



# St Margaret's Collier Street Primary School

## Forest School Handbook



**Forest School Lead:** Mrs Anna Brooker



**Forest School Handbook**  
**Level 3 Certificate in Forest School Programme Leadership**

Unit 1 Learning Outcome 3.1

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**Declaration of review date**

This document should be reviewed by **January 2024**, earlier if any substantial material changes are necessary.



### **Declaration that the handbook has been read by supporting adults**

This policy has been read and agreed by the School Governors during January 2023. It has been read by all supporting adults working within the school (as at January 2023). It will be made available to all volunteer helpers at Forest School sessions.

### **Forest School's vision statement**

Forest School is about exploration, resilience and learning in a stimulating yet calm environment. It allows our children 'freedom with purpose' to connect with the natural environment and all the wonders within it. Forest School promotes risk taking, independence and self-awareness for all children, regardless of their academic abilities, providing opportunities to build confidence in their own capability.

Children are privileged to explore their ideas in a beautiful environment; relaxing, taking charge of their own learning and building practical and emotional skills. By slowing down, appreciating the 'small things' and noticing detail, they become more aware of their effect on the people and things around them. Learners are encouraged to take ownership of the woodland, assisting in maintaining the sustainability of the area by respecting the space and carefully preserving the habitats within it. We are especially proud of preserving swathes of bluebells which grace the site!

Furthermore, learning in a less structured manner allows more time for our children to develop their Christian and school values of friendship, respect, kindness, and fairness, supporting each other in their endeavours and working together in harmony.

We are already exceedingly proud of our children at St Margaret's! We hope that Forest School will only add to their amazing skills and aptitudes.

### **Communications**

#### **a. Social Media (including Digital Photo/Video)**

**All adults should be aware of the St Margaret's [Social Media Policy](#) which also applies to Forest School.**

However, specifically:

- Staff will only use school provided equipment (not personal devices):
  - to take photos or videos of learners in line with our image use policy.
  - to work directly with learners during lessons/educational activities.
  - to communicate with parents/carers.
- Where remote learning activities take place, staff will use school provided equipment. If this is not available, staff will only use personal devices with prior



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approval from the headteacher. Staff will follow clear guidance outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy.

- If a member of staff breaches our policy, action will be taken in line with our staff code of conduct and allegations policy.
- If a member of staff is thought to have illegal content saved or stored on a mobile phone or personal device or have committed a criminal offence using a personal device or mobile phone, the police will be contacted and the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) will be informed in line with our allegations policy.

#### **b. Contact with volunteers and parents**

Contact may be:

- Via written letters containing essential information or via school text and email system. More time-critical issues may be discussed over the telephone at times.
- Informal discussions may take place on occasion.

#### **c. Contact with stakeholders**

- Contact with the landowner will be made via email or telephone/text.
- Contact with members of the public (e.g. dog walkers) during an active session will take place in person with FSL where necessary.
- A sign, aimed at walkers using the adjacent footpath, will be posted at the entrance to the site, informing walkers of the use of the land and asking dog walkers to place their dogs on a lead.
- Any other queries will be directed via the school either to the Headteacher or FSL, as appropriate.

### **Equal Opportunities** *(Including Prevent Duty where appropriate)*

Where possible, children will be allowed fair and equal access to all affordances offered by Forest School. However, both in terms of building resilience and in terms of logistical constraints, it will be made clear to children that they may not always get a chance to take part in every activity.

Children will be allowed to choose to take their learning in a way that is appropriate and individual to them, giving them time and space to do this.

Adults will ensure that all activities and resources will be accessible for all wherever possible.

Please refer to the full [Equal Opportunities Policy](#)



### **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)**

- The few substances used within the sessions are of domestic standard - for household use - and therefore do not present any risk to health when used correctly.
- Any chemicals used will be correctly stored according to guidelines within the school building. Where hazardous chemicals need to be brought to site, FSL will either take responsibility for maintaining safe storage or nominate another school adult to do so.

### **Accident & Emergencies**

- FSL will be qualified and hold a current certificate in Outdoor First Aid.
- A fully stocked First Aid kit will be present on site at all times for use of FSL and other members of school staff (not volunteers, visitors or children, unless there is dire necessity). FSL to ensure this is adequately stocked and replenished.
- FSL to be aware of known medical conditions relating to the group of children involved (from parent consent form). Any individual inhalers/Epipens/medical resources will accompany the children to the Forest School site and be held by FSL or school staff members alongside the First Aid kit.
- Minor incidents will be assessed by FSL/school staff and dealt with on site where possible. To ensure the safety of all children, staff to assess whether or not other children need to cease activities whilst First Aid takes place and to organise this where necessary.

**In the event of an emergency, the following will take place:**

- FSL/staff member to stop the group immediately, tools and equipment to be stowed away.
- FSL to assess the situation and remove any hazards.
- FSL/staff member to call school office and/or emergency services (parents notified by office), as appropriate. Emergency services to be apprised of access issues and given 'What Three Words' grid reference for both the driveway entry gate and the Forest School site. (A reminder of information for emergency services will be placed in the First Aid box and the school office.)
- Where necessary, supporting adults to lead remaining children back to school.
- FSL to remain (with another staff member wherever possible) on site to administer First Aid or await emergency services.
- Member of school staff to meet ambulance at gate adjacent to school for guidance to nearest access point
- If parent/nominated person has not arrived, member of school staff to accompany child to hospital (ideally carrying the signed parental consent to act in 'loco parentis', if this is accessible)



### **Incident reporting**

- FSL is responsible for notifying Headteacher/DSL of any note-worthy incidents.
- An accident/near miss/incident book to be kept in an emergency folder on site at all times. Incidents and injuries should be logged by the adult dealing with the issue as soon as is reasonably practicable after the incident.
- All adults should be aware that, should they feel the FSL or other adults are behaving in a dangerous manner or allowing dangerous play, they should discuss this in confidence with the HT/DSL.

**Please refer to School [Health and Safety Policy](#), especially section C7 re: RIDDOR 2013**



### **Adverse Weather Conditions**

Following the Forest School ethos of 'There is no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing' it is the intention that Forest School should take place in almost all weathers subject to the safety of the children concerned.

There may be some occasions where it may not be safe or practical to go ahead with a planned session due to extreme weather (e.g. storms, high winds, extreme cold).

- FSL to liaise with HT for a final decision as to the viability of a session either the day before or as early as reasonably possible on the day.
- Parents to be notified as soon as reasonably practicable via school email/text system if cancellation is made ahead of time.
- Should the weather take a sudden turn, the session may be cancelled with little notice and children will be offered alternative classroom activities or be absorbed back into their normal classroom.
- The safety and wellbeing of the children should be the guiding factor in a decision to cancel.
- Should a child attend with clothing deemed insufficient for the weather conditions, efforts may be made to secure more clothing from parents. If none are available, the child may have to miss the session for their own safety and comfort.

### **Behaviour**

Forest School is an opportunity for children to be at one with nature and – whilst we welcome carefully considered, **adventurous** play - we ask children to consider the safety and respect of others at all times. The three main principles are respect for yourself, for others and for the environment.

