

Forest School Handbook

Whitestone Infant School 2024.

Contents

1. Declaration from adults involved with Forest School

Declaration from adults involved with Forest School

I declare and agree to the policies and procedures read in this Forest School Handbook. I will have full access to the handbook and refer to its

A great opportunity has presented itself at Whitestone Infant School in the form of Forest Schooling. Utilising our already generous outdoor space, children will have the opportunity to build their confidence, concentration, communication, curiosity and much more, all whilst investigating the outdoors.

Every learner will have access to the sessions that will run across all seasons. The sessions will be child-led and very much focus of the interests, intrigue and imaginations of the children. Children will have access to learning new skills such as tool work, den building and cooking, but will ultimately be able to express their own independence and develop their self-confidence by exploring and discovering things for themselves.

The Forest School ethos and principles

There are six key Principles which are fundamental to the Forest school ethos and are used to ensure good Forest School practice. They are as follows:

- **Principle 1** Forest school is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions, ideally in a woodland or natural environment. Planning, assessing, observations and adaptation are all key parts of the Forest School process as they feed back into the program and support the children's learning, ideas and development.

- Our Forest School sessions will take part weekly and will start with a hook for the children to explore and develop their understanding of the outdoor environment. Planning will then take place weekly and will be based on the children's ideas and interests.

- **Principle 2** Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
- Our Forest School sessions will take place in a small wooded area within our school grounds. As the site is new we will be working closely with the children to think about how we could improve/develop our area whilst maintaining and ensuring we have little ecological impact on the site itself. We aim to use natural resources within the site area that are sustainable and manageable.

- **Principle 3** Forest Schools offer learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

- Our Forest School will promote the understanding of risks in a safe and manageable way so children feel they are able and willing to take the appropriate risks when they want or need to.

- **Principle 4** Forest Schools aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confidence, independent and creative learners.

- Our Forest School will aim to promote the physical, social, emotion, cognitive, spiritual and linguistic skills of the child.

- **Principle 5** Forest School is run by qualified Forest School Practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.

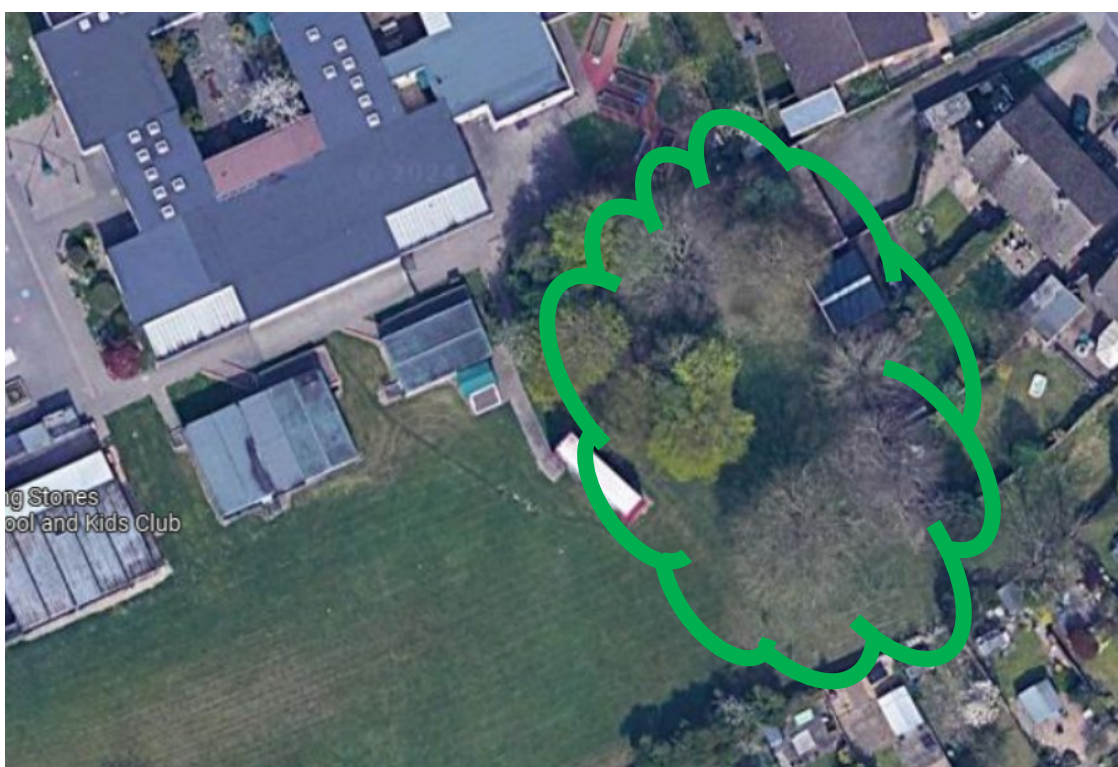
-Our Forest School will be run by Mrs Ford-Lings who is due to receive her Forest School qualification level 3 in Oct 2024.

