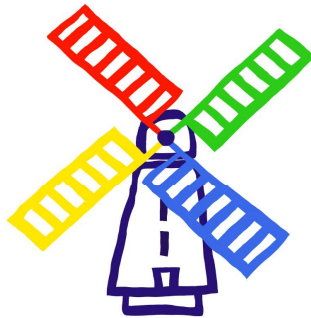


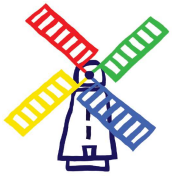
Tree Safety & Maintenance Policy

Unity
Trust
Courage
Curiosity
Respect
Kindness



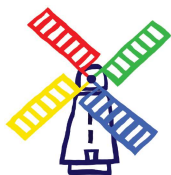
A community for learning. Raising expectations. Fulfilling high standards.

Created: **19th April 2023**
The policy is to be reviewed by: **1st September 2025**
Headteacher: **Mrs Gemma Hillier**
Health & Safety Governor: **Mrs Janet Mills**



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1. Tree Safety Applicable Legislation

- Health and Safety at Work etc.
- Act 1974 Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
- Occupiers' Liability Act 1984

2. Introduction

Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School, has a statutory 'duty of care' to members of the public, students and employees who must not be put at risk because of any failure by the school to take all reasonable precautions to ensure their safety.

There is therefore a need to periodically inspect trees on site, to assess whether they present a risk to life or property and to take appropriate remedial action as identified in the risk assessment.

3. Purpose

This document sets out the responsibilities, guidelines and control measures to manage trees. Within this document, the school has specified a minimum standard of inspection, competence and record keeping in relation to tree inspections.

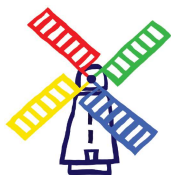
4. Scope

This procedure applies to all trees located on land that Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School is responsible for and where the school has a duty of care to make sure that tree(s) are kept in a safe manner.

5. Headteacher Responsibilities

- The Headteacher must monitor the condition of the state of the trees in and around their school and;
- report any tree defects that they are concerned about.

6. What are the Hazards?



All trees are subject to stress, decline, old age and collapse. They can be damaged physically by disease and/or invaded by organisms. As trees deteriorate they are increasingly likely to shed branches or fall over in strong winds. Some trees can shed branches without any form of prior warning.

7. What are the risks?

Risks are the likelihood that an unsafe tree will cause actual injury and/or damage. The risk screening of trees also relates to the location of the tree and the intensity of people in and around the immediate surrounding area of the tree. A further consideration will be the proximity of the tree to buildings or other structures.

8. The Environmental Impact

Trees (young, old and decaying) offer unique habitats for wildlife. However many trees can have structural weaknesses and/or are in poor physiological condition. As such they may have defects that could cause them to potentially fail. In order to mitigate these defects it will be necessary to undertake tree inspection programmes and action any remedial works deemed to be necessary to either part of the tree or the whole tree to reduce the risk that it poses to the site or users of the site.

9. Tree Inspection Programme

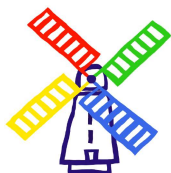
It is the school's responsibility to ensure that tree inspection procedures are in place for the whole plot and that persons undertaking these inspections are deemed to be of a competent nature.

10. Competent Persons

A 'competent' person is someone who has obtained arboricultural training and relevant professional experience. This person must be able to understand the hazards pertinent to the task being carried out and the methods to be implemented to eliminate or reduce the risks that can arise. This person should ideally hold the LANTRA Professional Tree Inspection Certificate and must be able to recognise a wide range of tree defects.

11. Tree Inspection Methodology

The inspection process should follow the 3 basic principles of a Visual Tree Assessment:



1. An assessment of the hazard.
2. An assessment of the risk.
3. Propose remedial actions.

NB. These three tasks do not necessarily all have to be done by the same person.

12. Assessing the hazards

The tree hazard assessment must be undertaken by a competent person. It is the responsibility of this person to identify the tree location, ensure that hazards are assessed to the best of their ability and recorded accurately.

13. Assessing the level of risk

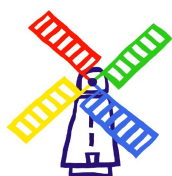
The tree inspection programme will define risk zones. Widmer End School is classed as a High Risk zone for the whole site, due to it being an educational setting. The examples of risk zones are as follows:

Risk Zones	Location
High Risk	close to main public areas, work/play areas, buildings, roads, car parks, major footpaths, picnic areas etc.
Medium Risk	other footpaths, bridle ways etc. in regular but not intensive public use, quieter areas of parks and gardens etc.
Low Risk	farmland and woodland away from paths or only lightly used etc.

Many trees are potentially hazardous as they may contain either structural or physiological defects. Some of these defects that can cause branch failure or a total collapse are visible from ground level and some are not (as they may be present within the upper crown or on top of branches).

NB. It is therefore only practical to expect the visible defects to be identified when the survey is being undertaken from ground level.

14. Technical Assessments of Trees



All trees will be inspected from ground level initially unless a more detailed climbing or internal inspection of the tree is required by the competent person.

Further methods of assessing the internal structure of a tree with identified defects should be available to the competent person. These include a simple mallet and probe or various electronic devices. These methods will only be used if it is deemed necessary by the competent person at the time of inspection.

