



CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL



APRIL 2023

BENEFIT AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

By Emma Clode

WHAT ARE BENEFIT AND RISK ASSESSMENTS?

Benefit and risk assessments are sensible and balanced health and safety procedures. In Forest Schools the practitioners take a reasonable and proportionate approach to safety which accepts a degree of risk. Forest School leaders take their responsibility for the safety of the students seriously and take heed of all their legal duties, risk is effectively managed and is seen as not only inevitable but positively desirable. Benefit and risk assessments are made for all activities and an in-depth knowledge of the process of learning these skills is always used and applied.

Within the structure of health and safety, Forest School practitioners know that risk-taking is an especially important part of a child's development. Preparing and supporting them to take risks and teaching how to adopt common sense and an appropriate approach that balances benefits and risks is a fundamental part of the programme. Our understanding of risk taking in Forest School does not just apply to physical risks but also social and emotional ones as well. Our aim in the programme is to support, facilitate and provide opportunities and because it is a child-led curriculum we allow the students to guide us, and we watch and observe them as they explore and play.

This booklet outlines our benefit and risk assessments at Canopy Forest School, it contains information relating to our policies and shares the process of learning some of these skills. This is a working document and alterations and adjustments will be made in relation to the current cohort and the grounds.



DENFINITIONS

Hazard-a potential source of harm it is something which could be dangerous to you or somebody else's health or safety.

Risk- an action or activity that has potential to have an undesired result. A risk is the chance, high or low, that any hazard will actually cause someone harm.

Incident - an event that happens and in terms of risk management it refers to somebodies health and safety being affected.

Safety- is the state of being safe from harm. Safety is achieved through risk management.

Accident - An unplanned, uncontrolled event, which leads to the injury of a person or damage to equipment.

Near Miss- is where an accident could have caused harm and was only just avoided. These are recorded so that future action can be taken.

Benefit- an advantage or a profit gained from something

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Forest school sessions offer learning opportunities for children and young people. Part of their purpose is to encourage participants to face new challenges and to learn to take reasonable risks. In order to do that safely, the adults involved must know their role and ensure that the necessary risk assessments are carried out regularly and thoroughly. Risks can rarely be eliminated entirely, but they can be reduced to a minimum without unduly limiting opportunities for children to explore and learn.

At **Canopy Forest School** the health and safety of the children, staff and visitors is our primary concern and very important to us. A site risk assessment is carried out before each session to look for natural or foreign hazards in the environment (appendix 13). All activities will be fully risk assessed to minimise dangers (appendix 20) and direct teaching will be carried out for the three skill strands: shelter, fire and tools. Policies have been written to outline protocols, teaching strategies and safety procedures for these skill strands. Please see more details about these activities on the following pages of this handbook, Tool Handling p23&24, Fire Safety p25&26, Tree Climbing and Den building p28. We also use and refer to our benefits and risk assessments for all skill based teaching. Before a session commences all staff involved in the sessions have access to activity plans and risk assessments associated with the activities (appendix 13).

The teaching of these skills is carefully balanced and interwoven with self discovery and exploration as participants learn to take controlled risks in a safe, non-judgemental, nurturing environment. Activities such as den building, tree climbing, learning knots, using tools, cooking and lighting fires help participants to become, healthy, resilient, creative and independent learners (appendix 15).

All adults participating at Canopy Forest School are required to read all of these risk assessments and protocols and sign a document to show they have read the handbook (appendix 21). We regularly review and update the risk assessments as required. Alongside this, each Forest School leader is highly skilled in observation, and reflection which drives all of the resourcing, planning and organisation of sessions. Individual risk assessments will be made for children whose medical condition or whose behaviour requires it (appendix 14). All of our staff and volunteers are DBS checked and our Forest School leader is training to receive a Level 3 Forest School Practitioner certificate (p4&5). The forest school leader is responsible for the safe running of **Canopy Forest School** therefore, has a duty of care for the children. However, all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.

For more information please read the following policies and procedures in this handbook:

- Rules (p8)
- First Aid Procedures (p12)
- Emergency Procedures (p13&14),
- Emergency Services Action Plan and Emergency Script (p15)
- Weather Conditions Procedures (p16)
- Tool Handling Policy (p23&24)
- Fire Safety Policy (p25&26)
- Tree Climbing and Den Building Policy (p28)
- Missing Child Policy (p32)
- Behaviour Policy (p35)
- Benefits and Risk assessments for skill based teaching (appendix 20)
- Safeguarding Children (p29)
- Safeguarding Adults (p30)
- Roles and Responsibilities (p36)

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Building relationships and trust is vital if the Forest School experience is to be a positive one. Through building relationships at Canopy Forest School, adults can gain an understanding of children's emotional difficulties (frustration/anger, etc) and the triggers which may cause behavioural changes of fight or flight. As trust is built, we can teach children coping strategies and use reflection opportunities to talk about feelings and emotions enabling children to become emotionally literate and aware of feelings and aware of who we are.

This policy gives guidance to all who work with pupils at **Canopy Forest School**. It describes how positive behaviour is encouraged. The quality of learning, teaching and behaviour in school are inseparable issues, and the responsibility of all school adults. The behaviour policy plays a crucial role in achieving our ethos and mission and is driven by our core values.

All members of our Forest School community enjoy the right to be treated respectfully and fairly in a safe learning environment. Everyone shares the responsibility in ensuring this happens effectively. Our Forest School rules are made with this end in mind and these are supported by clear, supportive routines so that everyone knows what is expected of them (appendix 4). All adults strive to establish and maintain strong, positive relationships. Meaning that when learners make bad choices there is a determination to restore things, and time to reflect and discuss feelings (appendix 30).

We manage children's behaviour in partnership between; the leader and parents/carers. We rely on both sides being open and honest about how children respond to different situations and this is especially important to note if you suspect or have a diagnosis of Special Educational Needs.

Children's self esteem and self respect is nurtured and fostered at all times and we need as much information as possible about how we can meet individual children's needs. Other children need to be considered too so if a child requires more attention from one of the adults it is vital that we know this in order to get the staff ratios right.

At **Canopy Forest School** our staff strive to be positive role models and will deal with situations in a clear, calm, polite and positive manner. Positive behaviour will be reinforced with praise and encouragement and mediation is facilitated between children to help them to resolve conflicts through negotiation, calm down times and discussion.

Behaviour that is unacceptable will be challenged in a calm and assertive manner (appendix 30). Adults will be aware that some kinds of behaviour may arise from a participants medical, behaviour or learning needs. Staff will avoid shouting unless this is required in an emergency situation to prevent harm. It will always be made clear that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable, not the person. Our procedure if a child's behaviour is deemed as dangerous or inappropriate to others or if they have stopped other children learning is removing them for some time "in" with an adult. This will mean that the child's self esteem is maintained. If behaviour is continuously unsafe and endangers others then unfortunately the child will no longer be able to attend Forest school. This of course is a last resort and will be fully discussed with the child, parents/carers before this step is taken.

We have a number of rules or codes of conduct at **Canopy Forest School** which are there to keep all individuals safe please see (Rules p8) of handbook and (appendix 4). At the beginning of every session a quick recap of the rules/boundaries is reinforced. Consistent boundaries are important and give children security, and enable them to know what to expect.

At **Canopy Forest School** we aim to build children's self esteem and confidence through self appraisal and own sense of achievement, through the completion of activities. Adults will facilitate learning to ensure that children achieve. Achieving a task will lead to a positive learning experience and children recognising a sense of personal competence. Children with low self esteem find it difficult to receive praise and only hear what they want to hear (biased scanning). When giving praise it should be for recognising skills and asking how it made the child feel. We will share items made (with permission of the children) with the rest of the group to celebrate individual success.

FLORA AND FAUNA AROUND THE SITE



Knowing the names of common trees, plants, mammals, insects and birds that live within the ecosystem at Merdon Junior School is really important. The skill of knowing the names and characteristics of flora and fauna is an almost forgotten art. Knowing the names of the creatures and plants in an ecosystem is very powerful as it brings you closer to it and there is something very innate and human about wanting to name things. As Macfarlane states in an interview

“We are names, we are name callers.....my naming you brings the other into being as it were, you allow it to enter into your life” (Macfarlane, 2017)

Knowing facts and information about the fauna and flora also gives you foresight about which plants and animals have the potential to cause harm and how you can put measures in place to protect everyone within this ecosystem.

THE SITE AT MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL, CHANDLER'S FORD



Grid Reference:50.989070, -1.374609

The Canopy Forest School site is situated within the grounds of Merdon Junior School in Chandler's Ford, Hampshire. Chandler's Ford is a town with a population of over 21,000 people and is a largely residential, urban area that lies between Winchester and Southampton. The site at Merdon Junior School is owned and managed by Hampshire LEA and other shareholders are Merdon Junior School's Governing Body. Merdon Junior school opened in 1956 and the school expanded rapidly in the 1970s.

The woodland area which we are using is approximately 0.29 ha/0.72 ac in size. Yew, hazel, holly and oak are the predominant tree species. Next to the woodland area is a dipping pond and an outdoor classroom. Access to the site is gained through the school. The site is enclosed within the school grounds and is therefore safe as only people who have signed in at the school office can access it. The area backs onto scrub land at the back of a public carpark and residential gardens with fencing acting as a divider. Chandler's Ford is a residential area but there are several nature reserves and secondary woodlands nearby and the understory of these echo the flora and fauna found at this Canopy Forest School site.

Abiotic Elements

Water

There is a water source, a tributary of "Monks Brook", that flows through Hiltingbury to become part of Hiltingbury Lakes:

"It then continues near to the site both under and above ground and can be seen as it rises at the lower end of Kingsway and south of Brownhill Road. It then flows down to the main stream near to Chandler's Ford Train station." (<https://chandlersfordtoday.co.uk/our-river-the-monks-brook/#:~:text=Both%20chalk%20streams%2C%20in%20their,known%20river%2C%20the%20Monks%20Brook.>)

It is here that the river begins to flow into sands, silt and clay. From maps produced by the National Rivers Authority, Chandlers Ford and the surrounding area lies on Barton, Bracklesham and Bagshot beds. This area is part of the Hampshire basin which is a geological basin of Palaeogene age in southern England.

Soil

The ground layer of the site consists of decaying matter, dead wood, logs, leaf litter and twigs. The soil layer it is dark, loamy clay and the school lies within an area that is characteristically London Clay with a ph. level of 6.5 so it is slightly acidic. In places there is little ground layer due to the enclosed canopy which has only allowed a small amount of light to penetrate down to the ground layer. The site is also constantly used by school children and consequently the soil has become very compacted in places.

Bedrock and Surface rock

From maps produced by the National Rivers Authority, Chandlers Ford and the surrounding area lies on Barton, Bracklesham and Bagshot beds. This area is part of the Hampshire basin which is a geological basin of Palaeogene age in southern England.

Archaeological Considerations

The site has been part of school grounds since 1956 when the school was built. The land around Merdon Junior school was owned by the Wallis family who bought portions of the vast Hursley and Brownhill Estate and they built grand Edwardian Houses one of which was Merdon House. Merdon House was located around the corner from Merdon School and had water gardens which still remain as Hiltingbury Lakes now owned and managed as a nature reserve by Eastleigh Borough Council. Historically the area was a montage of habitats which along with broadleaved woodland also included dry heath, unimproved grassland and cattle-grazed pastures, a number of streams used to run through the area including Cranbury stream towards the ford in Monk's Brook where Chandler's Ford got its name.

Management history of site

The site is owned by Hampshire LEA and other shareholders are Merdon Junior School's Governing Body. The school was built in 1956 the school expanded rapidly in the 1970s.

Long Term Vision

The long-term vision for this site is to use and develop it as Forest School area which is both a conservation area for native Flora and Fauna and a place where the children of the school can interact and learn from nature. The Forest School client base will be twelve Year 3 students from Merdon Junior School and they will be using the site all year round as part of an after school club provision which will run every Tuesday evening 3.30-5.30pm during term time.

The Canopy Forest School would like to develop and enhance the natural diversity of the space and at the same time use it as a learning resource. From the field surveys that have taken place on this site this area does not contain anything of local/national or international importance. The purpose will be to minimise any adverse impacts of this Forest School on the environment and a range of baseline assessments have been conducted to ensure that any direct/indirect or cumulative impacts are accounted for. Mitigation measures have been put in place to minimize negative short, medium- or long-term impacts and these will continue to be measured throughout the course of the Forest School programme. There are no conflicts of interests, legislative limits or public concerns linked to The Canopy Forest School use of this site.

