



Mud Pie Explorers Covid Secure Guidelines

These Covid secure guidelines are in place to protect our learners, visitors and team members. This is a working document which is regularly reviewed as new guidance and legislation is published, and as the situation develops overtime.

Last update: February 24th 2021

Currently we are in lockdown (legally we are in tier 4 of Covid restrictions). Lockdown is going to be lifted in line with the governments 4 step plan over the coming months.

Up to 29th March 2021

Some of our learners are permitted to attend Forest School during lockdown. Vulnerable learners or those with a disability may attend where to do so would both provide them essential support and respite for their parent/ carer. (See definitions at appendix 1). We are legally permitted to provide:

- care/ assistance to vulnerable/ disabled children in groups of 15 or less
- respite for vulnerable/ disabled children

Parties are not permitted. Our woodland playgroup is not permitted, even though there is a peer support element to it.

In lockdown parents/ carers will only be permitted to attend sessions if their child requires them to for medical reasons.

Team members will continue to run permitted Forest School sessions, but all other work will be done from home, rather than coming into the office in each of the tiers.

From 8th March 2021

Home educated children are permitted to attend our sessions as part of their existing arrangements for a suitable full-time education.

From 29th March 2021

Forest School activities, after school clubs, parties and half term sessions, for school age children, can legally take place as "outdoor provision to all children" is permitted "without restrictions on the purpose for which they may attend".

[Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/protective-measures-for-holiday-and-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)

However, there are some additional procedures in the guidelines:

- parents/ carers can not attend unless is it essential they do so
- siblings must attend the same group

Two new groups start after half term: Wed 5pm and Sat 115pm

We will be offering personalised sessions to allow school aged children celebrate their birthdays with friends, up to 8 children. No parents/ carers can attend.

We can legally run after school clubs- we will be contacting our partner schools in the next week or so to arrange start dates. This will not be until after Easter half term at the very soonest.

From 12th April, at the earliest

The rule of 6 applies to outdoor gatherings. We will offer a 2nd birthday option from this date: 5 people to attend plus our team member, parent/ carers can attend.

From 17th May, at the earliest

Groups of up to 30 people will be permitted outdoors so parties will return to their normal size at this time (pending a risk benefit assessment) and our Woodland Playgroup will restart. It can not start sooner as it is not a support group.

“Parent and child groups Support groups, such as for breastfeeding, postnatal, and baby and toddler groups, for the provision of support for parents, carers and their children, that are necessary to deliver in person, can continue with up to 15 participants (children under five are not counted in the number) where formally organised to provide mutual aid, therapy or any other form of support...This would not typically permit parent-and-child groups focused on social or development activities, such as singalong groups or art classes”. [DfE master statutory guidance template \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/dfe-master-statutory-guidance-template.pdf)

Group sizes at Lincombe Barn Woods

From 29th March groups of 15 are permitted in outdoor out of school settings with no limitation on the purpose of the activity:

“103 All children will be able to access any outdoor childcare and supervised activities.” [COVID-19 RESPONSE – SPRING 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/91222/dfe-master-statutory-guidance-template.pdf)

We will limit Forest School sessions for school aged children to 15 people at Lincombe Barn Woods. Our Woodland Playgroup will have up to 20 people (children under 5 towards permitted groups of 15). This will allow for:

- space for social distancing
- the provision of ample equipment and resources for good hand hygiene

Team members will be allocated to specific groups. Children may only attend one term time Forest School session per week- this will form their bubble.

As children from different schools attend our sessions it is not possible for us to adhere to school bubbles. The guidance states in these cases groups will be of up to 15 children and siblings should attend the same group.

Our groups will be inconsistent during school holidays and at parties. The guidance is clear that this reasonable because:

- we have varying booking patterns
- we take additional bookings throughout the term and during school holidays
- we have children of different ages attending

When operating for multiple groups of children throughout the day, we will allow enough changeover time in between groups to swap kit over and to prevent learners and parents/ carers waiting in large groups in the car park.

Reducing the risk of the virus coming into our sessions

- 1.1. As always, anyone who is physically ill cannot attend a Mud Pie Explorers session.
- 1.2. In line with government guidance learners, team members, visitors and members of their households will need to isolate if they show symptoms of coronavirus.
- 1.3. Our team members and the families accessing our sessions will always adhere to government guidelines to minimise transmission even when not in sessions, to keep everyone as safe as possible.
- 1.4. Parents/ carers will only be permitted to attend for medical reasons. Group sizes may be further reduced in line with risk benefit assessments for individuals.
- 1.5. Those in high risk groups such as the medically vulnerable, the over 70s and pregnant women are advised not attend sessions or drop off/ collect learners, in line with government guidance. If you do attend it will be at your own personal choice and risk.
- 1.6. Forest School Drop offs- social distancing will be adhered to. Learners will be collected from their parent/ carer from near their car/ space away from others. The team member will walk the learner to the corner safe grassy area by the park. The learner will walk about 30m to the 2nd team member who will be at the start of the woods and clearly in sight of the other team member.
- 1.7. Those attending will use hand sanitiser before entering the woods (minimum 60% alcohol) this will be administered by a nominated team member.
- 1.8. Forest School collection- Parents/ carers will wait near their car or away from others, observing social distancing. Learners must wash their hands with soap and water before leaving the woods.
- 1.9. We will reduce contact with members of the public as much as is possible and reasonable while in the woods.
- 1.10. Team members and parents/ carers are encouraged to use the NHS track and trace app.
- 1.11. In line with HSE guidance First Aid kits will contain medical grade facemasks and muslin clothes for use in the event of resuscitation.

