



## **St Nicolas Playgroup**

### **Outdoor Learning Sessions - The Woodland Scarecrows Policy**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

The Woodland Scarecrows is an outdoor learning session provided by St Nicolas Playgroup where children can spend their morning session outside exploring nature, (this opportunity is available to those who attend the Taplow setting). During the session the children will learn how to respect and care for our woodland and outside spaces. They'll practice using sustainable solutions and develop positive attitudes towards the environment. Our ethos during the session is to enjoy the outdoors, respect the woodland and local wildlife and develop a sense of independence and adventure.

#### **2.0 Outdoor Learning Aims**

The aim of the session is to:

- help children to learn about nature through exploration and play.
- support the environment by learning how to care for our woodland, picking up litter and leaving the space better than we found it.
- discover differences as the seasons change and talk about the different plants and animal habitats they might encounter on nature walks.
- promote awareness of boundaries and safe areas to play. Boundaries will be marked out, and children will learn to understand how we stay inside these boundaries for our safety.
- promote a sense of independence, through the preparation of the group's snacks and drinks.
- develop physical development skills through climbing, running and general outside exercise that is difficult to achieve indoors.

#### **3.0 The Details**

The session will take place in Old Priory Gardens (OPG) on a Tuesday and a Friday morning from 9.30 to 12.00. Thursdays may be added in the summer term as demand for the sessions become higher. Children should be brought to the playgroup for registration before walking down to OPG with the staff. Please ensure that your child is wearing their woodland clothes. Sessions will take place in all weathers (except in the event of high winds where flying debris could make it dangerous).

Children should wear clothes appropriate for the weather and arrive to the setting ready to go. Waterproofs and sturdy shoes (preferably no wellingtons as these have poor grip and are not warm in cold weather) must be provided, and it is advisable for the child to wear layers in case they get warm. Hat and gloves are recommended in the winter and sun cream and sun hats in the summer. All children will be supplied with a high-vis jacket to wear for the duration of the visit. Spare shoes must be provided to change into when they return to playgroup. Please label all belongings.



The session will cost £3, payable online.

Sessions could be subject to cancellation by the discretion of the management. In the event of cancellation, the children will spend the session at playgroup in the village hall.

Please let us know if you are registered but unable to attend Woodland Scarecrows as this may affect our child to adult ratios.

Collection will be at 12.15 at the village hall unless staying for the afternoon session.

All children must be 3 years of age to attend. This is so we can provide the right staff to child ratios and children can understand rules and boundaries better at this age.

#### 4.0 The Risks

There is an element of risk that comes with the outdoor learning sessions. Parents should be aware that there are no boundary fences at OPG as it is a public space. Children will be taught where they can and cannot play. If you think your child is not yet ready to understand fenceless boundaries then it may be wise to hold them back for a couple of months.

Being a woodland setting the children have access to fallen trees that are easy to climb. This play will be supervised but comes with its own risks. Parents need to be happy that their children will be encouraged to explore the woodland, make dens and climb trees, logs and branches (supervised). If at all you think your child may struggle, we advise that they wait until they are ready.

Parents are welcome to visit OPG to see the setting where our sessions take place. If you wish to volunteer to help at a session, please organise this with the manager at playgroup.

This policy was created on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2024

This policy was reviewed by:	The Manager	Signed
On:	Date: 21 August 2025	VE Evans
Date of next review:	Date: 21 August 2026	