- We expect kindness, consideration and respect for the instructions given by adults, especially in relation to safety issues.
- Staff will remain vigilant of children at all times and deal with areas of behaviour sooner rather than later.
- If there is an obvious threat of danger to self or others, staff must aim to stop this straight away and remove the child from the activity to talk about the dangers of their actions, ways to improve on it and be encouraged to make an apology, if appropriate.
- Where behaviour is deemed unsafe by adults, the FSL may take the decision to withdraw a child from their activity or, in serious cases, the whole session.
- Whilst we recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication and will always aim to work with a child, we must consider the safety of the group. If FSL considers a child's behaviour an ongoing danger to others, they will liaise with HT to consider a longer exclusion from Forest School.

For further information, please refer to St Margaret's [Behaviour Policy](#)



## **Cancellation and Contingency**

We aim to allow children to experience the woodland in all elements. In some circumstances, however, we may shorten a session due to severe conditions or damage to the site.

- An alternative safe area (e.g. school field) may be offered, if appropriate
- In the event of cancellation, parents and children will be notified as the earliest practicable convenience using the school's usual methods of contact.
- Dependent on circumstance, children may be offered an indoor craft/play activity on the day, or the entire session may be rescheduled at the FSL's discretion.

## **Safeguarding**

Please refer to whole-[school policy](#) which also applies to Forest School

All adults participating in Forest School should have read and understood the policy

### **a. Anti-bullying**

Forest School prides itself on the principles of respect, mutual tolerance and consideration of others. A positive environment will be encouraged by establishing clearly defined standards of expected behaviour and promotion of effective relationships with all.

Children will be encouraged to treat each other and property with respect to allow themselves and others the freedom to learn without discrimination or harassment.

- Complaints by children are to be taken seriously
- All adults to report bullying allegations to FSL and/or HT
- FSL assumes responsibility to discuss any bullying incidents with CT/HT, as appropriate.

### **b. Confidentiality**

In practice, there are few circumstances where absolute confidentiality is offered in our school. We aim to keep a balance between the safety, wellbeing and protection of our pupils and staff.

- All staff and volunteers must adhere to the school [confidentiality policy](#)
- Medical and personal information to remain confidential wherever possible.
- Adults to be made aware of medical details, including allergies affecting the children attending on a need-to-know basis and kept confidentially within the Forest School.
- Parents will be asked to agree to their child being photographed or filmed for observational or other school purposes.
- Any adults attending with any relevant medical conditions must disclose to the FSL. This information will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.





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- The school mobile phone will be used for emergency purposes.
- Volunteers are welcome to give feedback to the FSL regarding children, but are reminded to adhere to the school confidentiality policy when outside school.



**c. Child/vulnerable adults protection**

**See Section 5 of School Safeguarding Policy - link**

- FS practitioners should regard their duty of care when working with children as extremely important, to ensure all individuals are safe and protected.
- All adults involved in Forest School will be made aware of Health and Safety and risk assessments in respect of activities and should be apprised of the School Safeguarding Policy.
- FSL and school staff have an enhanced DBS check. Regular volunteers should have a current DBS certificate. Where an occasional volunteer or visitor does not hold a DBS, they should not be left unsupervised with children.
- School procedures for reporting safeguarding concerns are to be followed at all times and in accordance with the School Safeguarding Policy. (Volunteers should be aware that the Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr P Ryan, Headteacher.)

**d. Data Protection**

St Margaret's Collier Street School is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information. We take care to protect the privacy of our staff, pupils, parents and volunteers.

Information will be used in accordance with the [School GDPR](#) notice

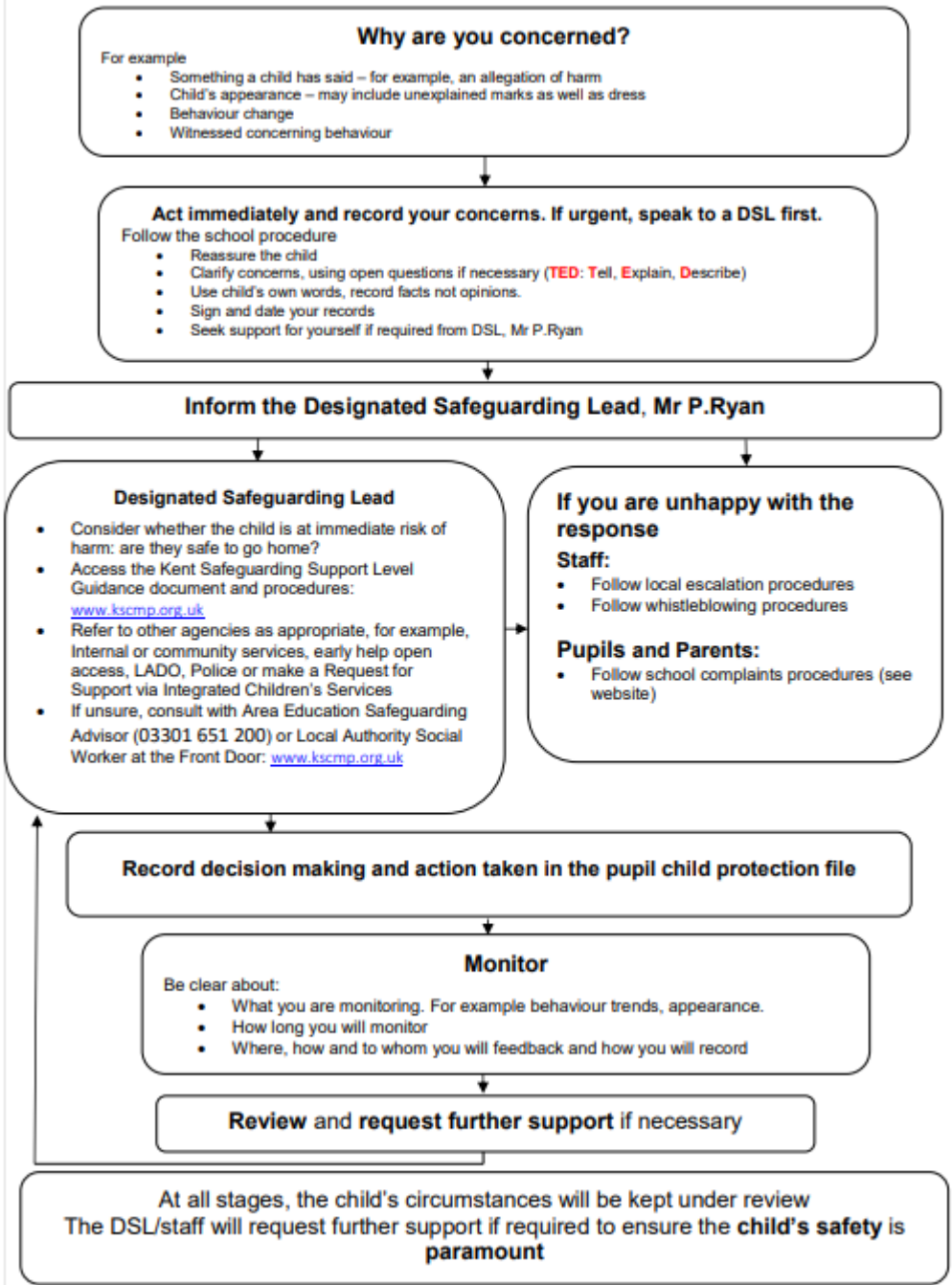
**e. DBS**

As stated in the School Safeguarding Policy, adults delivering sessions will all have an enhanced level DBS check. Any regular volunteers attending will also have a DBS check. Where a volunteer does not possess a current DBS, the adult will not be left unsupervised with children.

