

# GREAT SMEATON ACADEMY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Pond Safety Policy

### Introduction

Great Smeaton Academy Primary School offers all our children a rich learning environment to enhance the curriculum. In 2017 we developed a school pond area within the school grounds.

We wish to ensure that children have access to this environment, in a safe and controlled way.

We aim to allow children to use the pond as a “hands on” resource to enhance the curriculum as a whole.

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring safety is maintained in school rests with the Head Teacher. They may delegate some operational aspects, but will retain the responsibility.

### Overarching guidelines

- ✚ Children and adults must be kept safe at all times.
- ✚ All staff have a responsibility to check the pond regularly to ensure that the area is safe but particularly when planning an activity and immediately prior to entering the fenced area;
- ✚ Children must be accompanied by an adult at ALL times;
- ✚ During the activity try to ensure that those children with cuts on their hands cover them with waterproof plasters or wear suitable gloves, avoid ingestion of water and ensure that all children wash their hands after the activity especially before eating. Adequate instruction must be issued to children as to the risks, and how they should behave. This should include instruction not to drink the water
- ✚ Staff and children will wear suitable footwear when working around the pond;
- ✚ In case of emergency, the alarm must be raised with the school office;
- ✚ All staff members are trained in basic emergency first aid.
- ✚ All incidents involving falls into the pond must be reported on accident forms

### Management

The school will carry out risk assessments in relation to the pond and activities involving the pond. All relevant information (i.e. the findings of the assessment and the control measures) must be relayed to staff and to others that may carry out activities involving the pond.

Classes or groups using the pond must be supervised at all times.

The ratio of children to staff within the fenced area must allow full control.

- ✚ 1 adult for every 4 children in Reception with a maximum of 8 children;
- ✚ 1 adult for every 6 children in school years 1 to 3 with a maximum of 12 children;
- ✚ 1 adult for every 8 children in school years 4 to 6 with a maximum of 16 children;

Whole class teaching; teachers must complete a Risk Assessment and ensure that the needs of all the children are supported and can access the areas safely.

Children with 1:1 support must be accompanied by their supporting adult at all times including small group work activities.

Children are informed that the pond area is out of bounds unless permission is given.

The pond must be regularly maintained to ensure that the perimeter does not become obscured and that the area around the pond does not deteriorate.

The school has an emergency action plan in place for incidents associated with the pond. (See appendix A).

This covers:

- ✚ how to rescue a person who has fallen in
- ✚ resuscitation and first aid
- ✚ how to call for assistance
- ✚ what to do with other children during an emergency situation.

Adequate instruction must be issued to children as to the risks associated with the pond and activities in the pond area.

## Design

- ✚ The pond has been designed so that the edges of the large pond do not exceed a 1 in 3 gradient from the shallow to the deepest zone. The deepest part of the pond is in the centre.
- ✚ The depth of the water will be kept as shallow as possible and will not exceed the following depth for Primary Schools of 1000mm.
- ✚ The edge of the large pond has been flagged to clearly define the edges and provide a level and accessible surface for children of varying levels of mobility Children must be supervised around the edges of the pond.
- ✚ Staff must ensure that any tripping hazards have been eliminated before children access the pond area and in icy or wet conditions that the surface has not become slippery and pose an additional hazard and when additional control measures such as applying grit will be employed if the activity is to go ahead.
- ✚ A suitable and safe means of access has been provided through a locked gate and along a short path.
- ✚ Portable electrical equipment will not be used near the pond.
- ✚ Ponds in schools must be fenced to prevent accidental approach. The fencing has been designed to enclose the area containing the pond and is composed of vertical slats with no gaps large enough for a child to pass through. It is a minimum of 1.1metre in height in line with current ROSPA guidance. A lockable gate has been provided to deter unsupervised entry.
- ✚ Excessive plant growth and deposits of silt or mud should be removed on a regular basis.
- ✚ Appropriate warning signs have been posted warning of the presence of a pond and detailing safety rules for use. Signs are used in addition to, not instead of, other control measures.

- ✚ The school will carry out risk assessments in relation to the pond and activities involving the pond. The risk assessment will be reviewed annually, alongside this policy, or when appropriate e.g. any changes to the area. All relevant information (i.e. the findings of the assessment and the control measures) will be relayed to staff and other people who may carry out activities involving the pond.
- ✚ The classes or groups using the pond must be supervised at all times, see above for staff:pupil ratios and maximum group sizes.
- ✚ The pond will be regularly maintained to ensure that the perimeter does not deteriorate and monitoring forms part of the half termly Visual Premises Inspections reported to Governors via the Finance Committee.

### **Security**

The problem of children falling into a pond are perhaps greatest not with children during school hours but with youngsters during out-of-school time, weekends, holidays etc. With infants, however, the risk of a child straying into the pond area may be present during school hours too. To prevent this, the pond has an enclosed perimeter fence and locked gate and the school perimeter is also fenced and secured out of school opening times. There is controlled access at all times. The pond is a whole-school resource and security and general supervision are easier to achieve if all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

### **Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to monitor the standards and impact on children's learning in the outdoor classroom environment.

Appropriate Health and Safety measures must be adhered to at all times

## APPENDIX A

### Emergency Action Plan for incidents associated with the pond

- ✚ All staff must be familiar with the pond emergency action plan. It is there to provide a safe environment.
- ✚ Before any activities are started staff must assure themselves that the pond appears safe and operational and that the paths are not obstructed or slippery.
- ✚ Staff must be alert at all times.

In the event of a child falling into the pond resulting in injury or near drowning follow the steps below:

- ✚ If safe to do so adult could walk into the shallow water to aid the victim.
- ✚ If adult is unable to do this then use a throw line or pole to reach the casualty.
- ✚ Send someone to summon additional help and the emergency services.
- ✚ The rest of the children should be removed to a place of safety by another member of staff while the casualty is dealt with.

A minor incident is considered to be a child slipping feet first into the water.

A major incident is considered to be life threatening for any and all individuals including suspected drowning.

Emergency Services:

- ✚ Ring 999
- ✚ School telephone number is 01609 881349
- ✚ The address is Great Smeaton Academy Primary School, Great Smeaton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 2EQ

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