- **Principle 6** Forest School uses a range of learner centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

-Our Forest School approach will consist of a play-based approach using ideas from the children to support planning and resourcing of the area. The Forest School Leader will ensure all planning/resources are ready and up to date and support the children in developing their ideas.

Where?

The Forest School area is situated at the far-left hand corner (school behind you) of the school's field and fully within the school grounds. It has a small wooded area with a variety of trees/shrubs for the children to explore and use. We aim for Forest Schools to take place on a weekly basis and in all weather conditions.



What?

Forest School allows children to be a part of a variety of outdoor activities and encourages children to learn about the natural environment as well as developing key social and emotional skills. Some of the activities the children will be a part of are:

- Den building
- Use and practice of a variety of knots
- Safe use of Fire lighting and cooking
- The identification of plants and animals
- Exploration of the natural world
- How to look after the natural world
- Use of sustainable resources within the Forest School
- Safe use of tools to support learning
- Different seasons/what happens in each season

- Developing key social and emotional skills; e.g. spiritual development, health and wellbeing
- Playing in the outdoors
- Taking risks in a safe way
- Building relationships/supporting each other
- Achieving manageable tasks individually and in a group

Rules of Forest School

All children participating are encouraged to be involved in the decisions about their environment and safety; however, there are a few rules that the children will be made aware of at the start of their Forest School experience. Behind each rule, there is a range of learning opportunities that will encourage children to engage with and understand these rules. They are:

- Look after your Forest School.
- Do not pick anything growing. *No pick no lick.*
- Do not put fingers or anything else in your mouth. *No pick no lick.*
- Carry sticks carefully. *If it's as big as you it takes 2 – If you can cover it with your thumb it takes 1.*
- Stay within the boundary. *We don't go over it, we don't go under it, we don't go through it.*

The Countryside Code:

The Countryside Code gives a few guidelines dedicated to helping us learn how to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside, which will be followed if the group is taking part in Forest School sessions off-site. There are 5 sections to the Countryside Code; these are:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Consider other people.

As an adult involved in Forest School, in whatever capacity, please model and uphold these guidelines and encourage others to do so also.

Section 2 - Policies & Procedures

Equality / Inclusion Policy

Whitestone Infant School's Equality Statement sets out our approach to meeting the general and specific requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty for our school as outlined by the Equality Act 2010.

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

For full details of our Equality and Diversity Policy please visit the school's website or ask for a copy at the school's main reception.

Safeguarding Policy:

We are committed to protecting all children from harm and promoting their welfare and expect all staff to share this commitment. This policy is one of a series in the school's integrated safeguarding portfolio which include:

- Staff behaviour policy (code of conduct)
- Safer recruitment policy
- Allegations against staff
- Complaints policy
- Pupil behaviour
- Online safety
- SEND policy.

We expect that everyone working within the school will create an environment in which all children and adults have an equal right to protection regardless of gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual identity or culture. We require all adults to maintain an open mind and an attitude of 'It could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned.

When The school's safeguarding arrangements are inspected by Ofsted under the judgements for leadership & management and also impact the judgement on the personal development, behaviour and welfare of children and learners.

This policy is available on the school website and all staff and volunteers are required to read it and confirm they have done so in writing before commencing work in school. For full details of our Equality and Diversity Policy please visit the school's website or ask for a copy at the school's main reception.

Health and Safety

The School Health and Safety policy will be followed at all times. A full copy is available. You need to know your responsibilities.

Insurance

All activities are covered by Schools fully comprehensive cover as long as there is an adequate risk assessment of the site/activity.

