



Forest School Health and safety Policy

Safety at Forest School is paramount at all times

Forest School programmes may include activities that are considered higher risk than usual. We will minimise risk by following appropriate procedures, such as risk assessments, tool talks, 1:1 supervision with tools and training of camp fire rules. Taking risks is an important part of learning and development; we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment in which children learn to manage risk.

On Site Risk Assessment Procedure

- The Forest School site must be safe. Full risk assessment must be completed, we will seek to identify significant hazards and implement necessary controls to reduce risk to a safe level. PLEASE REFER TO RISK ASSESSMENT SECTION OF THE HANDBOOK
- Different activities and groups of children may require risk assessments to be modified.
- Completed risk assessments must be shared with other staff before a session takes place.
- Copies of risk assessments are kept in the Forest School Handbook.
- A final sweep of the Conservation Area will take place prior to a session.

Responsibilities of the Forest School Leader

To ensure that:

- Forest School is safe.
- Appropriate risk assessments have been completed.
- There has been a sweep/risk assessment of the Forest School area to check for hazards prior to any session.
- Adults have DBS.
- Tools are counted and in a secure tool box.
- Ratios are correct.
- Staff and volunteers have read Forest School Handbook.
- Tools are checked for safety, any maintenance dealt with or if necessary taken out of use.
- Accidents/incidents are reported.
- First aid kit, burns kit and fire blanket are available in a visible location known to staff and volunteers. Kits must be well stocked and replenished.
- To take lead in planning, delivering and evaluating the forest school programme.

Health and Safety Ground rules - Children

- Never eat anything you might find at Forest School.
- Large sticks/branches need to be dragged, not carried.
- Be aware of others.
- Use tools in the way you have been shown.
- Stay within boundaries.
- Once made aware of fire pit rules, they must be followed. The rules will always apply, even when there is no fire.

Insurance

Our Forest School site is covered by Lancashire County Council (located in handbook).

Tool use

Forest School includes offering activities that require the use of tools; they may include potato peelers, bow saw, hand drill, knives and a striker. Using tools enable the children to develop new skills and increase self-confidence. We aim to ensure all participants use tools safely with little risk to their health. The following guidelines are to be followed when using tools:

- Regular checks made to ensure tools are fit for use.
- When using tools, a designated area will be used and children will be made aware of this.
- Tool talks are given to the group prior to use.
- All tools must be counted at the start of the session and accounted for at the end.
- Tools will only be used when a level 3 Forest Leader is present.
- The use of tools with children will be carried out on a 1:1 basis with an adult.
- Tools should not be left unattended.
- Protected covers placed back on tools immediately after use.
- Safe working distances, two arms width and a tool length away.
- Awareness of the 'blood bubble' area when using tools.
- Personal protective equipment will be provided in the tool area (gloves).
- Tools are stored in a locked tool box in the strong room.

First Aid

The Forest School Leader must hold a valid outdoor first aid certificate.

Any minor injuries must be reported in the first aid book located in school staffroom. First aid treatment must only be carried out by a qualified first aid.

All cuts, grazes and open wounds must be covered when possible to avoid infection.

Major injuries that constitute 'reportable injuries' will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive via RIDDOR.

'Incidents' which includes when a child's behaviour puts themselves or others at risk will be reported in the Behaviour file located in the staffroom.

Forest School Leader must check for any known allergies and conditions and make staff/volunteers aware too. Ensure medication is available and is only administered by a first aider and a member of staff. If parents have provided sun cream, it is to be applied prior to the start of the session (children encouraged to apply own sun cream with supervision).

First aid kit, burns kit and fire blanket are available in a visible location know to staff and volunteers. Kits must be well stocked and replenished.

Fire Procedure

Camp fires are an important part of Forest School.

- Related safety equipment, including heat proof gloves, a burns kit, a fire blanket and water will be kept in close range to the fire.
- Smoke inhalation will be reduced by burning dead wood. Children will be encouraged to move if sat in direction of smoke.
- Children will only be allowed to light fires under direct supervision of Forest School leader using suitable equipment and materials.
- Fire must always be guarded by an adult.
- All fire must be extinguished at the end of the session - doused with water and stirred until all steam and smoke has ceased. Remains will be checked to see that they have cooled and safe to leave.

Location :

- The camp fire is enclosed by stones and then logs.

All children, staff and volunteers must be made aware of the fire pit rules in week 1, and must be adhered to even when there is no fire lit. A fire will not be lit until all children understand the rules:

1. Stand behind the log
2. Step over and sit down on the log
3. Stand up, turn around and step over the log
4. Children are not allowed to cross the circle or step into the circle
5. Children only allowed into the circle if invited by an adult
6. Never throw anything into the fire
7. Children should be knelt down if by the fire pit

Emergency fire procedure

In the event a fire became out of control:-

1. Assemble children by the gate and headcount
2. Exit Conservation area
3. Lead adult to call 999 AND send an additional adult to the Office.
If no signal is available then an adult MUST be sent to the Office to request 999 call.
4. Assemble on the top yard (near toy shed)
5. Second headcount

Forest School Leader becomes ill/injured

In the event of the Forest School Leader becoming ill or sustaining an injury, the session must end. An additional adult must take lead.

Procedures to be followed:-

1. Lead adult to gather children away from leader and fire pit and headcount. Lead all children out of conservation area and return to school.
2. Second adult to use Forest School Leader mobile to call for help, whether that is school office or 999.
3. Second adult to ensure FS Leader is comfortable and out of danger.
4. Extinguish the fire if lit.
5. Third adult available to send for help or assist with children.

Food Hygiene and eating

By following food hygiene principles, we are trying to avoid contamination of food by the following:

- Food should be prepared by someone who has a Food Hygiene certificate.
- Any cuts are covered with a plaster before preparing/serving food.
- Keep chemicals e.g hand gel in original container and store separately from food.
- All participants to use hand gel before eating.
- Any food that comes into contact with the ground must not be eaten.

Toileting

Children will be encouraged to go to the toilet before the session.

Children will be allowed to go back into school if the toilet is required.

Weather and Clothing

All adults attending Forest School will be advised on the appropriate clothing to wear for the weather and activities they will undertake.

Where possible we will provide suitable outdoor clothing for children up to the age of 6 years. Children above this age will be advised to wear old clothing, and for it to be suitable for all weathers. It is the Forest School leader's responsibility to check children are dressed suitably before participating in Forest School. For safety reasons if a child is unsuitably dressed and appropriate clothing can't be provided by school or parent/carer they will be unable to participate.

Emergency procedures

In case of injury to adults or children:

- In serious cases, 999 should be dialled using the mobile phone carried by the Forest School Leader.
- If the phone has no signal, an adult is to go to the office to call 999, ask the adult to return.
- The rest of the group will be supervised away from the incident and if in danger will be removed to safety.
- Inform Head Teacher
- Inform parents (responsibility of Office staff).

Emergency phone numbers:

School Office : 01695 574375

A Forest School session will only take place if other staff members are present in school.

Missing Child Procedure

Children are regularly reminded of forest school rules and boundaries. Regular head counts take place during the session.

On discovery of a missing child, gather children together using '1,2,3 where are you?' or sticky feet.

Whilst an adult remains with the group of children, a search of the vicinity must immediate commence.

Whilst search is underway, an adult notifies the school office (either on foot or mobile).

Office Manager will notify Headteacher or in absence, a member of SLT team and a decision will be made on whether to notify the police, then parent or guardian. Office Manager will use CCTV footage to help locate, find time and direction of missing child.