

Risk Assessment - SITE

Company name: Dinky Donkeys Forest School

Assessment carried out by: Katie Freeman

Date assessment was carried out: 29/01/2024

Review Risk Assessment : January 2025

Hazards	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Action Taken (Mitigation)	Risk Benefit	Seasonality
Boundary	Losing a child	Low	High	Walk the boundary with the children on the first session. Maintain boundaries so they are all intact. The wooded area is bordered by a fence and gates. It is on private land with no public right of way.	Children feel safe in the area, building self confidence. Adults feel safe letting the children roam the woodland.	All seasons
Lost Child	Injury, abduction	Low	High	Show children the boundaries on first session. The wooded area is bordered by a fence and gates. It is on private land with no public right of way.	Children are given responsibility to stay within the boundaries of a large outdoor space - building self confidence	All seasons
Gateways	Trapped Fingers	Low	Low	Adult to open / close gate	Keeps children in the area and larger animals out	All seasons
Uneven Ground	Trips, Falls, Grazes	Medium	Low	Explain to children about uneven ground at the beginning of each session.	Allows children to roam in a natural woodland	All seasons
Woodland Debris, Tree Stumps	Trips, Falls, Grazes	Medium	Low	Explain to children about the woodland floor at the beginning of each session.	Allows children to roam in a natural woodland	All seasons

Electricity plugs	Electric shock	Low	Medium - High	Explain to children not to touch. Secure plastic waterproof covers if not in use. Label sockets to warn children. Cover up sockets so not visible.	Children can use electrical equipment in the woods such as pyro pen. Allows festoon lights to be turned on in darker weather.	All seasons
Electric Fence	Electric shock	Low	High	Remove electric fence battery. Explain to children they need to stay within the forest school boundaries as some of the fencing further away is electric.	Responsibility to stay within the boundaries.	All seasons
Metal fence	Cut	Low	Medium	Tell children about the old metal fence, and ask them to stay away from it.	Giving children the responsibility. Marking out the boundary. Allowing fauna to access the woodland.	All seasons
Tree Branches Falling	Cut, knock	Low	Medium - high	Don't go in the woods in high winds. Annual tree surgeon survey	Aware of environment Learning about a tree's life cycle.	All seasons
Festoon lights	Shock, trip	Low	Low	Keep lights up high, out of reach	Light when it is getting dark	All seasons

Decking	Slip, fall	Low	Low	Explain to pupils that the wood can be slippery, especially when wet.	Learning what happens to wood in different weathers. Learning different uses for wood. Dry area to sit as a group	All seasons
Hot Water Dispenser	Burns	Low	Medium - High	Do not have out during a forest school session. Keep out of reach of children, make sure the button for dispensing hot water is locked when not in use.	People get hot drinks	All seasons
Ditch	Falls, cuts, cold, drowning	Low	Low (drowning - high)	Explain to children on the first day where the ditch is. Grow hedgerow alongside ditch	Children learn why we need ditches (helping with land irrigation). Ditches / water attract wildlife that the children can observe. Help with the biodiversity in woodland	Worse in Spring, Winter and Autumn when it rains more.
Swings	Falls, Rope burn, bumps	Medium	Low - medium	Explain to children on the first day about the hazards of each swing	Self Confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development decision making	All seasons
Green rubber swing	Bump	Low	Low	Explain to children and adults not to let this swing swing on its own as it has a hard bit underneath that could hit someone.	Responsibility given to the child to use the swing appropriately. Building self confidence	All seasons

