



Hakeford Woods Forest School

Poor Weather Procedures

At Hakeford Woods Forest School, as far as possible we wish to embrace and instil in our participants the idea that, “there is no such thing as bad weather, just unsuitable clothing”. We do however recognise that this does not apply in every weather condition that we experience here in Devon. The main exception to this idea is the case of strong winds. We are lucky at Hakeford Woods to have access to a variety of locations, so that we can carry out activities away from trees that could pose a safety risk at times of high winds.

Depending on weather conditions, we are able to carry out Forest School activities in the deciduous woodland, coppiced areas or meadow areas and the Forest School leaders will make their decisions based on the conditions on the day. If winds increase during a session activities will be moved to a more suitable location to ensure the safety of the group.

When the weather is wet a shelter will be erected immediately so that participants have shelter available from the start of the session. In so doing we hope to reduce the negative effects of poor weather. In cold conditions we will focus the activities on tasks that will keep the participants warm, they may be highly active or centred around a fire.

It is vital that all participants attending Forest School sessions are suitably equipped for the local weather conditions. Sturdy footwear is recommended throughout the year, wellington boots would be advisable for much of the year. All participants must wear long trousers and long sleeved tops at all times, this reduces the need for sun cream and provides some protection against stinging or sharp plants and biting or stinging insects. In colder times of year it is recommended that participants wear several layers on their upper body and come equipped with a second layer for their legs such as waterproof trousers. Waterproof coats and trousers not only provide protection from rain, but reduce the chilling effects of the wind and make moving through rough ground easier and safer. In cold weather we ask that all participants come equipped with warm hats and gloves and bring a second pair of socks in case they get wet or cold feet during the session. Peaked or brimmed hats are advisable in the hotter months.

If the forecast weather conditions are considered to be dangerous for participants, Hakeford Woods Forest School staff will attempt to relocate to a suitable location such as school grounds. In the case of extreme weather and no suitable alternative venue being available Hakeford Woods Forest School staff may need to cancel sessions at short notice. Where possible these sessions will be rescheduled.