



Handbook

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1. Introduction

What is a Forest School?

Forest School is a place where individuals can learn through nature and build their self-esteem, independence, confidence, creativity, physical, mental well-being and much more. It offers ALL learners opportunities to grow and take supported risks. Forest School creates a community of learners which is fully inclusive.

Where did the idea of Forest School Originate from?

Forest school originated in Scandinavia from the roots of Froebel to inspire kindergartens to spend more time with nature and give more opportunities to develop and learn outside. The United Kingdom adopted the idea of forest school and brought it to their shores in the 90s and since then it has been slowly developing despite not yet being in the curriculum. Japan has had Outside as an educational institution for over a century, from the ages 6-11 students are taught crafts with wood for social and environmental functions as part of their usual studies. Forest School had demonstrated positive growth for students' well-being through being outside in nature, proven by studies within the NHS and research conducted over the years. With all this in mind, Forest School is a beneficial developmental opportunity to get out in the natural environment to grow, learn and play.

2. What to Expect?

At Wild Sticks we offer a comprehensive and well-adjusted curriculum to help the development of the child as a whole. Forest School will offer the same wide-ranging experiences designed to develop the whole child; physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, spiritually and morally. We aim to challenge and support the children to become independent resilient learners. We will encourage the child to try out their ideas, encourage them to push their normal boundaries and work together with their peers to solve problems and conquer challenges.

Some of the challenges might include:

Shelter building, Fire lighting, using tools, Forest art, using a Ghillie Kettle, Carving and whittling, Planting and harvesting, Sculpture with natural materials, looking after wildlife, Group games, building bird boxes, Drama, looking closely at wildlife, Pond dipping, Cooking on an open fire, learning knots, Physical challenges, Rope and string work, building bug homes, Bug hunting, Traditional woodland craft, Telling and listening to stories, Team games and Free play.

3. Our Vision

We see ourselves unleashing the child's full potential, in an environment built around them. The freedom to explore, alongside guidance and support they can flourish as individuals. We believe that all children have more to gain from being outside in nature compared to the typically four walls many children struggle, to achieve and absorb knowledge directed to them.

Forest school principles

Contact - Interacting with nature directly, whether through physical exploration, sensory experiences, or observation.

Beauty - Appreciating the aesthetic qualities of nature, such as landscapes, wildlife and natural patterns.

Emotions - Developing positive feelings and emotional connections with the natural world.

Meaning - Finding personal significance and purpose in nature experiences.

Compassion - Cultivating empathy and care for the environment and other beings.

4. Rules of the Forest

Wild Sticks wants to keep Rules simple when it comes to the sessions and discuss these with the children before session starts, here is Wild Sticks Rules;

Be Kind to each other

Look after our forest

Respectful to each other

If it's bigger than you it takes two

Only come into fire pit area if invited

Hear the whistle come to Forest School Leader straight away ('emergency' use only)

Walking on the deck (only applies if site has decking)

Bellies or respect position whilst looking into the pond. (only applies if site has pond)

Roles and Responsibilities of Adults and Children

Adult

- Risk assessment in the mornings and afternoons on the site
- Risk assessments for equipment/ fire pit safety and site
- Keeping children safe within the site
- Be a positive role model
- First aid equipment checked
- Allow children to be themselves and manage some risks themselves, 'independent risk management' (climbing trees, rope swings)
- Understanding children's individual needs (SEN/EHCP)
- Communication and Compassion
- Looking after the environment
- Following Schools Ethos
- Following Forest school principles: 1. Meaning 2. Beauty 3. Emotion 4. Compassion 5. Contact

Child

- Follow rules of the forest
- Behaviour must be safe to be within the environment.
Behaviour • All children attending will be subjected to a safety assessment conducted by the Forest School Lead. If the child's behaviour puts other children at risk, child will not attend.
- Some children will be given chances because of individual behaviour but if not appropriate and continued risk shown they will not attend.
- This assessment by the Forest School Lead; 1. Appropriate clothing due to weather conditions 2. Take care of the environment 3. Enjoy and have fun

Booking/ Cancellation Procedure


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How Wild Sticks plan sessions

Wild Sticks understands Forest School is child-led, but having plans gives an overall topic of learning. Through experience planning has discovered children are able to give meaning to build/expand upon, this foundation plan (which can be flexible) has inspired children to become more creativity.

Here is a 6-week session plan;

Insect Habitats and Hibernation

Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Forest school Rules	Forest school Rules	Forest school Rules	Forest school Rules	Forest school Rules	Forest school Rules
Introduction Story Reading the topic book called The bug hunt collector	Rules around fire Child will be told the rules and the importance in keeping safe Kindling Collecting resources for starting a fire, with fire lighting activity. Different types of wood are needed. Small sticks give a better result. Children will experience this with the next activity (fire lighting).	Introduction Story Reading the topic book called Over and under Collecting resources Children will gather resources to build a suitable habitat for insects, will be placed in container to be used later date	Sticky strips Using sticky strips, children will examine textures of nature.	Making Insect homes With all the material and resources gathered, the children will put it all together to make their insect home	Fire lighting Children can use tools to fire light cotton wool 1:3 adult supervision needed, resources in tins Tidy up the forest
Bug hunt Using printed resources children will look around the environment to find bug pictures including names	Building bug homes Children can use materials around themselves to build homes for insects	Fire lighting Children can use tools to fire light cotton wool 1:3 adult supervision needed, resources in tins	Sawing wood Using one to one support will use a wood saw to saw wood for their insect homes		Beetle toast Using a baguette and skewers the children can use food colouring to paint their bread to be toasted
Tidy up the forest	Tidy up the forest	Tidy up the forest	Tidy up the forest	Tidy up the forest	Tidy up the forest
			Hot chocolate Using Kelly kettle make hot chocolate	Hot chocolate Using Kelly kettle make hot chocolate	Hot chocolate Using Kelly kettle make hot chocolate
Spiritually gathering (no fire) Coming together around the fire to retell our day with conversations and say our goodbyes	Spiritually gathering Coming together around the fire to retell our day with conversations and say our goodbyes	Spiritually gathering Coming together around the fire to retell our day with conversations and say our goodbyes	Spiritually gathering Coming together around the fire to retell our day with conversations and say our goodbyes	Spiritually gathering Coming together around the fire to retell our day with conversations and say our goodbyes	Spiritually gathering Coming together around the fire to retell our day with conversations and say our goodbyes

Site Check example

Site checks are carried out everyday alongside visual checks throughout the day. Here is an example of a blank site check sheet;

Date:	Time:	Weather:
Name of Forest School Leader:		

Checklist	Yes/No	Comments
Fallen branches		
Low branches		
Brambles/nettles		
Slippery areas		
Steps leading down to entrance		
Broken glass/needles		
Vandalism/intruders		
Weather effects		
Water area – flask		
Base camp		
Tool area roped off (if appropriate)		
Emergency rucksack		
Equipment ready		
Spare clothes		
Large hammocks		
Rope swing		
Check pallets for damage		

Other hazards identified:
Action taken:
Signature:

Environmental Impact

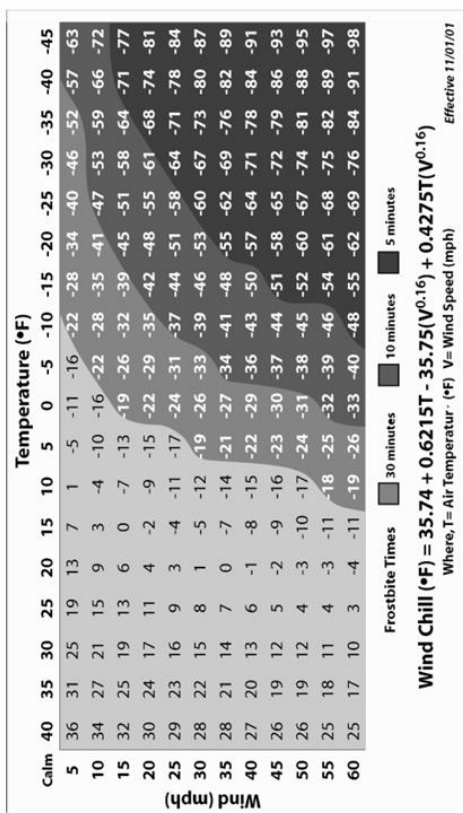
At Forest School, we believe it is fundamentally important to ensure that we do not disrupt the environment as much as we can. Our Aim is to increase everyone’s awareness to the beautiful natural world that surrounds them. We encourage them to be thoughtful about decision making when it comes to the Forest around them. All our activities are created with the environment in mind and procedures followed to minimise impact on the wildlife and the woodland’s ecosystem. We aim to finish each session with a “leave no trace” philosophy. Ensuring that we leave site the way we entered it.