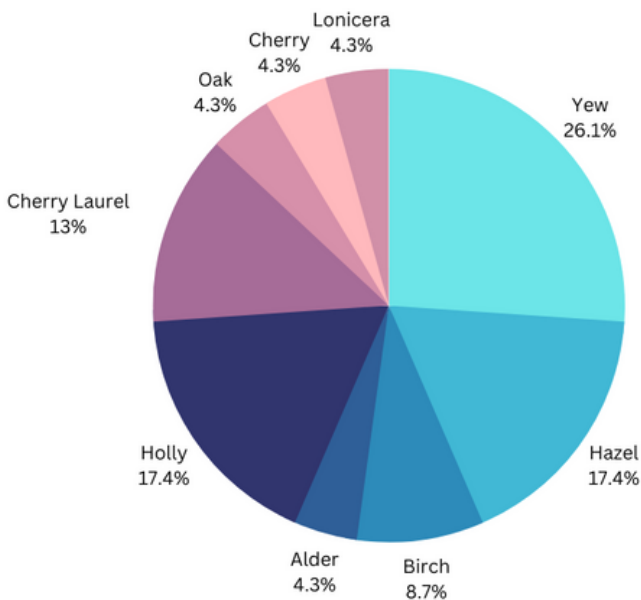


THE FLORA AND FAUNA ON THE SITE

Flora inventory-Trees and Shrubs

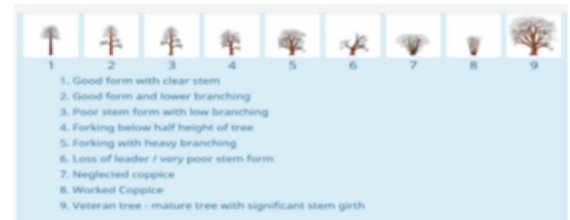
MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL SITE

SPECIES	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF TREES	ESTIMATED YEAR PLANTED	CROWN CLASS	TREE FORM
Yew	30	40/50yrs	co-dominant	5/4
Hazel	20	10/20yrs	Intermediate/ suppressed	5
Birch	10	30/40yrs	Dominant	2
Alder	5	30/40yrs	Co-dominant	2
Holly	20	30/40yrs	Intermediate	1
Cherry Laurel	15	30yrs	Intermediate	5/4
Oak	5 (1 stand alone mature oak)	30/40yrs (1 100+)	Co-dominant	4/9
Cherry	5	30/40yrs	Intermediate	1
Lonicera	5	10yrs	Shrubs	7

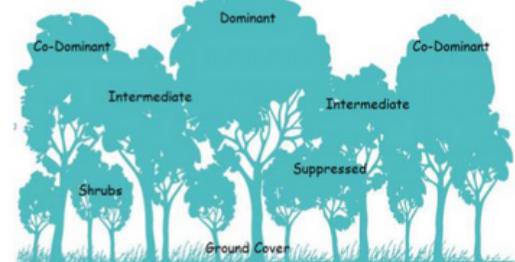


Key

Tree Form



Crown Cover

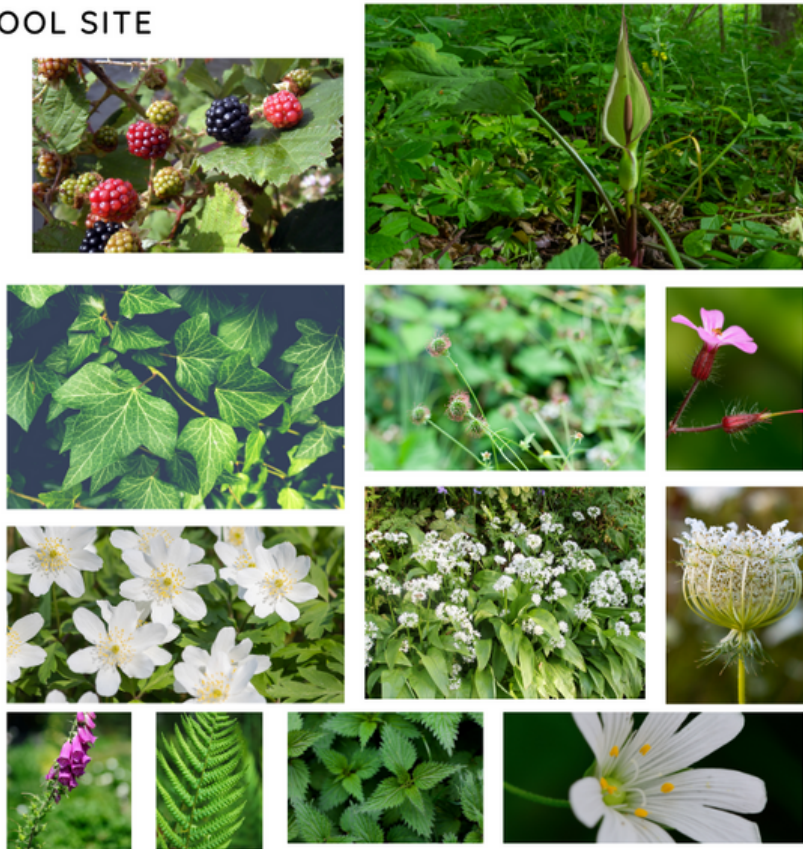


THE FLORA AND FAUNA ON THE SITE

Flora inventory-Plants and Ground cover

MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL SITE

SPECIES
Bracken
Brambles
Ivy
Lords and ladies
Wood Aven
Wild Garlic
Wood Anemone
Stinging Nettles
Bur Chevril
Herb Robert
Wild Carrot,
Foxglove
Stitchwort



Flora inventory-Fungi and Lichen

MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL SITE

SPECIES
Rough-stalked feather moss (<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>)
phlebia merismoides-wrinkled crust fungus
White polypore crust fungus
common tamarisk moss
Common green shield lichen
wood biristle moss-Lewinskya affinis (<i>Orthotrichum affine</i>)



THE FLORA AND FAUNA ON THE SITE











Fauna inventory-Insects

MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL SITE

SPECIES			
Stag beetle			
Woodlouse			
Earwigs			
centipede			
Shield bug			
Dor Beetle			
Silverfish			
Landhopper			
The Brown-lipped Snail			
Common Earth Worm			
Goat moth			
Tortoiseshell butterfly			

Fauna inventory-Birds

MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL SITE

SPECIES			
Blackbird			
Robin			
Bluetits			
Wren			
sparrows			
Wood pigeon			
Great tits			
Jackdaw			
Common Gull			
Magpie			

THE FLORA AND FAUNA ON THE SITE

Fauna inventory-Mammals

MERDON JUNIOR SCHOOL SITE

SPECIES
Fox
Hedgehog
Mice
Rats
Grey Squirrel
shrew



BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT



Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (minor burns, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

TLC	1
1 st Aid	2
Non Emergency	3
Emergency/Hospital	4
Death/multiple Injury	5

Benefit and Risk Assessment-Flora and Fauna

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of the plants and animals on the site												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Nettles & Thistles Brambles	Brambles, nettles thorns can cause scratches, stings, and cuts.	Children Taking part in Forest School	L	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	1	3	L	Clear Instructions. Adult supervision, appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Nettles, thistles, and Brambles pulled from path regularly. long sleeved tops, long trousers, socks & shoes to be always worn. Cleared from access areas. Noted as landmarks, children warned to avoid areas	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills- moving around site. Achievement and enjoyment, memory, relationship and understanding of plants in the environment.
2	Poisonous plants Mushrooms & fungi	Sickness, stomach upset, heart	Children Taking part in Forest School	H	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	4	8	M	Clear Instructions and awareness of dangers of eating and touching plants. Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. List of common poisonous plants & trees & symptoms. No picking of anything growing policy enforced. Strict hand washing routine before eating & drinking and on return to playgroup. Look and call an adult to see. Do not touch any.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills- moving around site. Achievement and enjoyment, memory, relationship and understanding of plants in the environment
3	Dead branches. Stumps & roots.		Children Taking part in Forest School	L	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	3	6	L	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Regularly inspected & felled where removed.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills; hand-eye co-ordination.
4	Beef/wasp stings and other insects, adder bites	Some children/adults may have severe reaction e.g. anaphylaxis.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3/4	9	M	Regular sweep to check for nests. First aider always on site. Avoid contact. First aid & emergency procedure if Adder bite suspected. Medical records if anyone has reactions to wasp/bee stings, etc. Advise everyone in H&S talk to keep still around wasps and bees, snake. First Aid kit on site and children's EpiPens as necessary.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
5	Ticks	Possibility of Lyme disease although this is rare.	Children Taking part in Forest School	L	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	2	4	L	Checks to take place after sessions and parents given Tick information sheet about how to remove them.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
6	Stray dog/cat bites and scratches and dead animal bodies carry diseases and	Bites and scratches and dead animal bodies carry diseases and germs, which	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	2	4	L		Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building.

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT

	germs, which children could catch.	children could catch										Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
7	Animal faeces on hands and in mouths.	Danger of diseases and germs from bird, rodent and fox, dog/cat faeces.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	2	4	L		Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity

POISONOUS PLANTS IN OUR WOODLAND AREA

POISONOUS PLANTS IN OUR WOODLAND AREA



Lords and Ladies

This is a very common and while not strictly poisonous they contain oxalate crystals which are very sharp and can penetrate and irritate skin for a long time and if consumed can cause the throat to close.



Ivy

Ivy is mildly poisonous. In addition, some people develop dermatitis after coming into contact with the plant.



Hemlock

All parts of the plant are poisonous. If it is eaten hemlock causes sickness and in severe cases it can kill by paralysing the lungs.



Stinging Nettles

Although not poisonous this plant can give a nasty sting.



Brambles

Although not poisonous the brambles have thorns that can give a nasty scratch

POISONOUS PLANTS IN OUR WOODLAND AREA

OTHER POISONOUS PLANTS FOUND IN THE LOCAL AREA



Foxgloves

All parts of the plant can cause vomiting and diarrhoea. Can slow the heart causing heart attack.

Deadly Night-shade

All parts of the plant are poisonous and can cause convulsions and hallucinations. The consumption of two to five berries by a human adult is probably lethal.



Lily of the Valley

All part of the plant are highly poisonous. If ingested, even in small amounts, the plant can cause abdominal pain, vomiting, reduced heart rate, blurred vision, drowsiness and red skin rashes.

OUR SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

"Take only memories and leave only footprints" Chief Seattle

Canopy Forest School aims to educate children and adults in the benefits of sustainability and therefore endeavours to thread this through learning and playing. At the start of each sessions there will be a brief talk with the group about the expectations for the day. Within this will be an expectation around looking after our environment linked to the sessions theme.

Any waste that is created from **Canopy Forest School** sessions will either be recycled or composted. Waste will be collected in a recyclable paper bag. Re-usable cups will be issued each session which will be washed each week and re-used, existing plastic bottles will be re-used for juice or drinking water. Healthily compostable snacks will be offered during each session. Please also refer to our the ecological impact (appendix 1, 2, 3). The site will be cleared of any trace of litter each week and "leave only footprints" is a phrase that we reinforce and teach the children.

During our long term programme children will be taught about sustainable woodland management and as part of this they will discover more about the benefits of coppicing trees such as hazel and then using the harvested wood to make objects, putting the wood to good use. All the equipment at Forest School is re-used, repaired, cleaned to make sure it is used for as long as possible. Please see pg 6 & 7 for more information on Provision and Environmental Impact and appendix 1, 2&3 for our Eco-logical Impact Assessment and Management Plan.

Canopy Forest School is fully and totally committed to sustainability and protecting the environment. We strive to provide exciting and adventurous forest school activities whilst contributing to a sustainable future through the resources, activities and actions that we take. We think it is important that every element of our business is true to our vision, ethos and mission. We therefore promote sustainability, through our own practices, through using green products and working with other green organisations. We have chosen to run our business through an ethical bank account as we believe that this is one of the most powerful tools that any of us can use to to change the world for the better.

Our Forest School recognises that there is a multiplicity of linked social, economic, political, cultural and technological elements that impact on actual sustainable and environmentally safe activities. In an increasingly complex world for young people and young adults **Canopy Forest School** will strive to be an educator of small actions and steps that are quick, simple and easy to achieve by anyone regardless of their background, income, health or employment status. We are committed to our green values and support the charity **Hampshire Wildlife Trust**. We make a 10% donation to this charity for every child enrolled on our books

OUR PROVISION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT POLICY

PAGE 07

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL

OUR FOREST SCHOOL SITE
PROVISION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT: 1

OUR FOREST SCHOOL SITE: PROVISION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT: 1

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Canopy Forest School takes place in a woodland area at the back of Merdon Junior School in Chandler's Ford. It is made up of a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees. The majority of the trees on the site are Yew and this is common on chalk sites in southern England. Yew trees form a dense canopy and are slow growing but long lived. They let little light in so other plants struggle to grow beneath them. These trees may have been planted as hedging as many appear on the parameter of the site. Holly trees grow amongst the Yew and this is probably because it tolerates shade well. Other trees that form a canopy layer are Birch, Hazel, Alder, Cherry and Laurel.

These species echo those found in Valley Park Woods and Hiltingbury Lakes. Both of these local conservation areas are sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) due to the ancient woodland and have over 19 species of ancient woodland plants. Hazel, Hawthorn, Holly and Alder-Buckthorn. Part of the Forest School role is to promote and teach sustainable woodland management to the children.

The ground layer of the site consists of decaying matter, dead wood, logs, leaf litter and twigs. The soil layer it is dark, loamy clay and the school lies within an area that is characteristically London Clay with a ph. level of 6.5 so it is slightly acidic.

In places there is little ground layer due to the enclosed canopy which has only allowed a small amount of light to penetrate down to the ground layer. The site is also constantly used by school children and consequently the soil has become very compacted in places.

There is a water source, a tributary of "Monks Brook", that flows through Hiltingbury to become part of Hiltingbury Lakes:

"It then continues near to the site both under and above ground and can be seen as it rises at the lower end of Kingsway and south of Brownhill Road. It then flows down to the main stream near to Chandler's Ford Train station." (Clark C, August 2021, Our-river-the-monks-brook)

It is here that the river begins to flow into sands, silt and clay. From maps produced by the National Rivers Authority, Chandlers Ford and the surrounding area lies on Barton, Bracklesham and Bagshot beds. This area is part of the Hampshire basin which is a geological basin of Palaeogene age in southern England.

Near to the edges of the site where more light penetrates Wild Garlic, Herb Robert, Wood Anemones, Wild Garlic, Foxgloves, and Wild Carrot can be found. There are elements of a shrub layer consisting mainly of laurel, holly, brambles and nettles.

OUR PROVISION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT POLICY 2

PAGE 08

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL

OUR FOREST SCHOOL SITE
PROVISION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT :2

OUR FOREST SCHOOL SITE: PROVISION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT 2

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

The older trees on the site consist of Yew, Hazel, Silver Birch, Oak and Alder. The most established layer of the area is the canopy and grey squirrels and a variety of birds are found here. In terms of fauna there is evidence of mice, rats, hedgehogs and foxes using this site. The likely impacts of the project will not impact significantly on the woodland habitat but instead we would like to introduce nesting boxes, feeders and more wild woodland flowers that will encourage more insects and animals to the site.

As far as I am aware there are no active conservation management plans for this site and this is something that **Canopy Forest School** will introduce and adhere to. However, the grounds at Merdon Junior School are being developed through a number of different projects. The woodland is not under any kind of special protection or status such as SSSI or NNR.

Our woodland area is managed carefully and as our Forest School progresses we hope to allow the site to go a little wilder and develop a deeper diversity. The site is within school grounds and is not accessible to the public. It is enclosed within the grounds and is therefore safe as only people who have signed in at the school office can access it. The area backs onto residential gardens with fencing acting as a divider. Access to the site is only gained through the school.

Chandler's Ford is a town with a population of over 21,000 people and is a largely residential, urban area that lies between Winchester and Southampton. The site at Merdon Junior School is owned and managed by Hampshire LEA and other shareholders are Merdon Junior School's Governing Body.

Merdon Junior school opened in 1956 and the school expanded rapidly in the 1970s. Chandler's Ford is a residential area but there are several nature reserves and secondary woodlands nearby and the understory of these echo the flora and fauna found at the **Canopy Forest School** site.

