

**WEE GREEN SPACES HOMEWORK – Part 2 Preparing People**

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| **To Do – Parent Preparation**  **Inform and involve parents – begin now, e.g.** | **Tick and date**  **once complete** |
| Inviting parents and children to advise on nearby greenspaces – where do they enjoy visiting? Send home a teddy or soft toy, “Explorer Ted” to help do this. |  |
| Snippets of information in newsletters and communications: fun pictures such as staff looking for a greenspace; updates about what preparation is happening with the children. |  |
| Photos of outdoor activities displayed in prominent places with the benefits highlighted. Feature happy children. |  |
| Add research snippets and quotes from informed professionals to parent communications. |  |
| Hold outdoor stay and play sessions. Think about warm drinks, hot food and spare clothes and shelter. |  |
| Find extra adults to assist with the sessions. Remember that 1-to-1 informal approaches often work well. Make sure they know what to expect. Be very proactive. |  |
| Once a site has been identified, have a pre-visit so that parents and children can see the site. Sometimes the land manager is willing to meet and greet such groups. |  |
| Ask for parents’ thoughts and ideas. Follow up on any concerns positively and look for ways of enabling the visits to go ahead in a way which takes account of the concerns. |  |
| Hold a parent information workshop so they have an opportunity to ask questions in advance. Use some of the parent activities to support this. |  |
| Ensure you have the Aberdeen City local excursions annual permission form signed. |  |
| Send home information letter re WGS. See example on the blog post. |  |



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| **To Do – Children Preparation** | **Tick and date**  **once complete** |
| Take photos of the site and share with children. Bring items from the place for children to hold, smell, feel and talk about.   * Do they know this site? * What advice do they have about visiting? Do they know how to get there? * What do they think they will need to help them ensure that the use of the site is a healthy, happy and safe experience? * Share ideas for equipment needed. |  |
| Introduce a soft toy who can help children learn about their greenspace site   * Use local wildlife animal if possible or a friendly teddy * Get the toy to bring photos and include in discussions. * Get the toy to ask children for advice about managing aspects of care and safety, e.g. how to cross a road * Develop little stories about the toy and his adventures outside to tell the children * Talk about what the soft toy needs for visiting the WGS site. |  |
| Ensure children have suitable outdoor clothing, including hats, gloves, warm socks, suitable boots or wellies.   * Have a look at the Stramash Gear Guide <https://stramash.org.uk/gear-guide/> * Practice putting on and taking off outdoor clothing, daily: have picture sequencing charts, encourage children who can do this to help those who can’t. * Create an outdoor dressing up box for extra practice * Send home the micro-routine sheet of what’s involved. |  |
| Give children lots of practice at:   * Packing their backpack with snack, water, seat, accessories (remember not to overload, they are little. * Putting the pack on and off * Go for mini walks with backpack on * Eating snack outside from the backpacks * Washing hands outside. Experiment with different systems. |  |
| Introduce simple songs and rhymes to help prepare children for the Wee Green Space visits. See the handout on the blog post. |  |
| Practice gathering round when called:   * Decide on a calling sound or song – perhaps the children have a preference. * Play games that involve running back to the gathering circle when calling sound is heard. |  |
| Develop the concept of a boundary and practice this   * Identify working areas in an open space * Play games where children learn to stop at identified boundaries. * Play games where children have to move to spaces where they can see you and you can see them. * Get children to help you establish where the boundaries should be. If needed use biodegradable tape to mark the boundaries so staff, volunteers and children know. |  |
| Learn to recognise key features   * Play games where children learn to recognise key features in the environment * Practice running to and waiting at key features (in safe places) * Look for places en route to your WGS site where it is okay for the children to run on ahead and wait at key features for the group. |  |
| Learn what to do if lost   * Play the games * Tell the story * Reinforce key messages about staying in one place, hugging a tree/lamppost and waiting for known adult * Practice regularly |  |
| Learn how to “be” outside   * Identify key issues from site appraisal and risk assessments * Think about songs, games, stories or rhymes which would help children learn how to manage the risks or issues, e.g. dogs and dog mess, crossing roads, encountering wildlife etc. * Practice these in advance. |  |



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| **To Do – Staff and Volunteer Preparation** | **Tick and date**  **once complete** |
| Staff have visited the greenspace prior to the Wee Green Space sessions started.   * They know where it is and how to get there. * They know the emergency procedures and arrangements and where key information is stored about the visits * Any concerns and issues have been collectively shared and agreements over how to address these have been made. |  |
| There is a designated lead person or two who kickstart the Wee Green Spaces sessions. |  |
| Staff and volunteers have the right clothing and footwear. Think about how everyone will manage in the cold sessions. It is important they are able to model a positive behaviour and attitude to being outdoors and off-site. |  |
| * You have considered what equipment you need and have acquired it. * Procedures are in place to care for the equipment before, during and after each visit. * Have a look at the equipment list on the blog and amend this to suit your setting’s needs. |  |
| You have thought about the manageability of the resources you are taking to the woods. Staff must follow your setting’s manual handling practices when lifting and carrying resources. |  |
| You have made provision for snack and drink for staff and helpers. This may include hot drinks on cold days. |  |
| Your toileting procedures include provision for adults. A little forward thinking can make all make a difference to comfort levels and dignity. <http://bit.ly/2SKfaKF>  You may need to consider:   * Having a designated space further away * A system for quietly being able to go, yet staff being aware * A way of managing sanitary needs * A portable seat, if wild toileting is inappropriate or seems too much to handle |  |
| You have put together a sensible induction process for staff who are new to Wee Green Spaces to ensure they learn the routines and expectations, policies and procedures. |  |
| You have an effective system for ensuring parents and volunteers:   * Know their role and what is okay to do and what not to do * Are valued for their contribution and giving up their free time * You and they are following ACC Volunteer guidelines as per the Education Visits Policy. * Have a look at the Cults information sheet on the blog. |  |
| You have planned the routines and framework for the Wee Green Spaces visits.   * This will change lots as you learn with the children. * Remember to actively involve your children in shaping this as much as possible. * Have a look at the visit leader’s checklist on the blog post and amend to suit your setting. |  |