Weather Conditions

Children are advised to dress warmly and wear waterproofs if necessary. However, there are some occasions where it may not be safe or practical to go ahead with a planned session due to extreme weather;

- In the case of high winds of 25mph or more determined by the met office online.
- In the case of extreme temperature determined by a met office amber weather warning
- In the case of extreme cold of below ‘0’ a session will be cancelled if it is near to this, we will ensure children are appropriately dressed, sessions will be made shorter and activities will be planned to ensure children are kept moving.

Wild Sticks also checks weather reports in the mornings and Windfinder to determine the day also these are Temperature and wind speeds diagrams we use;



Estimating Wind Speeds with Visual Clues

Beaufort Number	Description	Speed	Visual Clues and Damage Effects
0	Calm	Calm	Calm wind. Smoke rises vertically with little if any drift.
1	Light Air	1 to 3 mph	Direction of wind shown by smoke drift, not by wind vanes. Little if any movement with flags. Wind barely moves tree leaves.
2	Light Breeze	4 to 7 mph	Wind felt on face. Leaves rustle and small twigs move. Ordinary wind vanes move.
3	Gentle Breeze	8 to 12 mph	Leaves and small twigs in constant motion. Wind blows up dry leaves from the ground. Flags are extended out.
4	Moderate Breeze	13 to 18 mph	Wind moves small branches. Wind raises dust and loose paper from the ground and drives them along.
5	Fresh Breeze	19 to 24 mph	Large branches and small trees in leaf begin to sway. Crested wavelets form on inland lakes and large rivers.
6	Strong Breeze	25 to 31 mph	Large branches in continuous motion. Whistling sounds heard in overhead or nearby power and telephone lines. Umbrellas used with difficulty.
7	Near Gale	32 to 38 mph	Whole trees in motion. Inconvenience felt when walking against the wind.
8	Gale	39 to 46 mph	Wind breaks twigs and small branches. Wind generally impedes walking.
9	Strong Gale	47 to 54 mph	Slight or minor structural damage occurs, such as chimney covers, roofing tiles blown off, and television antennas damaged. Ground is littered with many small twigs and broken branches.
10	Whole Gale	55 to 63 mph 58 mph*	Considerable structural & vegetative damage occurs, especially on roofs. Small trees may be blown over and uprooted. 58 mph = Severe Thunderstorm Warning criteria.
11	Storm Force	64 to 75 mph	Widespread damage occurs. Larger trees blown over and uprooted. Corn stalks may be blown over.
12	Hurricane Force	over 75 mph	Severe and extensive damage. Roofs can be peeled off. Windows broken. Trees uprooted. RVs and small mobile homes overturned. Moving automobiles can be pushed off the roadways. Corn down.

Clothing

Children attending forest school must also wear appropriate clothing for safety and protection, this is required as Weather can be unpredictable so please follow our guidelines for clothing below;

Cold Wet Weather and Snow;

- Thick Coat • Thick Joggers • Long sleeved top and Jumper • Wellies • Gloves, Scarf and Hat (• Overalls must be worn over the top if required by school).

Slightly Cold Wet Weather;

- Light Coat • Short or long-sleeved Top • Joggers • Wellies (• Overalls must be worn over the top if required by school)

Warm Weather;

- light Jumper • light Joggers/Leggings • Short or long-sleeved Top • Wellies (Please note all short-sleeved clothing or shorts can result in scratches or stings by flora in the woodlands)

Hot Weather;

- Short sleeved Top • Joggers/Leggings or shorts • Hat covering Neck and Face • Trainers
- Sun Cream must be applied before sessions (Please note all short-sleeved clothing or shorts can result in scratches or stings by flora in the woodlands)

Risk Assessments and Benefits

At Wild sticks we take risks but we follow these Guiding Principles

- An element of risk is an essential part of children's development through play
- This process focuses on the benefits to children and the risks to children
- The reasons (benefits) give the context from which to judge the risk
- Benefits must be great enough to warrant the associated level of risk and be maximised without creating unnecessary risk
- Risks should be minimised without losing major benefits
- Risk Benefit Assessments should capture the risks, the benefits and the reasons for the judgements of safety
- Risk Benefit Assessments are a useful planning tool, or decision-making tool as well as a supporting document to demonstrate a considered approach.

What are Risk Benefit Assessments?

Risk Benefit Assessments are like Risk Assessments but with a clear emphasis on the benefits as well as the risks. To do this a judgement is made on the level of risk, and a judgement is made on the level of benefit. These are then compared to see if the activity is worth doing.

For example, it is a reasonably high risk for a child to climb a tree, but it also has great benefits: physical exercise and coordination, emotional development, over-coming fear, achievement, learning about nature, as well as learning how to judge risks (and benefits!) themselves.

If the situation is right then although this is of reasonably high risk it might be an acceptable risk due to all these benefits.

In a professional setting, this decision would have to be thought through and the judgement logged... and the Risk Benefit Assessment is the place to do this.

Why use Risk Benefit Assessments?

Traditional Risk Assessments focus on removing or minimising risk and are still used to meet the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 for staff and the workplace. As mentioned in the Play Policy: –It is a requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992) that employers undertake regular Risk Assessments. “ However, to entirely minimise risk is not always appropriate in social settings such as children’s play, as risk is a necessary part of it. For this reason, we recommend the use of Risk Benefit Assessments in children’s play.

To take an example from the Bristol City Council’s draft Risk Benefit Policy, written by Bernard Spiegel, PLAYLINK:

Risk Benefit Assessments can better capture the reasons for allowing some risks which may not be allowed in other work settings. However, they are not an excuse to allow unnecessary risks.

Two advantages of Risk Benefit Assessments over traditional Risk Assessments are:

1. They help to record why a certain risk is deemed acceptable, rather than just how large the risk is. If the worst was to happen and someone got badly hurt then this clear record would be very useful in showing an appropriate professional approach had been taken to make the judgement.
2. By giving clear focus to the benefits, it gives opportunity to spot when an increase in a risk might create much more benefit.

How to make the judgement

To judge risk:

What might happen - i.e. cuts & grazes, broken leg, emotional trauma, death

What likelihood there is of this happening - i.e. every time, once every few months, once in a lifetime.

Then consider how these two things balance to give an overall risk (**low**, **medium**, **high**).

This is determined by;

Probability - How likely for this risk to happen

Times (x)

Severity - What is the risks impact

The overall risk would represent by colour.

Probability Rating	Severity Rating	Risk Rating PxS=
5 extremely	5 extremely	1-2 minimal
4 High	4 High	3-6 low
3 Medium	3 Medium	7-10 medium
2 Low	2 Low	11-16 high
1 Very Low	1 Very Low	Above 16 Danger

Above risk of 16, would not be implemented due to the risk being dangerous.

To judge benefit:

What benefits are there - i.e. physical, mental, emotional, health, community, economic, skills development, etc.

How great are these benefits - i.e. is it something that'll be easily gained elsewhere, might this be the only time / place this benefit is gained, is it likely to be a lifelong benefit.

Definition in Managing Risk

Hazard

Anything that has the potential to cause harm, either physical or psychological. For example - hanging deadwood which has not been removed.

Risk

The likelihood of the potential harm from the hazard being realised. Taking into account both probability and severity.

Accident

An unplanned, uncontrolled event which has led to injury to people, damage to equipment or the environment or some other loss.

Near Miss

An unplanned, uncontrolled event which could have led to injury to people, damage to equipment or the environment or some other loss. **Informs and alters your practice. Near misses should be recorded in the NEAR MISS book! If a near miss occurs more than once it should be looked into to see if any preventative measures can be taken.**

Incident

A happening, event or occurrence. Caused by wilful or uninformed ignoring of or non-adherence to set rules, boundaries or laws.