Canopy Forest School would like to develop and enhance the natural diversity of the space and at the same time use it as a learning resource. The purpose will be to minimise any adverse impacts of this Forest School on the environment and a range of baseline assessments have been conducted to ensure that any direct/indirect or cumulative impacts are accounted for. Mitigation measures have been put in place to minimize negative short, medium- or long-term impacts and these will continue to be measured throughout the course of the Forest School programme. There are no conflicts of interests, legislative limits or public concerns linked to **The Canopy Forest School** use of this site.

The long-term vision for this site is to use and develop it as a Forest School area which is both a conservation area for native Flora and Fauna and a place where the children of the school can interact and learn from nature. Throughout the course of the year the children will take part in a carefully planned child centred Forest School programme which will allow them to connect to each other and the natural world. The activities will be developing their relationship to the Forest School site and they will actively take part in sustainable woodland management techniques such as coppicing hazel, sowing wildflower seeds putting up houses and boxes for wildlife and taking part in flora and fauna conservation surveys.

Please also refer to our Sustainability Policy p38, appendix 1- Ecological Impact, appendix 2-Sustainable Action Plan, appendix 3-Three Year Sustainable Woodland Management Action plan.

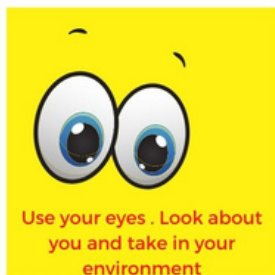
MOVING AROUND CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL



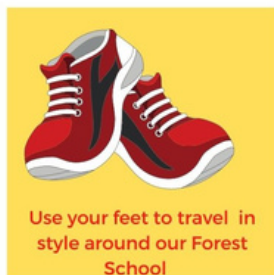
"The outdoors offers space to be physically active and to learn about the world, to be challenged by changing seasons, and by the variety of stimuli to be explored and discovered in both the natural and built environment. Physical and movement development, maintaining health through regular exercise and building a lifelong commitment to an active lifestyle can all be enhanced through active outdoor play ."

Patricia Maude (2021)

Top Tips for moving and playing safely in our Forest School



Use your eyes . Look about you and take in your environment



Use your feet to travel in style around our Forest School



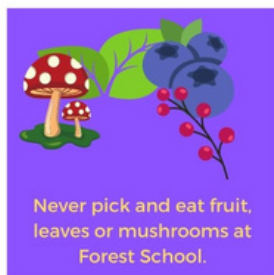
Use your hands to feel and touch the world around you..but wash them before you put them near your mouth



Enjoying playing with natural objects but think about how you use them, throwing, could hurt someone else.



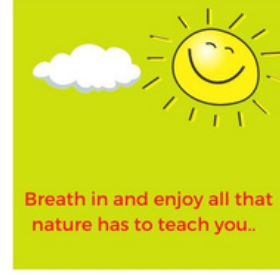
Wet can make things slippery.



Never pick and eat fruit, leaves or mushrooms at Forest School.



Look after and respect all the creatures in our Forest School Environment.



Breath in and enjoy all that nature has to teach you..

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENTS

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

TLC	1
1 st Aid	2
Non Emergency	3
Emergency/Hospital	4
Death/multiple Injury	5



General Site Benefit and Risk Assessment

Description of site/Activity tools										
Merdon Junior School										
An overview of the site										
Layer of the site	Hazard	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Risk (PS) (1-25)	Level of Risk After controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits
Ground layer	Animal faeces on hands and in mouths. Danger of diseases and germs from bird, rodent and fox, dog/cat faeces.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	3	2/3	6	L	1. Daily Site Check to reveal and remove any faeces. 2. Ensure children and adults wash their hands with antibacterial hand wash and rinse in clean water before snack time and again at end of session. 3. Teach children to report any faeces found on site to an adult.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
	Tripping over roots, uneven ground, holes in soil. Slipping on wet ground		M	3	2/3	6	L	1. Make sure everyone in FS aware of uneven ground in H&S talk.		
	Litter, debris, caused by occasional trespassers on site.		L	1	2	2	L	1. Daily Site Check to reveal and remove any litter, report to police if illegal substances/trespassing.		
Field Layer	Brambles, nettles thorns can cause scratches, stings and cuts.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	3	2	6	M	1. Daily Site Check to reveal and remove any in main access routes. 2. Show Children brambles, hawthorn, nettles, and other thorny plants. 3. Children and adults to wear long sleeves/trousers tucked in. 4. First Aid kit on site with antiseptic wipes, etc. 5. Adults to be aware of any severe reaction's children/adults have to plants.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity

	Tree stumps, uneven ground, logs and wood piles		M	3	2	6	M	1. Daily Site Check to reveal and remove any new objects in main access routes. 2. Advise children to look where they're walking.		
	Mushrooms and Fungi, poisonous plants, berries. Danger of getting spores, poisonous materials on fingers and in mouths if touched.		H	3	3	9	M	1. Teach children not to eat anything that they pick up. 2. Show children poisonous plants in FS site, holly berries, fungi, etc. 3. Ensure children and adults wash their hands with antibacterial hand wash and rinse in clean water before snack time and at the end of the session.		
Shrub layer	Branches and twigs at eye level could scratch faces and eyes.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	3	3	9	M	1. Advise children to always look ahead of them. 2. Daily Site Check to reveal any changes in shrub layer and consider removing if in main access route. 3. First Aid kit on site with eyewash, bandages, and plasters.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
	Climbing on large tree log. Risk of slipping or falling off, grazing skin, broken limbs, bump to head.		M	3	3	9	M	1. Discuss ways of climbing safely, e.g., 3 points of contact, not standing close behind someone who is climbing. 3 children on the tree at the same time, giving each other time and space. 2. High adult: child ratio with adult nearby when children are on the log		
Canopy Layer	Dead branches can fall on adults and children	Children Taking part in Forest School	H	2	5	10	M	1. Daily Site Check to reveal any changes in canopy layer and remove. 2. Rope off area under dead branches so people do not go under branch. 3. Report to tree surgeon/County Council grounds services.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
Access	Access through school gates. Away from street and main road	Children Taking part in Forest School	L	2	2	4	L	1. FS Leader to lead children out for collection at school main office at the end of the session. 2. Children to be accompanied by an adult to toilet within main school building.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
Animals	Stray dog/cat bites and scratches and dead animal bodies carry diseases and germs, which children could catch.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	2	2	4	L	1. Daily Site Check to reveal and remove any dead animal bodies. 2. Children to report but not touch unwanted animals that enter site.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance.

	Wasps and bees stings, adder/grass snake bites. Some children/adults may have severe reaction e.g. anaphylaxis.		M	3	3/4	9	M	1. Medical records if anyone has reactions to wasp/bee stings, etc. 2. Advise everyone in H&S talk to keep still around wasps and bees, snake. 3. Daily Site Check to reveal wasp/bee activity or nests. 4. First Aid kit on site and children's EpiPens as necessary.		Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
Structures	Shelters/Den/larger log piles made of logs can fall in on top of children causing injury, bruising. Fire Pit trip hazard.	Children Taking part in Forest School	L	2	3	6	L	1. Demonstrate how to secure logs and shelters, not disturb log piles.	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity

WEEKLY SITE CHECKS



Seasonal Site Risk Assessment-

Site: Merdon Junior School

Date assessed:

Assessed By: E.Clode

Signature:

	Tick if all acceptable and ok for session	Notes if future action needed
Mobile phone signal:		
Tree Layer: Tree types Yew Hazel Birch Alder Holly Cherry Laurel Oak (1 lone standing mature oak) Cherry		
Shrub layer (Types of lower branches of mature trees and small trees/large shrubs): Holly Cherry Laurel Lonicera		
Field layer (clearings, ground cover, ferns, animal habitats) Bracken Brambles Ivy Lords and ladies Wood <u>Aven</u> Wild Garlic Wood Anemone Stinging Nettles Bur <u>Cheyril</u> Herb Robert Wild Carrot Foxglove Stitchwort		
Ground layer (mosses, fungi, leaf mould: Rough-stalked feather moss (<u>Brachythecium rutabulum</u>) <u>phlebia merismoides</u> -wrinkled crust fungus White polypore crust fungus common tamarisk moss Common green shield lichen wood <u>bristle moss-Lewinskya affinis (Orthotrichum affine)</u>		
Others: Site backs onto gardens and scrub land it is not open to the public. There may be some animal faeces around site such as fox or cat.		
Fading light and cold weather: Solar lights have been placed in the trees. We also have flood lights and solar lights to put along pathways. All children will wear high visibility jackets and have been asked to bring a head torch or torch. All children have been asked to wear more layers of clothing in the winter months		

SEASONAL SITE CHECKS



Seasonal Site Risk Assessment-Autumn Term

Site: **Mexdon** Junior School: Canopy Forest School

Assessed By: **E. Clogg**

Date assessed:

Signature:

	Define Hazard	Probability	Consequence	Risk Rating	Hazard Severity	Action	Benefits
Mobile phone signal: Yes	Loss of signal	1	0	1	Minimal	No action required; no documentation necessary able to make contact via Chandler's Ford Infant School phone if necessary.	Communication always available if needed
Tree Layer: Yew Hazel Birch Alder Holly Cherry Laurel Oak (1 lone standing mature oak) Cherry	Falling branches Items falling from trees-nuts etc. Climbing trees and falling	1	3	3	Moderate	All avenues should be explored to reduce risk and implemented within specified time limits. A site check will be conducted before each session and the trees are checked regularly by the council and tree surgeons. Children are only allowed to climb to 2m and on trees marked with a canopy flag that have been deemed secure.	Physical exercise, gross motor skills- moving around site. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, relationship and understanding of plants in the environment.
Shrub layer: Holly Cherry Laurel Lonicera	Holly and bushes around site-priddy leaves that could hurt children. Berries on cherry laurel are poisonous if eaten.	2	1	2	Acceptable	No extra controls necessary. Alternatives can be considered. Children will be taught about the Holly bushes and the berries of cherry laurel. Children will be shown how to carry and play with sticks appropriately, so nobody gets hurt.	Physical exercise, gross motor skills- moving around site. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, relationship and understanding of plants in the environment.
Field layer: Bracken Brambles Ivy Lords and ladies Wood Wild Garlic Wood Anemone Stinging Nettles Burdock Herb Robert Wild Carnot Foalglow Stichwort	Brambles and stinging nettles can hurt children and some people can have a reaction to ivy. Lords and Ladies if picked can cause harm as all parts of the plant is poisonous and contain oxalate crystals which can burn skin. Foalglow are also poisonous as they contain toxic cardiac glycosides. Ingestion of any parts of the plant. Log piles falling hazard.	3	1	4	Moderate	All avenues should be explored to reduce risk and implemented within specified time limits. Children will be told about these bushes and to be careful around them. Teachers and staff will learn about the different flora on site so can warn and explain the dangers to the children.	Physical exercise, gross motor skills- moving around site. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, relationship and understanding of plants in the environment.
Ground layer: Mosses Leaf mould	Children could trip and tumble over roots and uneven ground. Fungi can be poisonous and cause harm if picked and eaten	3	1	4	Moderate	All avenues should be explored to reduce risk and implemented within specified time limits. Children will be told about watching their footing and uneven ground. Children and staff will be taught	Physical exercise, gross motor skills- moving around site. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, relationship and

Tree litter Mulch Fungi Roots						about the plants that grow in this eco-system and rule not to pick.	understanding of plants in the environment.
Bee/wasp stings and other insects, spider bites, ticks	Some children/adults may have severe reaction e.g., anaphylaxis. Ticks- possibility of Lyme disease although this is rare.	3	3	6	Substantial	Activities should not start until risk has been reduced. If activity already in progress then urgent action should be taken. Regular sweep to check for nests. First aid always on site. Avoid contact. First aid & emergency procedure if spider bite suspected. Medical records if anyone has reactions to wasp/bee stings, etc. Advise everyone in H&S talk to keep still around wasps and bees, make First Aid kit on site and children's EpiPens as necessary.	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity
Others: Site backs onto gardens, cats can leave poo around site and the site has been used at night by trespassers.	Poo left by cats and litter left by trespassers at night have the potential to cause harm.	2	1	2	Acceptable	No extra controls necessary. Alternatives can be considered. A site check will be conducted before each session to check for litter	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence, and creativity

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Probability	Consequence
1 Highly unlikely	1 Slightly harmful
2 Unlikely	2 Harmful
3 Likely	3 Extremely harmful

Probability x Consequence = Risk Rating

Risk Rating	Hazard Severity	Action
1	Minimal	No action required, no documentation necessary
2	Acceptable	No extra controls necessary. Alternatives can be considered.
3 and 4	Moderate	All avenues should be explored to reduce risk, and implemented within specified time limits. If a moderate risk is associated with extremely harmful consequences then further assessment is advisable to determine more accurately the probability of harm. This can be used to evaluate the need for improved controls.
6	Substantial	Activities should not start until risk has been reduced. If activity already in progress then urgent action should be taken.
9	Unacceptable	Activities should not start (or should be stopped) until risk is reduced. If this is impossible, the activity must not be started.

DAILY OPERATIONS PROCEDURES- BEFORE AND DURING SESSIONS

PAGE 18

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL

DAILY OPERATIONS
PROCEDURES

DAILY OPERATIONS PROCEDURES-BEFORE AND DURING SESSION

CONNECTION.GROWTH, EXPLORATION,SUSTAINABILITY

The best classroom and the richest classroom is roofed only by the sky.- Margret MC Millan

Before a session takes place the Forest School Leader will carry out a daily risk assessment of the area and will take any necessary action to ensure the site is safe before use (appendix 13). The Forest School Leader will list resources required for the session on the planning (appendix 20). The resources will be checked out by the Forest School Leader using the check list and all tools will be checked before use by the Forest School Leader following the tool policy procedure (p23-24). All tools and resources are locked in a storage unit until required for use. Sometimes children are encouraged to help carry and transport resources safely to the session. The Forest School Leader will provide activity risk assessments (appendix 20) to all staff and volunteers at the session, to ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of any hazards associated with an activity and the measures in place to control the risk. Before the session staff and volunteers will be briefed on the intended structure of the session and their responsibilities. The children will be collected from their classrooms after school by the Forest School Leader. The children will change into waterproofs and appropriate footwear and will then be brought to the outdoor classroom after registration. The beginning of the session will follow a similar pattern each time (coming together time to recap rules and boundaries).

