

ecco

BIRTHDAY PARTY
INFORMATION PACK



Parndon Wood Nature Reserve

Bring your children to this special forest on the outskirts of Harlow. A visit to Parndon Wood Nature Reserve provides the chance to learn and have fun in a safe and memorable environment all year round.

Birthdays at Parndon wood are a little different. Our focus is on facilitating awe and appreciation for the natural world. Children have an innate connection with the nature and Parndon Wood is a great place for them to express themselves.

Navigating around the woodland and interacting with nature brings a sense of satisfaction which is apart from the usual party frivolities. It's also great for burning off lots of energy! We have a select few activities we run because they work and we always get excellent feedback from children and parents alike.

The birthday room is equally as unique, with educational exhibits and craft materials that both children and adults can learn from & interact with. The space can be arranged and decorated at your leisure and we can help with themes.

Remember as Parndon Wood Nature Reserve is run by the charity Ecco (#1130579), all profits go straight back into maintaining & improving this beautiful woodland & the conservation centre. Supporting nature and the local community.

Please see below the basic information, feel free to call or message with any other queries.

Thank you

The Parndon Wood and Ecco team



Birthday party basics:

Activities:

We can provide a number of different activities of which the stage is our beautiful woodland. We get excellent feedback from parents and children alike which keep them coming back every year (*please book early*). **The basic activities are as follows :**

- **Treasure hunt in the woods (*favorite*)** - children burn of plenty of energy and enjoy being in the forest! The difficulty depends upon age group. Also the treasure can be as simple or ornate as you like, it's the journey around the forest which is the best bit! (let us know if you want a particular theme e.g Gruffalo, woodland wonderland, fairies, etc. £10 extra). **£20**
- **Bug hunting** - get to grips with the woodlands mini beasts. Collect bugs from our bug hotel and other secret places around the forest. Bring them back to the center and explore them using the magnifying glasses. **£20**
- **Nature craft activities** - collect items from the forest floor, bring them back to the center and have fun creating a natural masterpiece or a journey stick. We have a huge range of animal templates plus lots of stationary and fun materials to get creative with. **£30**
- **Making bird feeders** - find out what birds like to eat and make a bird feeder - take them home and feed the birds in your garden or local area. **£30**
- **Den building** - Learn different den building techniques and work together in small groups to build your own den. (Many of the den building parts are heavy we advise this activity for older groups of children). **£20**

We are developing activities all the time and are flexible if you perhaps have an idea or a different theme you would like to do. Please just give the centre an email or call.



Room hire:

We hire out the wildlife room for parties and events. There is easy access to toilet and handwashing facilities. And a café with hot and cold drinks, snacks and other food. The maximum number of children is 30 at any one time in the room.

Self catering - at this time we do not provide food catering for parties, (currently in development). So you can prepare and bring your own food or have it delivered directly to us.

We have a tea urn for hire - which includes tea, coffee, hot chocolate, milk etc, and we provide jugs of fruit squash.

We ask that you take your litter with you as we have limited facilities, thank you.

Costs and Payment:

Hire of the room (during normal opening hours):

- **£85** for two hours (week days)
- **£99** for two hours (weekend)
- **£45 / hour** for extra time (to be organised beforehand)

Availability for room hire outside of normal opening hours is priced on application.

You are allowed access to the room for setting up 30 minutes before and and extra 15 minutes at the end for clearing up.

Tea urn hire **£20**

Activities: **£20 - £30** per activity (see above)

Deposit: A deposit of **£40** will be required to secure the booking

We have a **visitors car park** at the entrance to the reserve that is free of charge.



I hope this gives you a good idea of the day you can have here. Please feel free to ask any other questions or discuss ideas by email or phone.

Methods of payment :

1. Bank transfer : Natwest account no. **87307863** sort code **60-10-05** to ECCO
(You will be invoiced prior to your visit)
2. You can also pay by card on the day (please come to the office 30 mins before the party to do this).

Cancellation:

Cancellation with less than 4 weeks written notice will be liable to pay 50% of the total cost of the visit as stated on the booking form. Cancellations made in writing with over 4 weeks notice will not incur a charge. If we decide to cancel on the day of the booking due to extreme weather, no charge will be levied.



Safety Statement

ECCO at Parndon Wood Nature Reserve endeavours to ensure measures are taken to minimise risks to visitors. In addition to a general Healthy and Safety Policy, we make full use of other safety arrangements, (for example, running daily trail checks) to identify hazards and assess risks to visitors. Each education activity has a specific risk assessment.

There is a full first aid kit located in the café.

The nearest hospital to Parndon Wood Nature Reserve is:
Princess Alexandra Hospital, Hamstel Road, Harlow, CM20 1QX

Hand washing facilities are available and groups must wash their hands after each activity.

Access Information and Medical Needs

Please contact us in advance if any group members have a specific medical condition we should be aware of. This will enable us to plan how to integrate them fully in any activities and consider emergency arrangements should they be required. Please ensure that suitable arrangements are made regarding extra assistance or supervision during your visit.

The majority of activities take place on reasonable level grassy or leafy ground. Parndon Wood Nature Reserve can be muddy throughout the year.

Supervision Requirements

Please remember that you are responsible for the members of your group at all times during your visit. Be aware that the Reserve is likely to be open to the public during your visit.

Always check the weather and wear suitable clothing. In wet weather paths get muddy and slippery so decent footwear is necessary.



Parndon Wood Nature Reserve Staff will at no time be responsible for groups. Visiting group leaders remain at all times, responsible for the safety and discipline of adults and children in their group throughout the duration of the visit.

A little history:

Parndon Wood has been recorded as a woodland for 900 years and thus is termed an “**ancient woodland**”. This designation of forest covers just 2% in the whole of the UK, so can see why its so special. Parndon Wood is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (**SSSI**) - due to its diversity and uniqueness of flora, fauna and value as an educational resource.

The reserve has proudly been the winner of the **Green Flag Award** for 10 consecutive years, representing excellent wildlife management, its recreation and educational value, and the dedication of our staff and volunteers. Parndon Wood is managed by ECCO Charity (#1130579) and proceeds from their shops directly fund Parndon Wood. We rely on volunteers for both the practical management of the forest and running of the visitor centre and events.

The woodland is primarily composed of a canopy of oak trees with hornbeam growing beneath. The hornbeam have traditionally been coppiced (for hundreds of years). This practice both brings in much needed revenue and maintains the high diversity of habitats within the woodland.

As this woodland is so special we ask all visitors to respect the designated paths and any signs which are there to protect the wildlife.



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Contact :

Nature Reserve : Parndon Wood Nature Reserve,
Parndon Wood Road,
CM19 4SF

Telephone : 01279 430 005

Ecco charity : St James Centre,
East Rd,
CM20 2SX

Telephone : 01279 444 244

Email: lazer.woolf@ecco.org.uk (Parndon Wood Manager)



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Birthday Party Booking form

Date of visit	
Contact Name	

No. of children	
Age group	
Activities	
Tea Urn hire (# of parents)	

Special requests or comments	
Date	