Safety

Taking positive steps to identify accident causes and implement suitable preventable measures.

Risk Assessments

If Wild Sticks notice risks due to your setting, a personal risk assessment will be updated when required.

Many risks in each setting are different but usual many settings face the same risks, here are Wild Sticks risk assessment for general use;

Contents

- Site Risks
- Woodland Layers
- Weather
- Collecting Resources/Materials
- Campfire/cooking
- Shelter/Den building
- Water Play and Mud (kitchen) play
- Tree Climbing and Rope swing
- Tools and Equipment
- Pond Area



Wild Sticks Risk Assessments

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Access to site	Adult and Child, Injury through hazards (paths, objects etc)	1x2=2	Access to site will be restricted and only authorised personal on site accompanied by forest school lead.	N/A		
Road/Vehicle	Adult and Child, injury through vehicle or hazard on road	1x2=2	Settings are within safe sites but if settings are next to hazards this would be assed when required.	N/A		
Boundaries	Child, road or river etc.	2x3=6	During sessions boundaries are fully discussed within session and in settings has fence around woodland environment or School.	N/A		
Pedestrians/dog walkers	Child and Adult	1x2=2	Stranger danger and safety with children would be discussed. Headcount are always taken and walkie talkies/mobile are always available for help.	N/A		
Temporary Structure	Adult and Child, hazards and injury	3x2=6	Equipment used will be discussed within groups before use and rules are in place (please see rules in handbook)	N/A		

Pond/ river/ stream	Adult and Child, drowning fast moving current etc.	3x3=9	Access to water would be supervised depending on level of water, rules will be featured as discussed with children (lay on stomach, respect position when observing nature.	Child will see wildlife and able to explore and to build a positive awareness of surroundings in the environment. Showing care and consideration for nature.		
Tools and Equipment	Adult and Child, injury in use of equipment	3x3=9	All tools are supervised and depending on tool 1;1 supervised, All tools and equipment are discussed before use. (please see tools in handbook)	Able to use equipment to improve, listening and attention, motor skills and more.		
Weather	Adult and Child	2x3=6	Please see weather guidelines in handbook All weather is checked and following guidelines will outline if session will be taken place or not. Decision will be decided by forest school lead.	Child will participate in all weathers and experience different environment changes in the woodlands.		
Emergencies	Adult and Child	2x5=10	Forest School leader is First Aid trained and is up to date. All procedures are followed by Setting or First Aid Policy (please see Handbook)			

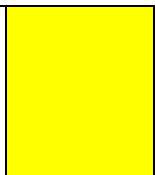


Woodland Layers

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Shrub layer	Child and Adult, injuries/hazards such as; cuts, trips, toxic substances and ingesting, etc.	4x1=4	Site Check Please see site check example in Handbook. Site check will be carried out before session to provide all potential risk hazards are checked. And both Clothing policy Rules are followed In handbook are followed, as well as discussion with children during session.	N/A		
Field Layer	Child and Adult, injuries/hazards such as; cuts, trips, toxic substances and ingesting, etc.	4x1=4	Site Check Please see site check example in Handbook. Site check will be carried out before session to provide all	N/A		



			potential risk hazards are checked. And both Clothing policy Rules are followed In handbook are followed, as well as discussion with children during session.			
Ground Layer	Child and Adult, injuries/hazards such as; cuts, trips, toxic substances and ingesting, etc.	4x1=4	Site Check Please see site check example in Handbook. Site check will be carried out before session to provide all potential risk hazards are checked. And both Clothing policy Rules are followed In handbook are followed, as well as discussion with children during session.	N/A		
Canopy Layer	Child and Adult, injuries/hazards such as; trees, falling branches cuts, trips, toxic substances and ingesting, etc.	4x1=4	Site Check Please see site check example in Handbook. Site check will be carried out before session to provide all potential risk hazards are checked. And both Clothing policy Rules are followed In handbook are followed, as well as discussion with children during session.	N/A		

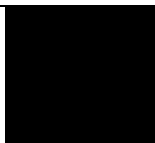


Weather

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Extreme Cold weather	Adult and Child, Frost bite, Hypothermia etc.		Please see weather guidelines in Handbook Session will not be taken place; this decision will be decided by forest school lead	N/A		
Extreme winds	Adult and Child, injury from falling objects/hazards		Please see weather guidelines in Handbook Session will not be taken place; this decision will be decided by forest school lead	N/A		
Cold wet weather and snow	Adult and Child	3x3=9	Please see weather guidelines and appropriate clothing within the woodlands in Handbook	Child will participate in all weathers and experience different environment changes in the woodlands.		



Slightly warm wet weather	Adult and Child	3x2=6	Please see weather guidelines and appropriate clothing within the woodlands in Handbook	Child will participate in all weathers and experience different environment changes in the woodlands.		
Warm weather	Adult and Child	3x2=6	Please see weather guidelines and appropriate clothing within the woodlands in Handbook	Child will participate in all weathers and experience different environment changes in the woodlands.		
Hot warm weather	Adult and Child	3x2=6	Please see weather guidelines and appropriate clothing within the woodlands in Handbook	Child will participate in all weathers and experience different environment changes in the woodlands.		
Extreme Hot weather	Adult and Child, Sunburn, heatstroke, dehydration etc.		Please see weather guidelines in Handbook Session will not be taken place; this decision will be decided by forest school lead	N/A		



Collecting Resources/Materials

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Consumption of material (leaves, berries etc.)	Child and Adult swallowing a material which is toxic	3x2=6	Before gathering resources examples of resources which can be gathered will be implemented. If a material such as a berry which should not be consumed, does; observation and medical advice will be seek. First aider always on site. (please see first aid in handbook)	N/A		
Collection of materials (leaves, berries etc.)	Child, may pick up stinging nettle or scratch on thorn bush etc.	3x2=6	Materials are always shown in the environment that are able to use and not. If material does cause allergic reaction First aider on site at all times. Observation, any serious reactions 999 will be contacted (please see first aid in handbook)	Able to explore surrounds and communication skills with peers building friendships		



Dropping heavy materials (logs, rocks etc.)	Child and Adult, dropping object on self or other. Causing injury (minor or serious)	3x2=6	Rule with child, "if it is bigger than you it takes two". Or drag object behind self. Adults must follow Moving and Handling guidelines in Handbook.	Moving larger object and working as a partnership in communication skills and creativity in using imagination with object. Also building physical development.		
Losing child	Child may become lost after gathering materials	2x4=8	Please see missing child policy in Handbook.	N/A		

Campfire/cooking

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Collecting fire wood (Fuel)	Adult and Child, the process is normally done with fire wood being brought in and splitting. The exception when children participate by	3x1=3	Adult is in lead of Forest school fire pit and supervision is always maintained.	Childs experience can greatly expand with the knowledge and listening and attention skills		

	collecting deadwood (see deadwood risk)			in building a fire. And understand Fire is used to cook food with activities built around this.		
Choosing site for fire pit area/ Low hanging trees/ Ground Layers of the surroundings	Children and Adult, selecting fire pit area must consider the area in which is going to be used. As the site hazards will greatly increase in risk causing fire damage and destruction of the environment.	4x1=4	The site has a purpose-built area designed to be checked with a site check list. All ground level debris cleared, low hanging trees are not in site of flame and fire pit has rules around fire discussed with the children. Supervision is maintained whilst fire is lite.	Creating a space to build social skills, a gathering to share special memories.		
Lighting/ striking fire	Child and Adult, spark on skin causing burn or striking onto dry material not designed for the fire pit use.	4x1=4	Children are 1:3 or 1:4 depending on abilities. The supervision is required. Children are educated about the fire safety rules before this activity and whilst activity in process.	Children learn persistence whilst trying to strike, and once gained can start placing their taught skill in lighting fire for forest school lead with supervision. Fine motor skills.		