It is the responsibility of ALL adults to make on-going risk assessments. Regular head counts are carried out and if there is any' doubt the cuckoo call is used to bring all children back to the leading adult. If any child is unaccounted for then the missing child procedure is followed. Please refer to missing child policy (p32). The adults should follow the roles of the adult guidance, keeping in mind the purpose for the high adult to child ratio.

At the end of the session children are called again using the cuckoo call. Children will be encouraged by supporting adults to work together to return resources safely, to a central location, ready for returning to storage. Children will then group in the Forest School seating area, where a head count will take place. A reflection session or game will take place, sometimes followed by a song. Children will be lead to the outdoor classroom to change out of waterproofs. Another headcount will take place before the children leave the outdoor classroom (p18).

At the end of the session children will be escorted to the main gates where they will wait to be collected by parents/careers. The remaining staff will stay onsite to gather resources and take back to the storage unit, where they will be checked back in using the check list by the Forest School Leader, who will be advised immediately if any tools/resources are missing and go and check the area (appendix 23). All tools and equipment will be taken off the site at the end of the session.

DAILY OPERATIONS PROCEDURES-FOLLOWING SESSIONS

DAILY OPERATIONS PROCEDURES-FOLLOWING SESSION

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

"Life is only a reflection of what we allow ourselves to see" Unknown

During and following a session, Forest School assistants will ensure they give their observational notes to the Forest School Leader to enable them to plan, according to the children's needs, for the next session. Please also see our Reflection, Assessment and Monitoring Policy (p37).

The Forest School Leader will reflect and assess the outcomes of each Forest School session and this process ensures that the correct amount of support can be built into the next session. This process allows the Forest School Leader to design sessions that build children's confidence, resilience and emotional intelligence. It also allows the Forest School leader to reflect upon the interests of the group and build a holistic profile of each member. To look back, reflect and learn from past experiences allows sessions and learning to move forwards and progress.

Forest School learning is a reflective process which also involves the participants. At the end of each session a reflective process takes place where a discussion takes place about all that happened. This process can take several forms:

- Discussions: Communicating and sharing what was liked, remembered, hearing different view points
- Art: reflections around art work, using objects, puppets, role play to discuss what was achieved and accomplished in the session
- Storytelling: telling stories about the session, reading story books that raise issues addressed during activities
- Emotional stations: emotion cards representing how participants feel, talk about emotions and feelings
- Games: drawing on learning, feelings and sharing of accomplishments and next steps.

Reflection supports growth mindset and resilience, community and trust. It is a process at the heart of Forest School practice and allows educators and participants to assess, review and progress. It helps the process to move forward to strive to improve, evaluate and from it the next sessions activities are planned and made.

EXTREME WEATHER



"Imagine children that have grown up playing outside in all manner of challenging conditions, in all seasons of the year. Imagine how they'd be different than kids taught to come inside when it's raining, or cold."

Andrew McMartin (2014)

EXTREME WEATHER POLICY

WEATHER CONDITIONS PROCEDURES

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

"There's no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing" Sir Ranulph Fiennes

This is an old Scandinavian saying which is of great importance for Forest School as sessions take place in almost all weathers. It is important that all participants (children and adults) are suitably dressed for Forest School. Otherwise, they will feel uncomfortable and miserable and are unlikely to enjoy the experience. Assessments of weather conditions will be taken prior to a visit (appendix 19) and the forecast will be monitored. Sessions will be cancelled if:

- the temperature is deemed extreme,
- if the wind speed is assessed as amber on the scale.
- if there is lightening in the woods.

Where possible, the sessions will carry on regardless of the weather as long as it is deemed as safe. If the weather deteriorates suddenly during a session, the Forest School leaders will decide whether to leave the site, use alternative accommodation or return the participants to their school classrooms .

The participants are asked to wear full winter or summer kit and while the Forest School leader will have limited amount of spare clothes this is not to be relied upon and as mentioned above it is parents responsibility to send children with appropriate clothing and spare clothes, insect repellent, sun cream, water in a bottle.

The nature of woodland means that Forest School sites are quite sheltered and we do have a shelter on site. Children will be taken back to school if the weather worsens and the assessment to close Forest School is made. This is rare.

Please see (appendix 22) for kit guidance. It is essential that children come in the correct kit. More clothes is better than not enough. In terms of safety children can injure their skin in the woods if they do not have long trousers and can also become cold very quickly when their clothes are not waterproof or warm enough.

It is recommended that long sleeves and long trousers are worn throughout the year to provide protection against sunburn, bites, stings and ticks. Layers are the best idea as temperatures and conditions can change significantly during a session. Plenty of warm clothing is essential on very cold days. Footwear needs to be sturdy. Sandals or flip flops are never suitable for Forest School. Wellies or strong boots are best and remember to add an extra pair of socks in cold weather as cold feet can make you feel particularly miserable. Waterproof jackets AND waterproof trousers are essential if there is any chance of rain or if the ground is wet. Sun hats and sun cream are essential in the summer. These recommendations apply to adults as well as children

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT



Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (I.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

Risk Assessment-Extreme Weather

Description of site/Activity tools: Merton Junior School An overview of Extreme weather												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Sun Exposure	Sunburn/Sun Stroke	Clients Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions, safety talks, appropriately dressed Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	Appropriate Safety Talk - Check Weather forecast. - Ensure Children Appropriately Dressed - Sun-cream available for children	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Significant benefits to being in a woodland environment. Children learn to manage risks in adverse weather conditions.
2	Cold Weather	Cold/Hypothermia	Clients Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions, safety talks, appropriately dressed Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	Appropriate Safety Talk - Check Weather forecast. - Ensure Children Appropriately Dressed. - Have space blankets available if needed. - End activity if too cold	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Significant benefits to being in a woodland environment. Children learn to manage risks in adverse weather conditions.
3	Ice/Snowy Conditions	-increased likelihood of slips and trip	Clients Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions, safety talks, appropriately dressed Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Appropriate Safety Talk - Check Weather forecast. - Ensure Children Appropriately Dressed. - If appropriate grit paths and areas. - End activity or cancel activity if too dangerous	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Significant benefits to being in a woodland environment. Children learn to manage risks in adverse weather conditions.
4	Windy Conditions	- Risk of falling branches or trees	Clients Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions, safety talks, appropriately dressed Adult supervision					Cancel activities if excessive wind. Appropriate safety talk. Safety check trees for loss damage and dead branches regularly.		Significant benefits to being in a woodland environment. Children learn to manage risks in adverse weather conditions.
5	Rainy Weather	Area become hazardous for slips. - Participants become cold/hyperthermia.	Clients Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions, safety talks, appropriately dressed Adult supervision					Appropriate Safety Talk - Check Weather forecast. - Ensure Children Appropriately Dressed. - Have space blankets available if needed. - End activity if too cold or area becomes dangerous.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Significant benefits to being in a woodland environment. Children learn to manage risks in adverse weather conditions.

CLOTHING

GETTING READY FOR YOUR FOREST SCHOOL SESSIONS



When visiting our Forest School it is essential that learners come prepared. Every learner should ensure they are dressed appropriately and have appropriate equipment with them.

Trousers

Ensure trousers are hardwearing and warm. Choose trousers that you are happy to get muddy and messy.



Tops.

For warmth it is advisable to dress in a number of different layers. This will allow for adjustment to temperature. Layers also trap heat.



Footwear

Ensure footwear is hard wearing and warm e.g walking boots or wellingtons. Choose footwear that is ok to get muddy and messy



Waterproofs

A set of waterproofs is essential and waterproof trousers would also be useful.



A Full bottle of water

Especially in hot weather staying hydrated is really important.



Sun Cream and Sun hat

During the summer these will be essential to stop burning.



Hat/gloves/Scarf

These may be needed in the winter months to keep you warm.



Torch

Especially in the winter when light goes early.



-CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL: EMMA CLODE 2020

CLOTHING POLICY

CLOTHING POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

All children are different and your child may get cold easily and therefore require more layers. Please go with what is right for your child but remember that it is better to have too many clothes than not enough.

It is important that all participants (children and adults) are suitably dressed for Forest School. Otherwise, they will feel uncomfortable and miserable and are unlikely to enjoy the experience. It is recommended that long sleeves and long trousers are worn throughout the year to provide protection against sunburn, bites, stings and ticks. Layers are the best idea as temperatures and conditions can change significantly during a session. Plenty of warm clothing is essential on very cold days. Footwear needs to be sturdy. Sandals or flip flops are never suitable for Forest School. Wellies or strong boots are best and remember to add an extra pair of socks in cold weather as cold feet can make you feel particularly miserable. Waterproof jackets AND waterproof trousers are essential if there is any chance of rain or if the ground is wet. **Canopy Forest School** has a limited supply of these if children need to borrow them. Sun hats and sun cream are essential in the summer. These recommendations apply to adults as well as children.

No person will be permitted to go to Forest School without appropriate clothing that will protect them from extremes of heat or cold, keep them covered to reduce the likelihood of cuts and scrapes, that fits appropriately for comfort, and that meets any religious requirements. Children and parents are encouraged to think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities, and to be aware they are likely to take some of our mud home with them after a session. It can be cooler in our wooded

Below you will find a clothing list please also see (appendix 22) for more details about clothing:

- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof coat, with a hood.
- Long sleeved top
- Full length trousers
- Warm boots (wellies can be very cold during the winter)
- Warm Socks, and a spare pair
- Gloves and Woolly hat – Cold weather
- Sun hat: that fits well to ensure good visibility-sunny weather

We work on the principle that “there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing”, but staff must be aware of how children in their class react to different weathers and how this affects their sensory processing.

If you need more advise or help with clothing suitability please ask as we would be happy to advise.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



Personal Protective Equipment allows us to explore and learn in the safest way possible. At Canopy Forest School we supply this equipment to help us carry out a range of activities.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT



WHEN USING TOOLS AND LIGHTING FIRES IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE. APPROPRIATE SAFETY EQUIPMENT WILL ALWAYS BE SUPPLIED DURING FOREST SCHOOL SESSIONS BEFORE STARTING AN ACTIVITY.

HIGH VISIBILITY VESTS

High visibility vests are ideal for making learners more visible. The vests will also be used while children are using tools to let others know to stay away



SAFETY GLOVES

Gloves are ideal for clearing areas with nettles and brambles. Gloves are also essential using cutting tools eg knives and saws. There are a variety of gloves used in Forest School including:

- Gardening Gloves
- Close fitting gloves
- Cut resistant gloves
- Fire gloves



SAFETY GOGGLES

Safety goggles are often used when using tools especially wood can splinter.



FIRST AID KITS

- Vinyl / non-latex gloves
- Bandages, Triangular bandages
- Plasters
- Wound dressings
- Eye pads
- Saline wash
- Safety pins
- Individually wrapped adhesive dressings.
- Tuff cut scissors
- Individually wrapped anti-bacteria moist wipes
- Face shield
- Instant ice packs
- Burns kit



FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Fire gloves are ideal when handling hot items from the fire e.g. plans, hot logs etc. Fire safety equipment when working with fires it is essential to have a method for extinguishing a fire, especially during an emergency. Fire safety equipment includes:

- A fire blanket
- A fire extinguisher
- A bucket full of water



WHISTLE AND TORCHES

Torches and whistles are useful for letting people know where you are and alerting others of an emergency.



BURNS KIT

- 1 x Bandage used to hold dressings in place
- 1 x Burnshield 10cm x 10cm – apply directly onto the burn
- 2 x Burnshield Blotts – sachets of liquid to pour directly onto the burn.
- 2 x Eyewash/Wound wash pods – cleans cuts and grazes and can also be used to rinse dirt from eyes
- 1 pair of gloves
- 1 x roll of Microporous tape – holds bandages in



DEN BUILDING



"Shelters are an important part of our lives. We rely on them everyday from our houses to umbrellas. But I think most of us take them for granted, assuming that a shelter will be there for us when we need one. I never knew just how important a shelter was until I didn't have one, in a storm, on a mountain, in the wilderness"
(Wlmsley & Westall, 2021, p70)

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (minor burns, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

TLC	1
1 st Aid	2
Non Emergency	3
Emergency/Hospital	4
Death/multiple Injury	5



Risk Assessment-Den Building

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of Den Building												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Woodland Site	Harm caused by branches, terrain, trips, falls, bruises.	Children Taking part in Forest School	L	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	2	4	L	Clear Instructions. Adult supervision, appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. The group will be made aware of aspects highlighted in the Woodland's Site Risk Assessment. Forest School Leader to ensure that aspects from the Woodland's Risk Assessments are highlighted.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise, gross motor skills: moving around site with rope; throwing rope, etc. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, Problem solving: how to move rope; pull items with rope, perseverance. Fine motor skills: wrapping it round items; tie knots, Working together, cooperation, sharing resources.
2	Collecting natural materials	Pokes, grazes, sprains, twists, strains	Children Taking part in Forest School	L	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	2	4	L	Clear Instructions. Adult supervision, appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. The group will be made aware of aspects highlighted in the Collecting Natural Materials Activity Risk Assessment. The Forest School Leader needs to ensure all areas are covered before the activity begins.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment.
3	Knots slipping	Rope burn, bumps from falling wood	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3	9	L	Specific knots and lashings are used for larger shelters. Groups to have practiced and understood lashings before being involved in larger scale constructions. Forest School Leader to check groups understanding of knots and lashings before construction begins. Do not complete activity if unsure.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise, gross motor skills; hand - eye co-ordination, throwing rope; making the swing work. Problem solving: how to get rope over branch Fine motor skills: wrapping it round items; tying knots. Working together, social skills, making relationships, managing feelings and Achievement and Enjoyment, turn-taking, pushing each other, judging speed/distance of swing.

											behaviour, cooperation, perseverance, Emotional Development; confidence, resilience, self-esteem, independence.	
4	Shelter collapsing	Rope burn, bumps from falling wood	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	3	6	L	Group advised on how and where to construct their shelters. Site chosen and materials being used must be appropriate to the type of shelter being made. Diameter of materials used above head height not to exceed that of the supporting branches. Forest School Leader and adults to monitor shelters being made closely to identify support amendment to potentially hazardous shelters. Forest School Leader and adults to check the shelters before they are used.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance, Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence and creativity
5	Branches sticking out from shelter and branches at head height	Poking eyes and body parts on shelter. Banging heads.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3	9	M	Group advised to avoid using materials with potentially dangerous spikes on them. Materials being used to be monitored by Forest School Leader. Group advised not to run or move quickly in or out of the shelters. Forest School Leader and other adults to monitor shelters closely highlighting potential hazards.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment.
6	Branches, roots, string, and rope	Trips and falls	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	2	6	L	Procedures are followed to ensure equipment being used for shelters is being stored appropriately. Group are aware of how they should be stored to avoid trip hazards occurring. Forest School Leader and adults to ensure area is being kept clear and free from potential trip hazards. Ensure that group is aware of potential hazards.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment.
7	Injury from use of tools	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	H	Clear instructions Adult supervision	4	2	8	M	Procedures are followed for tools used before activity begins. Children given tool talk and instructed how to follow Safe Tool Use procedures to ensure area is kept safe and tools handled correctly. Forest School Leader and adults to monitor use of tools and ensure that safety equipment is worn.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment.
8	Lifting Heavy items	Back injury, muscle strain etc	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	2	6	M	Adults to be made aware of procedures prior to session and asked to remind children throughout. Group to practice lifting techniques and to be encouraged to work as a team to carry heavier items. Forest School Leader to ensure group are confident in lifting techniques	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment.