Lost / missing person

Whitestone Infant School take the health and safety of the children and adults extremely seriously. If in the unlikely event a child cannot be found, the Leader and supporting staff must take the following action:

- The Forest School Leader shall be informed immediately.
- Activity for the rest of the group shall be suspended in order that up to two members of staff, including the Forest School Leader if appropriate, may be released to conduct a search which shall last no more than five minutes.

- The remaining children will be given a low risk activity to complete, within the designated Forest School area by the remaining adults, being mindful not to increase any anxiety in the group.
- If, after the five-minute search, the child has not been located, the Forest School Leader will alert the main office via walkie talkie or school mobile and an additional search will take place within the school building and grounds.
- If after that search the child has not been located, the Forest School Leader will ring 999 and alert the police.
- Whitestone Infant's School office will contact the child's parents or adult's emergency contact and inform them of the situation.
- All information and details of the incident, including times and details of when the child was last seen, will be recorded on CPOMS.

Staff ratios and responsibilities

The running of all Forest School sessions will have a qualified Level 3 Forest School Lead present who will additionally hold a paediatric first aid qualification.

Ratios will be 15:1 children to adults. Any children who require additional support must have their personal requirements met whilst attending any forest school session.

During Forest School sessions we aim for at least two adults to remain in Forest Schools during the entire session. If for some reason an adult must leave the site, the Forest School Lead must remain responsible and in charge of the group. If this occurs the Forest School Lead must have a form of contact with the main reception of the school (walkie talkie or school mobile) and must also ensure they have a first aid kit/any other medical equipment e.g. inhalers/epi pens on site with them. The children may also be asked to play in a reduced size area so the lone adult can see and monitor all children until supporting staff member returns.

Weather

Forest Schools will run in all-weather conditions. Only when there is a public health warning will sessions be considered void. This will include high wind/storm/snow warnings, heatwave warnings and flood warnings.

Fire Drill

In the event of a fire the alarm in school, the alarm will ring continuously and the school will be evacuated. The children in Forest School will make an orderly line and join the rest of the school on the school playground. If they are a mix of classes, they will remain all together and class teachers and SLT will be informed of any child who is not present.

First Aid

A first aid kit will be transported by the Forest Schools lead to each individual session. The Forest Schools Lead must hold a in date paediatric first aid qualification, and ideally any supporting staff should be first aid trained.

All individual children's inhalers and epi pens will be brought to the Forest Schools site by an adult during that children session. These are to be stored in a separate

bag that can be zipped closed. All accidents which require medical attention must be recorded in agreement with the school's current accident/injury/near miss policy. In the case of a head bump, the children will be given a bumped head note to take home with them.

First Aid Kit List: The following first aid kit list is based on a combination of advice from the Health and Safety Executive, the National Child-minding Association, the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the Ambulance Service.

- 1 x handbook giving general guidance on first aid
- 1 x protective face shield for performing CPR
- 20 x individually wrapped sterile adhesive plasters of assorted types
- 2 x sterile eye pads
- 4 x triangular bandages individually wrapped
- 6 x medium wound dressing (12cm x 12cm) individually wrapped and sterile
- 2 x large wound dressing (18cm x 18cm) individually wrapped and sterile
- 5 x low-adherent (Melolin) dressings (5cm x 5cm)
- 5 x low-adherent (Melolin) dressings (10cm x 10cm)
- 1 x roll of hypo-allergic tape (Micro-pore)
- 3 x pairs of disposable gloves
- 1 x scissors with rounded edge
- 10 x packs of 5 sterile gauze swabs (5cm x 5cm)
- 1 x finger bandage and applicator
- 1 x litre of sterile water

Risk management/assessment and risk-benefit assessment

A daily site risk assessment will be carried out by the Forest Schools Leader and recorded on the template provided.

All site risk assessments will be logged and kept for future reference as to record any reoccurring issues or concerns. The Forest Schools lead will be responsible to report issues and concerns to the relevant member of staff (e.g. Head, site manager, school office etc).

Tools

The use of all tools and other Forest School related equipment, will be used under adult supervision and in accordance to the individual tools Risk Assessment. At the beginning of any session involving tools, an appropriate 'Tool Talk' will take place to remind the children of how to safely use each tool.