**f. Disclosure**

Please follow the procedure below, taken from the school [Safeguarding Policy](#):

**What to do if you have a welfare concern in St. Margaret's**

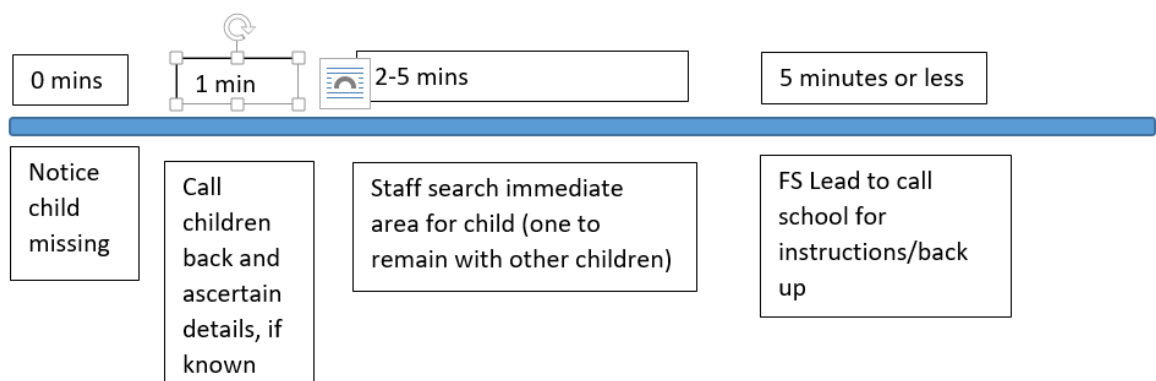


- Yellow forms for reporting a disclosure to DSL should be completed immediately following the disclosure **and before talking to any other adults** (– you may, though, indicate to FSL that you need a break to complete a yellow form or to speak directly to Mr Ryan). Yellow concern forms are located in the First Aid Kit.

### g. Lost or Missing Young Person

- In the event of a lost or missing child, FSL/school staff will call all children back to the shelter area and ascertain who is missing. Children are to remain quiet and stay in this area until the child is found or further help arrives.
- Other adults will perform a 'quick sweep' of the immediate area, calling the child's name and checking any obvious hiding places.
- If the child is not found within a few minutes, a telephone call will be made to the school in order to summon other adults and initiate the school's 'lost child' procedure. ([See policy](#))

Approximate expected timeline:



### h. Staff ratios

- For overall supervision of a session the adult-to-learner ratio should usually be 1:5 in KS1, 1:6 in KS2. This should comprise the FSL and at least one other staff member. Any further adults may be volunteers.
- For staff ratios for tool-use activities, please refer to the laminated tool-use instruction sheet in the toolbox. **Volunteers should not supervise tool-use** (except palm drills and screwdrivers); please refer the child to a staff member.
- **Where children have 1:1 support within school, a prior decision will be made in consultation with the Headteacher whether the 1:1 support needs to continue into Forest School sessions. Due consideration will be given to safety and wellbeing concerns. If the 1:1 support is considered necessary, this will be in addition to normal adult:child ratio.**

### i. Staff and volunteers roles and responsibilities

- All staff, volunteers and other adults are responsible for ensuring the safety of the children at Forest School
- Adults should be vigilant to potential dangers and discuss any concerns with FSL or HT, as appropriate. Volunteers: if in doubt, stop the activity before the discussion takes place.



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- Adults should protect themselves and the children in their care by attempting to be within sight of another adult wherever possible and avoiding any secluded locations within the woodland.
- Only staff members should deal with matters which could predictably lead to a safeguarding concern (e.g. toileting issues, taking photographs). Those staff members remain bound by the school's safeguarding policy throughout Forest School.
- Visiting staff and helpers are considered invaluable in the general support of children in Forest School, but should not instruct children on tool use or fire-lighting, due to issues of safety and liability. Likewise invited observers and visitors.
- Should a child make a disclosure of harm to you during Forest School, regardless of your position or role, you should inform the DSL/HT – Mr Paul Ryan – immediately.

#### **j. Visiting staff and helpers**

- Visiting staff and helpers should read the laminated 'Advice to volunteers' sheet situated in the First Aid kit. If you have any queries or concerns at any time, please speak to the Forest School Lead or a school-employed adult.
- All staff, volunteers and other adults are responsible for ensuring the safety of the children at Forest School
- Adults should be vigilant to potential dangers and discuss any concerns with FSL or HT, as appropriate. Volunteers: if in doubt, stop the activity before the discussion takes place.
- Adults should protect themselves and the children in their care by attempting to be within sight of another adult wherever possible and avoiding any secluded locations within the woodland. Only staff members should deal with matters which could predictably lead to a safeguarding concern (e.g. toileting issues, taking photographs).
- Visiting staff and helpers are considered invaluable in the general support of children in Forest School, but should not instruct children on tool use or fire-lighting, due to issues of safety and liability.
- Should a child make a disclosure of harm to you during Forest School, regardless of your position or role, you should inform the DSL/HT – Mr Paul Ryan – immediately.

#### **k. Invited visitors and observers**

- Please make yourself known to the Forest School Lead as soon as you arrive on site
- Visitors should read the laminated 'Advice to volunteers' sheet situated in the First Aid kit, even if the reason for your visit does not include interacting with the children. If you have any queries or concerns at any time, please speak to the Forest School Lead or a school-employed adult.
- All staff, volunteers and other adults are responsible for ensuring the safety of the children at Forest School



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- Adults should be vigilant to potential dangers and discuss any concerns with FSL or HT, as appropriate. Visitors: if in doubt, stop the activity before a discussion takes place: safety is of utmost importance. Do not feel that it is not your place to decide; we would rather stop to discuss a potential problem than have an accident occur.
- Adults should protect themselves and the children by attempting to be within sight of another adult wherever possible and avoiding any secluded locations within the woodland. Only staff members should deal with matters which could predictably lead to a safeguarding concern (e.g. toileting issues, taking photographs).
- Visitors/observers should not instruct children on activities, tool use or fire-lighting, due to issues of safety and liability.
- Should a child make a disclosure of harm to you during Forest School, regardless of your position or role, you should inform the DSL/HT – Mr Paul Ryan – immediately. The Forest School Lead will advise you how to do this: just say 'I have a safeguarding concern'.



### **Contact with dog walkers and other members of the public during sessions.**

The Forest School site is close to a public footpath which is occasionally used by dog walkers.

- A sign regarding Forest School use will be posted at both entry points to the woodland, asking people to put their dog on a lead whilst passing through Forest School and requesting that they warn of their presence with a call.
- Staff will remain vigilant to unexpected visitors and FSL will make several discreet headcounts during a session to ensure the children's safety
- Should a child be using tools at this time, the staff member or FSL should consider whether to pause tool use until the visitor has passed by.
- If an aggressive or obviously unsafe visitor were to arrive on site, the FSL/staff members should take 'common-sense' measures to keep the children safe, dependent on the situation. This would require stowing any tools and may include removing the children back to school or telephoning school for advice.
- Children are taught that they should return to the fire circle when given a specific 'call' by the FSL. This can be used to recall children if adults are concerned at any time.

### **Complaints**

We take complaints very seriously. We would hope that any concerns can be ironed-out before a complaint is necessary.