Den Building



The Benefits

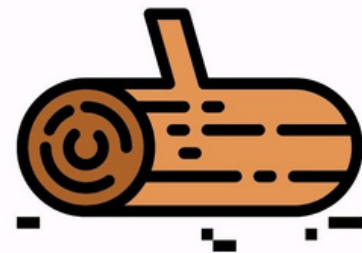
- Manipulate and experiment with natural materials
- Investigate and collaborate with others
- Imaginative, challenging creative play

What You need

- Branches
- Leaves
- Mud
- Your hands
- A good sturdy tree to start with nooks and nobbles
- Top tip: if you lean sticks against a tree like a wigwam, you don't have to do as much building.

Risks

- Carrying and transporting branches
- Using ropes and tying knots
- Trips, falls and bumps



BUILDING SHELTERS

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL



Security



Community



Acceptance



The Benefits of Building Shelters

- Physical -strength and co-ordination moving building materials, tying knots and constructing
- Social-Working together on a project, builds sense of community , role and place in the group, sharing skills and using each other's talents
- Emotional-Sense of purpose and achievement, dens a safe space in which to play and create an imaginary home, quiet space, place of belonging and ownership

Belonging



TREE CLIMBING



"To climb a tree is for a child to discover a whole new world."
(Froebel, 1826)

TREE CLIMBING AND DEN BUILDING POLICY

TREE CLIMBING AND DEN BUILDING POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

"To Climb a tree is for a child to discover a new world" Frederick Froebel

Within the Forest School area there are a limited amount of mature trees which are suitable for children to climb. There are two trees which are suitable for climbing these are marked with a red flag. Before allowing children to climb, trees should be checked for loose or rotten branches, as well as the ground surrounding the tree for hazards/sharp objects and then removed.

Adult to child ratio 1:1

- Only one child climbing a tree at any one time
- Tree climbing is NOT allowed in high winds or wet conditions.
- Children are ONLY allowed to climb up to 1.5 metres in height which will be depicted by a red flag.
- Adults should note that tree climbing should be carried out with extra caution when children are wearing wellies.

Den building and playing with natural found materials is an essential part of our curriculum. Children are taught to carry sticks shorter than their arm's length and to hold it pointing towards the ground. They are encouraged to think about the distance between themselves and others. Longer sticks can be dragged along the ground or carried with a child on each side if needed.

Wood is collected for fire lighting purposes. It is collected in four thicknesses - matchstick sized, pencil sized, thumb sized and wrist sized. This is a good mathematical activity involving sorting and matching. Sticks may be collected for creating pictures and patterns but should be collected sparingly so as not to disrupt creature habitats. Children are taught how to keep the woodland sustainable. (p38, p6-7)

Children are taught a selection of knots for different uses. If tying something like a hammock, den building or tarp an adult will oversee and advice as needed. Children are also encouraged to use rope and string to help transport materials.

Children are encouraged to roll, lift, drag and to pull materials, either by using their hands or by using ropes. We encourage safe lifting by bending our knees and keeping our back straight. Safe lifting should always be modelled by adults. Heavier objects should be rolled, lifted or carried by more people working together (Appendix 18).

ROPE WORK



Knowing how to tie a range of basic knots is a really useful bush craft skill that will help you in all manner of tasks from assembling a shelter to making an emergency shelter. " (Walmsley & Westall (2017), p50)

At Canopy Forest school we the students some of the most useful knots.

BENEFITS OF ROPE PLAY

Development of:

• GROSS AND FINE MOTOR SKILLS

• Vestibular sense - as they swing, balance, tilt and spin

• VISIO-SPATIAL AWARENESS

• PROPRIOCEPTIVE SENSE - AS THEY PUSH AND PULL WITH THEIR BODIES

Build up decision making skills

Risk taking skills as they swing higher, balance at the high ends of the ropes and test themselves on heights

Knowledge of Materials - understanding strength & stretch of ropes

Discover how a stable environment changes in different seasonal or weather conditions

Build up skills by repeating activities

Undertake self-chosen challenges

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (minor burns, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

TLC	1
1 st Aid	2
Non Emergency	3
Emergency/Hospital	4
Death/multiple Injury	5



Risk Assessment-Ropes

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of using Ropes												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	General use of ropes, free play and learning knots	Rope can get wrapped round limbs and neck and tighten, causing distress and injury or strangulation, trip hazard.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3	9	L	Clear Instructions: Adult supervision, appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. If possible, use brightly coloured ropes/string. Mark ropes/string with visible objects if needed. Adults to monitor locations of ropes/string and move if necessary. Gloves to be worn if activity involves pulling a rope. Adults to monitor use of rope and to control activities that involve pulling on rope. Groups to be advised to position ropes to ensure they are not a trip hazard. Loose ropes to be tidied away and secured when not in use. Groups taught to avoid putting ropes at neck height where people could walk into them.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills: moving around site with rope, throwing rope, etc. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, Problem solving: how to move rope, pull items with rope, perseverance. Fine motor skills: wrapping it round items, tie knots; Working together, cooperation, sharing resources.
2	Den building	Rope can get wrapped round limbs and neck and tighten, causing distress and injury or strangulation, trip hazard. Tripping	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3	9	L	Clear Instructions and awareness of dangers when using ropes. Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult supervision and instructions on how to tie ropes and brightly coloured ropes/string used for	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement
		and falling over rope.							guy ropes. Mark ropes/string with visible objects if needed. Adults to monitor locations of ropes/string and move if necessary. Gloves to be worn if activity involves pulling a rope. Adults to monitor use of rope and to control activities that involve pulling on rope. Groups to be advised to position ropes to ensure they are not a trip hazard. Loose ropes to be tidied away and secured when not in use. Groups taught to avoid putting ropes at neck height where people could walk into them.		and enjoyment, community building, Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, independence and creativity	
3	Rope swings	Throwing rope up over tree it could hit someone. Rope or branch may break cause injury through fall. Person using swing may fall off Children swinging into each other.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3	9	L	Training given and correct procedures adhered to including safe height not more than 1.5m as in insurance policy. Only using trees with canopy flag. Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Demonstrate safe throwing the rope. Ask everyone to stand out of range and the person throwing will watch carefully where it is falling. Ensure that the branch chosen for swing looks sturdy and strong and once the swing has been made then test it with their own weight to ensure the rope is secure before swinging. The swing will be made as low as possible. The swinging area will be cleared of hard objects on ground and the range should not include obstacles e.g. trees. An area covering the range of the swing will be kept clear of people so that they do not get hit and children will be	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills; hand – eye co-ordination, throwing rope; making the swing work. Problem solving: how to get rope over branch Fine motor skills: wrapping it round items; tying knots. Working together, social skills, making relationships, managing feelings and Achievement and Enjoyment, turn-taking, pushing each other, judging speed/distance of swing, behaviour, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development; confidence, resilience, self-esteem, independence.

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENTS OF A VARIETY OF FOREST SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

TLC	1
1 st Aid	2
Non Emergency	3
Emergency/Hospital	4
Death/multiple Injury	5



Risk Assessment-Variety of Forest School Activities

Description of site/Activity tools: Medon Junior School An overview of a Variety of Forest School Activities												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P)	Severity (S)	Rating (PXS)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Exploring the site	Trips and falls, sprains, branches poking eyes, face, body, splinters	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Site management, Checking for fallen branches, roots, glass and other objects left behind	3	2/3	6	L	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Awareness talks. Remove dangerous eye level branches on frequented paths	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Hand eye co-ordination, managing risks, fine and gross motor skills, <u>team-work</u> , community building, achievement and enjoyment
2	Fire pit - general	Burns, clothing catching fire, grounds catching fire	Children Taking part in Forest School	H	Site management Position of fire pit in the centre of a fire circle, away from buildings and over hanging trees and branches	3	5	15	M	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Safety awareness and practice of safe procedures. Understanding of fire safety and fire triangle	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	understanding instructions. Knowing about the heat triangle, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment
3	Fire pit - cooking	Burns	Children Taking part in Forest School	H	Site management Position of fire pit in the centre of a fire circle, away from buildings and over hanging trees and branches	3	5	15	M	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby awareness talks and reminders of correct procedures. Correct	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	understand instructions. Knowing about the heat triangle, manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building.
									PPE work and long handled equipment, circle rules and fire extinguishing equipment			
4	Small tool use - general. Bow saw, secateurs, loppers, penknives, billhooks, spade, pole saw.	Cuts, grazes, bumps, bruises	Children Taking part in Forest School	H	Clear instructions Adult supervision,	3	4	12	M	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Tool safety routines adhered to. 1:1 supervision until confident and competent. Tool Talks, tools to be put away in a locked container	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Significant benefits to using tool. Develop own risk management for client. manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building.
5	Small tool use - pole lathe & shave horse	Cuts, grazes, bumps bruises	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	L	First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Strict 1:1 supervision & training until confident and competent. Safety procedures adhered to. Tool Talks, tools to be put away in a locked container	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Significant benefits to using tool. Develop own risk management for client. manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building.
6	Coppicing & small tree felling.	Hit by falling branches, cuts, grazes and bruises	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	L	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Training given and correct procedures adhered to including safe distances. Always supervised. Use of correct PPE	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Significant benefits to using tool. Develop own risk management for client. manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building, sustainability.
7	Shelter building with tarpaulin, sticks, rope	Sticks falling on children, sticks poking eye, rope burn, splinters, cuts and grazes.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3	9	L	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Training given and correct procedures adhered to including safe distances. Always supervised. Use correct PPE	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Manage own risks, teamwork, and determination and resilience. Achievement and enjoyment, community building. Physical exercise, gross and fine motor skills. Challenge. Problem solving, involvement and concentration. Being imaginative and having their own ideas. Communication, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development, resilience, self-esteem, <u>independence</u> and <u>creativity</u>

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENTS OF A VARIETY OF FOREST SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

8	Tree climbing	Slippery conditions, slipping or falling from tree leading to broken bones, bruises, abrasions. Tree unstable, falling over and branches breaking during climbing leading to bruises, abrasions, crushing from falling tree or branches. Injuries to eyes and other body parts from twigs. Getting stuck in branches.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3/4	9	L	Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adult to be nearby Training given and correct procedures adhered to including safe height not more than 1.5m as in insurance policy. Only climbing trees with canopy flag	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Achievement and enjoyment, taking risks, involvement and concentration, perseverance, understanding and testing own limits. Emotional Development; social skills, confidence, resilience, self-esteem, independence. Physical skills: coordination, refining gross motor skills.
9	Rope swing	Throwing rope up over tree it could hit someone. Rope or branch may break cause injury through fall. Person using swing may fall off Children swinging into each other.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3/4	9	L	Training given and correct procedures adhered to including safe height not more than 1.5m as in insurance policy. Only using trees with canopy flag. Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Demonstrate safe throwing the rope. Ask everyone to stand out of range and the person throwing will watch carefully where it is falling. Ensure that the branch chosen for swing looks sturdy and strong and once the swing has been made then test it with their own weight to ensure the rope is secure before swinging. The swing will be made as low as possible. The swinging area will be cleared of hard objects on ground and the range should not include obstacles e.g. trees. An area covering the range of the swing will be kept clear of people so that they do not get hit and children will be	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills; hand – eye co-ordination, throwing rope; making the swing work. Problem solving- how to get rope over branch Fine motor skills- wrapping it round items; tying knots. Working together, social skills, making relationships, managing feelings and Achievement and Enjoyment, turn-taking, pushing each other, judging speed/distance of swing, behaviour, cooperation, perseverance. Emotional Development; confidence, resilience, self-esteem, independence.

10	Rope – free play with rope and string	Rope can get wrapped round limbs and neck and tighten, causing distress and injury or strangulation, trip hazard.	Children Taking part in Forest School	M	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3/4	9	L	made aware of where the swing is being used. Appropriate adult: child ratio trained FS Leader, First Aider. First Aid kit to hand. Emergency Action Plan in place. Adults need to observe children using the rope and stop activity if rope gets wrapped round anybody before it tightens. Discussion with children about safe use of rope. Make sure children listen to each other and respond to other's requests, especially if rope gets wrapped round somebody. Make those who approach the rope aware of any tripping hazard. If rope is tied up off ground then use a bright visible rope or make brighter by tying on something more visible	Forest Practitioners Briefed Clients	Physical exercise; gross motor skills- moving around site with rope; throwing rope, etc. Achievement and Enjoyment, memory, Problem solving- how to move rope; pull items with rope, perseverance. Fine motor skills- wrapping it round items; tie knots; Working together, cooperation, sharing resources.
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USING TOOLS



"I have noticed how absorbed people become when they are working with tools and wood. I think working with wood as meditation with the hands: when it's going well, there is nothing that helps me get into a state of flow more than whittling. When the hands are busy, the mind can be free."

(Irvine, 2021, Foreword)

TOOL HANDLING POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

There are a huge variety of tools that will be used appropriately at Canopy Forest School, to help with crafting, whittling, maintenance, building shelters and a whole lot more. In all cases consideration will always be given to the safety of the individuals working with the tools. When we are working with tools there are a number of key considerations that are made. Health and safety are of upmost importance and risk assessments are always produced for each activity.