Weather Conditions	Fire is used to warm and cook. But in very hot conditions fire can spread easier due to the dry materials on site. Can cause destruction to the environment.	2x4=8	Please see weather guidelines Forest School leader will decide on conditions and safety.	N/A		
Seating Locations and type	Child and Adult falling off seating or seating covered in faeces or injury due to sharp object	2x2=4	Site check carried out which covers fire pit area. checking Seating stability and any sharp objects sticking out seating (nails, splinters).	Creating a space to expand communication (social skills) and build friendships		
Injury due to tripping into fire	Adult and Children. Participant may trip or fall into the fire pit	1x4=4	Site check to ensure there is no debris around the fire pit area. Everyone is made aware of the expected behaviour in the fire pit area as well as a no running rule in the fire pit area. FS lead will supervise anyone near the open flame. First aid kit nearby as well as fire safety kit. Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. Supervision.	N/A		
Cooking materials	Adult and Child. Consuming unfriendly substance causing poison or materials unsuitable for the fire causing burns.	1x2=2	All equipment is designed for camping use, checked and cleaned before use	N/A		



Food Consumptions	Child and Adult. Food Poisoning or Allegic reaction.	1x4=4	All food cooked on site must first be checked with child's food requirements. All food is checked with Forest School leader before consumption.	Trying different food (health) and discovering where the food comes from.		
Hygiene	Children and Adults. Hands can be contaminated with bacteria from surfaces.	1x2=2	Children go down to the toilet area to wash hands. water station built within the forest to allow access to wash hands. Frequent talks with the children regarding hygiene and No lick or eating policy.	The importance of Hygiene and good practice		
Inappropriate Clothing /Long hair	Children and Adults. Clothes may catch a light or long hair may be caught on fire	3x1=3	All long hair must be tied up and participants must be wearing appropriate clothing as advised in clothing policy. First aid kit nearby as well as fire safety kit. Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid.	N/A		
Reckless & Inappropriate behaviour	Child. Fighting, hitting, spitting, pushing and rough play. Injury occurring through aggressive behaviour.	2x3=6	Each session is including Rules around Fire Pit. We have a strict rule procedure once a child displays reckless behaviour which can cause injury to self or others, the child must be risk asset to attend the forest school site. Children reminded of the behaviour policy and what is expected of them. Children with a history of challenging behaviour must be accompanied by their 1 to 1 at all times around the site.	N/A		



Fire too large/ out of control	Child and Adult, Wildlife and the Woodlands Destruction of the Environment	1x5=5	Fire always monitored and only natural materials are used. Please see Handbook. Fire out control, 999	N/A		
Extinguishing fire	Adult and Child, not follow guidance from Handbook and Child not supervised and cause the environmental damage and relight fire. Destruction of site. Burn etc.	2x4=8	In Handbook contains how to put out fire and must be followed. Fire must be drowned in water including ground layer (with holes) always double check before leaving.	N/A		
Burns/ smoke and Injury	Adult and Child First aid needed given or hospital.	1x5=5	First aid kit nearby as well as fire safety kit. Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid.	N/A		

Shelter/Den building

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Slips, trips and falls	Adult and Child falling over causing injury to self	3x2=6	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. And Site check before session starting	N/A		



Running, bumping or falling into objects (trunks, rocks etc)	Adult and Child falling over causing injury to self	3x2=6	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. Forest school rules and any manager obstacles removed or caution group briefing before session starting	N/A		
First aid Emergencies	Adult and Child needing first aid from injuries or further care from emergency service	2x5=10	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. Please see Handbook serious injuries response	N/A		
Collecting shelter/ den resources Impact on Wildlife/Habitats And The environment	Environment, deadwood maybe removed which can be home to wildlife and many ecosystems for insects.	2x3=6	Group discussion on what natural materials can be collected before use to minimise the impact to the environment	Physical development and independent learning		
Structures collapsing	Child and Adult having heavy objects falling onto them.	2x2=4	Close supervision whilst den is being built or dismantled. If structure has been kept over the week site check including structure before each session.	Physical development, teamwork, social skills and independent learning		
Handling Heavy Items	Adult and child lifting item causing strain or splinters from trees and rope burn	3x2=6	Ensuring children are following rules (if it is bigger than you it takes two) Observing what the children are moving around and check wood before lifting. Adults following Heavy lifting from handbook.	N/A		



Using rope	Child and Adult, rope burn or misuse causing strangulation	2x4=8	Observing how the rope is being used and what purpose the rope is being used for. Forest School leader is First aid trained.	Physical development and independent learning		
Hammocks	Child swinging or haven't put up Hammock correctly resulting in falling	2x2=4	Child being Observed with Hammock area and following rules. Hammock check before child goes into Hammock.	Physical development and independent learning		
Weather	Adult and Child	2x3=6	Please see weather risk assessments	N/A		

Water Play and Mud (kitchen) play

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Medical conditions	Child, grommets or other allergic reactions	3x2=6	School must provide medical forms and Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid	N/A		
Drowning	Child place head in water or over exposed with water	2x5=8	Observing and Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid.	N/A		



Reckless & Inappropriate behaviour	Child. Fighting, hitting, spitting, pushing and rough play. Injury occurring through aggressive behaviour.	2x3=6	Each session is including Rules around Water and Mud Kitchen Areas. We have a strict rule procedure once a child displays reckless behaviour which can cause injury to self or others, the child must be risk asset to attend the forest school site.	N/A		
Weather	Adult and Child	2x3=6	Please see weather risk assessments	N/A		
Soil Contact and Soil Contamination	Child coming sick or needing medical advice	1x4=4	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. And Site check before session starting	N/A		
Hygiene	Children and Adults. Hands can be contaminated with bacteria.	1x2=2	Children go down to the toilet area to wash hands. water station built within the forest to allow access to wash hands. Frequent talks with the children regarding hygiene and No lick or eating policy.	The importance of a healthy hygiene and good practice.		
Equipment (Mud and water play)	Child. Licking equipment, tools covered with faeces and may need to seek medical advice due to poisoning	2x3=6	All equipment is checked through site check and washed in sterilized once every term (5/6 weeks)	N/A		
Slips, trips, jumping and falls	Adult and Child falling over, slipping in puddles or jumping causing injury to self	3x3=9	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. And Site check before session starting	N/A		

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Tree Climbing and Rope Swing

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Falling from tree and landing on ground layer or branches	Child/children, Concussion, broken bones, penetration from branches and other injuries	2x5=10	Trees are tested before climbed. Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. And Site check before session starting The height that children can climb will be determined by a bright coloured ribbon tied to where the child's head can not pass. This is also explained during forest school rules.	Physical development and hand eye coordination improvement and risk taking		
Feet trapped by branches	Child twisting ankle or broken foot/feet	2x5=10	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. Please see Handbook serious injuries response	N/A		



Sharp, pointy twigs or branches	Child, Scratches, eye injury or other injuries	2x5=10	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. Please see Handbook serious injuries response	N/A		
Rope Handling	Child and Adult, friction burns, entanglement and other injures	2x5=10	Observing use of the rope and Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid	Physical development and hand eye coordination improvement and risk taking		
Rope Ladder	Child and Adult, friction burns, entanglement, falling from ladder and other injures	2x5=10	Observing use of the rope and Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid	Physical development and hand eye coordination improvement and risk taking		
Rope Swing	Child, knocked over by swing causing head injuries and other injures	2x5=10	Observing use of the rope, children will be reminded of the use of a swing about one at a time and keeping distance around area and Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid	Physical development and hand eye coordination improvement and risk taking		
Impact to tree	Tree, branch may become weak, stress upon tree creating fallen branches	2x2=4	Every term tree is given rest and site check on the structure to keep maintained	N/A		
Reckless & Inappropriate behaviour	Child. Fighting, hitting, spitting, pushing and rough play. Injury occurring through aggressive behaviour.	2x3=6	Each session is including Rules around Rope swing Areas. We have a strict rule procedure once a child displays reckless behaviour which can cause injury to self or others, the	N/A		

			child must be risk asset to attend the forest school site.			
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Tools and Equipment

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Reckless & Inappropriate behaviour	Child. Fighting, hitting, spitting, pushing and rough play. Injury occurring through aggressive behaviour	2x3=6	Each session is including Rules around Tools. We have a strict rule procedure once a child displays reckless behaviour which can cause injury to self or others, the child must be risk asset to attend the forest school site.	N/A		



First aid or Emergencies	Adult and Child needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care such as sawn-off finger from emergency service	2x4=8	Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid. Please see Handbook serious injuries response call 999	N/A		
Kelly Kettle	Adult, needing first aid from injuries such as burn or further care from emergency service	2x3=6	Adult only use. Maintained by Forest school leader	N/A		
Axe	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader. Forest School leader trained in paediatric first aid.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		
Bill Hook	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		



			maintained by Forest School Leader.			
Bow Saw	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		
Hacksaw	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		
Pruning Saw	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		

			decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.			
Sheath Knife	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		
Mallet/hammer	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	2x5=10	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		
Palm Drills	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	2x5=10	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination		



			(1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	skills and much more.		
Secateurs and Loppers	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	3x5=15	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		
Tent Pegs	Adult or Child, needing first aid from injuries such as cuts or further care from emergency service	2x5=10	Please see tools and Equipment Policy And tool kit equipment in Handbook tool kit Guild lines All tools are used appropriately depending on tool, supervised (1:1 or 1:3 or 1: \$ this is decided by group of children and forest school leader) and maintained by Forest School Leader.	Using Equipment can give motor skills, coordination skills and much more.		

