



Brington & Whilton Pre-school

The Village Hall, Main Street, Whilton, Nr Daventry, Northants, NN11 2NN

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE FOR WALKS, VISITING SPINNEY, ALLOTMENT and LOCAL GARDEN

Staff and volunteers to be:

- Aware that staff ratios to children are to be as guidelines in EYFS.
- Made aware that they should be aware of each other's safety and what others are doing around them at all times, indeed they have a duty of care to each other.
- Asked to keep areas tidy to prevent trips and falls.
- Asked to ensure tools/equipment are used safely.
- Told to alert all staff of anything they find that is potentially dangerous.
- Aware of children's allergies (especially insect stings) and possible health issues.
- Made aware that children's hands should be clean before eating or drinking.

Parents need to be made aware that the Pre-school encourages children to appreciate nature and understands that nature is the greatest teacher. Therefore it does not have a written policy regarding children climbing trees, building structures, collecting natural items, lighting fires, digging in the mud and other activities that children do in the outdoors as all activities are adequately supervised.

There is however always an element of risk involved with such activities and the level of risk will vary with each child's abilities, nature, experience and mood. It must therefore be up to the child's parents or guardians to gain an understanding of the risks involved and to decide on what each child may or may not do. It is also up to others to respect the parent or guardian's wishes.

Hazard	Risk	Who is at Risk	Controls in Place/Action Required	Check by Ticking
Children to be seen.	Traffic not seeing children	Children	All children to wear High Vis Vests when on outings.	
Children running into road	Traffic accident	Children	Children to walk in pairs, youngest children to hold adult hands. Adults to be at the front and back and middle of children's line. Children taught to cross the road safely.	
Animal Mess on paths or in fields	Contamination	Children and adults	Adult at front of line to ensure path is clear of animal mess and if seen ensure children avoid it.	
Gates	Children escaping	Children	Ensure all gates, where possible, are locked or secure to prevent children escaping on to neighbouring property or roads.	
Bees, wasps and Insects	Stings	All	These are natural inhabitants of the garden and pose no risk unless provoked. Team leader must be aware of any person who is allergic to specific insects. Seek first aid if stung. Volunteers to be on the look out for nesting creatures. If a nest is discovered it should be reported to the team leader.	

Hazard	Risk	Who is at Risk	Controls in Place/Action Required	Check by Ticking
Chemicals used in the garden	Inhalation, skin or eye contact.	All	No chemicals to be used. Adopt environmentally sensitive approach to garden i.e. garden without the use of chemicals. If used, chemicals to be used by qualified adult and in the proper manner and to be used and stored in accordance with health and safety legislation. Where it is deemed absolutely necessary to use chemical(s), a separate risk assessment and COSHH assessment should be carried out.	
Climbing and Play Equipment	Falling, risk of injury.	Children	Adequate supervision and instructed not to climb tree or objects unless they have specific permission from their parent or guardian. Play equipment to be supervised by adult at all times. Trampoline - one child at any one time, supervised by an adult at all times.	
Composting	Airborne particles Flies Vermin Lifting/ Turning	All	Avoid turning compost heaps when others are around. Consider keeping as cold heaps. Adults only to turn heaps when children are not present, adults must wear face mask and gloves to do this.	
Fire	Dangers from heat, smoke and fire	All	No fires in Spinney, Allotment or garden. Forest School fire emergency evacuation procedures to be in place and understood by all participants. Bonfires should have a team leader in charge of them at all times. A water source and buckets or hose should be to hand in case the fire gets out of hand. The fire must be out and thoroughly doused with water at the end of the day.	
Infection	Various	All	Everyone to wash their hands after touching plants or soil/compost and before handling food and drink. Either cover any cuts or abrasions before garden sessions or ensure gloves are worn. Stout footwear to be worn. All members should have up to date Tetanus immunisation. Be aware of Tetanus and Leptospirosis symptoms and dangers. If sharp objects such as needles are found volunteers told not to handle but to alert team leader.	
Lifting	Injury, strain.	All	People are not to lift heavy objects or to overfill wheelbarrows where in use.	
Mulching	Airborne particles Fungi Turning	All	Buy organic mulch materials in bags from a reputable source or use a weed suppressant such as mypex. Alternatively, use shredded paper, layers of cardboard or home-made compost. Reduce risk of air borne particles by wetting loose mulch materials before applying.	
Plant supports	Damage to the eye	All	People to be made aware of hazard and to take care when leaning over beds. Cane toppers to be used where cane height less than 1.8m high.	

