



## Foresteers Outdoor Preschool

# Emergency Procedure Policy including Procedure for Missing Children

Reviewed January 2026

Reviewed by Hayley Smith - Preschool Manager

### Introduction

The welfare of the children at Foresteers Outdoor Preschool is our paramount responsibility. Every adult who works at the preschool has been trained to appreciate that they have a key responsibility for helping to keep all of the children safe at all times without compromising the safety of others.

Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times. We have procedures in place to enable us to evacuate an area quickly and safely in the event of an emergency, we also have effective lockdown procedures which can be activated in response to a threat to the group. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

All of our procedures are written in line with current guidance Early Years Foundation Stage – (EYFS) and where applicable Sheffield City Council. The preschool manager is responsible for ensuring all staff understand and follow these procedures, and that regular rehearsals take place.

Our staffing ratios of a minimum of 1 adult to every 8 children are above the statutory guidelines of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and ensure each individual child is supervised while in our care.

### Emergency Procedure Policy

- All staff, volunteers and children will be briefed on what to do in case of emergency. For staff this begins during the induction process and continues with training and supervisions throughout the year. Visitors and volunteers are briefed on arrival at the setting. Children participate in daily safety talks at the start of each day and practice drills are completed throughout the year.

- Each member of staff carries a whistle, the group are alerted to an emergency by three blasts of the whistle. On hearing the whistle, all activities are suspended and the group gather at the log circle. Key persons conduct a head count and all wait quietly for further instructions. The preschool manager will assess the situation, the nature and extent of the incident, threat, injury or accident and direct staff accordingly, ensuring that the group are safe and supervision levels are maintained.

### Procedure for Accidents or Injuries

If anyone, child or adult, sustains an injury or illness:

- A member of staff trained in first aid will attend to the injured person, giving first aid if possible.
- In serious cases, the staff member will immediately call 999 using Foresteers Outdoor Preschool's mobile phone. The parent/carer/family will then immediately be contacted followed by the Greenhead House Farm (Chris 07931506526, Claire 07930687065)

- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger, moved to safety.
- The staff member attending to the injured person will check if they have specific medical needs. If they do, they will retrieve the relevant health information sheet from the Contacts Folder.
- If an ambulance is required, a member of staff meet the ambulance at the entrance and direct the crew to the incident site.
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  - top woods what3words - ///tender.race.handle
  - field what3words - ///draw.discrepancy.hung
- In cases of minor injuries to children, the child's key person will contact the parent of the injured child so they can be collected and taken to the hospital, doctor or home.
- An incident report will be completed later the same day including details of people involved and witnesses.
- Ofsted and the local safeguarding authority must be informed of any serious accident or injury.

**Procedure for Emergency Evacuation** *for example in the event of a fire or extreme weather,*

- The manager will complete daily weather checks as part of the risk assessment – if extreme weather is forecast a contingency plan will be discussed with staff before the children arrive at the site, regular update checks will continue throughout the day until the threat is removed. Contingency plans may involve evacuating to open ground, erecting shelters or cancelling the session and evacuating to the contingency building until children are collected.
- In the event of a fire – the group will evacuate the area and assemble on the field, away from the threat. If we are away from base camp, the manager will direct participants to an alternative assembly point. Specific arrangements will be made for pupils with disabilities to ensure they are supported during evacuation.
- Key workers will conduct a head count. The manager will assess the situation and decide whether to continue the session elsewhere within the woodland or cancel the session and contact parents to collect the children.
- All outbreaks of fire or any suspected fire should be reported immediately to the Fire Service by dialing 999 using Foresteers Outdoor Preschool's mobile phone.
- The manager has overall responsibility to ensure that a roll call is conducted in the event of evacuation of the premises, this includes any visitors or contractors on the premises at the time. The count at the assembly point must be checked with the attendance registers and visitors book to verify that everyone is out of the area.
- Attendance registers and visitors book will be stored in the hut and brought to the assembly point when the alarm sounds. Each staff member must report to the preschool manager to verify that everyone in their charge is accounted for or to inform him/her of the number of persons missing.

Fire evacuation drills will be carried out approximately once per term.

**Firefighting**

Any attempt to fight the fire must always be secondary to life safety. Circumstances will clearly dictate whether firefighting should be attempted. Any attempt to fight the fire must be based upon the type and degree of training received in the use of firefighting equipment employed in the premises.

**Procedure for Emergency Lockdown** *in response to a threat to the group such as a civil disturbance in the local community, risk of air pollution, major fire in the vicinity, an intruder trying to gain unauthorised access to the setting, the close proximity of a dangerous dog roaming loose.*

Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow when a Lockdown is activated. We have been advised not to circulate the full details of this procedure as this could render the plan ineffective.