Pond Area

Identify the hazard	Who might be at harm and how?	Risk rating LOW/ MEDIUM/ HIGH	What is already implemented?	Risk benefits	Action review required	Date of action
Slipping/running	Adult and Child, fall in and drown or could cause injury such as; head injury	3x2=6	Each session has rules around the pond area, including walking feet around the pond and how to look at the pond. The pond area has a sweep and when weather is wet, children are asked to be more cautious around pond area. This involves more attention on the pond area.	N/a		
Pests	Adult and Child, may get bitten, may touch contaminated vegetation due to faeces.	1x4=4	Rats and other pest thrive on pond areas due to drinking water. The school site has pest control who lay pesticide near the car park away from the children view and woodland area.	N/A		
Flooding	Area may become flooded. Risk to Children.	1x1=1	Heavy rain could cause the pond to overflow, but this has not happened before. Site check daily	N/A		
Disease	Adult and Child. Child may touch contaminated water source and become ill.	2x4=8	Pond disease often caused by rising temperature of springtime, parasites and bacteria can affect pond but normally with fish you would notice. Site check daily	N/A		

Reckless & Inappropriate behaviour	Child. Fighting, hitting, spitting, pushing and rough play. Injury occurring through aggressive behaviour	2x3=6	Each session is including Rules around Tools. We have a strict rule procedure once a child displays reckless behaviour which can cause injury to self or others, the child must be risk asset to attend the forest school site.	N/A		
Dogs	Child and Adult. Dog bites, collision by a dog.	1x1=1	Dogs are not permitted on site, including signage. (The site if open to public needs fence to prevent unwelcomed guests) Welfare bag containing dog lead	N/A		
Poisonous plants & Fungi	Children and adults. They may eat Poisonous plant or fungi causing sickness, or injury.	1x4=4	A no eating foraged items policy. Rules of Forest school state no lick or eating. Daily checks of the forest school area and children talks regarding policy	N/A		
Observing the pond/ life	Child. They may fall in whilst observing the pond. Injury to self or drowning.	4x2=8	Each session is including Rules around pond using our bellies to lay down or respect position using a knee pose to stop use falling forward. Each child is observed around pond area.	Watching the different wildlife and changes through out the seasons. Creating connection with the environment		



Hygiene	Children and Adults. Hands can be contaminated with bacteria from pond and other surfaces.	2x2=4	Children go down to the toilet area to wash hands. water station built within the forest to allow access to wash hands. Frequent talks with the children regarding hygiene	Importance of healthy hygiene and good practice.		
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Welfare Bag

A welfare bag is designed to become a bag when needed. It is not a large first aid kit or a bag with random objects. A welfare bag is for your own mental wellbeing and the children whom may need a break or on the go exploration and you can randomly create an activity when needed.

Each Welfare bag is designed for yourself and the children.

Here is my Welfare Bag;



Emergency and Serious Incident Procedures

Emergency and serious incident produces At Forest School we take safety very seriously although there is always a possibility of an accident or serious injury happening. We ensure that everyone is familiar with the emergency procedures and are equipped with the skills to deal with them safely and quickly.

The Forest School Lead is First Aid trained and Fire Safety trained. They are also trained in the use of all tools. All Staff our DBS checked.

In the event the Forest School Lead deems it necessary due to a result of injury, illness or threat the emergency services will be contacted and the following procedure will be followed;

- Stop activities and locate all members of the group then Remove the group to safety from further danger.
- First Aider to attend to any Casualties with Adult helper and record any procedures or medicine administered to them for handover to paramedic
- Staff to ensure that all radios and mobile phones are charged and working. Designated person to meet emergency vehicle. All staff to know the WhatThreeWords of the location to aid emergency services.
- Next of kin to be informed as soon as possible by the Forest School Lead
- Incident/First Aid book to always be completed on site when any emergency plan is used.
- All Emergency and Serious Incident Procedures to be reviewed and updated as necessary to adhere to safety standards.

Safeguarding

At Forest School we take safeguarding seriously and have a number of policies in place to ensure that safeguarding is of a top priority.

Anti bullying

As part of the school's values and Visions we expect Respect and Safety. We believe all children should have the right to enjoy sessions without fear and take bullying seriously. The Forest School Lead will ensure that all participants are aware of the anti-bullying policy and what is expected of them in line with the behaviour policy.

The definition of bullying is "Behaviour by an individual or a group, repeated over time that intentionally hurts another individual either physically or Emotionally". (DfE "Preventing and Tackling Bullying", July 2017). As a Forest School we will use this definition to address bullying including but not excluding; name calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments; kicking; hitting; taking belongings; producing offensive graffiti; gossiping; excluding people from groups and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

If bullying is suspected or reported the incident will be dealt with immediately by the Forest School Lead. The incident will then be noted and class teacher, head teacher and safeguarding lead will be informed regarding the incident. The school will then deal with

this in line with their Bullying policy. If a participant is found to be repeatedly breaking anti bullying policy, they will not be able to attend Forest School sessions.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

We follow strict confidentiality and data protection guidelines.

In line with GDPR all parental consent forms and medical details for each child are held by the Forest School Lead and accompany the group for each Forest School session and after each session stored in a secure cabinet in line with GDPR requirements. When concerns for a participant come to the attention of the Forest School Lead, for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure, however insignificant this might appear to be, this should be discussed with Safeguarding Lead and senior leadership team as soon as possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. This will also be noted on CPOMs or any schools Safeguarding policy approach.

If there is any breach of confidentiality, data is lost or stolen all parents will be advised via a letter and action will be taken to investigate and retrieve the information. A risk assessment will then be conducted to ensure that this breach does not occur again.

Child Protection

At Forest School we believe child abuse is never acceptable and commit to advocate for children's rights. This means we commit to protecting children who attend the sessions. Our Aim is to provide a safe space in the Forest School whilst providing activities that enable participants to grow in confidence. We intend to enhance mental and physical well-being of children encouraging environmental awareness. We are committed to safeguarding all children that attend any Forest School sessions. We will strive to protect children on a 4-step procedure:

- **Vigilance:** Ensuring that all staff are aware of the problem of child abuse and remain Vigilant.
- **Prevention:** Ensuring through good practice, that we minimise the risks to children.
- **Reporting:** Ensuring that staff are clear on how to report any concerns and who too.
- **Responding:** Ensuring that action is taken to support and protect children immediately.

When required disclosed events will be reported to relevant authorities.

DBS

In order to keep the children safe all staff are subjected to an DBS check before interaction with the children. Any concerns arising from the DBS check will mean they are unable to attend the Session. Wild Sticks follows the guidelines; DBS checks: guidance for employers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Disclosure

When a participant discloses information relating to a concern, appropriate steps will be taken to report to a safeguarding lead and also documented on CPOMs or any other safeguarding format from the school. We will ensure that disclosures are responded to sensitively and appropriately, in line with school policies.

Lost or Missing Child

In Forest School we believe that prevention is key. We will be conducting a register at the beginning and end of each session. Throughout the session the Forest School Lead will be conducting head counts to ensure all are present.