In this section we would like to explain how we teach children tool use and how we implement health and safety through our risk assessments (appendix 5, 20, 25).

At **Canopy Forest School** the children will be given the chance to make a range of objects from stickmen to wooden mallets or learning new carving cuts. The children use tools when we feel they are ready. All tools are provided by the Forest School along with gloves, goggles and other safety equipment. We will always have a tool area where all tools are kept and this is a locked box that only adults have access to.

All tools are counted out and back in at the beginning and end of each session in which they are used (appendix 23). When not in use they are kept secured away in a locked area. Before each tool is to be used it will be checked for damage and working order. Each tool type is kept in their own suitable containers, many of which are also lockable.

Children are never allowed to help themselves and will always have adult supervision when collecting, transporting and using tools. Tools are only used for a specific purpose. Adults will model correct and safe tool use, storage and transportation at all times. We use "Tool Talks" to introduce each tool and first show the parts of the tool, arriving, moving and carrying a tool, how to use a tool in a safe way and how to store and maintain tools. We also have a "tool passport" which records and celebrates each child working through the Tool Talk "PASS" system (appendix 5).

Blades will always be made safe when not in use and children will be taught how to do this. Ratios should be adhered to however a Forest school leader may make a judgement based on their knowledge of individual children. When adults are taking part in the session the tool use and safety will be modelled. Safe sitting is required for most tool use and this can be taught as one knee position of both knees known as the "Respect Position" (appendix 24). Appropriate PPC will be used (appendix 25).

There may also be times when Forest School Leaders use their skills, knowledge and judgement to accommodate children's physical needs and abilities and may have to change the given procedure of a tool in order for the child to have the opportunity to use it. For example, children who are unable to kneel.

When using a tool, they are used well away from others in the group, (two arm's length and the tool length) and ensuring that others are aware that a tool is in use (appendix 26). Only walking is permitted when transporting a tool.

TOOL USING POLICY 2

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL

TOOL HANDLING POLICY 2

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Safe use of tools General:

- Keep tools in good, clean order.
- Check tools are safe to use before the start of each session.
- Carry out tool maintenance (cleaning and oiling) once a week.
- Do not use tools with damaged blades or handles or with loose bolts or fixings.
- When transporting tools do not carry more than can be held securely.
- A blunt blade is more dangerous than a sharp one.
- Count tools in and out.

Bow Saws - use for cutting wood with a diameter greater than a 2 pence piece

- Wear a glove on the non-sawing (helping) hand, not on the tool.
- Use the saw to the side of you and not in front.
- Keep your non sawing hand away from the blade when sawing.
- Saw with easy relaxed strokes using the full length of the blade. Let the blade do the work - don't force it, especially if it sticks.
- Carry with the frame at your side with the blade facing down, like carrying a handbag.
- Keep the blade covered when not in use and especially when transporting.
- Ensure the item to be cut is firmly held.
- When using with children - Leader and child to kneel on floor with Leader on one side of saw and the child on the other, both in the 'respect position'. The Leader guides the saw and the child follows.

Billhooks - use for cleaving wood

- Never wear a glove on the hand holding the tool - it makes the handle hard to grip safely.
- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Stop if anyone comes too close.
- Hold billhook away from your body and cut away from yourself.
- Stop if you get tired.

Loppers - use for cutting wood with a diameter smaller than a 2 pence piece

- Always carry with blades closed (and locked if applicable).
- When not in use leave with blades closed (and locked if applicable).
- Do not exceed the cutting capacity of the tool. ☒ Use away from your body and keep hand not holding tool away from blades.
- Children only to use when sitting or kneeling.

Knives - use to whittle small sticks, peel bark and cut string

- Never wear a glove on the hand holding the tool - it makes the handle hard to grip safely. Wear a safety glove on your other helper hand.
- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work. Stop if anyone comes too close.
- Hold the knife away from your body and cut away from yourself.

Potato Peelers - use to peel bark

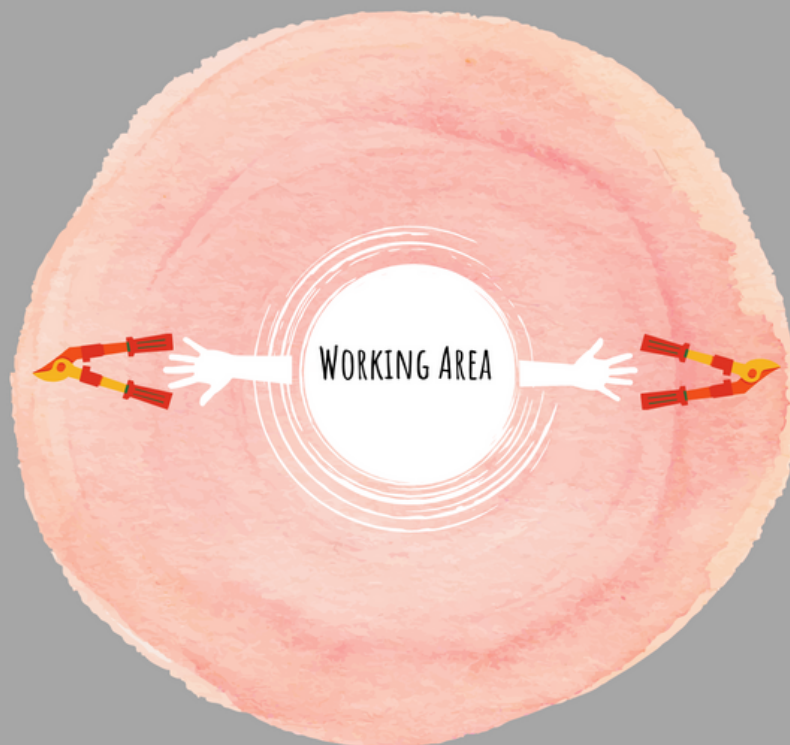
- Rest the wood you are peeling on the ground or on a bench and not on your leg.
- Hold the potato peeler away from your body and peel away from yourself towards the ground.
- Keep the hand not holding the tool away from sharp end of potato peeler.
- Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of

THE SAFETY CIRCLE

SAFE WORKING DISTANCE

THE SAFETY CIRCLE

Safe working distance: The safe working distance between an individual or two individuals is often referred to as a Safety circle or blood Circle. The name is designed to show that this is the safe working distance that bystanders should be to avoid being hurt, when a tool is in use. The Blood circle is a consistent size (2 arms and a tools length) . With younger children you can mark out this area.



CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL



THE RESPECT POSITION

THE RESPECT POSITION

WHEN WORKING WITH TOOLS OR FIRE IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A STABLE BASE. THE RESPECT POSITION INVOLVES KNEELING ON ONE KNEE AND THIS ALLOWS YOU TO BE STABLE WHILST OPENING UP SPACE FOR YOU TO BE ABLE TO USE TOOLS. IN THIS POSITION YOU ARE ALSO ABLE TO MOVE AWAY QUICKLY IF NEEDED. WHEN TAKING UP THE RESPECT POSITION THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE PLACING YOUR KNEE IN RELATION TO THE TOOL YOU ARE USING OR THE JOB YOU MIGHT BE DOING.



BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death



Risk Assessment- Loppers

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of using Loppers												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (P(S) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Accidental injury on unattended tool.	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	- Clear instructions - Adult supervision - Ensure tools are stored in a designated space. - Ensure tools are stored in a locked box.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem
2	Incorrect use of tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	Inform person using Loppers of tool talk - No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on non-sawing hand. - First aiders and first aid kit close by. - One to one supervision for new/younger/vulnerable clients. - Ensure safety of site. - Keep blade cover on when not in use and store in tool bag.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem
3	Trip or fall with tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Ensure safe working area prepared with limited trip risks. - Ensure tool transported with cover on. - Ensure tool talk learnt including how to move safely with tool.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem
4	Falling Branches when cutting	Bumps, bruises, cuts from falling branches	Children Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Ensure high branches are correctly supported. - Ensure other clients are clear of the working area. - Ensure those using the loppers know the correct procedure.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Body and environment awareness, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death



Risk Assessment-Bowsaw

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of using a Bowsaw												
Hazard	Halm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (P(S) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Accidental injury on unattended tool.	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	- Clear instructions - Adult supervision - Ensure tools are stored in a designated space. - Ensure tools are stored in a locked box.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem
2	Incorrect use of tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	Inform person using Bowsaw of tool talk - No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on non-sawing hand. - First aiders and first aid kit close by. - One to one supervision for new/younger/vulnerable clients. - Ensure safety of site. - Keep blade cover on when not in use and store in tool bag.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem
3	Trip or fall with tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Ensure safe working area prepared with limited trip risks. - Ensure tool transported with cover on. - Ensure tool talk learnt including how to move safely with tool.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem
4	Falling Branches when cutting	Bumps, bruises, cuts from falling branches	Children Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Ensure high branches are correctly supported. - Ensure other clients are clear of the working area. - Ensure those using the Bowsaw know the correct procedure.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Body and environment awareness, risk awareness, confidence, self-esteem

BENEFIT/RISK ASSESSMENT



Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

Risk Assessment-Billhook

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of using a Billhook												
Hazard	Harm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Accidental injury on unattended tool.	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	- Clear Instructions - Adult supervision Ensure tools are stored in a designated space. - Ensure tools are stored in a locked box.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye coordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem
2	Incorrect use of tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	Inform person using Billhook of tool talk - No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on non-sawing hand. - First aiders and first aid kit close by. - One to one supervision for new/younger/vulnerable clients. - Ensure safety of site. - Keep blade cover on when not in use and store in tool bag.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye coordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem
3	Trip or fall with tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Ensure safe working area prepared with limited trip risks. - Ensure tool transported with cover on. - Ensure tool talk learnt including how to move safely with tool.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (broken bone or other injury, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death







Risk Assessment-Sheath Knife


Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of using a Sheath Knife												
Hazard	Harm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Accidental injury on unattended tool.	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	- Clear Instructions - Adult supervision Ensure tools are stored in a designated space. - Ensure tools are stored in a locked box.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye coordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem
2	Incorrect use of tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	4	12	6	Inform person using Sheath Knife of tool talk - No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on non-tool hand. - First aiders and first aid kit close by. - One to one supervision for new/younger/vulnerable clients. - Ensure safety of site. - Keep blade sheath cover on when not in use and store in a locked tool bag/box.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye coordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem
3	Trip or fall with tool	Cuts	Children Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	4	3	12	6	Ensure safe working area prepared with limited trip risks. - Ensure tool transported with sheath on. - Ensure tool talk learnt including how to move safely with tool.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem

TOOL TALKS

TOOL TALK

 <h3 style="text-align: center;">LOPPERS</h3> <p>This is a pair of LOPPERS This is the handle This is the blade This is the cutting edge I stand with the loppers like this I walk with the loppers like this I pass the loppers like this I use the loppers two arms and tool away from anyone else except my partner like this I use the loppers to cut anything smaller than a 2 pence piece I have bare hands on the tool When I am not using the loppers I put them on the ground with the handles facing forwards and the blade facing behind me When I have finished with the loppers I put them back in the designated place or in the toolbox provided</p>	 <h3 style="text-align: center;">BOW SAW</h3> <p>This is a BOWSAW This is the handle This is the blade cover I take the cover off like this This is the blade This is the cutting edge When I have finished sawing I put the cover back on like this I walk with the bowsaw like this I pass the bowsaw like this When I use the bow saw I use it two arms and a tool away from anyone else except my partner like this I use the bowsaw to cut anything bigger than a 2 pence piece I wear a glove on the helper hand When I am not holding the bowsaw I put it down with the handle facing out and the blade facing in When I have finished using the bowsaw I put it in the designated place or in the toolbox provided</p>	 <h3 style="text-align: center;">KNIFE</h3> <p>This is a SHEATH KNIFE This is the handle This is the sheath I take the sheath off like this This is the blade This is the cutting edge When not using it I put it back in the sheath like this I stand with it like this I walk with it like this I pass it like this I always use it two arms and a tool length away from anyone else I always use it on the outside of my body and away from me When I use it for cutting string and whittling I wear a glove on my helper hand When I am not using the knife I put it on the ground with the handle facing forwards and the blade facing in When I have finished using the knife I put it in the designated place or in the toolbox provided</p>	 <h3 style="text-align: center;">BILLHOOK</h3> <p>This is a BILLHOOK This is the handle This is the cover I take the cover off like this This is the blade This is the cutting edge When I have finished with the billhook I put the cover back on like this I stand with the billhook like this I walk with the billhook like this I pass the billhook like this When I use the billhook I use it two arms and a tool away from anyone else except my partner like this I use the billhook to cleave (split) wood I have bare hands on the tool When I am not using the billhook I put it down with the handle facing forwards and the blade facing in When I have finished with the billhook I put it in the designated place or in the toolbox provided</p>
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SOURCED FROM: FOREST SCHOOLS OPEN AWARD HANDOUT 1:6

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL - 2021 

TOOLS CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL



Resilience



Self-esteem



Confidence



The Benefits of using Tools

- Physical Skills-fine and gross motor skills, strength and co-ordination
- Emotional resilience-confidence and self-esteem due to the feeling of success, not giving up, learning a new skill, adapting and improving technique
- Social-it builds strong relationships, focus and concentration, working as a team, helping and supporting each other, learning from each other

Capability



USING FIRE



"Fire is an essential part of brushcraft if you are intending to camp out for any length of time. It will provide warmth and a means to cook. Learning to light a fire is a core outdoor skill that teaches children about perseverance as well as science. It is also very satisfying to achieve success." (Walmsley & Westall, 2021, p72)

FIRE POLICY

FIRE POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Fires will only take place in our Forest School once the children are ready in every way; emotionally and physically. We teach the children how to safely and responsibly light a fire and use them cooking and some art and craft activities.

For everyone's safety, no one is allowed to walk or run inside the fire circle even if there is no fire lit. We use log stools to mark out our fire circle and to sit on. If anyone wants to move around the circle or change places, they must step out of the circle and walk around the outside. The fire is kept within a marked out area at the centre of the circle and we use a free standing fire pit. Children may be invited to approach the inner fire circle for cooking or fire lighting but only under adult supervision.