Welfare – clothing, PPE, toileting, food and drink

The children will be provided with a full wet suit to take part in Forest Schools, but we kindly ask parents to bring wellingtons, hat, scarf, gloves and a coat if needed to ensure that Forest Schools is an enjoyable experience. We also ask on hotter days that the children bring hats and sun cream if needed, water will be supplied by school.

Any sessions that will involve food/cooking, will be provided by the school. Parents will be given at least a week's notice if any additional food or resources need to be provided from home.

All adults that will be involved in a Forest Schools session will be given adequate notice (at least 24hrs) in order to provide their own weather appropriate clothing.

All children will be encouraged to go to the toilet before the session begins, any child needing the toilet during a session will be taken by the additional member of staff supporting the session. The Forest Schools lead must remain on the Forest Schools site for the duration of the session.

Photography/social media

All staff are aware of children who are not allowed photos taken/used in specific ways. See home/school agreement forms for specific children if unsure.

Visitors

The Forest School site is a secure area within the School grounds and is private land. There should not be any visitors to the school grounds unless arranged by prior appointment. In the case of trespassers, the Forest School Lead will address the issue and report to the Head teacher. All visitors must report to the School Reception before entering school. This is to ensure that all visitors are signed in and have been allocated a badge. The office staff will then take any visitors to the appropriate staff members.

Pre-session checklist

A register for each session will be done in the school building prior to going over to the Forest School site. A paper register will be taken to the site and kept with the Forest School lead.

A Pre-Session checklist will be completed before each session, if two or more groups are attending sessions in the same day, a pre-session checklist will be done individual for each group (see template below). This checklist will also include a boundary check to ensure the site is safe and secure.

Accident and emergency

-All Accidents

Details of all accidents will be recorded in the accident book, which will be kept with the First Aid Kit in the emergency rucksack.

The information should include:

- Type of accident
- Where it happened
- Time and date of the accident
- Injured person's name, address and age
- Type of injury
- Any treatment given

- Name, signature and address of person reporting the accident

-Serious Accidents

Serious accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

A full report must be sent within ten working days on form 2508 (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 RIDDOR)

Such accidents include those resulting in

- Death
- Bone fractures, except to finger, toes and thumbs
- Dislocation of shoulder, hip, knee or spine
- Loss of sight or penetrating eye injury
- An employee being absent from work for more than three days

Accidents to non-employees, including children, are reportable if the accident arose out of, or in connection with, the work activity and the person was taken from the scene of the accident to hospital for treatment.

Parents should be informed as soon as possible.

-Other Incidents and Near Misses

Details of other incidents that occur during Forest School should be recorded on paper and given to Team Leader.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All staff members will be familiar with

- The emergency equipment and location
- Details of the exact location to give to the emergency services

In case of emergency, dial 999 or 112. Be ready to give your name, site details, and description of incident.

Directions to: Whitestone Infant School

Post Code: CV11 4SQ

OS Grid Ref: 52 30'12" N, 001 26'24" W

What 3 Words: slick.busy.pitch

Helicopter landing area: WIS School Field

Nearest A&E Hospital: George Elliot, College St, Nuneaton CV10 7DJ

Nearest Defib and code: WIS School Main Reception. (available 6am-6pm)

Emergency Equipment

Forest School leader will be responsible for ensuring that the Emergency Rucksack is properly equipped.

It should include:

- First Aid Kit
- Accident Book
- Fire Extinguisher
- Emergency Bivvy-bag
- Water
- Wet Wipes
- Spare clothes
- Newspaper
- Tissue
- Mobile Phones
- Details of children's medical information and their emergency contact numbers, which will be in the file.

Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) and Sustainable Management Plan

There are two main access points to the Forest School area when you have exited the main building, through the raised bed garden and past the library bus via the main school field. On site there are established pathways from both the field and garden area. An abundance of trees creates the well-established Spiny area, and large trees appear around the whole site. A clear and defined wild flower area was created in 2023, and will be monitored and conserved during Forest School sessions.

Initial Review

Forest School activities will take place every week during the course of the year with around 30 children and at least 2 adults using the area. The use of fire on site will be limited to the fire pit area as well as the use of any cooking equipment. There is ample dead wood within school to provide fire wood for sessions without having any negative impact on wildlife. The main impact of the sessions will be trampling and disturbance to wildlife.