Whilst the FSL is very open to listening to any minor concerns you may have, any complaints should be addressed to Mr Paul Ryan, Headteacher.

Please contact him at the school, on 01892-730264 or by email: [office@collier-street.kent.sch.uk](mailto:office@collier-street.kent.sch.uk).

### **Digital Photo/Video**

Please refer to the 'Communications' section on pages 3 and 4 of this document.

### **Environmental Considerations**

We care very much about preserving the woodlands used by St Margaret's Primary School and understand that any activity carried out here will have impact on this environment. We wish to keep this to a minimum and, working with the farmer who has kindly loaned the area, we have a Woodland Management Plan in place.

**a. Ecological Impact Assessments for all activities**

• Activity	Impact			Mitigation
	Woodland Floor	Shrub Layer	Canopy	
Setting up shelter	Trampling/compaction	Possible damage to tree bark layer from paracord	Unaffected if fire site is chosen carefully (see below)	Children put up shelter under supervision Reminders to respect trees/environment
Collecting firewood	Damage to habitats by removal of dead wood	Habitat destruction (standing deadwood)		Only take what is need from sacrificial area agreed with landowner Avoid any obvious nesting areas
Cooking fire	Scorching/burning Damage to underground root system Habitat destruction	Burning/smoke damage Damage/disturbance to habitats	Affected by smoke	Follow policies and procedures document re: fire management Dig out and line fire site Site fire in an open area (canopy not closed above it)
Wood cutting/Green woodworking	Habitat disturbance	Denuding shrub layer		Try to stick to desire lines Only take what's needed and try to choose species which are prolific on site Avoid areas where animals are nesting
Running around games	Trampling/compaction Habitat destruction	Broken/damaged habitats	Noise disturbance may affect nesting birds, etc	Reminders to children to respect nature Vary the areas used
Den building	Dragging heavy branches may affect habitats	Damage to trees/habitats within them		Choose a sacrificial area for wood cutting and den building
Tree climbing/building tree house dens	Trampling Habitat disturbance	Damage to trees/habitats within them	Noise/movement of trees may affect nesting birds	Children reminded to be respectful – do not climb trees whose bark is already compromised and





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				look for nests before climbing
Mud kitchen/mud play	Reduction in soil caused by mud hole will affect insect habitats	'Dumping' of lumps of unwanted mud on shrub layer – potential damage to habitats/plants		Carefully choose a single mud-hole site Try to re-use/return mud where possible Advise children on safe disposal or retention of mud prior to activity where possible
Woodland craft	Denuding plants/fallen seeds, acorns etc Trampling Affecting habitats	Denuding plants Affecting habitats		Identify any habitats to avoid prior to task Use fallen items where possible Children restricted to how much they should pick (if at all) Stick to a set area/desire lines
All activities involving movement around site	Trampling (especially of bluebells on this site)			Agreed with landowner to set aside a large no-go area from November to July
Slack line	Trampling/compaction	Damage to tree bark	Possible movement of trees retaining the slackline – affects nesting sites	Use tree protector strips when attaching slack line Re-site slack line periodically if ground appears compacted/eroded Check for nests before erecting slackline



### **Food Hygiene**

We care very much about the safety and health of our students and will do what we can to ensure hygiene in the woodland environment.

- The FSL holds a current Food Hygiene Certificate.
- Parents will be asked to indicate any food allergies on their Forest School consent form. This information will be taken seriously by staff.
- Children will be encouraged to wash hands before eating/preparing food and after using the bathroom.

### **Hazardous Plants & Fungi**

- Forest School operates a 'no picky-licky' rule, with children regularly reminded not to pick, taste or eat anything without prior permission. This rule will be reinforced periodically and, in particular, when an obvious hazard is present (e.g. lots of fungi present on forest floor, poisonous berries, etc)
- Should there be ingestion of a potentially hazardous item, the child may be returned to school for observation, and/or parents called.
- **If foraging is taking place, children will be clearly instructed which plants they can and can't pick, dependent on the aims of the session.**

### **Manual Handling**

- All staff have received manual handling training within school and should follow the guidance given
- Volunteers should defer to staff in lifting or moving any heavy/awkward loads and should only ever move items they are confident to move without risk of injury

### **Emotional Wellbeing**

In Forest School, we aim to provide a positive, holistic learning environment based on each child's needs, promoting the safety and wellbeing of children at all times. We hope that the tasks and opportunities provided will:

- Enable children to be independent, self-motivated and considerate to others.
- Develop self-esteem, confidence and an enthusiastic disposition to learning, through the opportunity to complete achievable, but sometimes ambitious, tasks.
- Provide time for quiet thought and reflection, ultimately leading to creative expression of their own interests.
- Allow children to experiment in their problem-solving, experience challenges and build resilience in finding alternative methods.
- Help each child to build self-esteem, confidence, self-control and independence.



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- Encourage good relationships and interpersonal skills/
- Promote honesty, politeness and kindness.



## Play

In Forest School, we view play as the child's work. Through play, a child can develop social and language skills, understanding of the world, planning and problem solving techniques, confidence in their own abilities and judgment and much more.

A child-centred approach that is responsive to the needs and interests of children will help facilitate learning and a connection with the natural environment in a holistic way. Play AND choice are an integral part of the learning process, these should be recognised and valued by all supporting adults. A commitment to play and choice will provide stimulus for all learning styles and dispositions. Through careful observations and attuning to the needs and interests of individuals, FS sessions can and should be child led, 'in the moment', as much as is reasonably practical. These 'moments' should be seized upon to allow the natural development of individuals' curiosities and insights.

- Supporting adults will aim to give children freedom to make mistakes in a safe way, whilst avoiding harm occurring. It is our objective to help empower children to manage risks for themselves.
- We aim to promote thoughtful attitudes towards working and playing safely, allowing opportunities for reflection in which children consider the impact of their own actions on themselves and on others.

These are the Playwork Principles to which we aspire:

- 1 All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities.
- 2 Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
- 3 The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
- 4 For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
- 5 The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
- 6 The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
- 7 Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
- 8 Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.



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- **Risk Management, RBA**

**Overview of Risk-Benefit Assessment**

<b>Project/ proposal name:</b>	St Margaret's School Forest School Provision		
<b>Type of assessment (tick one box):</b>	<i>Designer</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>Provider/manager</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>Post-installation</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<i>Monitoring</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Assessor:</b>	<i>Name</i>	Anna Brooker	
	<i>Position</i>	Teaching Assistant/ Forest School Lead	
	<i>Date</i>	21/12/2022	
<b>Description and location of facility, feature, activity or equipment:</b>			
Woodland behind school field, belonging to Mr Stuart Highwood			
<b>Date to review risk-benefit assessment:</b>			
21/12/2024			
<b>Signature of senior worker/manager:</b>			



**All the tool use RBAs are amendments**

**Activity: Tool Use – Safety Whittler**

<p><b>Benefits:</b></p>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief Challenging self to take on daunting tasks Planning, design and engineering skills Gross and fine motor skills Improved coordination Developing communication and language Teamwork and cooperation skills Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner Improved observation and concentration Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p>
<p><b>Risks</b> (<i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i>):</p>	<p>Slipping whilst cutting, causing injury to self/others Reckless/unfocused behavior, causing injury Eye injuries from wood shavings, etc</p>
<p><b>Local factors:</b></p>	<p>Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention</p>
<p><b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b></p>	<p>Children use potato peelers in cookery</p>
<p><b>Decision:</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b></p>	<p>Injury: Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity. Gloves/suede aprons available, if wanted, but probably unnecessary for safety whittlers in most cases. Children taught to lean forwards (away from femoral artery area) whilst whittling. High adult:child ratio (adult discretion for this tool – suggested 1:2 for youngest children using for the first time, rising to 1:5 for UKS2 children). Children taught 'blood bubble' rules.</p>



