

Additional Risk Assessment Measures

This risk assessment is in addition to the main Risk Assessment for the space2grow site which can be read here; - <https://www.space2grow.space/our-policies>

space2play Stay and Play Sessions will follow the principles of Forest School and as such will support and encourage a child-led, holistic approach to play. Children are encouraged to challenge themselves and learn how to engage in risky play safely, developing their resilience, their physical abilities, and sense of well-being.

In order for all children to stay safe during Forest School sessions, the following rules, risk assessments and procedures have been put in place to ensure children and adults can reduce the risk of the activities and available. They will learn to make dynamic risk assessments and balance risk with the benefits of doing an activity. For more complex and risky activities, like tool use the details below are an overview and a more detailed risk assessment will be available at the time of delivery.

Understanding the site boundaries

- At the beginning of each session, the children will be made aware of where on the site they can explore and how far they can go.
- All children and adults will be taught the return call- "One, two three. Come back to me." On hearing this call everyone will be taught to stop what they are doing carefully and return to the fire circle. This will have been introduced to everyone through a game and practised many times. The call is used at regular periods throughout the session for example at snack time. At the stay and play sessions it is the responsibility of the parent or carer to make sure that their child has remained within the boundaries. If the group go out for a walk or to play on the meadow boundaries will be set and the same call used to bring the group back together.

Moving around the site

- Everyone should be aware of the trip hazards and risk of bumping into others on the site. Whilst children will not be stopped from running, they will be taught to assess where it is safe to run. Charging around with no awareness of others will be discussed and discouraged. Walking will be positively encouraged unless playing an organised game. Sticks and tools are not to be held when running.

Picking up and playing with sticks

Children will be allowed to carry sticks shorter than their arm's length but made sure they think about how close they are to other children. Longer sticks can be dragged or carried with a child at both ends. Sticks must not be thrown, nor should children be allowed to pull them from living trees.

Tree Climbing

When risk assessments are carried out before sessions, areas below climbing trees must be checked for sharp objects and the tree checked for loose branches. Children are not to climb higher than an adults arm length or chest height. (This will be taught). Children will be taught how to check if branches are safe to climb.

Rope and String Use

Children will be encouraged to connect and transport materials but prevented from tying up other children or themselves! If a child has a good idea and wants, for example, to try and build a rope swing do help them and use the opportunity to model appropriate knot tying. All string and rope must be collected up at the end of the session.

Carrying and Transporting Materials

The children should be encouraged to roll, lift, drag and pull materials either by hand or using ropes. The safe way to lift, by bending your knees and keeping your back straight should be modelled by all adults. Heavier objects will be rolled, dragged or carried by more people.

Eating and Drinking

- Children will be taught not to eat anything found in the woods through 'No picking and no licking'. We will discuss this together so that children are secure in their knowledge. At snack time, before cooking on the fire or preparing food everyone will wash their hands.

- During foraging or gardening children and adults will be taught what is safe to eat. Eating food from the garden or wider site will be restricted to these specified times.

Fire Safety

- Everyone will be taught to walk around the outside of the fire circle even when the fire pit is not being used. No-one is allowed into the fire circle unless they are invited in by the leader.
- A separate risk assessment will be available for all fire sessions, including lighting and cooking. Everyone will be reminded of all the procedures before and during the fire activities. It is essential that these are followed to reduce the risk to everyone and the nature around us.

Pond Dipping

- The pond is fenced during the sessions. It will be opened and used for observing and pond dipping at suitable periods during the year. To ensure that there is not a negative impact on the pond, dipping will not happen during breeding seasons and only a few times a week.
- Under 5's must have at least one adult to 2 children accompanying them at the pond. Over 5's have a ratio of 1 adult to 6 children.
- A separate risk assessment will be available for all pond sessions. Everyone will be reminded of all the procedures before and during the pond activities. It is essential that these are followed to reduce the risk to everyone and the pond habitat.

Tool Use

- Tools are only to be used under the guidance of a trained adult.
- Knives and fire kits will be locked away when not in use.
- A separate risk assessment will be available for all tool sessions. Everyone will be reminded of all the procedures before and during the tool activities. It is essential that these are followed to reduce the risk to everyone.

Leaving the Site

- At the end of each session, the children take part in a 'leave no trace' tidy up task. If artefacts are made using 'found materials' these may be taken off sight. Everything must be packed away at the end of the session, except the mud kitchen which must be left tidy. The site must always be left as it is found for everyone to enjoy and our resident wildlife to enjoy.

Change Record

Date of Change:	Changed By:	Comments:
27/08/23	Kate Newton	Policy approved by the Trustees and space2play session leaders
29/2/24	Kate Newton & Catherine Floyd	Reviewed & Re-issued