The only prevalent ground species is woodland grasses. Daisies, crocuses, daffodils and buttercups are present on the field during spring as well as dandelions. For the sessions taking place in November and December to March, there will be no trampling threat, however during spring and summer extra caution will be needed. There is active management by the school, caretaker and SLT in certain areas and close contact is important to ensure that relationships as well as Health and Safety considerations are adhered to.

The most established part of the site is the Spiny area which includes a number of different trees, shrubs, and some perennials. This area also houses a bug hotel, hedgehog house and several bird houses. Careful monitoring and consideration will be taken when using this area, there is a distinct pathway, however, it will be up to the discretion of the adults present as to the purposeful play that happens away from the pathways.

As of spring 2024, there are no fauna sets or nests living on site. The likely impacts of the sessions will not impact significantly on any natural habitats. The school site is not under any kind of special protection or status such as SSSI or NNR and no trees have tree preservation orders.

Impacts of programme and mitigation measures

Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures
Trampling impact to ground flora	Use pathways already established in woodland, especially during spring. Identify any vulnerable areas and avoid them.
Disturbance/habitat destruction of flora and fauna	Make participants aware of the environment they are in and how to treat it in terms of handling plants and animals and using natural resources.
Overuse of fire area/shelter area	If ground is becoming trampled/ compacted move these to other areas. If any further Forest School sessions take place rotate the fire circle and shelter locations.
Use of natural materials for activities	Only what is required will be taken where there is abundance of that resource.

Possible Positive Impacts

Further establishing footpaths and improved access – The footpaths have become trampled in places making the area harder to use as they get very slippery. The Forest School leader will ensure that alternative access paths are identified and ensure there are no unacceptable health and safety risks.

Litter picking – Removing litter from areas will take away a threat to wildlife as well as making the school more aesthetically attractive.

Improved habitats – Forest School sessions might involve positive habitat effects e.g. planting, maintenance, clearing dead areas etc.

Three-year sustainable woodland management plan for the Forest School area based on our ecological impact assessment

Information collated for the environmental impact assessment gives a clear indication of some management activities which could enhance the Forest school

area and contribute to its long-term sustainability. Below is a simple management plan for the next 3 years with suggested activities and management methods. The time scale of the management plan commences in September 2024 – during the Forests School sessions onsite.

Factor	Location	Current state	Target state	Any preventative measures	Monitoring	Management required	Timescale
Access	Two access points marked on the	Two access point paths become very muddy in winter and overgrown	To make access paths useable all year round	To rotate use of entrance paths	Review each term with members of the	Edge paths with wood from woodland and lay bark. Prune vegetation	Year 1 – prune vegetation and begin to create path edging using wood from the woodland
Activity	area map	in the summer. Internal paths are well established and in good condition			Date SLT and FS team.	annually – this will be carried out by SLT and FS groups.	Year 2 – prune vegetation and finish path edging. Year 3 – prune vegetation and lay bark on fire pit. Complete any maintenance of path edging.
Deadwood	Throughout site	There is some wood on the site floor as well as standing deadwood.	Utilize deadwood for habitat piles	N/A	Monitor and add to habitat piles annually	Collect deadwood and create habitat piles	Year 1 - Collect deadwood and create piles Year 2 & 3 – Monitor piles and add to them, create new piles if appropriate

Site Risk Assessment:

Emergency Telephone Numbers:

Main School Office number: [024 7634](tel:02476347813)

[7813](tel:02476347813)

Emergency: 999 or 112

Location of Site

Whitestone Infant School

Magyar Crescent,

Nuneaton

CV11 4SQ

Location		School / Visiting Group	
Responsible staff		Possible Visitors to site	
Risk Assessment written by		Risk Assessment Checked/Approved by	
Position			
Signature			
Person (s) responsible on site for 1st Aid.	Cert. type		Date of Cert.