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	<p>Whittling to take place sitting down where possible.          Children advised how to pass tools safely to an adult/safely stow tools after use.          School adults only to supervise tool use.,          First Aid kit on site</p> <p>Local factors:          Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency</p>
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	<p>FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses          Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers          HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.</p>

**Activity: Tool Use – Bow Saw**

<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief          Challenging self to take on daunting tasks          Planning, design and engineering skills          Gross and fine motor skills          Improved coordination          Developing communication and language          Teamwork and cooperation skills          Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner          Improved observation and concentration          Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology          Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p>
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	<p>Slipping whilst cutting, causing injury to self/others          Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury          Eye injuries from wood shavings, etc          Injury whilst carrying tool</p>
<b>Local factors:</b>	<p>Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for</p>



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	medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children use hacksaws in DT occasionally
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	<p>Injury:</p> <p>Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks</p> <p>Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity.</p> <p>Gloves/suede aprons available, if wanted.</p> <p>Children taught place hand through saw frame whilst cutting to keep helper hand safe from accidental poor placement.</p> <p>High adult:child ratio (1:1 – one adult to one tool, up to two children - for this tool)</p> <p>Children taught 'blood bubble' rules.</p> <p>Children advised how to pass tools safely to an adult/safely stow tools after use.</p> <p>School adults only to supervise tool use.,</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p> <p>Local factors:</p> <p>Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency</p>
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	<p>FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers</p> <p>HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.</p>

**Activity: Tool Use – Loppers**

<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief</p> <p>Challenging self to take on daunting tasks</p> <p>Planning, design and engineering skills</p> <p>Gross and fine motor skills</p> <p>Improved coordination</p> <p>Developing communication and language</p> <p>Teamwork and cooperation skills</p>
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	<p>Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner</p> <p>Improved observation and concentration</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology</p> <p>Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p>
<p><b>Risks</b> (taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below):</p>	<p>Slipping whilst cutting, causing injury to self/others</p> <p>Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury</p> <p>Eye injuries from wood splinters or from point of lopper blades</p> <p>Injury whilst carrying tool</p>
<p><b>Local factors:</b></p>	<p>Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention</p>
<p><b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b></p>	<p>Some older children use secateurs in Gardening Club</p>
<p><b>Decision:</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b></p>	<p><b>Injury:</b></p> <p>Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks</p> <p>Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity.</p> <p>Gloves/suede aprons available, if wanted.</p> <p>Children taught safe usage and closely supervised by an adult</p> <p>High adult:child ratio (1:1 for this tool)</p> <p>Children taught 'blood bubble' rules.</p> <p>Children advised how to pass tools safely to an adult/safely stow tools after use.</p> <p>School adults only to supervise tool use.,</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p> <p><b>Local factors:</b></p> <p>Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency</p>
<p><b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b></p>	<p>FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers</p> <p>HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.</p>



## Activity: Tool Use – Knife

<p><b>Benefits:</b></p>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief          Challenging self to take on daunting tasks          Planning, design and engineering skills          Gross and fine motor skills          Improved coordination          Developing communication and language          Teamwork and cooperation skills          Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner          Improved observation and concentration          Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology          Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p>
<p><b>Risks</b> (<i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i>):</p>	<p>Slipping whilst cutting, causing injury to self/others          Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury          Eye injuries from wood splinters or from point of lopper blades          Injury whilst carrying tool</p>
<p><b>Local factors:</b></p>	<p>Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention</p>
<p><b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b></p>	<p>Children use knives during cookery</p>
<p><b>Decision:</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b></p>	<p><b>Injury:</b>          Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks          Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity.          Suede aprons/ glove for helper hand used          Children taught safe usage and closely supervised by an adult – whittle leaning elbows on knees, away from femoral artery; careful demonstration of battening, where needed          High adult:child ratio (1:2 for this tool)          Children taught 'blood bubble' rules.          Children advised how to pass tool to an adult immediately after use.          School adults only to supervise tool use.,          First Aid kit on site</p>



	Local factors: Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.

### **Activity: Tool Use – Hatchet/axe or Billhook**

<b>Benefits:</b>	Improved self-confidence and self-belief Challenging self to take on daunting tasks Planning, design and engineering skills Gross and fine motor skills Improved coordination Developing communication and language Teamwork and cooperation skills Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner Improved observation and concentration Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology Experiencing failure and adapting to it
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	Slipping whilst cutting, causing injury to self/others Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury Eye injuries from wood splinters Injury whilst carrying tool
<b>Local factors:</b>	Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	None
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	Injury: Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity.



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	<p>Suede aprons available, if wanted.</p> <p>Children taught safe usage and closely supervised by an adult</p> <p>High adult:child ratio (1:1 per tool, up to two children)</p> <p>Children taught 'blood bubble' rules.</p> <p>Children advised how to pass tool to an adult immediately after use.</p> <p>School adults only to supervise tool use.,</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p> <p>Local factors:</p> <p>Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency</p>
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	<p>FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers</p> <p>HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.</p>

## Activity: Tool Use – Palm Drill

<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief</p> <p>Challenging self to take on daunting tasks</p> <p>Planning, design and engineering skills</p> <p>Gross and fine motor skills</p> <p>Improved coordination</p> <p>Developing communication and language</p> <p>Teamwork and cooperation skills</p> <p>Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner</p> <p>Improved observation and concentration</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology</p> <p>Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p>
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	<p>Slipping whilst drilling, causing injury to self/others</p> <p>Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury</p> <p>Eye injuries from wood splinters</p> <p>Injury whilst carrying tool</p>



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<b>Local factors:</b>	Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children occasionally use hole-making tools in DT
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	<p>Injury:</p> <p>Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks</p> <p>Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity.</p> <p>Children taught safe usage and closely supervised by an adult .</p> <p>Children advised how to pass tool to an adult immediately after use.</p> <p>School adults only to supervise tool use.,</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p> <p>Local factors:</p> <p>Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency</p>
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	<p>FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers</p> <p>HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.</p>

**Activity: Tool Use – Hammers/nails, Screwdrivers/screws**

<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief</p> <p>Challenging self to take on daunting tasks</p> <p>Planning, design and engineering skills</p> <p>Gross and fine motor skills</p> <p>Improved coordination</p> <p>Developing communication and language</p> <p>Teamwork and cooperation skills</p> <p>Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner</p> <p>Improved observation and concentration</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology</p> <p>Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p>
<b>Risks (taking into</b>	Slipping whilst hammering, causing injury to self/others



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<i>account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below):</i>	Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury Eye injuries from wood splinters/nails/screws Injury whilst carrying tool
<b>Local factors:</b>	Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children occasionally use hammers/screwdrivers in DT
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	Injury: Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity. Children taught safe usage and closely supervised by an adult. Children advised how to pass tool to an adult immediately after use. School adults only to supervise tool use. First Aid kit on site  Local factors: Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.

