



# Handbook



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# Rules and the Countryside Code

## **Rules of Forest School:**

1. Look after your Forest School.
2. Do not pick anything growing.
3. Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth.
4. Stay within the boundary, we do not go under it or over it.
5. Leave Forest School tidy.

## **The Countryside Code:**

*There are five sections of The Countryside Code dedicated to helping us learn how to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside:*

1. Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.
2. Leave gates and property as you find them.
3. Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
4. Keep dogs under close control.
5. Consider other people.



# Equipment list

- Forest School equipment bag
- Register with emergency numbers/contact numbers
- Medical forms/photographs
- Mobile phone
- Newspaper
- Matches
- Wet wipes
- Protective gloves
- Sun cream
- First aid bag
- Plasters
- Bandages
- Scissors
- Water bottle with water for drinking/washing
- Sleeping bag/survival bag
- Thermal wrap sheet
- Map of woodland area
- Pamphlet on hypothermia and first aid
- Container for inhalers
- Carry bag for dirty/wet clothing



# Clothing requirements

## **Cold weather:**

- Woolly hat
- Gloves
- Waterproof coat
- Fleece/sweatshirt
- Long trousers
- Spare socks
- Sturdy shoes/wellies/boots
- An emergency change of clothes and a carrier bag for dirty/wet clothing

## **Hot weather:**

- Sun hat
- Long sleeve top
- Sturdy shoes
- Sun cream



# Policies and legislation

The following policies and legislation can be found at the back of the handbook.

## Policies:

- Health and Safety policy  
Forest School programmes will follow the health and safety policy of the school. There may be some activities that are considered higher risk than usual for the children. In order to minimise risks, such as tool use and fires, a full risk assessment covering key hazards that children may come into contact with during a session will be carrying out.
- School Emergency Management Plan
- Business Continuity Plan

## Legislation:

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Children's Act 1989
- Liability insurance
- Disability Discrimination Act
- Race Relations Act
- Sex Discrimination Act
- CRB Checks
- Every Child Matters



# Procedures

## **Emergency procedure**

- Ensure that the medical and emergency contact details sheet is taken if going off site
- Forest School Leader to perform first aid
- Other children to be moved away from incident by adult helpers to the fire assembly point located in the playground
- An adult needs to dial 999 and ask for an ambulance if necessary
- Ambulance to enter through the large gate in the staff car park

## **Lock down procedure**

- Office staff to phone Forest School Leader in the event of a lock down to alert them and advise them on whether or not to return to the school building

## **Missing child procedure**

- Forest School Leader to gather all of the children at base camp
- Adult helpers search the immediate area thoroughly
- Search outside the Forest School site
- Phone the missing child's emergency contact (list of numbers is kept in the office)

## **Toileting procedure**

- Children are able to use the toilets in the school
- Forest School toilet passes will be used to keep track of how many children have left the Forest School site



# Risk management

## **Risk assessment**

The Forest School site will be risk assessed every term (3 times a year) by the Forest School Leaders. The risk assessment template that will be used is on page 8.

## **Safety sweeps**

Before each Forest School session there will be a safety sweep of the Forest School site to look for and assess immediate risks. All safety sweeps will be recorded and filed by the Forest School leader. The safety sweep template that will be used is on page 9.

## **Management of Forest School site**

Mr Skeats will maintain and manage the forest school located at the bottom of the school field.

## **Management of tools and equipment**

Mr Skeats will manage and maintain all tools and equipment to ensure they are fit for use.







# Safety sweep

Date:

Time:

Weather:

Name of FS leader:

Checklist	Yes/No	Comments
<i>Are there any of the following:</i>		
Fallen branches		
Low branches		
Protruding thorns		
Brambles/nettles		
Slippery areas		
Broken glass/needles		
Vandalism/intruders		
Weather effects		
Standing water		
<i>Are the following prepared/in order:</i>		
Boundary line/fence		
Base camp		
Tool area		
Emergency rucksack		
Equipment		
Spare clothes		

Other hazards identified:	Action taken:



# Roles and responsibilities

## **Forest School leaders**

**Dawn Burbury**

**Loren Tutcher**

The leader's role is to take a lead in planning, delivering and evaluating the forest school programme. They also take primary responsibility in ensuring that policies and procedures, rules and guidelines are adhered to.