- Key workers will count their children and lead them to the Predetermined Assembly Point as directed by the manager or deputy manager (this is different to the Assembly Point used for Evacuation).
- Depending on the severity of the situation, the manager will contact the Emergency Services.
- If necessary, parents will be contacted, however pupils will not be released to parents during a lockdown. Parents should be reassured that staff will do everything possible to ensure the child's safety and will act on guidance from the Emergency Services. Any developments will be communicated to parents as soon as is practicable.
- If it becomes necessary to evacuate the area we will follow our Emergency Evacuation Procedure (outlined above)

Lockdown drills will be carried out approximately once a year.

### **Procedure for Missing Child**

Procedures and routines are in place to minimise the risk of a child leaving the area unsupervised. If a child is identified as missing the whistle will be blown three times and everyone will gather at the log circle

Key workers will conduct a headcount, children will sit down with one of staff member for low level activity (i.e. singing, story). Half the staff stay with the children to keep them calm, engaged and together.

#### *Next steps for a missing child*

1. The remainder of adults will conduct a search. Agree who is leading the search. If near a road entrance, a staff member goes there first. Other staff conduct search in last known location. The search lasts no more than five minutes.
2. If, after the five-minute search, the child has not been located, the staff member leading the search calls 999 and the Greenhead House Farm (Chris 07931506526, Claire 07930687065)
3. A member of staff will meet the police at the park entrance. Staffs continue the search while waiting for the police then assist the police with the search.
4. The manager will contact the child's parents and inform them of the situation.

#### *During the investigation*

- Staff should keep calm and should not let the other children become anxious or worried.
- The senior staff members will speak with the parent/carer(s).
- If the incident warrants a police investigation, all staff should 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.

#### *Actions to be followed by staff once the child is found*

- Talk to, take care of and, if necessary, comfort the child
- Reassure other children and adults

- The Preschool Manager will speak to the parents/carers to discuss events and give an account of the incident.
- The Preschool Manager carries out a full investigation taking statements from all the staff present at the time, and then writes up an incident report and updates the incident log. Other agencies will need to be notified if it seems likely that there is a child protection issue to address, including Children Services and Sheffield Children's Safeguarding Partnership. Ofsted must also be informed.
- A conclusion is drawn as to how the breach of security happened.
- The manager may need to take action against any member of staff who they believe is found to be at fault. In the event of disciplinary action needing to be taken, Ofsted is informed
- The investigation should involve all concerned providing written statements in a report. The report should be detailed covering: time, place, numbers of staff and children, when the child was last seen, what appeared to have happened, the purpose of the activity, the length of time that the child was missing and how s/he appeared to have gone missing, lessons for the future, actions for changes in practice, policies and procedures
- The incident is reported under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangers Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) arrangements (see the Reporting of Accidents and Incidents policy); the local authority Health and Safety Officer may want to investigate and will decide if there is a case for prosecution.
- The insurance provider is informed.

#### Managing people

- Missing child incidents are very worrying for all concerned. Part of managing the incident is to try to keep everyone as calm as possible.
- The staff will feel worried about the child, especially the key person 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 target of parental anger and they may be afraid. Preschool leaders need to ensure that staff under investigation are not only fairly treated but receive support while feeling vulnerable. All staff involved will need support.
- The parents will feel angry, and fraught. They may want to blame staff and may single out one staff member over others; they may direct their anger at the preschool manager. When dealing with a distraught and angry parent, there should always be two members of staff, one of whom is the preschool manager and the other should be a senior member of staff. No matter how understandable the parent's anger may be, aggression or threats against staff are not tolerated, and the police should be called. Staff should report any aggression/violence.
- The other children will also be sensitive to what is going on around them. Staff 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 final outcome, staff may need counselling and support. The manager and owner will use their discretion to decide what action to take.
- Staff must not discuss any missing child incident with the press without consultation with the preschool manager as well as the police investigating the incident.

#### Disseminating and Implementing this Policy

All preschool staff will be required to read this policy as part of their induction and to comply with the contents of the policy. The policy will be kept in the policy folder and will be available for staff to refer to at all times as well as on the preschool website. The implementation of the policy will be monitored by preschool staff on a day to day

basis. If incidences of non-compliance do occur, this will be dealt with on a case by case basis through staff supervisions. Any adverse incidents will be recorded and reviewed to ensure the policy is fit for purpose.

**This policy was adopted  
on**

*1st January 2026*

**Signed on behalf of the  
preschool**

***Hayley Smith***

**Date for review**

*December 2026*