**Activity: Tool Use – Gimlet/Hand drills**

<b>Benefits:</b>	Improved self-confidence and self-belief Challenging self to take on daunting tasks Planning, design and engineering skills Gross and fine motor skills Improved coordination Developing communication and language Teamwork and cooperation skills
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	<p>Learning to self-assess risks in a controlled manner</p> <p>Improved observation and concentration</p> <p>Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology</p> <p>Experiencing failure and adapting to it</p> <p>Building resilience</p>
<p><b>Risks</b> (<i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i>):</p>	<p>Slipping whilst drilling, causing injury to self/others</p> <p>Reckless/unfocused behaviour, causing injury</p> <p>Eye injuries from wood splinters</p> <p>Injury whilst carrying tool</p>
<p><b>Local factors:</b></p>	<p>Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention</p>
<p><b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b></p>	<p>Children occasionally use hole-making tools in DT</p>
<p><b>Decision:</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b></p>	<p><b>Injury:</b></p> <p>Tools introduced gradually to children using set tool talks</p> <p>Laminated 'Tool Talk' sheets in tool box stating correct procedure and adult/child ratio for each activity.</p> <p>Children taught safe usage and closely supervised by an adult .</p> <p>Children advised how to pass tool to an adult immediately after use.</p> <p>School adults only to supervise tool use.,</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p> <p><b>Local factors:</b></p> <p>Robust procedure for assistance in the event of an emergency</p>
<p><b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b></p>	<p>FS Lead to liaise with HT over any serious incidents/near misses</p> <p>Ongoing evaluation re: safe practice/unexpected dangers</p> <p>HT to be on site throughout FS Pilot Programme to that he has a thorough working understanding of the use of tools in FS.</p>



- **Activity: Running-around games/general movement around the site**

<b>Benefits:</b>	Gross motor skills Improved coordination Developing communication and language Teamwork, planning and cooperation skills Improved empathy (by imagining what others may be thinking/seeing, etc.) Improved observation and concentration Knowledge and understanding of the natural world/ecology
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	Uneven ground , causing twisted/broken limbs, falling down injuries Protruding tree branches/twigs, injury to eyes, scratches, snagging clothing, etc. Hide and seek, etc. – potential lost child Risks to others – bumped heads, collision injuries and similar danger to others including – potentially - walkers on site Ticks/insect bites/stings
<b>Local factors:</b>	Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children already play similar games at playtime/PE
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	Injury: Children advised of uneven ground, rabbit holes, tree roots, low branches, etc. Seasonal sweeps of area to trim back obvious growing hazards Children regularly reminded to take care of others when rushing around First Aid kit on site at all times – includes water for eye flushing Risk to ‘outsiders’ – notice placed at both entrances to the site warning of FS activity Ticks – if ticks are noticed, parents will be contacted to take the child home/remove tick themselves  Lost child: Children taught to come back to FS lead’s call Robust Lost Child procedure





	Local factors: Robust planning for assistance in the event of emergency
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead and HT to liaise over any note-worthy incidents Ongoing informal evaluation of safe practice, by HT

**Activity: Fire lighting (flint and steel)**

<b>Benefits:</b>	Improved self-confidence and self-belief Improved perseverance/resilience Learning to approach an exciting task in a calm and safe manner Fine and gross motor skills Knowledge and understanding of the triangle of fire/physics Developing communication and language Sense of satisfaction if achieved, learning management of negative feelings/frustration if unsuccessful
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	Slight burns from fire Potential minor injury from misjudged striking action Irresponsible behavior around fire; similar injuries as mentioned in 'cooking fire' risk/benefit assessment
<b>Local factors:</b>	- (serious emergency unlikely, but as above)
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	-
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	Injury: Children taught to use respect position when close to fire Adult supervision around fire lighting Fire bucket on hand at all times Water available on site to cool any burns/scalds, some burn gel in First Aid kit First Aid kit on site at all times



<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead and HT to liaise over any note-worthy incidents Ongoing informal evaluation of safe practice, by HT
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### Activity: Craft activities, inc. mud play

<b>Benefits:</b>	<p>Fine and gross motor skills</p> <p>Planning, imagination and creative skills</p> <p>Learning to dynamically self-assess and make changes to initial plan</p> <p>Developing communication and language</p> <p>Sense of satisfaction/ improved resilience when things go wrong</p> <p>Improved self-confidence and sense of achievement where tool-use is involved</p> <p>Improved knowledge of flora and fauna where afforded activities are nature-themed</p>
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	<p>Injuries:</p> <p>Lacerations, splinters, stick-injuries etc. from tool-use</p> <p>Potential eye injuries from flying splinters/components</p> <p>Bacterial infections, cuts and bites from mud and its contents</p>
<b>Local factors:</b>	-
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children habitually participate in craft at school and sometimes play with mud in the playground (they don't usually use tools for these though)
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	<p>Injury:</p> <p>Children advised on safe tool use regularly (tool talks)</p> <p>Adult supervision of craft area to help avoid incidents</p> <p>Mud – children advised to cover any cuts beforehand and wash hands after mud use</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p> <p>(see tool use risk/benefit assessment for more detail)</p>



<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead and HT to liaise over any note-worthy incidents Ongoing informal evaluation of safe practice, by HT
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**Activity: ‘Around the fire’ discussion activities**

<b>Benefits:</b>	Developing communication and language Turn-taking skills Listening and evaluation skills Learning to express and justify opinions Confidence in public-speaking
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	Slight risks associated with children possibly getting up unexpectedly and moving into the fire circle, tripping or behaving inappropriately with others, leading to fire-related injury
<b>Local factors:</b>	Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children are used to having to sit still and wait their turn within the classroom, although not with the associated risk of a fire nearby
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	Children regularly reminded of fire safety and given an ‘alert’ word (e.g. ‘tablecloth’) to notify adults of a fire circle breach Adult supervision around fire sit First Aid kit on site, cool water and some burns gel
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead and HT to liaise over any note-worthy incidents Ongoing informal evaluation of safe practice, by HT



## Activity: Cooking fire

<p><b>Benefits:</b></p>	<p>Improved self-confidence and self-belief Challenging self to take on daunting tasks Sense of achievement in successfully lighting and keeping a fire Learning to self-assess risk in a controlled manner Learning to approach an exciting task in a calm and safe manner; thinking before acting Gross and fine motor skills Knowledge and understanding of the triangle of fire/physics Developing communication and language Teamwork and planning skills towards a common aim Learning to take responsibility for group cooking tasks Basic cookery skills Sense of satisfaction having provided for your own needs</p>
<p><b>Risks</b> (<i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i>):</p>	<p>Burning from fire/hot pans, etc. Scalding from kettle water/steam Splinters/cuts from collecting wood Smoke inhalation/ sore eyes from smoke</p>
<p><b>Local factors:</b></p>	<p>Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention</p>
<p><b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b></p>	<p>Children are used to taking care with the oven in the school kitchen</p>
<p><b>Decision:</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b></p>	<p>Injury: Children taught to enter the fire circle only with permission and use respect position when close to fire Adult supervision around fire circle Fire gloves and fire bucket on hand at all times Water available on site to cool any burns/scalds, some burn gel in First Aid kit First Aid kit on site at all times for covering splinters, etc.</p> <p>Local factors:</p>



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	Robust planning for assistance in the event of emergency
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	FS Lead and HT to liaise over any note-worthy incidents Ongoing informal evaluation of safe practice, by HT