Hazard	Risk	Who is at Risk	Controls in Place/Action Required	Check by Ticking
Plants	Ingestion, allergic reactions, poisonous, flicking branches, falling branches, thorns and stings.	All	<p>Some of the plants may be irritating to skin (gloves to be worn), or contain parts which are harmful or toxic if eaten, or have been sprayed with chemicals.</p> <p>When tasting garden produce, all produce and hands should be washed in tap water (not water butts) before eating.</p> <p>Do not plant potentially poisonous plants (e.g. daffodils) in edible beds. Label any potentially poisonous plants e.g. rhubarb. Tell children not to eat anything without checking with an adult.</p> <p>Volunteers to use dust masks if they are allergic to plants.</p> <p>Volunteers to wear eye protection if possible when working in bushes, otherwise be aware of flicking branches.</p> <p>Venue supervisor to make volunteers aware of any poisonous, stinging and thorny plants and fungi.</p> <p>Volunteers to be made aware where there is the possibility of falling debris from trees and shrubs.</p>	
Running children	Slips, trips and falls	Children	Children adequately supervised and instructed not to run or play running games in the garden if considered unsafe, slippery grass etc..	
Soil	Tetanus Toxoplasmosis Skin Irritation Soil blowing into eyes	All	<p>Check whether or not people have had tetanus inoculation before sessions start.</p> <p>Hands must be thoroughly washed at the end of each session and especially before eating food/drinking.</p> <p>Check garden/spinney/allotment before session and remove any animal mess whilst wearing gloves. Bury/dispose of mess away from the garden and wash trowel and hands afterwards.</p> <p>Proprietary compost e.g. for seed sowing, can be handled without gloves but hands must be washed after the session.</p> <p>If someone has skin irritations e.g. eczema, or cuts/abrasions, or is likely to have a suppressed immune system, then disposable gloves should be worn.</p> <p>Bags of compost or potting media should be opened with the head away from the opening as far as practically possible.</p> <p>Moisten dry compost/potting media before using.</p> <p>Avoid storing compost/potting media in greenhouses or other warm places.</p> <p>Avoid using loose compost and digging/ raking soil in dry and windy conditions.</p> <p>Compost heaps – see composting below</p>	
Tools	Injury, trips and falls. Cuts and getting hit.	All	<p>Tools correctly maintained to be safe to use. Children to only use tools when instructed to do so. At start of each session tool safety to be embedded. Training to be given for all sharp tools to be used e.g. loppers, secateurs etc.</p> <p>Garden forks and spades to be used with care, particularly avoiding feet of user and those around. These should not be used with force as levers when digging. Rakes must be stored with teeth facing downwards or leaned against a wall with teeth facing in towards wall. All tools counted 'out' and 'in'. Appropriate type and size of tools to be selected for use by children.</p> <p>'Tool stop' point to be clearly identified and all tools to be returned here when not in use during a session.</p> <p>Ensure adequate working space for people when they are working around garden beds.</p>	

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Water	Slips, trips, falls	All	Children shown how to correctly water plants to avoid soaking pathways. Hose pipes should be coiled/ rolled up after use and not left lying out where they could become a trip hazard. Working procedures should be designed to keep water spillages and run off to a minimum	
Water Butts, Hoses and ponds/water courses	Drinking Washing Hands Water borne bugs/ infections Drowning	All	<p>Water butts must have child proof, locked lids and should be firmly secured on a stable surface.</p> <p>Children must not wash their hands or wash garden produce to eat with water from the butts.</p> <p>When using water from the butts for watering then people must wash their hands afterwards.</p> <p>Water butts should be emptied and scrubbed out once a year. This job should be carried out by an adult with gloves and face mask.</p> <p>Water butts to be kept in cool position as far as practically possible. If not, consideration to be given to insulation or light reflecting paint.</p> <p>Empty water out of full hoses after use. (NB Full hoses left in sun or warm conditions may breed micro-organisms such as Legionella)</p> <p>If there are ponds or water courses, small children must be supervised closely at all times and older children.</p>	
Weather	Sunburn, dehydration, hypothermia, Slipping in wet weather Soil blown into eyes.	All	<p>Appropriate clothing to be worn for the weather conditions (hot, cold, wet, windy). Adequate fluids to be drunk when it is hot and work activities to be planned in shady areas where possible.</p> <p>Everyone to apply own sun-cream and wear hats. Ensure that all children have sun cream applied by adult if child unable to apply adequately. Supply of sunscreen available for those that have forgotten it.</p> <p>In wet weather, garden surfaces can become slippery e.g. clay soils. Close paths if too slippery and revise activities to minimise risk of slipping. For children, no running to, from and within the area. Wear appropriate footwear.</p> <p>Avoid using loose compost and digging/ raking soil in windy conditions.</p>	
Weather (flooding)	Potential (pathogenic) microbial contamination		<p>If gardens become flooded and waterlogged do not harvest crops from these areas for consumption, and relocate garden in un-flooded area.</p> <p>Do not grow crops in flooded area for at least 2 years after the flood.</p>	

Brington and Whilton Pre-school - Site Assessment Form

Date		Signature
Site conditions?		Weather conditions?
Trip hazards?		Animal Mess?
Tool count		Condition of tools?
Other potential risks:		

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