A fire can only be lit if our fire safety equipment is present and correct. The Forest School Leader will always take the lead during fire lighting. All helpers will be briefed prior to a fire lighting session to set out protocols. A lit fire will never be left unattended. Open fires will only be lit in the inner fire circle in a raised fire pit. All Forest School activities are rigorously risk assessed. Sessions are planned in such a way as to introduce higher risk activities to children over a period of time. This allows Leaders to get to know the children in the group and for the children to learn how to behave responsibly and to build knowledge and understanding of the activity.

Children are taught that they would not create fire or be left alone with fire unless they were with an adult. The adults role is to facilitate learning not to dictate but to make sure that children have a firm grasp of the safety rules before they are allowed to

practise their fire lighting and cooking skills. Wood is usually brought in to burn and we teach the children the correct way to lay a fire. We look for four different sizes of wood: matchstick, pencil, thumb and wrist sized.

Non negotiable understanding children must have before being allowed to fire light, cook and anything else that involves being close to the fire (within 1.5 m)

- Ability to safe sit - As already mentioned this can be adapted if a child has a physical barrier to being able to safe sit.
- Understands what the fire circle is and why it helps us stay safe
- Knows how to access and exit the fire circle safely
- understanding of walking only within the fire circle
- understands that sitting around the outside of the fire circle is ok but if they were to move closer to the fire then the above would apply.
- Understand that nobody goes in the inner fire circle where the fire is.

There will be an Introduction to safety around fire before it is lit to explain the above and to play games and talk to re-enforce this. Fire will only be lit in the designated fire area that has been risk assessed and inspected on the day of the session. Permission from the landowner has been sought and given.

Please also see appendix 6

FIRE POLICY 2

FIRE POLICY 2

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Procedure

- Highlight the fire area as a "no go" area, possibly play some games to endorse this.
- The fire area should be large enough to ensure that children are 1.5m away from the fire.
- There should be a gap in the canopy of the trees to reduce the risk of over hanging branches catching fire.
- Ensure that all the required areas are prepared: First Aid, Hand washing area, emergency water/extinguishing purposes, food prep.
- Highlight all the areas and their purpose to the group.
- Children should check that long hair is tied back and no toggles or anything else is dangling from their bodies creating a fire hazard.
- Talk about "The fire Triangle" of heat, oxygen and fuel.
- Demonstrate safe sitting and allow children to practice this.
- Model building a fire in preparation for lighting it.
- Identify the parts of the flint and steel and that this will create a spark and therefore heat in the fire triangle. Show the cotton wool as the fuel.

Lighting and managing the fire

- Demonstrate lighting the cotton wool and then feeding the fire quickly with small pieces of dry kindling followed by sticks in three sizes of little finger, middle finger and wrist.
- Children should feed the fire from their safe sitting position and use the fire glove if necessary understanding of walking only within the fire circle.

Cooking on the fire

- Before handling food hands must be washed in the hand washing area either with soap and water or alcohol gel and dried properly.
- Cooking should only take place once the fire is hot enough, the flames have died down and the embers are glowing. The food can burn if not.

Extinguishing a camp fire

- Using a sturdy long stick spread the ashes to begin the process of putting the fire out
- Using the emergency water gently pour over all the remains of the fire.
- REMEMBER THAT THE WOOD WILL HOLD THE HEAT FOR QUITE A WHILE.
- Using the stick turn the ashes and soil together making sure the fire is out.

Temporary fire site

- Remove all charred wood from the site
- Integrate the ashes into the soil and combine with leaf litter to disguise.
- Place the branches of the fire area back into the woodland (Sustainability Policy p28)

Fire procedure (Emergency Procedures and Emergency Services Script p 13-15)

- In the event of a fire that cannot be put out quickly and safely by the Forest School Leaders, blow repeated long whistles to alert the group.
- Gather everyone together, conduct a head count and evacuate area to a safe location - Playground meeting point in case of fire.
- Alert SMT and instruct one person to call the fire brigade and give directions to the site - see location and access to Merdon Junior School.
- Ask a second person to telephone the emergency numbers (see emergency procedures p13-15).
- Arrange for someone to stand at the entrance to the school to direct emergency services

FIRE RISK/BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

Low Risk	Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm (i.e. scratch or bruise)
Medium Risk	Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury (minor burns, which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)
High Risk	Something which may result in extensive damage, multiple major injuries or death

TLC	1
1 st Aid	2
Non Emergency	3
Emergency/Hospital	4
Death/multiple Injury	5



Risk Assessment-Fire Circle

Description of site/Activity tools: Merdon Junior School An overview of using a Fire Circle												
Hazard	Harm	People at risk	Potential Level of Risk	Existing prevention methods	Probability (P) (1-5)	Severity (S) (1-5)	Rating (PXS) (1-25)	Level of Risk after controls	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits	
1	Collecting firewood	Participants Slips, Trips, Falls, Cuts to individuals Lift/strain injuries	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instructions Adult supervision	2	2	4	2	- Clear Instructions - Adult supervision, only collecting sticks off the ground not from trees	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, fun
2	Laying and lighting the fire	burns	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instructions Adult supervision	3	3/4	12	6	- Clear Instructions: Follow safe laying and lighting instructions - Adult supervision Always lay a fire in a designated fire area in the centre of our fire circle	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye co-ordination, grand motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun
3	General fire safety	Burns Fire Spreading	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instruction Adult supervision	3	4/5	12	6	- Clear Instructions to participants regarding behaviour around a fire - Adult supervision Fire Gloves to always be worn Fire Buckets containing water should be near the fire (preferably metal but plastic can be used)	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun
										First Aid kit – likely injuries are burns from touching hot objects – have some water available / fire blanket		
4	Fire & heat	burning to skin & clothes	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instruction Adult supervision	3	4/5	12	6	Supervision of the fire, one person to be <u>sat beside fire at all times</u> while alight or hot embers remain, to ensure children do not have unsupervised access. Children will be given rules and safety advice and dangers of fire prior to visiting the fire. First aiders and first aid box will be available. Fireproof gloves within easy reach.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun
5	Fire out of control	as above and damage to area.	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instruction Adult supervision	3	4/5	12	6	Fire will be in a soil pit surrounded by stones to prevent the fire escaping the area. Fire area will be away from buildings. The fire will not be under overhanging trees which may catch alight. A good supply of water will be available to put out flames and dampen heat. A fire blanket will be available to wrap around person who may be alight.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem, Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun

6	Falls into fire	burning to skin & clothes	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	High	Clear instruction Adult supervision	3	4/5	12	6	As above Children have a safety brief before entering the fire pit area. No walking between the seats and fire allowed. When cooking etc. everyone at fire should be on one knee to remain stable.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem. Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun
7	Smoke	inhalation, irritation	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	3	3/4	6	4	The position of the fire will be away from buildings. The wind direction will be constantly assessed, and children advised to move safely out of smoke direction. Dry suitable wood used to prevent excess smoke. Use clear goggles if needed.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem. Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun
8	Heat from hot embers.	burning to skin & clothes	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	3	3/4	9	4	When the fire activity is finished the embers will be dampened and cooled with water and spread out with a spade.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem. Group work, understanding fire triangle, fun
9	Extinguishing a fire	Burning, smoke inhalation, damage to area	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	2	3/4	6	4	When the fire activity is finished the embers will be dampened and cooled with water and spread out with a spade. Fire will be in a soil pit surrounded by stones to prevent the fire escaping the area.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem. Group work, understanding fire triangle. Fun

										Fire area will be away from buildings. The fire will not be under overhanging trees which may catch alight. A good supply of water will be available to put out flames and dampen heat. A fire extinguisher and fire blanket will also be at the site. The site will not be left until it is sure that the fire has <u>cooled</u> and it is safe to leave unattended.		
10	Cooking on the fire	Burning, smoke inhalation, damage to area	Children and adults Taking part in Forest School	Medium	Clear instruction Adult supervision	2	3/4	6	4	Supervision of the fire, one adult to be always sat beside fire while alight or hot embers remain, to ensure children do not have unsupervised access. Children will be given rules and safety advice and dangers of fire prior to visiting the fire. Sit in fire circle and must use the exit and entrance routes if need to move walk clockwise outside of the fire circle. First aiders and first aid box will be available. Fireproof gloves within easy reach and used if cooking. Children will have 1-1 supervision if cooking next to the fire. Safe distance and long handled equipment.	Forest School Leader Briefed clients	Hand-eye, body awareness, motor control, risk awareness confidence, self-esteem. Group work, understanding fire triangle. Fun and community building

OUR FIRE CIRCLE

When we work around a fire it is important that we consider everybody's safety. We have to ensure that we move around and use the fire sensibly so that no one is put at risk. We have a number of rules to follow as we use our fire circle.



Key Rules

- Only enter the circle through the 'IN' entrance.
- Move round the circle in a clockwise direction.
- Take a seat on a log or stump around the edge.
- Only approach the fire with the permission of the leader.
- Only exit the fire circle through the OUT exit
- In an Emergency walk to your closest safe exit and congregate at the Emergency Assembly point.

PREPARING THE SITE FOR A FIRE



Before lighting a fire it is essential that you prepare the site appropriately. Ensuring that your area is well prepared is essential. Below are a collection of key questions to ask and think about:



The health and safety of the group.

The impact of the fire on the site.

Creating the ideal fire for the activity

When we light a fire we are responsible for managing it, keeping it under control and extinguishing it.

Choosing a clear site

- No low overhanging branches
- Ground is clear of peat and rocks
- Which has a natural wind break
- Create a fire ring

Risk and Benefit assessments

- Know your group is ready for fire lighting activities
- Prepare all fire safety equipment

LEARNING ABOUT FIRE

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL



Ignite



Curiosity



Imagination



The Benefits of Fire

- Physical Skills-Learning how to create a spark using flint and steel develops fine motor skills, co-ordination, hand-eye co-ordination, building strength in shoulders.
- Emotional Well-being-feeling of success and achievement when they light the spark, developing new talents which can be used practically for cooking activities
- Concentration skills-determination and drive to achieve a goal
- Safety Awareness-developing an understanding of the safety skills needed when lighting fires, respect for nature and the world around us, scientific understanding of the fire triangle

Capability



FIRST AID PROCEDURES

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Take some time to learn First Aid and CPR. It saves lives and it works." Bobby Sherman

At least one adult will have the paediatric and outdoor first aid training and an up to date, stocked First Aid Kit, along with relevant emergency equipment, which will always be readily accessible. There will also be a mobile phone on site and in the event of a serious accident the emergency procedures will be followed. A record should be kept of injuries that required first aid for audit and monitoring purposes (appendix 11). Parents/carers will be informed at the end of the day of any injuries and the treatment given (appendix 16). Forest School leaders are responsible for keeping the First Aid box up to date and stocked. Near misses are reflected upon and actioned in the risk assessment. It is ESSENTIAL that parents/carers complete the booking form fully, giving all the details of any allergies or intolerances (appendix 12). This is particularly pertinent given the following:

- If the injury requires a plaster in the first aider's opinion, then one is used.
 - If an unprescribed lotion or medicine is required then the first aider will contact the child's parent or carer to seek permission. For example a bee sting that needs sting relief.
 - If a child has a splinter the first aider will attempt with the child's consent to remove it. The above are carried out as more harm would be caused by leaving the injury untreated.
 - in the case of emergency first aid. This would be carried out without permission in order to sustain life. All the above are in consideration of any allergies or intolerances.
 - Parents/ Carers should inform the leader if a child has been administered medicines prior to the session (appendix 17).
 - Adults are not able to administer medicines on site. Only in exceptional circumstances will the leader do this after parents have completed an administration of medicines form and the leader has checked the prescription (appendix 17).
 - Children should be well enough to attend the session and all activities. This is a decision that is made by the parents at the start of the session. However, if the leader feels that a child is not well enough or health deteriorates during a session they reserve the right to ask the parent/ carer to collect the child from the session.
 - If a child has vomiting they should be 48 hours clear of any further sickness before coming to a session.
 - Anaphylaxis emergency bags should be brought by the child and carried by the leader. This also applies to medicines. In the situation that children are on regular medication but are well enough to come to Forest School for example regular piriton is given for hay fever, parents/carers should give children their medication before and after the session to avoid children missing a dose in the day. Please also refer to emergency procedures (p13 &14) and (appendix 10) for First Aid Kit contents.
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EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES

PAGE 11

CANOPY FOREST SCHOOL

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Forest school sessions offer learning opportunities for children and young people. Part of their purpose is to encourage participants to face new challenges and to learn to take reasonable risks. In order to do that safely, the adults involved must know their role and ensure that the necessary risk assessments are carried out regularly and thoroughly. Risks can rarely be eliminated entirely, but they can be reduced to a minimum without unduly limiting opportunities for children to explore and learn.

At **Canopy Forest School** the health and safety of the children, staff and visitors is our primary concern and very important to us. A site risk assessment is carried out before each session to look for natural or foreign hazards in the environment (appendix 13). All activities will be fully risk assessed to minimise dangers (appendix 20) and direct teaching will be carried out for the three skill strands: shelter, fire and tools. Policies have been written to outline protocols, teaching strategies and safety procedures for these skill strands. Please see more details about these activities on the following pages of this handbook, Tool Handling p23&24, Fire Safety p25&26, Tree Climbing and Den building p28. We also use and refer to our benefits and risk assessments for all skill based teaching. Before a session commences all staff involved in the sessions have access to activity plans and risk assessments associated with the activities (appendix 13).

The teaching of these skills is carefully balanced and interwoven with self discovery and exploration as participants learn to take controlled risks in a safe, non-judgemental, nurturing environment. Activities such as den building, tree climbing, learning knots, using tools, cooking and lighting fires help participants to become.