• **Activity: Use of Ropes and Cord**

<b>Benefits:</b>	Fine and gross motor skills Planning skills Knot-tying and lashing skills Improved self-confidence and self-belief Developing resilience/perseverance Teamwork and cooperation skills in completing challenges Developing communication and language Improved self-confidence and sense of achievement when objective is achieved
<b>Risks</b> ( <i>taking into account any technical information identified in the supplementary form below</i> ):	Injuries: Rope burns/cuts Possible strangulation Tripping on cords around site
<b>Local factors:</b>	Should a serious injury occur, the site is difficult to access for medical attention
<b>Precedents &amp;/or comparisons:</b>	Children often play with ropes on the playground and use string/wool, etc. in craft at school
<b>Decision:</b>	
<b>Actions taken/mitigation:</b>	Injury: Colourful/luminous paracord used for shelter guy-ropes, etc. to make them more visible and tied above child-head-height where possible. 'Flags' tied to any ropes in general thoroughfare. Children advised to use cords sensibly; not to tie around <b>any</b>



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	<p>part of the body</p> <p>Adult supervision throughout site</p> <p>First Aid kit on site</p>
<b>Ongoing management and monitoring:</b>	<p>FS Lead and HT to liaise over any note-worthy incidents</p> <p>Ongoing informal evaluation of safe practice, by HT</p>



## **Personal Protective Equipment**

Whilst using sharp, bladed tools (excluding palm drills, hammers, screwdrivers, etc), all children should have access to the following PPE:

- A glove for the 'helper' hand, to help avoid cuts
- A leather/suede apron if they are whittling in a seated position, to help protect the upper thigh area

Children should be made aware that these are available and the safest option, although there may be occasions where their use may be unnecessary or hamper free movement, in which case an adult may allow them to use the equipment without protection.

Cutting with a knife, however, should ALWAYS require both items of PPE.

Fire gloves are available for dealing with the cooking fire and cooking activities (not necessary for flint and steel activities or fire lighting.)

## **Fire Management**

### **Selecting and siting fire**

- The fire should be sited beneath an area where the tree canopy is thinnest/highest
- The ground below the fire site should be protected with a layer of sand and stone paving slabs to protect tree roots/ground from scorching
- A 'fire circle' cordon will be placed approximately 2m outside the fire site and children will be advised not to cross it (a 'danger word' will be issued, so that adults can be alerted to any transgression and children transgressing can change their behaviour quickly)

### **Using a fire for cooking**

- A grill stand or tripod will be set up to allow for cooking over the fire
- Child advised to use the 'respect' position for cooking
- FSL or School adult will supervise any child cooking from within the fire circle, from within easy reach of the child
- **Up to four children may be cooking at any one time, but consideration should be given to the age and demeanour of the children involved and the ratio adjusted accordingly**

### **Fire lighting**

- Children will undertake fire lighting under close supervision by a School adult and that close supervision should remain until the child leaves the fire circle
- They will be advised to use the 'respect' position for safety whilst fire lighting



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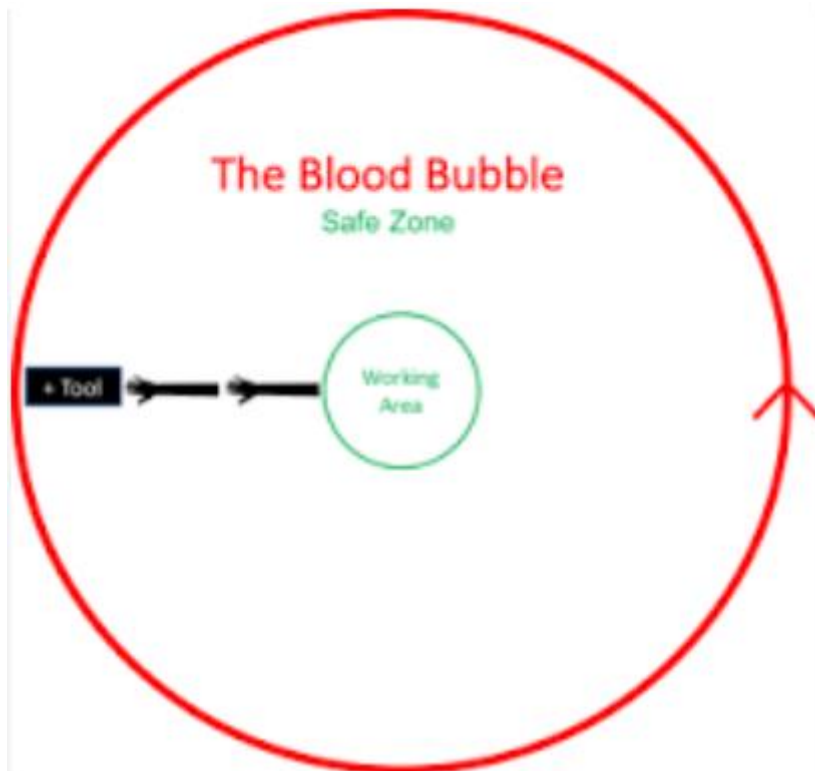
- As soon as is reasonable after lighting **any cooking fire**, the child should don the fire safety gloves if they are to remain to tend the fire **by adding substantial material** in any way
- A fire bucket of water will be on hand within **easy reach of** the fire circle at all times **in order to extinguish the fire, should the need arise**

- **Tools**

- Tools will be transported to site in the Forest School toolbox with an adult
- They will be stored on site in the toolbox and children will be advised to return tools to the toolbox after use
- Whilst in the toolbox, tools should retain their 'safety features', such as blade guards and knife sheaths
- FS Lead will maintain the tools in good order and report any losses in detail to HT
- A laminated 'tool talk' advice sheet will be kept in the toolbox for adult reference, detailing the 'tool talk' to be given and appropriate supervising adults and ratios. All adults should adhere to these guidelines.
- Should an appropriate supervising adult not be available, the child should be advised of the problem and told to wait for another time (although adults should aim to find time as soon as is reasonable thereafter)



**Safe Use - Tool talk advice sheets:**



## **The Blood Bubble**

The safety concept of a 'blood bubble' is that, when working with sharp tools, a person should be **at least two arms' length and a tool length away** from any other person (thereby ensuring that the tool in your hand cannot reach another person, causing accidents).

There are many references to this concept in the 'tool talk' guides below.

**Children should be reminded of the 'blood bubble' when using sharp tools.**

# Bow Saw

It is **used for cutting wood in the round or to fell small trees/branches** (up to twice the width between the blade and the back of the saw)



This is the handle (indicate), this is the frame (indicate) and this is the blade (indicate).

The **blade is very sharp and should not be touched**. Try not to move around with an unguarded saw blade: **carefully hand it to an adult or return it to the tool box when not in use**. Do not leave it on the ground. If you do need to carry the saw for a short distance, you should **carry it pointing downwards towards the ground**, handle at the top, alongside your leg:



**Guide to cross-cutting:**

## **Glove on the helper hand and think 'blood bubble'**

Using one hand on the handle, guide the saw in a straight line across the wood (cross-cutting). The other hand should be placed through the gap between the blade and top of the frame to hold the wood secure. Once the blade is embedded in the wood, the second hand can be removed and placed on the wood a safe distance away from the blade.

Adults: **one school-employed adult supervising one bow saw**, please (this may involve one or two children at a time). Talk to FS Lead for two-person sawing technique, where needed.

