

Fire Safety Policy



Last Review Date: September 2023

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Willow Banks Forest School aims to keep all children safe.

Campfires are an important part of Forest School and are used in many sessions.

Location

- Only designated sites will be used for campfires. These sites will always be sited away from low canopy branches.
- Campfire areas are enclosed by logs and/or bricks to make a Fire Pit to prevent the spread.

Positioning of Children and Adults

- Fire areas are surrounded by seating logs at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit. Exit paths are available at each corner.
- For younger children, additional poles are in place between the fire pit and seating logs to ensure children stay a safe distance from the fire pit.
- When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area immediately surrounding the fire without permission.
- Children will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area.
- Children must walk around the outside of the seating logs step over to sit down at all times. A fire will not be lit with a group until all children have demonstrated that they do this at all times.
- Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
- Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.
- Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.
- Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the children.
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if at all possible.

Fire Lighting

- Training has been provided to the Forest School Leader and Forest School Support Workers regarding the way to construct and light a fire.

Safety and Responsibility

- A Fire Blanket, bucket of water and Burns Kit must be sited close to the camp fire. Cling film is carried in the Fire Lighting Box.
- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader or Forest School Support Workers.
 - Fires are lit using a flint and steel to cotton wool and natural tinder. Or by using a bow drill collecting an ember on leather and placed in straw.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires.
- No plastics are to be burnt.
- If sessions involve children adding fuel to the fire, this must be done with one to one adult supervision.
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go over the fire.

Extinguishing

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session.
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash.
- The Forest School Leader and Forest School Support Workers should ensure that any large remains of wood, especially when using logs, are separated from one another.
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water using the circular method of working from the outside into the centre and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased.
- Large build ups of potash, from several fires, need to be dispersed. This must only be done when it has totally cooled, preferably the following day. It should be finely scattered to enable natural decomposition.