In the unfortunate even a child has been noted as missing after a head count, the session will be paused and all participants will be called to the fire pit area. The FS Lead will radio the whole school to advise a child is missing. One adult will remain with the children while the other team members will begin a search of the immediate area and school grounds calling for a response. Once this has been completed, if the child is still missing the police will be called. The forest school leader will remain on site and await police. Risk assessment will be conducted and further procedures put into place if required.

Staff Ratios

There will always be two members of staff minimum at each session. Staff Ratios will be as standard 1:6 for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 will be 1:10. When working with tools this will be on a 1:1 Ratio.

Should there be any vulnerable participants who require additional support they must be accompanied by their 1:1 who would normally accompany them in their classroom setting.

Visiting Staff, Observers and Helpers

All Staff and Helpers must be subjected to enhanced DBS check as per the DBS policy and will not be able to attend with unsuitable DBS certificates. All volunteers and visitors will be vetted by gathering: references / employment history / record of qualification / or because we will have had prior personal knowledge of the person. This is also covered in the school's staff policy. If the visitor has a DBS certificate relevant to working with children or vulnerable adults, this will be checked by the school office and Forest School Lead. Participants will not be left unsupervised with a visitor.

No Visitors or observers are allowed on site without advanced notice to school and the Forest School Lead. We will not allow any drop in visitors or large groups. Visitors and Observers must become fully immersed in the experience but we ask them to follow the rules outlined in behaviour and safeguarding policy;

- Visitors must not be alone with any child. In the event they find they are we ask that they move away from the area and find a member of staff immediately.
- Follow staff instructions when asked to move away. • Respect the children and their space being aware of the impact that you might have and act accordingly.
- Be familiar with the Forest school handbook and the methodology of Forest School.

Contact with Dog walkers and other Members of the Public during Sessions

Forest School site is a secure gated ground. There will be signs stating all dogs must be on leads and signs advising no access to general public. In the unlikely event a dog enters the grounds, the Forest School Lead will have a slip lead in the tool kit which they will if able detain and moved the dog away from the children. Children will be advised before each session on not approaching any dogs and will also be educated on stranger danger.

Fire Management

Selecting and Sitting fire

Fire is an important element of Forest School so with this we have procedures in place to follow. When deciding on a location for the fire it is important to select one that is safe. There are different protocols and challenges that comes with each destination. A temporary area has a lesser environmental impact on the forest than that of a permanent one. The reasons for this are there can be regrowth after the fire is finished whereas a permanent fire means regrowth cannot occur. Each fire must have room to manoeuvre around safely and also a barrier which indicates no child to cross.

For safety the following must be present:

- Fire proof gloves
- First Aid Kit which contains a Burn Kit
- Log barrier around the fire • Water (minimum of 4 litres for extinguishing the fire)
- Fire Proof Blanket All of the above will be within reach when a fire is built in Forest School.

Using fire to cook

No food consumed in Forest School will start from Raw to eliminate the risk of food poisoning.

All food cooked on the fire will be cooked for the instructed time allowing additional time if required due to the variations in heat the fire produces. All food will be visually checked by the Forest School Lead to ensure that this is safe for consumption and only then will it be provided to the children.

All children handling food directly from the fire will be using correct safety equipment and with adult supervision only.

Fire Lighting

1. Ensure the area is safe and a barrier around fire pit is clear.
2. Ensure all equipment is safe to use and in reach of the Fire area (first aid kit, gloves, water and fire blanket).
3. Light the fire only adding the required amount of wood which is necessary to keep the fire going. (Do not use toxic liquid as an accelerant)

Fire finished with;

4. Cover the fire with water until the fire is extinguished.
5. Cover the ash with water. 6. Place holes into ground and add water to ensure no heat is trapped under the earth.
7. Check equipment for use next time and the area again to ensure fire area is extinguished.

Food safety and Hygiene Procedures

Children at Forest Schools are taught a strict NO eating rule, unless it is a specific activity led by an adult to prepare and cook food. Initially, when children are ready they will participate in simple cooking on the fire activities which include; toasting marshmallows/waffles and making s'mores. When food is being handled and prepared. Food Preparation, transport and storage;

- Hands will be washed thoroughly and any cuts/grazes covered in the correct manner (blue plaster or ideally gloves) before handling and preparing food.
- Any food needing preparation will be prepared in the school kitchen e.g. bread dough
- Food will be stored in clean containers and transported in a cool bag to and from the site, with any clean utensils and cooking pans required. The box will remain closed in between use with food covered in bags or boxes; to avoid attracting flies and other insects.
- Raw meats will be stored separately to any other foods.
- All 'use by' dates will be checked on foods before eating.
- Water for cooking will be provided in cleaned sealed storage container.

Handling, cooking and eating Food;

- A fresh, clean, bucket of warm soapy water will be available for children to wash their hands before handling food or utensils
- Children are taught how to cook food safely following the activity risk assessment and fire procedure. All food will be checked by an adult to ensure it is fully cooked before eating.
- Children will be asked to sit still around the fire circle or to move to a designated eating area from the fire to keep numbers to a minimum near the fire circle. Clearing away and cleaning up;
- ALL food not eaten or cooked will be placed in black bin bags and disposed of in the school bin at the end of the session by one of the adults.
- The area is checked to ensure there is no food traces to avoid vermin being attracted to the area.
- ALL utensils and pans will be washed at the station in hot soapy water and stored away correctly.

Use of Tools procedure

- Children and adults will be informed of rules, safety and trained in the use of each tool before they use it. Tool use guidance documents will be carried by the leader during each session and tool use ratios will be at the discretion of the Forest School Leader. Ratios will be set out in the session risk assessments.
- Relevant personal protection equipment will be worn at all times.
- Tools will be counted in and out and checked against an inventory.
- Tools will be stored safely and kept out of the reach of children.
- They will be cleaned after each use to prolong their life, broken and damaged tools will not be used.

Toileting Policy

Due to the Forest school being on the school sites we must adhere to school policy.

- Children use the toilet on site.

Warm water and soap and paper towels are available in the toilet block to clean hands.

Behaviour Policy

These behaviour policies are not only for the children but all participants and Visitors. This is also for parents/guardians collecting children. We believe that if you create a nurturing and safe environment then you should see most children begin to bloom within Forest School. It is important that children are allowed to take ownership for behaviour while at forest school. At the first session we will discuss the behaviour policy and this will continue through all sessions, so it is in a form that is easy for children to remember and visualise.

Our behaviour policy is:

- Safety - We will stay safely within the agreed boundaries on the forest school site. We will listen to safety instructions and use tools only as instructed by FS Lead.
- Listen - We will listen to each other and we will remain silent when the Forest School Lead speaks.
- Environment - Do not Leave a Trace in the forest environment. At forest School we respect our environment which means leaving it exactly how we found it. • Respect - We treat everyone with respect and kindness. We also respect our environment.
- Persistence - we aim to encourage children to keep trying even when they have not succeeded.

Along with the above we also expect children to follow the school's behaviour policy as well.

Any parent suspected of being under the influence when collecting or dropping off their children will be asked to remain on site until the correct authorities have arrived. This is a non-negotiable policy and all person attending site will be made aware of this policy.

Hazardous Plants & Fungi

Part of the risk assessment will be to identify any particularly hazardous plants and point them out to the group so that all members are aware of the dangers.

The sap or hairs from some plants can cause rashes and blistering when in contact with skin, or after the skin is then exposed to sunlight. Most rashes are caused by stinging nettles, though giant hogweed may also be a problem. Both of these plants are easily distinguishable and if either is seen growing on site all members of the group will be taught how to distinguish and avoid coming into contact with it.

Serious poisoning from ingestion of leaves, berries or mushrooms rarely occurs, even when curious children are involved. However, ingesting even small amounts of some species can cause nausea, vomiting, and stomach cramps; and large amounts are potentially fatal. Consequently, we disallow all participants from foraging and eating anything. We have a strict no licking or picking of plants and fungi. If a member of the group is exposed to a hazardous plant or fungi, so that they have a reaction a leader must be informed and appropriate First Aid given. If the nature of the reaction is more serious the Emergency & Serious Incident Procedure must be followed.