Generic Site Risk Assessment

The Hazard	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Control	Who will carry out control measure.	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Weather	Medium	Suitable clothing and footwear to be worn at all times, weather warnings to be monitored and adhered to.	FS Lead, SLT.	Low
Fallen tree branches Tripping, slips, uneven ground grazes, falls, twisted ankles etc.	Low	Restricted areas where there are no trip hazards. Children and adults to wear safe, suitable footwear.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low

Animal Faeces (bird and small mammal).	Medium	To be identified during daily site sweep. Areas to be avoided where possible. Adults to remove any hazard where possible.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low
Litter	Low	To be identified during daily site sweep. Areas to be avoided where possible. Adults to remove any hazard where possible.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low
Brambles, nettles, thorns.	Low	Children to wear long sleeved tops and trousers. Make children aware of hazards, clear away any hazards where possible.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low
Fungi, poisonous plants, berries.	Medium	Children and adults aware of the Forest School rules about not picking any plants or flowers. Handwashing routine before eating or drinking and on return to school. Familiarity with poisonous species.	FS Lead, Supervising adults.	Low
Branches and twigs at eye level	low	To be identified during daily site sweep. Areas to be avoided where possible. Adults to remove any hazard where possible. Children to be made aware of any new hazards.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low
Climbing big trees.	low	Weather check in line with weather risk assessment below. Safety check of structure to be used for climbing – ensure it is not wet and slippery and is not rotten. All climbing activities to be closely supervised Safe climbing to be demonstrated or guided Visual assessment for any animal life Participants will not climb wearing loose clothing, or articles that could become entangled in the branches	FS Leader to select a safe tree for climbing	Low
Insect bites and stings.	Medium	Teaching children how to behave around bees and wasps to lower risk of being stung.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low
Stray animals and dead animals' bodies (e.g.	Low	To be identified during daily site sweep. Areas to be avoided where possible. Adults to remove any hazard where	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low

mice and birds) on site.		possible.		
Allergies to pollen, nuts, materials etc.	Medium	All adults aware of any first aid and medical needs. Specific inhalers and epi pens etc to be on site with child. Children to be aware of the Forest school rules about not picking any plants.	FS Lead, Site Manager, SLT, Supervising adults.	Medium
Tool use.	Medium	Clear rules about boundaries and staying with an adult. All tool work will be under adult supervision. All tools will be accounted for before and after session. High adult: child ratio	FS Lead	Medium
Moving and handling heavy objects.	Low	Children shown how to safely move objects, and clear rules and boundaries established with regards to the movement of any objects. Children reminded of FS rules before each session.	FS Lead, Supervising adults	Low
Food choking.	Low	FS Lead to be first aid trained, communication to main office to be accessible at all times (i.e. walkie talkie/school mobile).	FS Lead, SLT, Supervising adults.	Low
Food cooking.	Medium	Hand washing routines followed. All food hygiene policies adhered to. Adult supervision at all times.	FS Lead	Low
Fire lighting.	High	Only the FS Lead to lite fire, supporting adults to supervise. Fires to only be lit in suitable weather conditions.	FS Lead	Medium
Lit fire.	High	<p>Clear rules about boundaries set and explained before the lighting of every fire. Adult to supervise lit fire at all times.</p> <p>Fire will be in a soil pit surrounded by stones to prevent the fire escaping the area. Fire area will be away from buildings.</p> <p>The fire will not be under overhanging trees which may catch alight.</p> <p>A good supply of water will be available to put out flames and dampen heat. A fire blanket will be available.</p> <p>Embers will be dampened off with water</p>	FS Lead, Supervising adults.	Medium

		<p>and cooled and spread around with a spade</p> <p>The position of the fire will be away from buildings and wind direction will be constantly assessed.</p> <p>Children advised to move safely out of smoke direction.</p> <p>No walking between the seats and fire allowed. When at the fire everyone to adopt the safe sitting pose - on one knee to remain stable.</p>		
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“The more risks you allow children to take, the better they learn to take care of themselves”

Roald Dahl, My Year.

Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment (Master Template)

Which activity is this assessment for?	
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:	

The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Control					

Low Risk(Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm i.e. scratch or bruise)

Medium Risk(Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury i.e. broken bone or other injury which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)

High Risk(something which may result in extensive damage, multiple or major injuries or death)

Date	Comments / additions to safety information given to group.	Controls	Signed

Daily/Session safety check record

All Daily/Session safety checks should be recorded prior to the session taking place. Using the template provided, any concerns or actions for the following areas must be recorded:

- Fallen branches
- Low branches
- Brambles/Nettles
- Slippery areas
- Weather effects
- Protruding thorns
- Tool area
- Base camp area
- Animals/faeces

- Other hazards identified
- Action taken

Risk Management of Tools and Equipment used at Forest School

All the tools are counted in and out and are kept in suitable containers in the designated area. Children will never be allowed to help themselves.