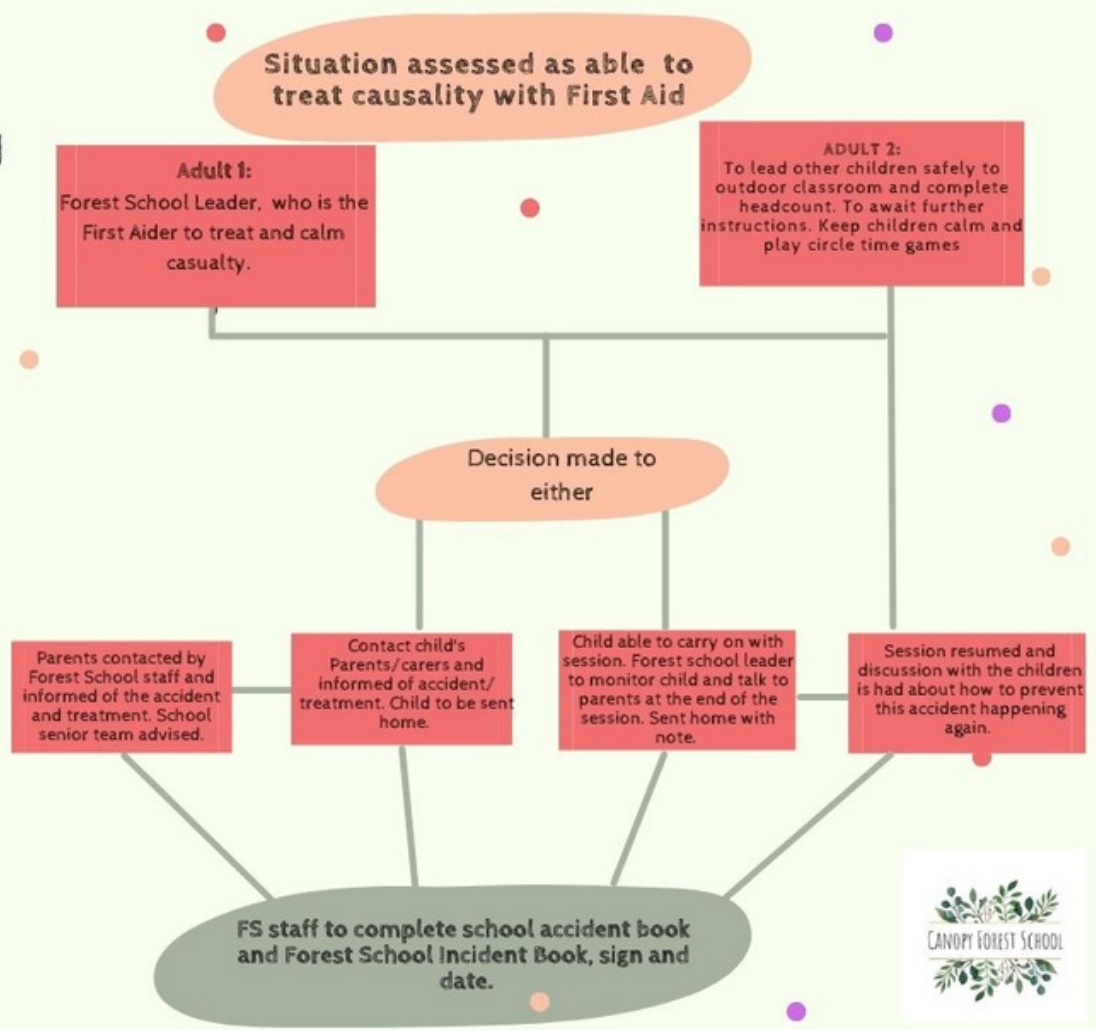
All adults participating at Canopy Forest School are required to read all of these risk assessments and protocols and sign a document to show they have read the handbook (appendix 21). We regularly review and update the risk assessments as required. Alongside this, each Forest School leader is highly skilled in observation, and reflection which drives all of the resourcing, planning and organisation of sessions. Individual risk assessments will be made for children whose medical condition or whose behaviour requires it (appendix 14). All of our staff and volunteers are DBS checked and our Forest School leader is training to receive a Level 3 Forest School Practitioner certificate (p4&5). The forest school leader is responsible for the safe running of **Canopy Forest School** therefore, has a duty of care for the children. However, all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.

For more information please read the following policies and procedures in this handbook:

- Rules (p8)
- First Aid Procedures (p12)
- Emergency Procedures (p13&14),
- Emergency Services Action Plan and Emergency Script (p15)
- Weather Conditions Procedures (p16)
- Tool Handling Policy (p23&24)
- Fire Safety Policy (p25&26)
- Tree Climbing and Den Building Policy (p28)
- Missing Child Policy (p32)
- Behaviour Policy (p35)
- Benefits and Risk assessments for skill based teaching (appendix 20)
- Safeguarding Children (p29)
- Safeguarding Adults (p30)
- Roles and Responsibilities (p36)

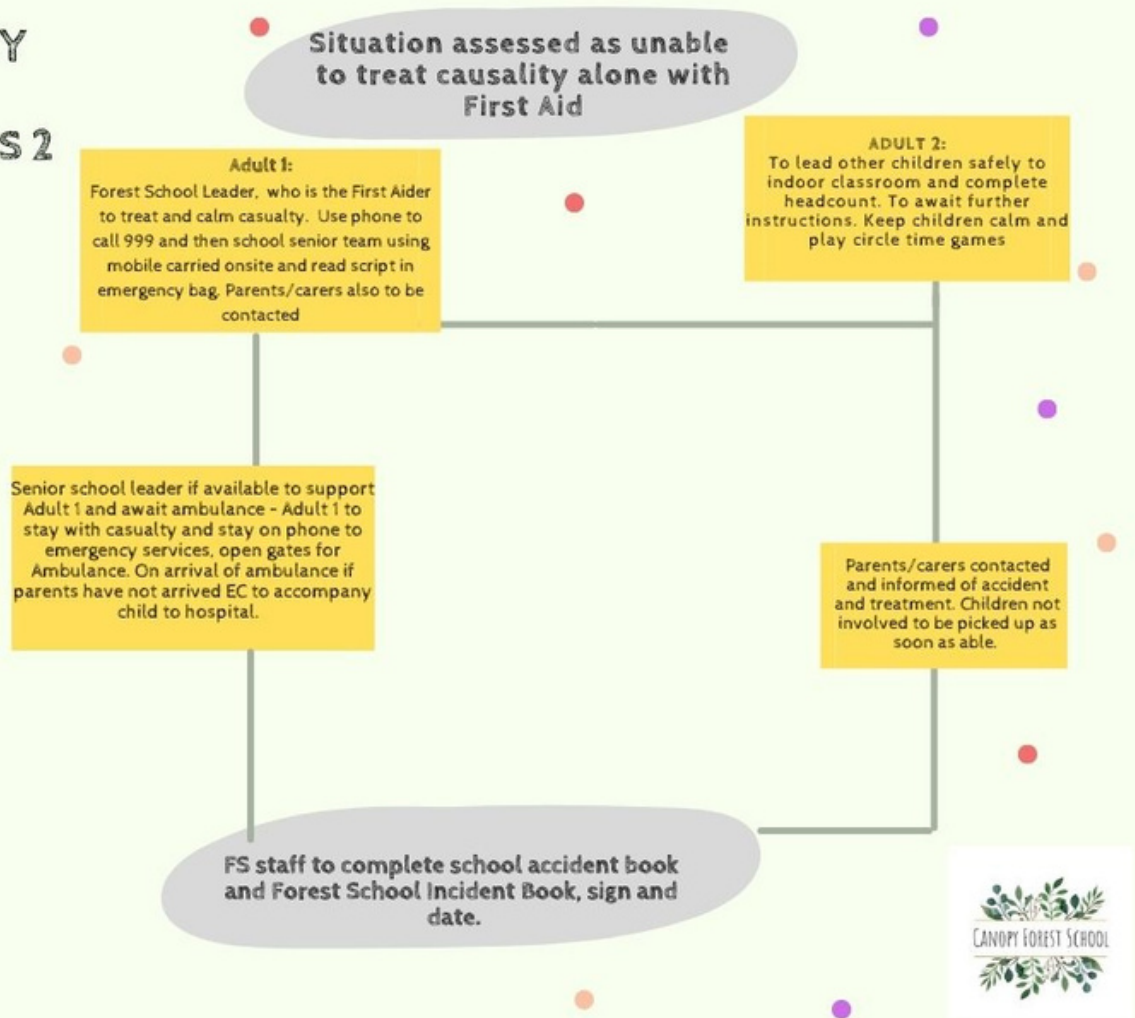
EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES

EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES 1



EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES

EMERGENCY FIRST AID PROCEDURES 2



EMERGENCY SCRIPT

EMERGENCY SERVICES SCRIPT

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

In the event of an emergency and the Emergency Services need to be called the following will happen;

- Emergency services are called using mobile phone.
 - Call the emergency service/s that you require on 999 from a landline or 112 from a mobile.
 - Notify a member of Senior Management: **023 8026 5255**
 - Give as much information about the patient and their location as possible:
 - Who has been injured?
 - What their injuries are?
 - If they have any medical conditions
 - Where on the site the patient is
 - The directions to the site and the patient:
 - Site co-ordinates/ grid reference are: **50.989070, -1.374609**
 - **What3words:///design.bugs.menu**
 - **Merdon Junior School, Chandler's Ford, Eastleigh SO53 1EJ**
 - Arrange for someone to stand on road side outside of the main gates wearing high visibility jacket
 - If needed open the gates in the YR playground for the Ambulance or Fire Service to get through onto grounds.
 - Don't hang up until you are told to do so by the call taker.
 - Try to stay calm.
-

LOST OR MISSING CHILD POLICY

LOST OR MISSING CHILD POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

If a child is found to be missing, we will immediately search the vicinity and call "cuckoo" and call pupils name repeatedly. The rest of the children will then assemble to ensure they are safe and a head count will be taken. An adult will blow the whistle 3 times. If the child has not been found in 5 minutes with SMT consent we will contact the police and child's parents. Staff will follow our Major Incident Procedures.

At **Canopy Forest School** we teach the children the call back routine of responding to "cuckoo". When they hear this call they gather around the adult summoning everyone back to a base.

At **Canopy Forest School** clear boundaries are established with the children at the beginning of all session and children are taught to ask an adult if they wish to go beyond the boundary. The children will be involved in the risk management process of establishing boundaries and safe areas to go and red flags will be put out to indicate boundary lines. If a child leaves the Forest School boundaries, the outer school gates will be locked and the children do not need to enter the school building as the toilet is located in the outdoor classroom.

Headcounts will take place at the beginning, during and at the end of each session. The number of children and adults participating, will be recorded at the top of the daily risk assessments and also recorded on our outdoor whiteboard.

It is the responsibility of all adults participating to ensure they are aware of the headcount for the session and to be involved in the monitoring of this. The high ratios of adults to children at Forest Schools (minimum 1:6) ensure that children are well supervised and supported in their learning and development. Adults are expected to spread out in the Forest School area and be able to see children but not impose on children.

On our site at Merdon Junior School the size of the groups will be limited to 12 children with 2 adults. This will allow us to ensure the physical safety but will also allow our forest school ethos to have maximum effect.

Again, if a child is found to be missing, we will immediately search the vicinity and call "cuckoo" and call pupils name repeatedly. The rest of the children will then assemble to ensure they are safe and a head count will be taken. An adult will blow the whistle 3 times. If the child has not been found in 5 minutes with SMT consent we will contact the police and child's parents. Staff will follow our Major Incident Procedures. After the incident is over, complete a full report using the Incident Report Form (appendix 11)

Areas for search:

- All outside areas.
- The Outdoor classroom and toilets
- The main school building

HYGIENE, FOOD AND EATING POLICY

CONNECTION, GROWTH, EXPLORATION, SUSTAINABILITY

Basic hygiene and safe food handling is an important aspect of keeping our students safe.

At Canopy Forest School we learn about health, safety and personal hygiene through the activities we provide and the routines we follow. This includes the basic hygiene of hand washing, food preparation and cooking as well as safety involved in tool handling and fire lighting. We teach our students about personal sustainability and the importance of looking after yourself as well as the world around us.

A hand washing area is always available at the site this includes: hand wash, gel, fresh water, soap, towel, and wipes. Children are taught the correct hand washing procedure and are expected to wash their hands before they handle food and after using the toilet. Children are reminded not to put their hands near their mouths during the session. They are able to wash their hands at any point during the session. The FS leader will also ensure that children's skin does not react adversely to the increase in hand washing and will ensure a moisturising gentle soap is available. A basic first aid kit is kept for the treatment of minor injuries by qualified staff and any cuts or openings in the skin will be covered. Please see (appendix 10) for the contents of our basic first aid kit.

Preparing and eating food and drink together is an important parts of our Forest School community. The Forest School leader-Emma Clode has a Level 2 in Food Safety and Hygiene and all food practices comply with the requirements of the UK Food Safety Act.

Every week we always share a snack together and most of the food that is consumed at the site will be prepared prior to the session by Emma Clode. It is transported in a cool bag and covered in an air tight container/paper bag/foil and labelled. Children should only handle their own food and they will be seated when eating. Separate containers, cutlery, crockery, pans etc are used for children suffering with food allergies. A medical needs form is always completed by all parents indicating food allergies (appendix 12). All utensils/cutlery and crockery will be cleaned after the session in a dishwasher at high heat. All food is within the use by date.

Forest School food hygiene rules

Everyone involved in Forest School will be involved in basic hygiene and food safety rules below. When involved in food and drink preparation you should:

- Wash hands before and during cooking.
- Not handle food if they are ill with stomach problems, such as diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Cover sores and cuts with a waterproof dressing.
- Avoid handling food when possible, and instead use spoons, tongs or other suitable implements.
- Tie hair back.
- Keep food that is waiting to be cooked separate from food that is ready to be eaten.
- Use separate chopping boards for preparing different foods, especially raw and ready-to-eat food.
- Prepare food on a suitable surface, e.g. chopping board, cup, saucepan and not on the ground.
- Ensure food is cooked thoroughly before serving. Food should be cooked right through and piping hot in the middle. Temperature will be measured by a food thermometer.
- Do not reheat food more than once.
- Keep utensils clean and regularly wash tea towels and cloths.
- Store food in clean plastic reusable containers with non-leaking lids.
- Take all rubbish and food scraps away from the site at the end of the session to avoid attracting vermin to the site.
- Wash dishes with hot water and a scrubbing sponge. When using soup ensure it is biodegradable camp soap. Strain the dish water through a fine mesh screen or fine fabric and into a container. The strainer catches all but the tiniest of food bits and you can then pack them in the designated rubbish area. The resulting water is called 'grey water' and should be disposed of by broadcasting it over a wide area. That means throwing the water out in an arc to disperse it as much as possible. This helps it evaporate faster and reduces the attraction for animals. (Sustainability Policy p38 and Provision and Environmental Impact p6-7)

Food allergies and special dietary requirements:

- Participants are asked to state any food allergies and special dietary requirements they may have on their Parental Consent and Medical form (appendix 12). This information will be used to plan what food and drink to provide during sessions, ensuring that the food and drink provided is suitable for all.

REFERENCES

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