Tools and Equipment Policy

The principles of Forest school are to enable children to work independently and gain confidence. The use of tools helps the child to progress and learn valuable skills.

Our aim is to get children to work with tools in order to gain the sense of independence and enable them to advance their ability to identify and manage risk. The Forest School lead will assess each child to identify if they are able to work with tools safely. Once they have been identified as being able to, they will be able to use non bladed or bladed low risk tools.

The aim is to allow children to experiment with tools and equipment safely in a supervised way.

Children are permitted to work with tools on a 1:1 basis with a qualified member of staff.

Once a child is deemed competent by the Forest School Lead, they will be able to work alone with low risk non bladed tools although carefully monitored on a 1:5 ratio.

Tools available for use:

Bow saw, Knives, Palm drills

- All tools are cleaned, maintained and stored securely by the Forest School Lead.
- Prior to Sessions each tool will be checked by the Forest School lead for any damage.
- Tools are transported and stored in a secure container.
- Only tools provided by the Forest School Lead will be used within the session.
- All tools will be demonstrated to the children in the group and assessed on a 1:1 basis.
- All children must be able to have a good understanding of the Tool Talk guidelines as explained on the following page before being considered capable of using a tool.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

AXE	
USAGE	Chopping, splitting and carving wood.
TRANSPORTING	Sheath on in secure , waterproof tool bag or box. Locked in secure storage or in boot of car.
SAFETY CHECKS	Look for cracks in head, that is not loose, handle is firmly in place and doesn't wobble, handle has no splits or cracks in it, pin in head is in place, check sharpness of blade and for chinks out of metal.
PPE	Glove can be worn on non-dominant hand.
SAFETY NOTES	Stable chopping block. Appropriate clothing.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Holding axe in dominant hand. If standing; foot of tooled hand a step back. Body positioned to the side of the axe. If kneeling; respect position with leg opposite side to tool at a right angle to the ground.
PREPERATION	Ensure area front/behind clear. Clear area of anything likely to catch during swing. Operate within blood bubble.
	Hold head straight down, raise to shoulder height and strike straight down. Don't over stretch, have

AXE (cont.)	
CARRYING	Sheath on, blade forward, grasp the head behind the bit of the axe and cradle the handle in your elbow. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	Axes should be passed head first, supporting the head with your free hand.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Between use, an axe can be masked temporarily in the chopping block but make sure that the blade is securely wedged in the grain of the wood and that the haft does not pose a trip hazard. Do not plant the head in the ground. When finished, sheath axe and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Oil and rag, soft brush, wood.
MAINTENANCE	Sharpen with sharpening stone and strop. Apply oil with rag.
STORAGE	Store with sheath on. All axe handles facing the same way. Make sure cover is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

	before you strike. If holding wood, keep fingers out of way on reverse side. Only work half way up wood, then flip over, if required.
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TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

BILLHOOK	
USAGE	Cleaving; splitting wood.
TRANSPORTING	Sheath on in secure, waterproof tool bag or box. Locked in secure storage or in boot of car.
SAFETY CHECKS	Check tang is secure in shaft. Check that blade is sharp and free of chinks.
PPE	Glove can be worn on non-dominant hand.
SAFETY NOTES	Stable chopping block. Appropriate clothing:
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Stand with the hook next to your leg with the blade facing down and the hook facing forward.
PREPERATION	Ensure area front/behind clear. Clear area nothing likely to catch during swing. Operate within blood bubble.
SAFE ACTION	This is a two-person task; one person should hold the bill hook with one hand firmly on the handle and pinching the hook with the other. The blade should be placed at the top of the log to be split. The second person will use a mallet or piece of wood to strike the top of the bill hook and drive the blade into the wood.

BILLHOOK (cont.)	
CARRYING	Sheath on, hook forward, blade facing the ground. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	With the hook and blade facing down hold the top of the tool and pass the handle towards the other person.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Between use, a billhook can be masked temporarily in the chopping block but make sure that the blade is securely wedged in the grain of the wood and that the haft does not pose a trip hazard. Do not plant the head in the ground. When finished, sheath the tool and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Use a cloth and oil to remove dirt and moisture from the blade.
MAINTENANCE	Sharpen with sharpening stone. Apply oil with rag.
STORAGE	Store with sheath on. All handles facing the same way. Make sure sheath is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

BOWSAW	
USAGE	Cutting lengths of wood too large to be cut using secateurs or loppers. As a guide, this means cutting wood thicker than a two pence piece.
TRANSPORTING	Cover on in secure, waterproof tool bag or box. Locked in secure storage or in boot of car.
SAFETY CHECKS	Ensure hand guard in place. Check blade is secure and taut in saw; not warped. Check handle is not bent or damaged.
PPE	Glove worn on non-dominant hand.
SAFETY NOTES	Use of sturdy A-Frame saw horse where possible. Appropriate clothing. Use appropriate blade; <i>raker</i> blade for greenwood or <i>peg tooth</i> blade for seasoned/dry wood.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Spread feet to stabilise stance, one foot slightly in front of other, dominant arm needs to be able to take saw full length of blade over wood, other arm to hold wood still.
PREPERATION	Ensure area is clear; operate within blood bubble. Ensure wood to be cut is supported or held firmly.

BOWSAW (cont.)	
SAFE ACTION	To start cut, place non-sawing hand through bowsaw over blade, hold wood and draw the saw toward you three times to create a groove. Two-person sawing using large bow saw blade: instructor holds handle, participant at non-handle end only needs to pull; teaches effective sawing motion. Single-person sawing: cuts on the push & pull of the whole length of the blade. Once blade deep, place gloved finger to avoid jumping out.
CARRYING	With saw next to your leg, holding top frame, cover on, blade facing the ground. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	Keep the blade facing down; turn the handle to offer to the other person.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED When finished, cover the blade and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Soft brush to clean off and wipe with oily rag
MAINTENANCE	Difficult to sharpen due to shape of cutting edge. Keep spare blades in toolbox.
STORAGE	Store with blade cover on. All handles facing the same way. Make sure tool is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

PRUNING SAW	
USAGE	Pruning small branches on trees. Sawing/cutting small pieces of wood.
TRANSPORTING	Closed into protective case in secure, waterproof tool bag or box. Locked in secure storage or in boot of car.
SAFETY CHECKS	Check to see if any teeth are missing, check blade not cracked/damaged and lock is operational; decommission if faulty or damaged.
PPE	Glove worn on non-dominant hand.
SAFETY NOTES	Used only for sawing/cutting wood. Use of sturdy A-Frame saw horse where possible. Appropriate clothing.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Spread feet to stabilise stance, one foot slightly in front of other, dominant arm needs to be able to saw blade over wood, other arm to hold wood still.
PREPERATION	Ensure area is clear; operate within blood bubble. Ensure wood to be cut is supported or held firmly. When opening always open away from body firmly holding the handle in non dominant hand and ease the blade out with your dominant hand. (Listen for safety click)

PRUNING SAW (cont.)	
SAFE ACTION	When using with A-Frame saw horse your gloved non-working hand rests behind its natural guard. When using to prune trees keep supporting hand above blade and saw away from self. Always cut/saw away from hands, legs and body.
CARRYING	Close tool into protective case. TOOL SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	With tool closed into protective case.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Close tool into protective case. When finished, sheath the tool and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Use a cloth and oil to remove dirt and moisture from the blade.
MAINTENANCE	Difficult to sharpen due to shape of cutting edge. Decommission if damaged/faulty.
STORAGE	Store in tool box/bag, closed into protective case. Make sure tool is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

SHEATH KNIFE	
USAGE	Whittling and carving wood.
TRANSPORTING	Sheath on in secure, waterproof tool bag or box. Locked in secure storage or in boot of car. Carry proof of purpose i.e. Forest School Leader certificate.
SAFETY CHECKS	Look for cracks in blade, that is not loose, handle is firmly in place and doesn't wobble, sheath and handle have no splits or cracks, check sharpness of blade and for chinks out of metal.
PPE	Glove can be worn on non-dominant hand.
SAFETY NOTES	Stable chopping block, as required. Appropriate clothing.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Stable position, seated if possible. Hold the knife at the handle with fingers and thumb tucked away using a firm fist-like grip. Stabilise object to side of body working down toward the ground.
PREPERATION	Ensure area clear; operate within blood bubble. The wood/object should be held between yourself and the knife, with fingers clear.
SAFE ACTION	Hold the wood firmly with the non-working hand placed away from the blade. Ensure the blade is cutting away from the legs and the non-working hand is placed away from the blade. Move the blade away from the body pulling down & outwards with minimum force.