# Safety Whittler

It is **used for whittling green wood** only



This is the handle (indicate), this is the blade (indicate). The blade is sharp. Please take care and **do** not to touch it.

- Wear a **glove on the helper hand, if wanted**
- Always **lean forwards** when whittling and **whittle away from yourself**. (Age appropriate explanation of dangers of whittling close to femoral artery)
- Think '**blood bubble**'

Carry it point-downwards, alongside your leg and return it to the tool box after use.

Adults: use judgement as to **supervision ratio**, suggest 1:2 with first-time Reception children up to 1:5 with experienced and sensible Year Sixes. (Volunteers may be included in the adult ratio, as long as an employed adult is also supervising.)

## Palm Drill

This is **used for making holes** in pieces of wood



- **Hold the wood** to be drilled steady **on a flat surface** of wood and keep your holding fingers as far away from the drill as practicable.
- Try to **hold your drill very straight and vertically**, with your body weight pushing down from above.
- **Screw** in one direction whilst **applying pressure**.

Adults: use judgement as to supervision ratio (glove on helper hand not usually necessary)  
Volunteers may supervise use of Palm Drills.

## Sheath Knife

This is **only to be used for its intended purpose (usually whittling), which will be agreed with the leader**



- Never move around with an unsheathed knife!
- Pass the knife handle first, in its sheath, or with the blade pointing downwards
- Before whittling: **glove on the helper hand and wear a suede apron**
- Place elbows on knees, **lean forwards and whittle away from you** (age-appropriate femoral artery chat)
- Think 'blood bubble'! This is a dangerous tool
- Carefully hand the sheathed knife back to an adult or place it in the toolbox, if it is very close by (see point one above)

Adults: supervision ratio – **Forest School Leader or Qualified Teacher only to supervise**. Max 1:2 supervision. Second school-employed adult may supervise to allow up to four children if FS Lead is close by and in the same group.

# Hatchet

This is **used for splitting green wood only**



This is the shaft/handle (indicate) and this is the blade (indicate). The blade is very sharp. Do not touch it.

- Wear a **suede apron**
- **An adult will pass the axe to you immediately before you need it**
- Chop onto a hard, flat, wooden surface
- Position body so that, if you miss the wood, the hatchet would swing past you instead of into you! (An adult will demonstrate if you are unsure or new to this)



- **Listen carefully to the adult's instruction and never place your hand below the blade (you should not hold the wood you are cutting; an adult will show you how to achieve this).**
- Do not lay tool on the ground: **carefully replace any blade cover (if present)**, pass the handle (blade downwards) to an adult for removal to the tool box after use.
- Think 'blood bubble'!

Adults: **supervision ratio 1:1, Forest School Lead or Qualified Teacher only.**

# Loppers

These are **used for cutting small branches of wood**



These are called 'loppers'. These are the handles (indicate), these are the blades (indicate). The blades are very sharp and the tool is very strong. Do not touch the blades and never put your fingers between the blades (indicate)!

- Cut nothing larger than the diameter of an adult thumb
- Carry loppers in a closed position with the blades facing the ground
- Do not stick the blades in the ground. Carefully carry them to the toolbox or hand them to an adult when not in use.
- Think 'blood bubble'

Adults: **supervision ratio 1:1**. School adults only, please.

## **Folding Saw**

This is mostly used for cutting branches from trees. Occasionally, it may be used for other things, as agreed by the Forest School Lead



This is a folding saw. This is the handle (indicate) and this is the blade (indicate). The blade is extremely sharp! Do not touch it. It opens and closes like this (demonstrate).

- Only use this saw as agreed by the Forest School Leader and listen carefully to instructions
  - Never move around with the saw open! Carry it folded.
- Carefully unfold it, as shown. Then use it and fold it back up immediately after use, watching your fingers...then pass it straight to an adult.
  - Think 'blood bubble'. This is a very sharp tool.

Adults: supervision ratio – **Forest School Leader or Qualified Teacher only to supervise**

1:1 supervision.



## Billhook

This is used (with a mallet/beetle) for splitting green wood



This is the handle (indicate) and this is the blade (indicate). The blade is very sharp. Do not touch it.

- An adult will hand you the billhook immediately before the task. Please hold it very carefully and do not swing it around!
- Think 'blood bubble'! This is extremely sharp!
- Listen carefully to the adult's instruction and never place your hand below the blade (you should not hold the wood you are cutting; an adult will show you how to achieve this)
- When cutting, hold the handle in one hand, stretched out ahead of you, steadying the other end of the blade by pinching between your thumb and finger on the blunt top-side of the blade. Stand so that the blade will swing past your body as it falls (adult to demonstrate)



- When finished, point the blade towards the floor and pass the handle to the adult, who will stow the billhook away.

**Adults: Forest School Lead or qualified teacher only to supervise please. 1:1 supervision**



## Welfare Requirements

By virtue of being outside, the hygiene facilities at Forest School are somewhat rudimentary. However, this can push children a little out of their 'comfort zone' in dealing with matters which are not quite as they would have liked, thus building resilience.

### a. Toilets and hygiene

- Children will be reminded to visit the school toilets before the session begins
- A non-flushing 'camping toilet' will be provided on site within a privacy tent, with sawdust for 'flushing' purposes, **for KS1 children. KS2 children will be asked to visit the toilet before attending Forest School and will need to wait until they return to school for another visit.**
- Water and soap will be provided outside the tent area and children will be encouraged to wash after using the facilities and before cooking or eating
- Wet wipes will also be kept alongside the First Aid Kit

### a. Food

- Mostly, children will cook and eat items brought from home, since sessions are short
- Parents will be asked to sign their permission for other food/snacks cooked on the campfire
- As with almost everything in Forest School, children will be offered any food made, but not be obliged to eat it

### a. Clothing

- Parents will be advised to send their child in appropriate clothing/footwear for the weather, assuming the clothing may come back very dirty, smoky and possibly damaged
- If school adults feel that the child's clothing is insufficient in terms of warmth, protection and comfort, the child may have to miss a session (although some efforts may be made to contact parents beforehand)

**Below is a guide to suitable clothing:**

### SPRING/AUTUMN

- Waterproofs
- A pair of comfortable trousers (jogging bottoms or leggings)
- A long sleeved t-shirt or top
- A jumper
- A fleecy zip up jacket
- At least two pairs of socks. On the bottom, one thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy!)



- Spare trousers & socks

### **SUMMER**

- Waterproofs
- A pair of comfortable trousers (jogging bottoms or leggings)
- A t-shirt, light long sleeved t-shirt
- A fleecy zip up jacket
- A pair of socks
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe shoes (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy!)
- A sun hat for sunny days
- Sun cream and Mosquito repellent
- Spare trousers & socks

### **WINTER**

- Waterproofs
- Base layer - thermals
- Next bottom layer - fleece or other warm tracksuit bottoms
- First top layer - long sleeve t-shirt or thin jumper
- Second top layer - fleece jumper
- Third top layer - fleece jacket
- Neck scarf
- Hat and gloves (plenty of spares to be packed in backpack)
- Four pairs of socks. Two pairs to wear (on the bottom, one thin cotton sock, and the top, a thick wool or fluffy bed sock) and two spare pairs to be packed in the backpack
- Extra Jumpers to be packed in backpack for really cold days
- Snow boots or sturdy warm outdoor boots