



Foresteers Outdoor Preschool

Risk Assessment Policy

Reviewed January 2026

Reviewed by Hayley Smith - Preschool Manager

Introduction

Foresteers Outdoor Preschool believes that the health and safety of children is of paramount importance, we want to make our setting a safe and healthy place for children, parents, staff and volunteers. We do this by enabling our children to identify, assess and reduce risks therefore helping them to stay safe not only at preschool but also in other aspects of their life and indeed their future.

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

What is Risk Assessment?

Risk assessment means taking note of aspects of your surroundings and activities that could cause harm, either to yourself or to others, and deciding what needs to be done to prevent that harm, making sure this is adhered to and is updated when necessary.

The law does not require that all risk is eliminated – but that 'reasonable precaution' is taken. This is particularly important when balancing the need for children to be able to take appropriate risks through physically challenging play. Children need the opportunity to work out what is not safe and what they should do when faced with a risk.

Risk Assessment at Foresteers Outdoor Preschool

- Staff carry out a daily safety sweep and risk assessment of the area before the children arrive. This involves creating a set visual boundary around the perimeter of the activity area; checking the ground for dangerous litter (including general rubbish, animal faeces, etc); checking for low branches and dangerous plants encroaching on main pathways; visual check on canopy level for loose hanging branches; weather conditions are also considered in case this is likely to affect the day's planned routine or activities.
- Hazards are removed/reduced as appropriate. Some hazards are "left" for children to "find".
- Daily risk assessment is recorded on tick sheet by a member of staff and checked by either the manager or deputy manager. These are reviewed on a termly basis.
- On arrival the children participate in a safety chat and walk the boundary. Children identify risks and as a group we discuss what the risk is, who is at risk, if we should/could remove/reduce the risk and identify our next step.

- Once this routine is established verbally and physically, children will be encouraged to develop their own risk assessment recording methods.
- Throughout the session Staff will continually risk assess activities and situations and encourage children to participate in this. Children will learn to recognise risks and know how to make others aware and report concerns to an adult. Children will know not to attempt to remove/reduce the risk themselves as this is the adult's role.

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Risk Assessment Procedure

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Introduction

Managing risk is a fundamental part of life and a vital skill for children to develop. Staff have a duty of care towards young people to keep them safe, this does not mean eliminating all risks, instead it means providing opportunities for our children to encounter risks and enabling them to assess and manage risks safely.

Risk management is about identifying and managing any significant chance of harm. Significance is determined by two factors:

- 1) the **probability** of an accident or incident happening
- 2) the **severity** of injury or harm if it does occur

PROBABILITY		SEVERITY	
Rating		Rating	
5	Inevitable.	5	Multiple injuries /Death
4	Likely.	4	Serious injury – requires ambulance
3	Possible.	3	Requires visit to doctor at end of session
2	Unlikely.	2	Requires first aid kit
1	Remote possibility.	1	Minor injury e.g. bruise, graze

Severity x Probability = Risk Factor

Factor	Risk Assessment
1-4	Low risk – no further action required.
5-9	Moderate risk – reduce risk reasonably practicable.
10-15	High risk – high priority for action.
16-25	Unacceptable risk - requires immediate attention.

Our risk assessment will:

- be integral to overall planning
- ensure that staff have the necessary competence and experience
- concentrate on significant hazards to assess risk
- ensure that control measures are suitable and responsibilities are defined
- make sure that those that need to know, do know.

Legal framework

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Health and Safety at Work Act (1996)
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1992

This policy was adopted	Signed on behalf of the	Date for review
on <i>1st January 2026</i>	preschool <i>Hayley Smith</i>	<i>December 2026</i>