

**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.
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| 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.
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| 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.
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| 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.
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| 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.
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| 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.
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| 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.
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| 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
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| 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.
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| 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.
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| 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
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| 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.
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| 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.
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