The tools are given out for a purpose and all the adults should model for the children how to use them correctly and safely. A 'Tool Talk' will happen before each session that involves any tool work.

General rules for tool use:

- Children are allowed to use the tools under the supervision of the Forest School leader.
- Children will always sit down when they will use knives.
- Ensure that knives and other bladed tools are in protective guards and sheaths when are not used.
- When using any tool, ensure nobody is within two arm's length from you.
- Children are not allowed to help themselves to the tools.
- Always return tools to their sheath or guard and then to the tool box after use.
- Tools must only be used in the designated tool area.
- Never walk around with tools.
- Ensure safe storage for all the tools.



Name: **Bowsaw**

Annotate: Handle, blade, blade clip

Check: Blade is secure and sharp

PPE – Glove on non-working hand. Close fitting glove on working hand if required. Long trousers (preferably overtrousers / overalls), working boots.

Handling: Carry at your side with blade facing down, pass using the handle

Purpose: Used for cutting green and dead wood (blades differ for each type) up to a size determined by the limitations of the handle size

Use: Use stepped cuts for standing live wood. Secure wood lengths before sawing. Use three backward cuts (with hand through blade) to start the cut and then use saw on both push and pull action.

Finish: Clean the cutting edge after use, Clip blade guard on before storing in tool bag

Maintain: When blade gets blunt replace with a new one. Replace damaged or lost blade guards



Name:
different

Billhook (many
styles available)

Annotate:

Handle, cutting edge.

Check: Handle is not loose.

PPE – Glove on non-working hand, long trousers (preferably over trousers/ overalls), steel toe cap boots

Handling: Carry at your side with the cutting edge facing down. Pass using handle

Purpose: Used for splitting green wood, stripping poles of side branches, hedge-laying, coppicing.

Use: Log to be split is placed on secure surface, billhook is placed on top and hit with a wooden mallet. For other uses refer to BTCV manual!

Finish: Clean the blade after use, wrap blade before storing in tool bag.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone

The Billhook will be strictly only used by the Forest School Lead.

Name: **Penknife** (Sheath, locking or non-locking types)

Annotate: Handle, blade, hinge (folding types), lock

Check: Blade secure, hinge secure, locking device functions

PPE – Glove on non-working hand, long trousers, (preferably over trousers/ overalls) working boots.

Handling: Close or sheath the knife when not in use. Pass using handle

Purpose: Used for cutting, shaping, de-barking and carving

Use: Sit or stand comfortably and securely. Lock elbows in to body and work the blade moving away from you. Check you have enough personal space to work safely.

Finish: Clean the blade after use, close or sheath blade before storing in tool bag.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone



Name: **Mallet** (wooden, rubber)

Annotate: Handle, head,

Check: Head secure, no damage to handle, striking end in good condition.

PPE – Glove on non-working hand, working boots.

Handling: To be carried by FS leader along with other tools which are in the locked box.

Purpose: To knock wooden pieces together, or to drive dowels, chisels and to apply pressure on joints

Use: Sit or stand comfortably and securely. Check you have enough personal space to work safely.

Finish: Check for any damage before storing in tool bag.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean.

Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?	Use of fire (for heat, cooking, creating materials i.e. charcoal)
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Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Safe Practice, fire safety and fire awareness			
		Science, understanding of the world, DT skills			
		Cooking skills			
		Promoting determination and patience			
		Gross and fine motor skills.			
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Burns and scalds. Fires spreading	Children and adults. Wildlife, environment.	Minor burns and scalds to severe burns and scalds.	High	FS Lead	Medium
Control	<p>FS Lead has been trained in the case of fire and should follow procedures from their FS training. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of a raised, contained fire in a fire pit, with clear boundary in place. • Rules around safely moving and kneeling close to the fire. Children must not cross fire when it is lit. When directly next to the fire, adults and children must be knelt on one knee and not cross the boundary of the fire pit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 children maximum directly around lit fire. • Heat resistant gloves worn by anybody tending to the fire. Gloves must be worn when putting anything in or on the fire. Once an object is in or on the fire, children are not able to take it back from the fire. • Water buckets, 20L of water to be within 5metres of lit fire. Running water to be available from main school building and all adults to be aware of where the nearest tap is (Outdoor class 5 door). • Fire Blankets • First Aid Kit including Burn Gels. <p>As part of the FS session participants are encouraged to take part in fire maintenance and cooking with fire. It is about safe practice and habits being in place. On occasions a minor burn or scald may occur at FS. All adults must ensure that they follow these procedures and model how to behaviour safely with fire.</p> <p>When prevailing weather conditions and the site are deemed unsuitable the Forest School Leader may decide not to have a fire. This includes extremely dry periods where ground conditions may be susceptible to the spread of fire. This may also include exposed sites where the wind causes the fire to not be contained within the fire pit.</p> <p>At the end of the session the FS Leader must fully extinguish the fire and the ground (this may be done with the participants as part of the educational experience).</p>				