Leaders will nurture the children by ensuring that they have a safe learning environment that meets their needs. Leaders will furthermore, support children to take managed risks and identify the needs of the individual. By using observation, they will be able to adapt sessions to suit the needs of the group or individuals. Leaders will plan the sessions to promote child-led activities, model and encourage self-awareness, social skills, motivation and management of feelings.

## **Observer**

The observer's role is to allow the group to play and learn as independently as possible, often without demonstrating or suggesting. If invited to provide support then they will, but otherwise merely observe, allowing the experience to be learner-directed.

## **Job cards**

Job cards will be given to any adult helpers to make them aware of their role and responsibilities during the Forest School session.



# Ecological impact of Forest School

The table below shows the ecological impact of Forest School activities on the woodland site.

Forest School activity	Impact on woodland site	Minimisation of impact
Collecting wood	Dead wood could be used up too quickly. Dead wood is the habitat of minibeasts and important for fungi to grow.	Limit the frequency of fires and evaluate the amount of dry, dead wood before having a fire. Collect only the minimum amount required for any given fire.
Fires	Could be harmful to plants, the tree canopy could be effected by smoke and it may disturb nesting birds.	Select an appropriate location for a fire pit, position in an area away from plants with an opening overhead. Always ensure that the fire is contained within the fire pit/fire basket and that fires are extinguished fully before leaving the site.
Tree climbing/shelter building	Damage to trees, may disturb animals.	Restrict activities to suitable trees and make children aware of any birds' nests.
Collecting natural materials	Damage to plants	Ask children to collect leaves are flowers which have fallen and leave plants unpicked. Limit the frequency of this activity.
Walking/playing	May damage the earth, wear away grass, damage plants, may disturb animal habitats.	Make children aware of plants and animal habitats, lay bark chip around the fire pit, clear fallen leaves in autumn, create paths on repeatedly walked on areas.



# Woodland management plan

	Area on site	Concerns/Action to be taken	Who is responsible	Date to be completed
Year 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seating area</li> <li>Fire pit</li> <li>Wildlife</li> <li>Digging area</li> <li>Pruning trees</li> <li>Waterproofs</li> <li>Order tools</li> <li>Somewhere to store tools</li> <li>Somewhere to store waterproofs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of grass - get bark to cover the area</li> <li>Create a suitable fire pit to contain the fire</li> <li>Create a minibeast hotel and birdfeeders to promote wildlife on the site</li> <li>Section off a digging area with logs under the tree at the back. Purchase/obtain trowels and spades</li> <li>Gardeners to prune all trees and bushes</li> <li>Acquire funding for waterproofs and buy a set to keep in school</li> <li>Acquire funding for tools and buy a set to keep in school</li> <li>Acquire funding for a shed with a lock to keep tools</li> <li>Find an appropriate place in school to store waterproofs</li> </ol>	SD, DB, LT, AN, TS, grounds maintenance team	End of 2015
Year 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hedgerow packs</li> <li>Planting</li> <li>Wildlife</li> <li>Ground state</li> <li>Permanent shelter</li> <li>Pruning</li> <li>Equipment check</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order from woodland trust</li> <li>Plant trees</li> <li>Bird feeders make and install</li> <li>Developing the areas</li> <li>Purchase and erect a permanent shelter</li> <li>Grounds maintenance team to coppice</li> <li>Audit of equipment used/needed/purchase</li> </ol>	SD, DB, LT, AN, TS, grounds maintenance team	End of 2016
Year 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting</li> <li>Hedgerow</li> <li>Wildlife</li> <li>Tool area</li> <li>Pruning</li> <li>Equipment check</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Order new tree packs</li> <li>Plant</li> <li>Maintain hedgerow cultivation</li> <li>Bird houses make and install</li> <li>Storage container for safe storage of tools, purchased, erected and maintained</li> <li>As number 6 above</li> <li>As number 7 above</li> </ol>	SD, DB, LT, AN, TS, grounds maintenance team	End of 2017



# Medical and emergency contact details

Child's details:

Child's full name:	
Date of birth:	
Emergency contact name:	
Relationship to child:	
Home address:	
Home phone number:	
Mobile number:	
Work/Other:	
Doctor's address:	
Doctor's phone number:	

Has your child had any of the following?

<b>Illness</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Please specify if medication is needed</b>
Asthma/bronchitis		
Sight/hearing difficulties		
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Allergies e.g. pollen, nuts, materials		
Bee/wasp sting, if yes, describe the reaction		
Date of last Tetanus injection		

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

