for their own safety as well as the safety of others
- To listen to and follow safety information given to them
- To bring appropriate clothing and footwear to Forest School session

Visitors Responsibilities

- Be familiar and adhere to the Visitors Protocol and policies outline in this Handbook.

Visitor Protocol

From time to time we will have visitors to Little Muddy Me. This policy is in place to ensure the safety of the children as well as the staff remains a priority always when visitors are onsite.

All visitors will be made aware of our requirements and expectations during their visit and this should include Safeguarding, Philosophy of FS and Code of Conduct.

They will be asked by a member of staff and asked what the purpose of the visit is or whom they are coming to see and provide identification. This identification should be validated if a member of staff is at all unsure. All visitors must sign into the visitor's books.

Remain clearly visible to staff always they at Forest School.

Visitors to the session are asked not to use personal cameras, mobile phones or any other recording device in accordance with our Camera and Mobile Phone Policy.

If an unexpected visitor has no suitable reason to be on the premises or they do not follow the Code of Conduct expected of them, they will be asked to leave immediately and escorted from the premises. If they fail to leave the site, police assistance will be called for unacceptable behaviour. Everyone who is engaged in Little Me's Forest School sessions, Children, staff and visitors, should be treated with respect and courtesy. If this does not occur the behaviour may be deemed as unacceptable. If this becomes an issue from either a member of Staff who has treated or is treating a visitor unacceptably: If a visitor believes they have been mistreated during FS sessions, the Complaints Procedure must be implemented or a visitor who has treated or is treating a member staff, pupil or another visitor in an unacceptable manner; This should be referred to the managers who will investigate the incident and build a picture of what has occurred. They will determine the appropriate action to take.