SHEATH KNIFE (cont.)	
CARRYING	By handle, with sheath clicked on. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	Handle first, with sheath clicked on.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Always sheath knife between use. When finished, sheath knife and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Use a cloth to wipe the knife, from the blunt end to the blade. Clean the case to keep it free from damp and debris. Clean the knife with a rag.
MAINTENANCE	Sharpen with sharpening stone and strop. Apply oil with rag.
STORAGE	Store in tool box/bag, sheath clicked on. Make sure tool is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

MALLETS & HAMMERS	
USAGE	Mallets to provide a force to tools that split wood and to hammer wooden pegs into ground. Hammers to hammer nails into wood.
TRANSPORTING	Tool bag or box.
SAFETY CHECKS	Check that mallet/hammer in good condition; that handle is not loose and head is secure.
PPE	None required.
SAFETY NOTES	Appropriate clothing.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Spread feet to stabilise stance, one foot slightly in front of other, dominant arm needs to be able to bring hammer/mallet down with varying force, dependant on task.
PREPERATION	Ensure area clear and free from other persons. Ensure front/back clear in case head flies. Clear area of anything likely to catch during swing.
SAFE ACTION	Bend elbow, lift arm to raise mallets and bring down on object with necessary force. Hammers can be controlled with wrist and forearm for tapping.

MALLET/HAMMER (cont.)	
CARRYING	Hold top of tool next to leg with handle facing downwards. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	Hold top of tool and offer the handle to the other person.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Place on surface with handle facing backwards. When finished, return to designated place.
CLEANING	Use a cloth to wipe down the tool if required.
MAINTENANCE	Repair or replace any broken or damaged mallets/hammers.
STORAGE	Store in tool box/bag. Make sure tool is dry and clean.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

PALM DRILL	
USAGE	Drilling holes into wood.
TRANSPORTING	Cork cover on in secure, waterproof tool bag or box.
SAFETY CHECKS	Check that palm drill is in good condition; that handle is not loose and drill bit is secure.
PPE	Glove can be worn on non-dominant hand, if appropriate.
SAFETY NOTES	Stable work surface required. Clamp if required. Appropriate clothing.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Stable position, seated if possible. Object to be drilled on flat surface at comfortable height.
PREPERATION	Ensure area clear; operate within blood bubble. The wood/object should be placed on stable work surface, such as a larger piece of wood.
SAFE ACTION	Hold the wood firmly with the non-working hand or clamp to ensure non-slip stability. Position drill bit in desired location, apply downward pressure and twist to start drilling. NEVER HOLD THE OBJECT TO BE DRILLED IN YOUR HAND WHILE DRILLING

PALM DRILL (cont.)	
CARRYING	By handle, with cork cover on, bit pointing down. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	Handle first, with cork cover on.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Always re-cork between use. When finished, apply cork cover and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Soft brush to clean off and wipe with oily rag
MAINTENANCE	Sharpen with sharpening stone or replace. Apply oil with rag.
STORAGE	Store in tool box/bag, cork cover on. Make sure tool is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

TOOL TALK GUIDELINES

SECATEURS & LOPPERS	
USAGE	Pruning twigs and small branches; cutting wood with diameter less than a two pence piece.
TRANSPORTING	Safety catch on in secure, waterproof tool bag or box. Locked in secure storage or in boot of car.
SAFETY CHECKS	Check handles are secure, mechanism joining two handles is secure, bolts are not loose, shuts and opens as it should, brace against body to check blade is in good condition.
PPE	Not required.
SAFETY NOTES	Appropriate clothing.
RATIO	1:1
SAFE STANCE	Feet shoulder width apart for a stable stance, work raised off the ground if possible. Stand with arms forward so body is not trapped.
PREPERATION	Ensure area clear; operate within blood bubble. Prepare position to cut with blade on the top. Carefully release safety catch. Check no other items are within cutting area (fingers, clothing, etc).
SAFE ACTION	Open handles (both hands on loppers, dominant hand on secateurs) and position blades around desired cut, bring handles together to cut.

SECATEURS & LOPPERS (cont.)	
CARRYING	Secateurs: With safety catch on, carry with jaws pointing to the ground. Loppers: With safety catch on, hold one shaft in your right hand and the other in your left hand. Keeping hold of the loppers bring your right arm in to your right side bent with your elbow a little further back than your body. Your left arm will now cross in front of you keeping hold of the other shaft. The loppers should now be flat in to the right side of your body with the jaws facing forwards and the length of the loppers parallel to the ground. TOOLS SHOULD NOT BE CARRIED AROUND SITE UNLESS BEING USED.
PASSING	Secateurs: With safety catch on, turn jaws towards you and offer handles to next person. Loppers: Holding one shaft in each hand, hold the loppers with the jaws pointing towards the ground. Offer the ends of the handles to the next person, only letting go when they hold both handles securely.
AFTER USE	DO NOT LEAVE TOOL UNATTENDED Always replace safety catch between use. When finished, sheath knife and return to designated place, tool bag or box.
CLEANING	Before storing check all jaws and hinges are in good working order, wiped clean and dried.
MAINTENANCE	Sharpen with sharpening stone. Apply oil with rag.
STORAGE	Store in tool box/bag, safety catch on. Make sure tool is dry and clean. Locked in a secure store, with restricted access.

First Aid Provision and Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency there will always be one fully qualified paediatric trained first aider on site.

Regular First Aid drills will take place to cover every eventuality and risk assessments will be reviewed and re-written accordingly.

All forest school sessions there will be a First Aid bag which will be carried. This will include:

- Contact Card
- Latex Gloves • Bandages
- Plasters • Burns Gel
- Burn Dressing • Dressings
- Eye wash
- Sewing kit
- Cotton wool
- Antiseptic wipes
- Tick Removers
- Sterile Water
- Cling Film
- Bites and Sting Cream/Spray

In addition to the First Aid Bag there will be a secure bag with children's individual medication and medical consent forms labelled.

Emergency procedures have been outlined in the Emergency and Serious Incident Policy.

All incidents where an injury or First Aid is required will be logged in an accident book and risk assessments reviewed if necessary.

Digital Photo and Video (Social Media and Website)

We understand that parents would like to see activities that are conducted at Forest School and to see how they children are enjoying the sessions. On the occasions we do take photos or videos the following is our Policy and Procedure;

- We will obtain signed consent forms from Parents/Guardians/Care Givers at the beginning of the academic year or when necessary. Where consent is not obtained, we will try our best to ensure that the child/children are not in the images taken and that if they are their faces will be blurred.
- No staff is permitted to take images of children with their personal device. If they are found to do so they will be reported Head Teacher to follow with Safeguarding procedure.

- All photographs and Videos will be taken by the Forest School Lead's Camera. A device solely for the use of Forest School.
- No names or the identity of the participants will be published on to websites, social media or leaflets that could identify the participants to the image on show.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion Policy

- At Forest School all persons are treated equally.
- We aim to provide a secure safe learning environment where children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued. • We ensure that our service is fully inclusive in meeting the needs of all children, particularly those defined in The Equality Act 2010 for instance: from their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability.
- Equal opportunity requires that everyone has an equal chance to develop themselves to their full potential and be safe and free from harm. • In Forest School we are open to all members of the community. We ensure all of our parents/guardians/referees are aware of our equal opportunities policy and all other relevant policies. We do not discriminate against a child or their family and will not prevent attendance to our sessions on the basis of colour, ethnicity, religion or social background. We do not discriminate against a disabled child or refuse a child attendance of sessions for reasons relating to disability. We take action against any discriminatory behaviour by staff or parents or other children. Displaying of openly discriminatory and possibly offensive materials, name calling, or threatening behaviour are unacceptable in our forest school and will be dealt with in accordance with the school's disciplinary action.

Cancellation Policy

Complaints