Tree House	Falls	Low	High	<p>Explain tree house is out of bounds in intro chat</p> <p>Cover ladder so children are unable to climb it.</p>	<p>Interesting to look out into the woodland from a higher point.</p> <p>Fun to play in.</p>	All seasons
Tree climbing	Falls/Cuts	Low / Medium	High	<p>Tree climbing only allowed to adult head height, or 1.5metres off the ground.</p> <p>Mark trees that children are allowed to climb.</p> <p>Always have 3 limbs on a tree.</p> <p>Test before you climb, (children are taught basic risk assessment) - tree structure is safe, limbs of tree are strong, obstructions on the woodland floor, surface of trunk and branches</p>	<p>Self confidence</p> <p>Focus</p> <p>Concentration</p> <p>Motor skills development</p> <p>Hand eye coordination</p> <p>Problem solving and decision making</p>	All seasons
Play Tyres	Fall, bump, graze	Low	Low	<p>Explain to children on the first day about the hazards of falling off the tyres.</p> <p>Wood chip around tyres</p>	<p>Self confidence</p> <p>Focus</p> <p>Concentration</p> <p>Motor skills development</p> <p>Hand eye coordination</p> <p>Problem solving and decision making</p>	All year
Log Stepping Stones	Slip, fall, grazes	Low	Low-Medium	<p>Explain to children that the wood can be slippery, especially when wet. Tell them not to rush around them</p>	<p>Self confidence</p> <p>Focus</p> <p>Concentration</p> <p>Motor skills development</p> <p>Problem solving and decision making</p>	All seasons

Water Play Table	Bumps on edge of wooden frame. Wet / cold from water. Slip on wet logs	Low	Low	Explain to children not to run, or push each other near the frame. Wear suitable clothes if they are going to get very wet	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making	All seasons
Mud Kitchen	Bumps on edge of wooden frame. Bumps from pans	Low	Low	Explain to children not to run, or push each other near the frame, and use kitchen utensils sensibly	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making	All seasons
Animal faeces	Infection, poisoning, bacteria	Low	Medium	Don't allow dogs in the woodland. Ask children to tell me if they find a fences	Faeces identification	All seasons
Horses / Donkeys	Kick, bite, allergies, spread disease	Low	Medium - high	Keep the animals behind the fence. Ask children not to touch them unless with an adult. Ask children not to feed them. Put up animal caution signs. Hand washing	Learning about larger animals Confidence building Animals in natural habitat, grazing	All year
Tortoises	Bite, spread disease	Low	Low	Show children the tortoises in small groups Wash hands Don't pick up Adult supervision	Learning about fauna Focus, concentration	Spring, summer, autumn

Chickens	Pecking, Allergies, Disease	Low	Low- High	Washing Hands, Medication	Interaction / observation with animals. Collecting eggs Learning about fauna	All seasons
Mushrooms	Poisoning, allergy	Low	Medium	Ask children to show me if they find a mushroom	Learning how to identify Flora Biodiversity in woodland. Food for fauna	Autumn
Black Thorn	Cut, splinter, allergy, Poison (seeds inside the flesh of berries)	Low	Low	Teach children what plant looks like	Learning how to identify Flora Food for fauna	Autumn (berries)
Holly	Cuts	Low	Low	Teach children what plant looks like	Learning how to identify Flora	All seasons
Lords and Ladies	Poisoning, allergy	Low	Low - medium	Show children the plant so they can identify it. Explain that the red berries are the most poisonous part. Wear gloves is handling it. Wash hands if touched without gloves	Learning how to identify Flora Food for birds	Spring / Summer
Nettles	Sting	Medium	Low	Teach children what a stinging nettle looks like	Learning how to identify Flora	Spring, summer, autumn
Brambles	Cut, splinter from thorn	Low - Medium	Low	Show children where the brambles are, explain they have thorns	Learning the lay out of the woodland Learning how to identify Flora	All seasons

Risk Assessment - TOOLS

Company name: Dinky Donkeys Forest School

Assessment carried out by: Katie Freeman

Date assessment was carried out: 29/01/2024

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Hazards	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Action Taken (Mitigation)	Risk Benefit	Seasonality
Ropes	Friction burns, strangulation, rope damage	Low - medium	Low - High	Children are given a full safety talk. They are told they are not allowed to tie each other up. Ropes are stored carefully and kept dry.	Children can learn how to tie knots, make dens, build barriers ect. Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision makin	All seasons
Axe	Cutting injury during storage	Low	Medium	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock. Adult only to have access to storage. Blades to be securely wrapped.	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons
Axe	Cutting or amputation injury during use as a splitting tool	Low	Medium - High	Children are given full demonstration and instruction in the safe use of the tool. Always work in 'safe working position' *. Tools to be kept in good working order. No gloves to be worn. Adult supervision at 1:1. Adults to be informed of any difficulty whilst working. All axes to be returned to safe storage at the end of the working session.	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making	All seasons
Axe	Injury caused by broken or	Medium	Medium - High	Axe to be examined for damage before and after use. Damaged tool	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons

	damaged tool			to be repaired or replaced		
Mallet	Injury during storage	Low	Low	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock., Adult only to have access to storage.	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons
Mallet	Injury while using the tool	Medium	Medium - High	Ensure all participants understand that the mallet is only used for purpose specified, with supervision from an adult (1:1). If working with a partner, maintain good communication and only hit workpiece when both are ready	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Mallet	Injury caused by broken or damaged tool	Low	Medium	Mallet to be examined for damage before and after use. Damaged tool to be repaired or replaced	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons
Peeler	Injury during storage	Low	Low	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock., Adult only to have access to storage.	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons
Peeler	Injury while using the tool	Medium	Medium - High	Peelers to be used only whilst seated and at a safe distance from others. Direction of work should be away from the body and whilst seated with elbows on knees or whilst kneeling behind a block and working onto it. Adult supervision at 1:3	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Peeler	Injury caused by broken or damaged tool	Low	Medium	Peller to be examined for damage before and after use. Damaged tool to be repaired or replaced	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons
Secateurs	Injury during storage	Low	Low	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock., Adult only to have	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons

				access to storage.		
Secateurs	Injury while using the tool	Medium	Medium - High	Always hold by handles. Ensure that others do not place hands near to cutting edges whilst holding branches for cutting. Wear glove on bracing hand. Only attempt to cut wood up to 1 centimetre diameter (dependent on cutting power of tool and of user) If assisting younger children, ensure whole body is kept away from blades and from closing of tool handles. Adult supervision at 1:1	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Secateurs	Injury caused by broken or damaged tool	Low	Medium	Secateurs to be examined for damage before and after use. Damaged tool to be repaired or replaced	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons
Bowsaw	Injury during storage	Low	Low	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock., Adult only to have access to storage.	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons
Bowsaw	Injury while using the tool	Medium	Medium - High	Children briefed with safe working use of Bowsaw * and a demonstration given by a responsible adult. Adult to monitor and advise on use of saw, at a ratio of 1:1. After use, blade guard to be put back on blade and saw put back in pre-arranged safe place. Glove must be worn on bracing hand at all times	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Bowsaw	Injury caused by broken or damaged tool	Low	Medium	Bowsaw to be examined for damage before and after use. Damaged tool to be repaired or	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons

				replaced		
Hammer	Injury during storage	Low	Low	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock., Adult only to have access to storage.	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons
Hammer	Injury while using the tool	Medium	Medium - High	Do not wear gloves whilst using tool. If working with a partner to steady the wood, maintain good communication and only hit work piece when both are ready. Where possible, secure nail in peg for initial driving in of nail to avoid injury to fingers. Ensure safe space around users. Adult supervision at 1:1	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Hammer	Injury caused by broken or damaged tool	Low	Medium	Hammer to be examined for damage before and after use. Damaged tool to be repaired or replaced	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons

*Safe working position for splitting wood

Person 1 to hold axe by the handle and kneeling on one knee

Tool held in position on greenwood piece which should be sitting firmly on work stump

Person 1 determines when they are ready by verbal communication with person

Person 2 using mallet to split the greenwood to communicate with person 1, then firmly hit centre of the back of tool blade in order to split wood

Do not hold the wood piece; this is held in position by the weight of the axe

* Saw working position for Bowsaw

Student to hold handle of saw (young children hold with both hands)

Free hand passed through bow over back of blade to hold wood if this is comfortable

Wood to be supported by 2 log supports and wood to be braced by other participants. (Alternatively, a saw horse may be used)

Body to be positioned so that saw is drawn freely to the side of the body

Students asked to place saw safely down before retrieving cut section of wood

Adult to hold other end of the saw during working if group is young or inexperienced

Participants advised to tie back dangling clothing or hair

Glove must be worn on bracing hand

Risk Assessment - FIRE

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Assessment carried out by: Katie Freeman