15. The frequency and method of inspection must be determined by the risk area.

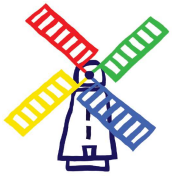
Risk Zones	Inspect	Method
High Risk	1 to 2 Years (site dependent)	Rapid but careful inspection for clear defects (especially in the crown and around the base of the tree).
Medium Risk	3 – 5 years (site dependent)	Rapid but careful search for clear defects.
Low Risk	Within 5 years	No formal inspection, but general observations.
*Retained trees (not felled) in High Risk areas showing significant defects	Annually or after storms	Thorough inspection, monitoring rate of decline. Probe and ladder may be required.

Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School will contract a competent person to review trees every 18-24 months.

16. Records of Inspection

All trees that are deemed to pose a high or medium risk must be recorded with the corresponding trees plotted on a site plan.

Trees that appear to be sound during formal inspection require no documented record of their condition. Any omission from the record therefore implies that the tree has been judged to present a negligible risk.



17. Determining Remedial Actions

Only a competent person may prescribe remedial actions. Within these remedial actions proposals and priorities (with defined timescales) must be recorded so that a competent specialist can clearly understand what is required of them. These remedial actions will be based upon an assessment of the hazards and the risks posed by the tree.

NB. It may be necessary to exclude all persons from an area until the risks have been removed and the site has been declared safe by a competent person.

18. Arboricultural Contractors

If we feel that our trees are unsafe then we will obtain advice from a qualified person. This person will have undertaken the relevant arboricultural training that will allow them to clearly identify any defects that may be present in your trees. This individual will also hold appropriate insurance for the works that they are undertaking and we will ask to see this prior to instructing them to undertake works.

All works must be carried out in accordance with the current relevant British Standard 3998:2010 Tree Work Recommendations.

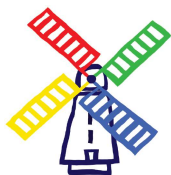
Any arboricultural consultants used by Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School will be recognised by the Arboricultural Association (www.tree.org.uk) as a registered consultant.

19. Notification of Defects

The Headteacher has a duty of care to notify the Health and Safety Governor if they know of any hazardous trees on the school site or neighbouring land. All staff/employees have a duty to report any obvious defects on trees to the Headteacher as soon as practicable. Any trees on neighbouring land that require works must be reported to the land owner as soon as is practicable.

20. Legal Constraints

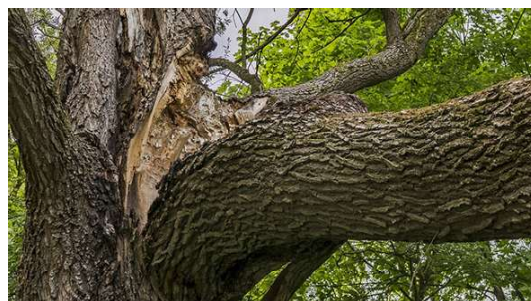
Some trees are protected by means of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or they are deemed to be within a conservation area. Widmer End Community Combined School & Pre-School does not have any trees on site with TPOs, nor are we in a conservation area.



21. Unsafe Trees - Things to look out for:

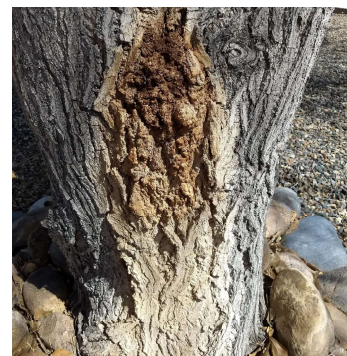
Damage or injury

- Splits or cracks in the trunk or branches.
- Branches that are broken, hanging or that has dropped.
- Sections of bark damaged or stripped to show the wood beneath (remember that some trees such as Plane or Eucalyptus naturally shed their bark).
- Soil movement around the base of the tree in strong winds.



Ill health, disease or infestation

- Sections showing signs of rotting.
- Growth of fungi on the bark, wood or around the base of the tree.
- Sections of infestations showing holes and damaged material.
- Foliage dying back or going brown for no apparent reason on evergreen trees, or out of season for deciduous trees.



Tree pests

Horse chestnut leaf miner

- This affects the photosynthetic capabilities of the trees and causes the tree to look unsightly. Rake up the leaves that have fallen and compost or dispose of them away from the affected tree or other horse chestnut trees.

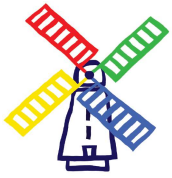


Oak Processionary Moth

- This is an insect that has the potential to cause serious damage, financially, sociologically and environmentally to Buckinghamshire. The caterpillars defoliate oak trees and can cause respiratory issues in humans and animals. If you think you have seen this insect please contact the tree team immediately and do not under any circumstances touch the caterpillars or nests on the trees.



Tree diseases



Acute Oak Decline

- This very aggressive bacterial disease affects our native oak trees. Symptoms include bleeding lesions on the stems of trees and results in the rapid death of the tree.



Bleeding Canker

- This is a bacterial disease caused by the genus of Phytophthora that affects our horse chestnut trees. It affects trees' ability to move water and nutrients around and can cause death to the whole or part of a tree. Not all trees affected will die as there are five different forms of the disease, each with their own level of aggressiveness.



Fungal diseases

Ganoderma spp.

- A root decaying fungi, visible by a fungal bracket at the base of the tree.



Kretzschmaria deusta

- A root rotting fungi, present as a black or grey patch at the base of a tree.



Inonotus hispidus

- A black fungal bracket affecting the trunks and branches of ash trees in hedgerows, causing a brittle fracture and tree failure.

