**Woodfield Forest Church – amended December 2020**

**Risk assessment**

The **aim** of forest church is to develop individual and group spirituality through engagement with the natural world.

We are seeking to engage with people who would not usually consider church in the traditional sense, yet are searching, physically and spiritually and feel more comfortable in the outdoors.

Initially activity will take place to the rear of St Lawrence Church Measham, however *may* become roving and meet at different, suitably agreed places.

This set of risk assessments covers potential activities related to Forest Church, yet also recognizes that day to day risk assessment and risk management is a dynamic process which takes place before and during each session.

*The* ***Forest Church Leader*** *is responsible for monitoring the safety of the activity and reminding participants of risk and safety precautions*.

Some activities may include the use of hand held blades, for example bushcraft knives, stanley knives, carving scrapes, carving knives, secateurs or scissors as we explore and respond to the natural world.

Another aspect of the natural world that is common to forest church activities is fire.

Fire is one of the 4 classical elements of Earth, water, air and fire

Fire may be a focal point of group worship and discussion.

Fire is symbolic of Jesus, light of the world and of the Holy Spirit.

Fire may be symbolic of warmth, comfort and togetherness.

It is our intention that everyone has a safe and engaging time and that they know something of Gods presence through our being and through their being with creation, however in the event of accident a First aid kit, first aider and mobile phone to be available at all times.

| **Area** | **Hazard** | **Risk** | **Control** | **Risk** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Lack of supervision | Serious injury including cuts or burns | All children to accompanied by a responsible adultInitial safety talk by supervisor to give rules and safety advice and dangers of fire Running near the fire not allowedAppropriate ratio of adults to children | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Weather exposure | HypothermiaSlips, trips and falls | Ensure everyone is wearing appropriate clothing Encourage the drinking of warm fluids (tea, coffee, soup, hot chocolate)Awareness of conditions.Consider delaying the activity if very wet or cold | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Weather exposure | Heat stroke/ Sunburn | Advise appropriate clothing, hats and sunscreen.Activity to be based in shaded areas where possibleDrinks available at all times to stay hydrated | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Walking at night | Slips, trips and fallsContact with low hanging branches | Area checked for hazards prior to sessionWearing of sturdy footwear encouragedAwareness of terrain | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Collecting firewood | Slips, trips and fallsScratches, splinters, nettle stings | Demonstration by supervisor first to show the size of wood to be collectedPoint out areas of concernEnsure boundaries are clearly explained | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Fire | Burns or scalds | Fire lighting equipment stored in a sealed containerFire-fighting equipment close to fire (buckets of water and/or extinguishers)Fire pit lit well away from the buildings and overhanging branchesSupervisor to remain vigilant at all timesChildren and adults to sit well back from the open fireFirst aider on siteFirst aid kit available |  Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Fire getting out of control | Burns or scalds | Spare wood kept away from the fireWater immediately available to put out the fire Raised fire pit used so fire not in direct contact with the ground | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Cooking on the fire | Burns or scalds | Long green sticks used for toasting and safe handling demonstratedMaximum 4 people at a time, and the supervisor, at the fire  | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Smoke | Inhalation/irritation | Fire pit to be placed well away from any buildingsBe aware of wind direction and seat children away from smokeDry wood to be used to prevent excess smokeRemove anyone affected well away from the area | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Extinguishing the fire | Burns or scalds | Supervisors to ensure that the group is a safe distance away before attempting to put out the fireThe fire should be extinguished until all the embers have stopped glowingFire pit removed when cooled | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Bare foot wandering-Bee or wasp sting | Worst case - Anaphylactic Shock  | Safety talk – watch where you are walking, and what you are picking up.Site assessment before each walkChildren accompanied by responsible adultEpipen check | Low |
|  | Bare foot wandering  | something stuck in foot | Safety talk – watch where you are walking, and what you are picking up.Site assessment before each walkChildren accompanied by responsible adultEpipen check | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Risk of Injury from hand held blade / tool | worst case severe cut injury | ***Safety Talk***: Prior to every session using Hand held blades, a tool talk outlining the safe use of, storage and transport of the knife. When using the Bushcraft knife, no glove is to be worn on the tool hand; however, a protective glove must be worn on the opposite hand.Parents / responsible adults are reminded of their responsibility to monitor their child(ren).Session leader to monitor use of knives closely, knives are not be used outside of leaders and/or appointed monitors range of vision, there will ***immediate removal of tools*** from the session of any participant using knives inappropriatelyAll tools to be checked regularly and maintained in good working order. | Low |
|  |  |  | **Date of assessment** **By Joanne Dyer and Helen Phillips 23/07/2018** |  |
| **Risk Assessment updated to consider additions – Coronavirus August 2020 – Joanne Dyer** |
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| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Cross contamination  | Virus transmission from person to person | Hand sanitizer available and to be used on the way into the church yard.Some larger bubbles to allow for larger families and space to undertake activities. And pre prepared provided materials put together after hands washed and sanitized, ideally more than 72 hrs. in advance. After use to be clean and sanitized where possible, or bagged and left for 72 hrs where not.Families requested to bring own picnic mat / blanket to sit in if wanted.No provided refreshments, all to bring own drink and snack.Attendee details held for 21 days for track and trace then destroyed. | Low |
| Rear Garden/ or space deemed suitable for activities | Social Distance | Participants are too close to those from beyond their household / bubble.Children wanting to play with each other | Families encouraged to use one way system in and out of the church yard. In Via Front of Church.Families to maintain household bubbles in line with appropriate Tier level.No mixing of householdsPre marked bubbles into the grass with either the lawn mower or spray chalk paint. Minimum 2mts gap between bubbles. Room for 10 bubbles on short grass near the church. More can be accommodated in the longer grass of needed.No Fire pit – to discourage closenessActivities that can be taken part in housholds / bubbles.Clear instructions to be given by the leader.Adults remain responsible for their children. | Medium |
| Hall / Toilets | Cross contamination | Virus transmission through surface contact | Door handles, baby changing station and toilet/taps/sink to be cleaned ad sanitized before and after activity.Toilet only available on key request.Sanitize hands before receiving key.Use of accessible toilet only, rest of hall out of bounds.Cleaning materials available for user to wipe down touched surfaces before and after use.Children must be accompanied by their responsible adult. | Low |