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Hazards	Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Action Taken (Mitigation)	Risk Benefit	Seasonality
Fire Steel	Injury during storage	Low	Low	Tools to be stored securely in a box with padlock., Adult only to have access to storage.	Tools are kept in one place for easy access to adults	All seasons
Fire Steel	Injury while using the tool	Medium	Medium - High	Place tinder on non-flammable surface, or securely on top of fire stack if lighting fire directly. Striking action should be away from the body and upwind of tinder to prevent burns from lighted tinder. Only use tinder as approved by group leader. Leaders and volunteers should leave children to create sparks on their own. Adult only demonstrates. For some children, it may be advised to: 1:1 trained person and child. Cotton wool on non-flammable surface secured by stick. Tinder added to fire by adult or picked up between 2 sticks and placed onto the fire if directed.	Self confidence Focus Concentration Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Fire Steel	Injury caused by broken or damaged tool	Low	Medium	Fire Steel to be examined for damage before/after use. Damaged tool to be repaired or replaced	Tools are always ready to use and in safe working order	All seasons

Fire	<p>Touching the fire, embers or hot sticks.</p> <p>Tripping, falling on or near fire</p>	Low	Low - High	<p>One adult is in charge of guarding the fire.</p> <p>At least one teacher to supervise the children.</p> <p>Children to be given a safety talk before hand.</p> <p>A clear fire circle and children learn to respect it.</p> <p>Fire areas are surrounded by individual seating mats / logs at least 1.5 metres from the fire</p> <p>Children must be supervised whilst around the campfire at all times and the fire should never be left unattended. If children add wood to a fire it must be at a ratio of 1:1</p> <p>If children cook on a fire it must be at a ratio of 1:1.</p> <p>When accessing or moving around the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the seating circle, then remain sitting on the mats whilst they are around the fire.</p> <p>Long trousers and shoes must always be worn.</p> <p>Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire. Fires kept small – no tall flames. If sessions involve children adding fuel (wood) to or toasting things on the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision.</p> <p>A bucket of water nearby</p> <p>Fire extinguished with water afterwards.</p> <p>Session to be ended if there are any behaviour concerns.</p> <p>Keep 1st aid kit on hand at all times</p>	<p>Self confidence</p> <p>Focus</p> <p>Concentration</p> <p>Motor skills development</p> <p>Hand eye coordination</p> <p>Problem solving and decision making</p> <p>Communication Skills</p>	All seasons
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Fire	Floating embers in eyes	Low	Low - high	Fires not lit in the severe wind. If embers start to fly, move children away. Keep 1st aid kit on hand at all times	Focus Concentration Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Fire	Smoke in eyes	Medium	Low	Fires not lit in high winds. Keep 1st aid kit on hand at all times. Supervising staff to note direction of smoke and adjust the activity if it is drifting at the children or if any child complains of sore eyes. Teach the children to close their eyes if the smoke is in their eyes	Focus Concentration Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons
Fire	Fire spreading to surroundings – eg a building, trees or dry wood/sticks	Low	Low - high	Fires only lit in designated areas Fires sited a good distance away from any buildings, property or material that could burn. Wood supply kept well away from the fire. Fires kept small – no tall flames Check wider surroundings for any highly flammable material.	Focus Concentration Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills	All seasons. Higher risk in summer
Toasting Marshmallows	Burn from fire Burn from marshmallow	Low	Low-high	Explain to the children the rules of being around the fire. One child at a time is allowed to toast a marshmallow (ratio 1:1). Stick must be suitable - long enough, and made of suitable wood. Hair tied back. Don't put stick in your mouth. Wash hands before and after.	Motor skills development Hand eye coordination Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills Focus	All seasons
Kelly Kettle	Burn from steam, hot water, or	Medium	Low - high	Cold water can be added by a child. Children can practise pouring it with	Motor skills development Hand eye coordination	All season

	metal kettle			cold water. Hot water only to be poured by an adult. Adult must always supervise when the Kelly kettle is in use. When in use the bung in the Kelly Kettle should be removed. Only adult users should add wood down the funnel. Use a fire glove when taking the kettle off the fire	Problem solving and decision making Communication Skills Focus	
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