Low Risk(Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm i.e. scratch or bruise)

Medium Risk(Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury i.e. broken bone or other injury which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)

High Risk(something which may result in extensive damage, multiple or major injuries or death)

Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Den building			
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Team work/cooperation			
		Determination and patience.			
		Gross and fine motor skills.			
		Negotiate, resolve, problem solve, manage and logic skills.			
		Interact with natural elements.			
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Objects falling/collapsing. Trips, falls, slips. Carrying equipment/large objects.	Children and adults	Injury	Low	FS Lead and supervising adults.	Low
Control	<p>Consideration of siting of natural dens is encouraged prior to a den building session. Discussion of types of wood is used so that participants avoid dead wood. Participants should test the integrity of the den as they build it. They should check for stability and made necessary adjustments to avoid the den collapsing whilst they are in it.</p> <p>Where dens are left in place these should be checked by participants every session to make any necessary adjustments. At the end of a Forest School project all dens should be dismantled and cleared away.</p>				

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Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Tree Climbing			
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Gross motor skills			
		Negotiate, resolve, problem solve, manage and logic skills.			
		Interact with natural elements.			
		Confidence building			
		Stimulates the senses			
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Climbing trees	Child	Injury Falls	Low	FS Lead and Supervising adults.	Low
Control	<p>Participants and FS leaders will discuss safely climbing a tree and encouraged to consider having three points in contact with the tree at any one time.</p> <p>They must also make decisions about the height that they climb the tree, which is age/ability specific. The FS leader will train participants in carrying out dynamic risk assessments of specific trees, considered along with recent weather conditions. The presence of decaying branches on a tree should make this unsuitable as a climbing tree. Some trees will be more suitable for climbing than others. When climbing a tree, participants should also be aware of others around them and avoid several people climbing the same tree. Participants are encouraged to leave the tree safely and avoid rushing.</p> <p>Where incidents occur around injuries associated with falls from tree we will follow accident procedures with in the FS Handbook. As part of reflection activities, participants will be encouraged to think about their feelings associated with tree climbing. Questions like: how high do you think the tree can support your weight? At what height do you have a sense of fear or satisfaction?</p>				

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Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this	Activities involving string and ropes
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assessment for?					
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Dexterity, fine motor skills			
		Construction, Gross motor skills			
		Negotiate, resolve, problem solve, manage and logic skills			
		Determination and patience			
		Strength, balance, coordination.			
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Ropes, strings, twine.	Children and adults	Strangulation. Entanglement Friction burns	Medium	FS lead and supervising adults.	Low
Control	<p>Rope and twine are predominantly used at Forest School to put up shelters. These are sometimes placed in the way of paths and at a height where they may be in the way for participants.</p> <p>Children on FS projects are encouraged to carry out their own risk assessments in order to keep themselves safe. They can also work with their fellow participants to discuss and raise issues around incorrect siting of ropes. This is part of their learning process.</p> <p>Twine is purchased regularly so that old and rotting twine can be replaced in areas. Where rope is used to make swings the FS Leader should check the ropes condition for fraying and signs of deterioration, prior to its use as a rope swing.</p> <p>Children are taught how to erect shelters and the appropriate knots that can be used. They are encouraged to think about the siting of shelters and considering how other people move around the site.</p> <p>FS Leader, SLT and site manager are responsible for keeping the site in a usable state and encouraging the discussion when and if issues arise. On an annual basis during tool check, old rope to be removed from tarps. FS leader to encourage the testing of swings and consideration of siting of the swing in relation to size of drop.</p>				

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