Reducing the risk of cross contamination during sessions

2.1 Face masks are NOT mandatory at Forest School. If team members or attendees wish to wear a face mask they will need to:

- wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting a face covering on, and before and after removing it
- when wearing a face covering, avoid touching your face or face covering, as you could contaminate them with germs from your hands
- change your face covering if it becomes damp or if you've touched it
- change and wash your face covering daily

2.2 Hand sanitizer is not sufficient to clean hands in muddy environments. During sessions we use soap and water for handwashing. There are individual paper towels to dry hands that will be placed by the learner in a bin with a lid. Hands will be washed before eating or drinking, after coughing or sneezing and at the end of the session.

- 2.3 Each group has their own kit bag with equipment and resources solely for their use. There is also a bag of kit for parties which is quarantined for at least 72 hours before use with another group.
- 2.4 Some equipment may be used across groups such as fire strikers and tools. These items will be thoroughly cleaned with antiviral spray at the end of the session.
- 2.5 When cooking, hands will be washed for at least 20 seconds:
- Before handling any food or cooking equipment
 - Before handling clean cutlery, dishes, glasses, or other items to be used by the group
 - After handling dirty or items used by the group
- 2.6 Before eating and after eating everyone should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before doing so.
- 2.7 Plates, bowls, cups and eating utensils will not be shared.
- 2.8 Food will each be individually portioned (marshmallows/ corn on cob/ jacket potato/toffee apples/ croissants in foil/ bananas and chocolate) or prepared by one person (popcorn/ soup/ porridge/ toast/ pasta).
- 2.9 When toasting marshmallows there will be one learner at a time will be in the fire area.
- 2.10 Learners and team members may bring their own snack and drink, this is not to be shared.
- 2.11 Activities will be strewn at socially distanced intervals.
- 2.12 When a learner or team member coughs or sneezes they will wash their hands with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds. Team members will teach and role model coughing/ sneezing into their elbow crease. Tissues will be put into the bin by the person that used it. The bin will be emptied safely at the end of the session.
- 2.13 If First Aid is to be administered the team member will wear a face mask to reduce the risk of transmission. The patient will be offered a facemask too. Face masks will be disposed of in the bin with a lid and the team member will then wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser.
- 2.14 All learners will watch the social story video on keeping Covid safe at Forest School before attending a session. Leaders will carry a printout of the video images to be used as a visual prompt if necessary.

Post session procedures

- 3.1 Clothes should be washed regularly, as there is some evidence that the virus can stay on fabrics.
- 3.2 Team members and families are advised to keep Forest School kit in a bag away from other items.
- 3.3 Any equipment or resources used in the session that will be used by other groups will be cleaned with antiviral spray.

Procedure for if someone contracts Covid 19 and has attended one of our sessions

- 4.1 When a learner or team member develops symptoms compatible with coronavirus (COVID-19), they will not be permitted to attend sessions.
- 4.2 If symptoms occur during a session the person will be sent home.
- 4.3 Those with symptoms must follow government guidance around testing and isolation. Advice can be obtained at [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) or contacting NHS 119 to arrange a test.
- 4.4 If the learner or team member tests negative but is unwell, they should not return until they are recovered.

4.5 Where the learner or team member tests positive, NHS Test and Trace will speak directly to those they have been in contact with to offer advice- this will include those who attended our session with them.

Appendix 1: Definitions

LEGAL DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

References to a person who has a disability are to a person who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities;

DEFINITION OF VULNERABLE from Jan 2021 guidance for out of school clubs

Vulnerable children and young people include those who:

- are assessed as being in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, including children and young people who have a child in need plan, a child protection plan or who are a looked-after child
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- have been identified as otherwise vulnerable by educational providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who could therefore benefit from continued full-time attendance, this might include:
 - children and young people on the edge of receiving support from children's social care services or in the process of being referred to children's services
 - adopted children or children on a special guardianship order
 - those at risk of becoming NEET ('not in employment, education or training')
 - those living in temporary accommodation
 - those who are young carers
 - those who may have difficulty engaging with remote education at home (for example due to a lack of devices or quiet space to study)
 - care leavers
 - others at the provider and local authority's discretion including pupils and students who need to attend to receive support or manage risks to their mental health

For the duration of the national lockdown, children who are home educated should not attend out-of-school settings for face-to-face provision unless they are vulnerable children and young people, or the children of critical workers.

SOURCE: [Protective measures for holiday and after-school clubs, and other out-of-school settings during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/protective-measures-for-holiday-and-after-school-clubs-and-other-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak)