

Corbridge and Broomhaugh Federation of Schools



The Federation of
Corbridge
and
Broomhaugh First Schools

FOREST SCHOOL Handbook

References: Broomley and Whittenstall First School Forest School Handbook

Forest Leader Qualifications Level 3

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Policy seen and agreed by SLT, governors and volunteers/support staff.

SLT:

Governors:

Support staff:





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1. The Forest School Ethos

Originating from Denmark, the Forest School approach encourages child-centred hands-on learning. The holistic approach caters for the child as a whole, looking to nurture and develop every aspect of the child. Building confidence, self-esteem, resilience and a knowledge of nature are core skills to our programme. Over the years, there has been much research carried out looking in to the benefits of outdoor learning, play and experience. Through a practical, tactile approach we hope to provide a nurturing and inclusive learning environment for all.

Through high quality modelling and interactions, we aim to give children the opportunity to explore and challenge themselves just beyond their comfort zone, so that greater feelings of accomplishment and learning are achieved.

We are very fortunate to have the use of a natural site within our school grounds, in which we are developing to become our personal Forest School.

Purpose/Aims of Forest School

1. To provide experiences that encourages an appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural environment.
2. To develop the ability to assess risks.
3. To develop self-esteem and self-confidence.
4. To be able to solve problems and challenges.
5. To be able to work together & help each other, as well as working independently.
6. To develop practical skills.
7. To be able to light and use fire meaningfully and safely.
8. To be able to use a variety of tools meaningfully and safely.



2. Forest School in the Federation

- * Forest School takes place at least one half term a year for each year group and in most weather conditions. High wind or excessive rain will result in trips being cancelled for health and safety reasons.
- * Forest School takes place in our on-site setting. However, Classes may take part in 'Forest School' type days at school in our wider school area.
- * The school will inform parents of the dates and times of sessions so that all children are dressed appropriately.
- * Children must bring their kit to school on Forest School Day with suitable clothing (e.g. waterproof coats, trousers and boots) unless told otherwise. The leader will ensure that all children are correctly dressed. If alternatives can't be found then a child will not be able to attend Forest School due to health & safety reasons. School do have a number of waterproofs and boots that can be borrowed.
- * The sessions are generally for a half day. Children may have lunch at the Forest School Site depending on what has been agreed with the leader and teacher, parents will be informed in advance of this. Packed lunches can be provided by school or brought from home.
- * Whilst at forest school access to the school toilets is available and children are provided with water and antibacterial gel to wash their hands before they eat.
- * The children take part in a variety of activities, covering all areas of the curriculum. Staff make every effort to ensure that all activities are fully inclusive, thus catering for all ability levels.
- * The children are taught a variety of woodland skills through practical hands on activities. They also learn how to light or work around fires safely.
- * The children learn the care and safe use of a wide range of tools. This is a tightly supervised activity and is introduced gradually in small steps.
- * Children are encouraged to listen attentively to instructions and to take responsibility for their actions.
- * The Forest School leader will keep parents informed and updated regarding all aspects of Forest School.

3. Benefits of Forest School

Key Features of Forest Schools

The use of a natural outdoor environment.

Allows every child to have a voice, especially those who find it difficult to communicate in a more conventional learning environment.

Child-led approach to children's learning which is fun and unhurried.

A high adult to child ratio allows children to undertake new experiences and challenges whilst taking appropriate risks.

Long term programme that allows repetition where children come into contact with nature using all their senses.

Supports personalised learning.

Builds children's confidence and self esteem as they are responsible for making their own decisions and are carefully supported to achieve.

Trained adults and facilitators and observers rather than leaders and directors.

*"Too often we think of ourselves as separate from nature, forgetting that we are just a part of it."
- Ray Mears*



4. Our Forest School Code

- We use our eyes and ears.
- We only enter the fire circle when we are invited.
- We do not use sticks or stones as weapons.
- We always walk near the fire circle.
- We always think about the risks before choosing whether to do something.
- We keep our hands away from our mouths.
- We can always see camp unless we're with an adult.
- We treat others and what they have made with respect.
- We have fun!

5. Suggested Activities for Forest Schools

<p style="text-align: center;">Ice breaking activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Wooden discs - Name Necklaces * Memory Games – Kim’s game <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - walking through an area and remembering objects that are there that shouldn’t be there. * Pass The Pine Cone – along a line through legs or over heads * Fairy breath * name game * Find Me A... First 	<p style="text-align: center;">Making structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lashings & Knots * Making a frame * Shelter & den Building (small & large/natural materials and tarpaulin) * Boat making * Bow and Arrow * Nests * picture frame
<p style="text-align: center;">Building confidence, establishing trust & supporting emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trust Game With Rope – circle of rope. Group lean back onto rope to be held up by it * Meet A Tree * Clay Creatures – make and hide in woods to find * Blind fold games * Night line 	<p style="text-align: center;">Natural art & craft activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Green Crowns * Natural Weaving * Dreamcatchers * Puppet Making * Elder Jewellery * Natural Portraits * Andy Goldworthy type sculptures * nature painting (plant dye, mud)
<p style="text-align: center;">Establishing boundaries & exploring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 1-2-3 Where Are You? * Journey Sticks * Badger Trail * Estimating Distances * Maths trails * Animal print trails 	<p style="text-align: center;">Storytelling & music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Stories * Story part discs (pick 5 discs and the story has to include those parts) * Making Music * Xylophones * Windchimes * Potions
<p style="text-align: center;">Listening activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sound Map * Bird Calling * Find Your Flock * Weaving Hurdle Fences 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tool use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Safe Use Of Tools Check Sheets * Cutting wood for fire * Making Kazoos * See activities above that involve tools * Making/repairing camp (benches, fence)
<p style="text-align: center;">Activities with fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Establishing A Fire Site * Collecting Sticks * Building Fires * Making A Log Screen or * Heat Reflector * Kelly Kettle * Cooking on the fire 	<p style="text-align: center;">Campfire Cooking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sustainable Lunch * Vegetable soup * Pizza * Twizzles (dough on sticks. Experiment with fillings) * Stews * S’mores (marshmallow sandwiches) * Bread * popcorn * hot chocolate * veggie skewers

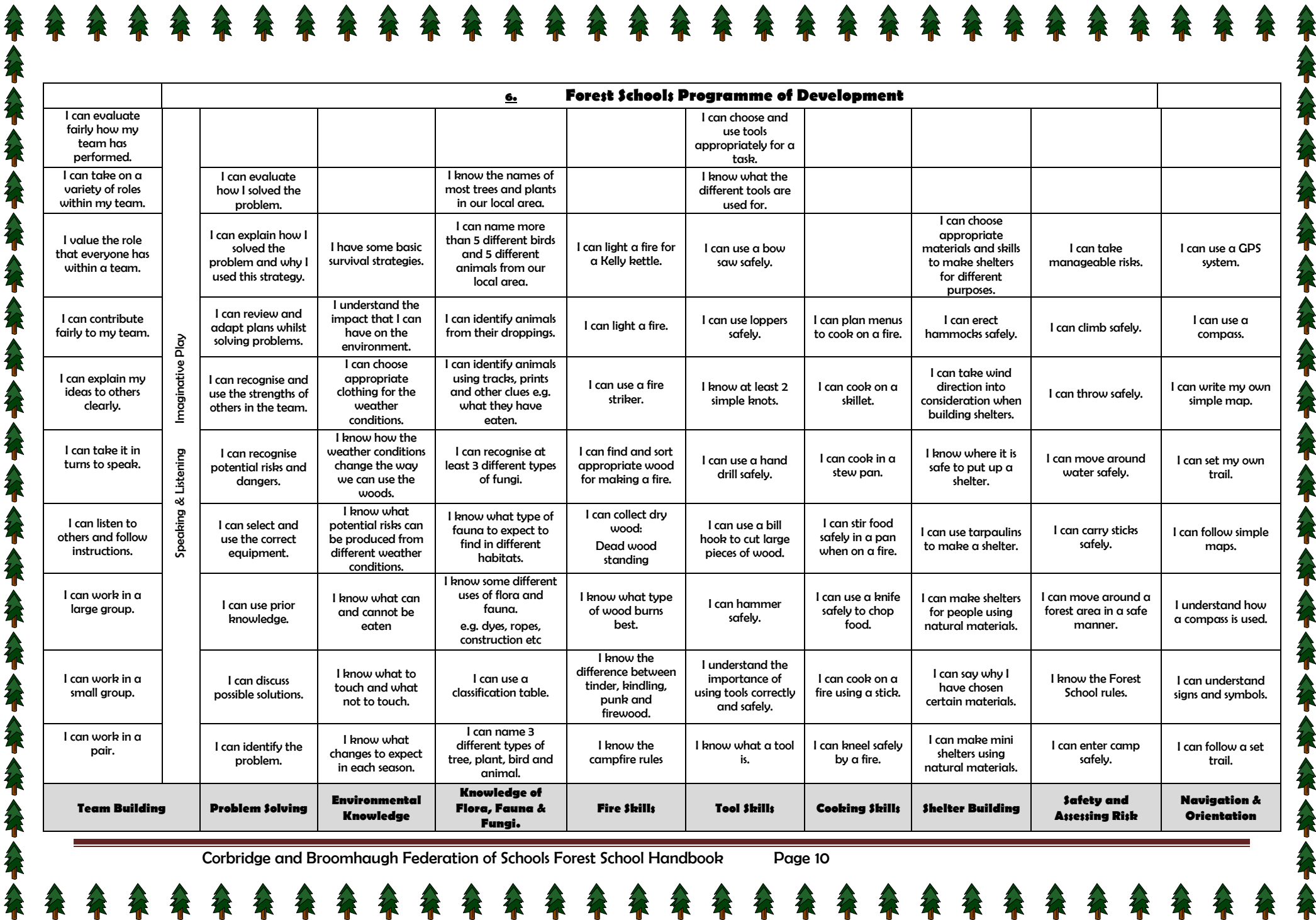


Reviewing & evaluating

- * Chuff Line – one end didn't enjoy the other end enjoy. Children place themselves on the line depending on their opinion as you mention diff parts of the day
- * Making shapes/words to represent their day (Using themselves or natural materials)
- * Forest School Song
- * Talking stick

More ideas from:

- www.naturedetectives.org.uk/schools/forest_schools.htm
- www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/learn/children-and-families/nature-detectives/
- www.creativestartlearning.co.uk
- Outdoor Activity Cards (see folder)
- Environmental Learning Cards (see folder)



6. Forest Schools Programme of Development									
I can evaluate fairly how my team has performed.					I can choose and use tools appropriately for a task.				
I can take on a variety of roles within my team.	I can evaluate how I solved the problem.		I know the names of most trees and plants in our local area.		I know what the different tools are used for.				
I value the role that everyone has within a team.	I can explain how I solved the problem and why I used this strategy.	I have some basic survival strategies.	I can name more than 5 different birds and 5 different animals from our local area.	I can light a fire for a Kelly kettle.	I can use a bow saw safely.		I can choose appropriate materials and skills to make shelters for different purposes.	I can take manageable risks.	I can use a GPS system.
I can contribute fairly to my team.	I can review and adapt plans whilst solving problems.	I understand the impact that I can have on the environment.	I can identify animals from their droppings.	I can light a fire.	I can use loppers safely.	I can plan menus to cook on a fire.	I can erect hammocks safely.	I can climb safely.	I can use a compass.
I can explain my ideas to others clearly.	I can recognise and use the strengths of others in the team.	I can choose appropriate clothing for the weather conditions.	I can identify animals using tracks, prints and other clues e.g. what they have eaten.	I can use a fire striker.	I know at least 2 simple knots.	I can cook on a skillet.	I can take wind direction into consideration when building shelters.	I can throw safely.	I can write my own simple map.
I can take it in turns to speak.	I can recognise potential risks and dangers.	I know how the weather conditions change the way we can use the woods.	I can recognise at least 3 different types of fungi.	I can find and sort appropriate wood for making a fire.	I can use a hand drill safely.	I can cook in a stew pan.	I know where it is safe to put up a shelter.	I can move around water safely.	I can set my own trail.
I can listen to others and follow instructions.	I can select and use the correct equipment.	I know what potential risks can be produced from different weather conditions.	I know what type of fauna to expect to find in different habitats.	I can collect dry wood: Dead wood standing	I can use a bill hook to cut large pieces of wood.	I can stir food safely in a pan when on a fire.	I can use tarpaulins to make a shelter.	I can carry sticks safely.	I can follow simple maps.
I can work in a large group.	I can use prior knowledge.	I know what can and cannot be eaten	I know some different uses of flora and fauna. e.g. dyes, ropes, construction etc	I know what type of wood burns best.	I can hammer safely.	I can use a knife safely to chop food.	I can make shelters for people using natural materials.	I can move around a forest area in a safe manner.	I understand how a compass is used.
I can work in a small group.	I can discuss possible solutions.	I know what to touch and what not to touch.	I can use a classification table.	I know the difference between tinder, kindling, punk and firewood.	I understand the importance of using tools correctly and safely.	I can cook on a fire using a stick.	I can say why I have chosen certain materials.	I know the Forest School rules.	I can understand signs and symbols.
I can work in a pair.	I can identify the problem.	I know what changes to expect in each season.	I can name 3 different types of tree, plant, bird and animal.	I know the campfire rules	I know what a tool is.	I can kneel safely by a fire.	I can make mini shelters using natural materials.	I can enter camp safely.	I can follow a set trail.
Team Building	Problem Solving	Environmental Knowledge	Knowledge of Flora, Fauna & Fungi.	Fire Skills	Tool Skills	Cooking Skills	Shelter Building	Safety and Assessing Risk	Navigation & Orientation



Proposed Activities; 2024-25

Safety and Rules

- 1,2,3 Where are you? Establishes camp boundaries
- Entering camp- counting children in, go in opposite directions, where can you walk, when to sit down
- Fire Safety in camp- who goes near the fire?
- How do we walk? Keeping our eyes open and talking to each other- play blindfold games and go for walks passing messages along the line of children.

Moving and Carrying

- Tasks that involve moving logs, branches and stones- how to move them correctly, build teamwork through communication, log dragging with rope.
- Crossing steep sections using a rope to assist, sliding down hills on bottom.

Taking turns/ listening

- Story telling in a circle, each child continues from where previous child left off.
- Kim's game with woodland objects.
- Lead blindfolded children through simple obstacle.
- Throwing games- How many cones in the circle?
- Collecting fairy breath
- Follow a trail- children give each other instructions to follow.

Wildlife knowledge

- Meet a tree- describe bark, shape of crown, leaves, thickness of branches, height compared to other trees
- Bird calling- listen for a few minutes for a bird and copy its call. Find all the other children who choose the same call as you.



Structures

- Den building- fairy dens.

Craftwork/ Artwork

- Clay discs- for a disc and add seeds, grasses etc to make it beautiful.
- Painting stones- build mini-cairns from painted stones.

Cookery

- Marshmallows on the fire.

Maths activities

- Pattern making with sticks and cones.
- Comparing sticks lengths- fetch me a stick that is...
- Creating patterns and repeating patterns
- Weighing
- Comparison



7. Forest School Check list

Basics necessary for a Forest School Day

- Tarps – 1 large one for camp, 1 for bags or pop up tent (plus any needed for shelter building activities)
- Antiseptic gel, wipes, change of clothes, shelter
- Snack resources, flasks, hot chocolate, milk, biscuits, cups/bowls/plates
- First aid kit ruck sack, medication/Inhalers
- Mobile phone, Contacts list and risk assessments
- Camera / Ipad
- Wood, fire box (firelighters, fire striker, cotton wool/silver birch bark), water containers x 3, burns first aid kit, cooking pans/skillet/Dutch oven, Kelly kettle, chopping board, knife, bowl, wooden spoon
- Tea towels, bucket, hand wash, antibacterial gel
- Bin bags
- Set of tools and gloves
- String/rope
- Equipment specific to day's activities.



8. Using and storing tools

All tools are counted out and back in at the beginning and end of each session in which they are used. When not in use they are kept secured away in a locked shed. Before each tool is used it will be checked for damage and that it is in working order.

Each set of tools are kept in their own tool bag. 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. Only Forest School leaders will work with children and tools. All leaders will model correct and safe tool use, storage and transportation.

Tools will be checked and cleaned before they are put away.



9. Policy Statement

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment Policy Statement.

Risk Assessment is an essential part of the Health and Safety management for Corbridge First School. The Designated Level 3 Forest Leader is responsible for ensuring that all policy and procedures follow best practice and are current with any legal changes and requirements. This responsibility is to be shared with Health and Safety Coordinator. Before every Forest School visit to the site, Risk assessments will be checked and signed off.

All members of staff who support on Forest School days are required to have a full understanding of the Risk Assessment Process.

The Risk Assessment Process

Corbridge First School will consider all activities, sites and influencing factors that need to be covered to produce comprehensive Risk Assessments.

We will follow the five steps to risk assessment to ensure all risks are minimized.

1. Look for the hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.
4. Record our findings
5. Review our assessment and revise it if necessary.

The assessments are written for general welfare, weather, activities, sites or tools and must be acted upon in conjunction with one another as appropriate e.g. the site assessment will constantly be affected by the weather conditions.

All Risk Assessments are reviewed and updated every 6 months or when an incident or near miss has occurred, or legislation has changed. Responsibility for this lies with the Health and Safety Co-Coordinator and Forest School leaders. If there are amendments up dated Risk Assessments must be circulated to all staff involved in Forest School work.



10. Forest School Fire Policy

Aim

Using fire is an integral part of the Forest School experience and ethos. Children need to experience safe fire to reduce the risk of them putting themselves in danger. Lighting fires under strict guidelines and safety instructions helps children to understand at first hand the risks and how they can be safely controlled and managed.

Through the practical process to demonstrating safe fire use, handling and management, children will gain a better understanding of fire and increase their safe behaviour around fire. Our aim is for children to learn how and when to use fire appropriately. This will make it less likely for children to experiment with fire in an uncontrolled and potentially dangerous situation.

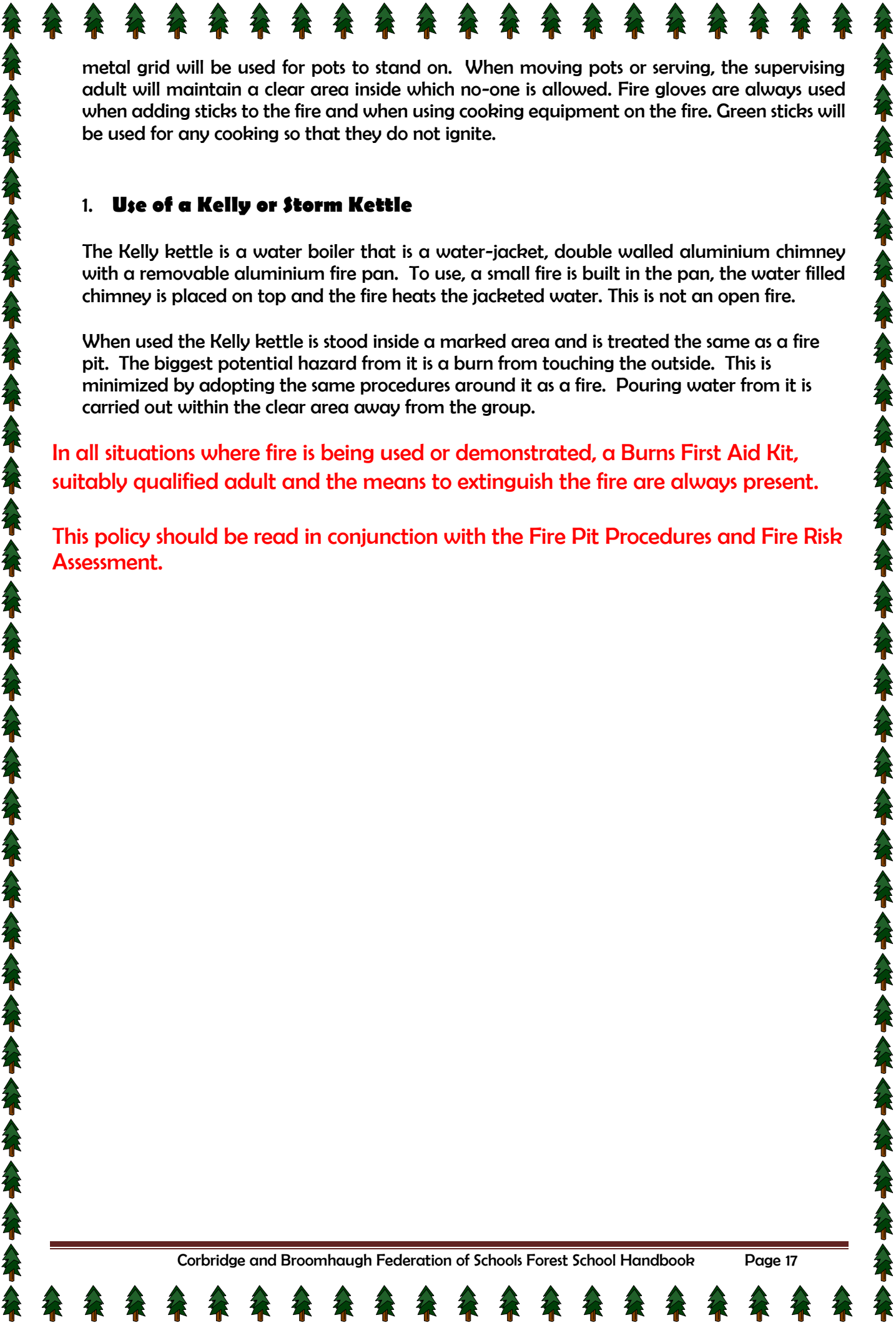
Safe Fire Procedures

- Have the Fire bucket to hand and Fire Burns First Aid Kit—know how to use them.
- Group to enter Fire circle from one side.
- If approaching the fire there will be a maximum of 4 at any one time.
- Kneel on one knee only for ease of moving backwards.
- Red fire proof gloves within reach.
- No bags or sticks are to be brought into the fire pit area.
- For cooking purposes the fire will be allowed to die down to embers of a suitable size.
- A metal grid will be used for barbeques or for pots to stand on.
- When moving pots or serving, the supervising adult will maintain a clear area inside which no-one else is allowed.

Fires in a constructed fire pit

These fires are used to reinforce the above aims and also for cooking and warmth. A Fire Pit will have been constructed in accordance with Fire Pit constructions and use procedures, prior to children arriving on site. For a group's first visit fire experience a dry run of these procedures will be practiced, so children can be shown the entry and exit procedures before a fire is lit. Children will have had the opportunity to do this in school using the school Fire Pit area before going to the woods. In later and subsequent visits the fire may be lit by the Qualified Forest Leader before the children arrive.

For cooking purposes the fire will be allowed to die down to embers of a suitable size. A



metal grid will be used for pots to stand on. When moving pots or serving, the supervising adult will maintain a clear area inside which no-one is allowed. Fire gloves are always used when adding sticks to the fire and when using cooking equipment on the fire. Green sticks will be used for any cooking so that they do not ignite.

1. Use of a Kelly or Storm Kettle

The Kelly kettle is a water boiler that is a water-jacket, double walled aluminium chimney with a removable aluminium fire pan. To use, a small fire is built in the pan, the water filled chimney is placed on top and the fire heats the jacketed water. This is not an open fire.

When used the Kelly kettle is stood inside a marked area and is treated the same as a fire pit. The biggest potential hazard from it is a burn from touching the outside. This is minimized by adopting the same procedures around it as a fire. Pouring water from it is carried out within the clear area away from the group.

In all situations where fire is being used or demonstrated, a Burns First Aid Kit, suitably qualified adult and the means to extinguish the fire are always present.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Fire Pit Procedures and Fire Risk Assessment.



Kelly Kettle

taken from
Forest Schools OCN Level 3
Archimedes Handout Booklet p25

Have Fire bucket to hand and Fire Burns First Aid Kit—know how to use them
Stay with the kettles at all times

- Place kettle on a firm **FLAT** surface - it has a high centre of gravity
- Have air hole on opposite side to spout
- Remove cork when putting on fire
- Keep spout on opposite side to you
- Have red fire gloves available

- Make a small **WAFFLE** fire lay in the bottom of the fire tray to aid circulation
- Use a **COTTON PAD** teased apart
- Scrape magnesium on if required
- Use **SWEDISH FIRE STEEL** to light
- Place on **TINDER**—silver birch bark
- Place on **KINDLING**—folded silver birch twigs, elder (**DRY STANDING DEAD WOOD**)
- Put kettle on to help draw the flame
- **BE PATIENT**
- Put **FUEL** small pieces down the chimney
- When boiling remove from base with gloves
- Place on a flat surface
- Allow fire to go out naturally



Forest School Waste Policy

Aim

The ethos of Forest School is very much related to taking care of the environment. Children need to make the links between what they see and do and the impact this can have. Ensuring there is no waste left when we leave the site is essential.

Explaining why we need to leave no waste is an essential element of caring for ourselves and the environment we live in. The Countryside Code has a section Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home. We aim to support this as it is a criminal offence to drop litter.

The main type of waste relate to food, litter, water and the fire pit.

1. **Food** - All members of the group will be informed any food that is not eaten or has fallen on the ground will be taken back with the individuals. Food left can cause harm to the fauna in the wood. Waste food will not be burned in the fire. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure all their rubbish and waste food is removed with them. The group leader will always check the site before leaving.
2. **Litter** - All members of the group will be made aware of issues surrounding left litter such as spoiling the landscape, endangering wildlife, polluting soil and water.
3. **Water** - Water is a very valuable resource and needs to be seen as such. Water is needed for drinking (this will be held in a specified water container), hand washing and the fire pit. Water used for hand washing will be recycled by being used to put out the fire.



10. Procedures

Emergency Procedure:

In the event of an emergency the following will happen;

- Emergency Whistle blown
- Children advised to put tools down by other adults in surrounding areas and to await further instructions.
- Forest School Leader to assess situation and remove any hazards.
- Once any hazard has been removed the leader will deal with the incident or follow the first aid procedures in the case of an accident.

First Aid Procedure:

- A number of staff within the school (including the current Forest School Leader) are qualified first aiders and will administer the care needed.
- First aid kit will be taken to all sessions and will be checked regularly
- Whilst dealing with a first aid incident, the leader will ensure the safety of all other children within the group by advising other adults present of the situation and ask them to monitor the other children, if alone children will be call to the area that the leader is in and if necessary all children will be taken indoors.
- Seek emergency help if needed.
- There will be a first aid kit taken into the woodland area and extra first aid equipment is located within the school.
- Contact the parents and complete the accident report forms
- Ensure all staff are aware of medical conditions of the children and inhalers, epi pens etc. are taken)

Food safety and Hygiene Procedures:

Children at Forest Schools are taught a strict NO eating rule, unless it is a specific activity led by an adult to prepare and cook food. Initially, when children are ready they will participate in simple cooking on the fire activities which include; toasting marshmallows/waffles and making s'mores. There is always a staff member present with food hygiene training, when food is being handled and prepared.

Food Preparation, transport and storage;

- Hands will be washed thoroughly and any cuts/grazes covered in the correct manner (blue plaster or ideally gloves) before handling and preparing food.
- Any food needing preparation will be prepared in the school kitchen e.g. bread dough
- Food will be stored in clean containers and transported in a cool bag to and from the site, with any clean utensils and cooking pans required. The box will remain closed in between use with food covered in bags or boxes; to avoid attracting flies and other insects.

- 
- All 'use by' dates will be checked on foods before eating.
 - Water for cooking will be provided in cleaned sealed storage container.

Handling, cooking and eating Food;

- A fresh, clean, bucket of warm soapy water will be available for children to wash their hands before handling food or utensils
- Children are taught how to cook food safely following the activity risk assessment and fire procedure. All food will be checked by an adult to ensure it is fully cooked before eating.
- Children will be asked to sit still around the fire circle or to move to a designated eating area from the fire to keep numbers to a minimum near the fire circle.

Clearing away and cleaning up;

- ALL food not eaten or cooked will be placed in black bin bags and disposed of in the school bin at the end of the session by one of the adults.
- The area is checked to ensure there is no food traces to avoid vermin being attracted to the area.
- ALL utensils and pans will be washed at the station in hot soapy water and stored away correctly.

Toileting

In the event of a child needing the toilet during a forest school session the children will have access to their usual class toilets and staff will have access to the staff toilets - these are all situated inside the school building. If a child needs to go to the toilet during a forest school session they will let an adult know. The children will be accompanied to the toilet by a member of school staff, not a volunteer to the session.

11. Forest School Risk Assessment

The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>High Medium Low</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place) <i>High Medium Low</i>
Eye level branches	Participants and leaders	Scratches, bumps, trips and pokes	Low	Warn the children and add a flag to make it more visible.	Forest leader to check on the day before the session.	Low
Uneven ground	Participants and leaders	Bumps, trips and falls.	Medium	Ensure aspirational language of walking only is adhered to.	Forest leader before the session.	Low
Fallen branches	Participants and leaders	Scratches, bumps, trips and pokes	Low	Remind all participants of safety precautions regarding branches.	Forest leader before the session.	Low
Animal droppings / mud and dirt	Participants and leaders	Fingers in mouths could lead to illness.	Medium	Remind children to not putting fingers in mouths. Wear gloves when collecting things. Check for and remove and obvious animal droppings on site. Handwashing before eating and at the ends of the session.	Forest leader before the session.	Low

Fungi, plants and nettles	Participants and leaders	Poisoning, cuts and allergies	Medium	Enforce rules around looking and not touching. Ask for adult support to look. Wearing gloves when collecting plant material to prevent cuts to hands.	Forest leader before and during the session.	Low
Insects, wasp, bees etc	Participants and leaders	Stings	High – season dependent	Leader to be aware of any allergies in the group. Warn children to not put anything in their mouths. Participant to wear long sleeve tops for some protection. Water and first aid kit on site with first aiders.	FS leader before and during session.	Low
Medical conditions	Participants and leaders	Medical condition dependent / death	High	FS leader to be aware of all medical conditions for all participants and staff. All staff to be aware of the whereabouts of medication and kept on hand with group/activity leader when necessary.	All staff before, during and after the session.	Medium/low
Weather	Participants and leaders	Sunstroke – hypothermia. Windy - bumps	Medium	Participant must have appropriate clothing and footwear for the session/weather conditions. Sun cream and sun reminder when it is sunny as well as water on site. When it is cold FS leader ensure children are wearing layers and plenty of physical activity to keep them warm. Unless participants have appropriate clothing on they will not be able to join in the session.	FS Leader and all staff before, during and after the session.	Low

Forest School Risk / Benefit Assessments

Fire

This activity risk assessment must be used in conjunction with:

Risk Assessments: General Welfare & Weather
 Site Specific Woodland Assessment
 Related Activity Risk Assessments

Procedures: Lifting
 Site safety
 Tool Use and storage

Hazards	Control Measures - how to manage the risks safely
1 Burns from igniting the fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group will be briefed on Forest Schools Fire Safety Policy. • Any group lighting fire will do so at arm's length using fire lighter kits. (magnesium block and striker only) • Matches and firelighters only to be used by the Forest Leader when required. • Fire managed to a safe size and supervised at all times. • Safe kneeling position to be used by all within the fire circle. • Basic fire safety rules to be followed and reinforced each session, e.g., tucking in dangling cords, scarves, hair tied back, never lean across the fire. • Water bucket by fire pit. • First Aid Kit and burns gel available.
2 Burns from cooking, kettles, pans, burning wood, hot water or fire pit rocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group will be briefed on the Forest Schools fire safety policy and procedures in the fire area • The leader will remove all items from the fire area. • All children will be seated when passed any hot item. • All group to move round in the fire zone in a safe and controlled manner. • Fire First Aid kit to be readily available and water bucket • Children cooking on fire to be re-briefed immediately prior to activity, on their required actions.
3 Burns from hot food/ drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants will be told about the dangers of eating food directly from the fire. • Children will shown suitable time scales for eating food once removed from the fire. • Drinks such as hot chocolate, hot mulled blackcurrant to be served at a suitable temperature.
4 Setting surrounding ground and vegetation areas alight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire pit will be strategically placed with minimum risk of setting surrounding foliage alight. • Burning sticks not to be removed from the fire. • Ensure that all feeding of the fire is carried out using suitable sized sticks that do not cross the barrier. • Water bucket to be next to the fire at all times. • Copiously large amounts of water are available to extinguish prior to leaving the site
5 Slipping, tripping, and falling on to the fire once alight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure there is a safe working distance from fire to prevent slipping. Seating around the fire will be at a distance of min. 2 meters and will be raised off the ground to aid easy exit and reduce risk of falling. • Group needs to understand safety zone procedure. • Ensure that the group has a full understanding on how to position themselves correctly when using the fire, so if a slip or fall occurs neither they nor any other group member will make contact with the fire. • All shown route into area around fire and the way to approach the fire. • Children to kneel with 1 knee up, 1 down to maintain balance position. • Children shown how to push off backwards from that position, to stand before they leave the fire area.

General Welfare and Weather

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders aware of daily weather report before beginning activities and will choose to curtail the visit if deemed unsafe. • Explain to the group the actions on bad weather. • Leaders to monitor the group closely to identify any discomfort at an early stage and take appropriate action (particularly in cold and wet weather) • Site trees regularly checked. Potentially dangerous branches to be made safe.
2	High winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups will not enter the site when the wind is high. • Leader will make decisions on weather before the group enters the site. • If the weather forecast predicts increasing wind speeds, leaders will make an informed decision about the safe use of the site, lighting of fires, and use of areas around trees.
3	Inappropriate foot wear and / or clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of appropriate clothing is given to parents in advance of the sessions. • Leaders to arrange loan of extra clothing if appropriate. • Curtail the visit if a group is inadequately equipped.
4	General health and Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders to provide appropriate advice and monitor individuals throughout activities. • Ensure regular food and drink breaks. • Ensure medical info regarding food and or drink allergies is correctly identified. • Necessary medical supplies to be brought to the site, e.g., inhalers.
5	Sunburn and heatstroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and Guardians will be advised to send sun cream, hats and glasses with their children. Leaders to carry sun cream but not to apply it to any individuals. Permission for children to use named sun cream in exceptional circumstances is held on the permission slip. • Group are advised to wear appropriate clothing, hats and sun protection. (see parents info)
6	Medical problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader will have an up to date medical info sheet which will ensure they are aware of any medical considerations. • Leader to ensure all consent forms are completed prior to any session and that they are aware of any allergies, medical considerations. • Leader will carry and keep a record of consent forms.
7	Accident or health problem occurring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader first aid trained in group leadership, hazard perception and carry /or have immediately available First Aid Kits and emergency shelter. • Leaders to carry mobile phones. • Leaders to note any medical information on children and support staff and helpers. • Leader will take control of any accident or health situations assisted by school staff. • First Aid Book and Near Miss Book to be kept and incidents recorded.

Bill Hook

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	BILL HOOK Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Bill Hooks are kept in sheaths when not being used. • Leader to ensure group have a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	BILL HOOK slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance kept sharp and useable. • No gloves worn. • Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	BILL HOOK bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and useable. • Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likely hood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. • No glove tool.
4	BILL HOOK blade snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. • The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.

Bow Saw

	Hazard	Control Measures; – how to manage the risks; safely
1	Injury during Bow Saw Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All bow saws kept in sheaths when not being used. Leader to ensure group have a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly in its designated holder.
2	Tool slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool maintenance keeps bow saw sharp and useable. Glove worn on the non-sawing hand. Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	Bow Saw blade snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Glove worn on non-sawing hand. Group to be informed of how a blade should look and that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader. The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Bow Saw trapping Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand guards on tools. Glove worn on non-sawing hand. Leader to ensure group are aware of correct positioning of saw when in use.

Loppers

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risk; safely
1	Loppers Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All loppers are kept in sheaths when not being used. Leader to ensure group have a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Loppers slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tool maintenance kept sharp and useable. Gloves worn to prevent slipping. Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group. Group needs to know the tools capacity to prevent the tool failing to cut and bouncing off.
3	Loppers bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and useable. Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likely hood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. No glove tool.
4	Loppers snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular and effective maintenance of tools. The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported to the leader. The leader will decommission the tool.

Pruning Saw

	Hazard	Control Measure; – how to manage the risks safely
1	Pruning saw Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Pruning saws are kept in sheaths when not being used. • Leader to ensure group have a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Pruning saw slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance kept sharp and useable. • Gloves worn on non-sawing hand. • Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	Pruning saw Blade Snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and useable. • Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likely hood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. • Glove worn on non-tool hand. • The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Pruning Saw Trapping Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader to ensure group knows the correct positioning of saw when in use.

Secateurs

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Secateurs Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Secateurs are kept in protective carriers when not being used. • Leader to ensure group have a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Secateurs slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance kept sharp and useable. • No gloves worn to prevent slipping. • Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group. •
3	Secateurs bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and useable. • Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likely hood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. • No glove tool. • Group needs to know the tools capacity to prevent the tool failing to cut and bouncing off.
4	Secateurs breaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. • The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.

Sheath Knife

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Sheath Knife Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Sheath knives kept in sheaths when not being used.• Leader to ensure group have a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly in its designated holder.
2	Tool slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tool maintenance keeps bow saw sharp and useable.• No gloves worn to prevent slipping.• Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	Blade snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular and effective maintenance of tools.• Group to be informed of how a blade should look and that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader.• The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Sheath Knife storage during a session	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Knives need to be in their sheath hanging from their tether.• When not in use they should be returned to the correct storage box.

Collecting Natural Materials

This activity risk assessment must be used in conjunction with other school policies and procedures.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risk safely
1	Injury from lifting materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders to ensure a group understands and practices correct lifting procedures. • Lifting Procedures implemented.
2	Getting stung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider avoiding areas that contain stinging plants and insects. • Demonstrate and explain which plants may sting. • Warning signs/ ribbons around potential sites.
3	Cutting hands on litter and Debris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area to be risk assessed regarding the occurrence of litter. • Ensure the group is aware of potential hazards and investigate areas carefully. If litter is observed leader to be informed and the group told not to touch it.
4	Trip/slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the group is told to watch out for trip/slip hazards before activity commences. Explain to the group how to move around safely not running or pushing. • Activity area has its own risk assessment which considers trip and slip hazards.
5	Banging into Low Branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas area chosen to avoid sites with eye height branches. • Ensure groups are aware of any dangers these hazards may pose. Make sure the group move carefully around the wood without moving quickly.
6	Animal faeces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure groups are aware of this potential problem. Leaders to carry antibacterial wipes in case of contact with animal faeces.
7	Lifting and swinging sticks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group are shown how to lift and carry sticks carefully. • The leader will step in to control a situation where branches are not being carried correctly.
8	Fungus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with high numbers of fungi will not be used. • The group are shown a fungus or pictures of them so that they can avoid touching them. • Warning signs/ ribbons around potential sites.
9	Toxic Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to areas containing toxic plants will be restricted. • The group will be told not to eat anything that they find and will clean their hands before eating food. • Warning signs/ ribbons around potential sites.

Building shelters

This activity risk assessment must be used in conjunction with other school policies and procedures.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Knots slipping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific knots and lashing systems are used for larger shelter construction. • The group need to have practiced and understand lashing before being involved in more major construction.
2	Shelter collapsing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group are advised on how and where to construct their shelters. • The sites chosen and materials being used must be appropriate to avoid sharp points.
3	Poking eye on shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group are advised to avoid using materials with potential dangerous spikes on them. • The materials used should be monitored to avoid sharp points.
4	Banging heads on shelters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The group are advised not to run or move quickly inside or in and out of shelters. • Group to move sensibly around the shelter making area.
5	Trip Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are followed for to ensure equipment being used for shelter making is stored appropriately. • The group are to be made aware of procedures for equipment and building materials to avoid trip hazards
6	Injury from use of tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures are followed for tool use before activity commences. • The group need to follow Safe Tool use procedures to ensure the area is kept safe and ensure proper tool handling occurs.
7	Lifting Heavy Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifting procedures are to be followed • Medical forms highlighted that identify potential problems such as back/knee injuries. • Group needs to practice lifting techniques and to be encouraged to work a team to carry heavier items.

Using Rope or string

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Poor visibility of potential obstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High visibility rope used to span areas for trails in areas which may be considered hazardous to others. • Alternative other markers used to increase visual impact such as hanging bags or objects off the rope or string.
2	Rope Burn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloves will be worn if an activity involves pulling a heavy rope. • Activities involving rope pulling will be controlled tightly by qualified staff.
3	Trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ropes will be made out of brightly coloured material. • Groups will be practiced at using ropes to avoid putting them where people can trip over them.
4	Entanglement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups briefed to leave rope /string at central point and cut required lengths. • Groups not left unsupervised with ropes, string or straps.
5	Catching neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ropes left in place to be made out of bright materials or marked accordingly. • Groups using rope will avoid putting them at a height where people could walk into them.
6	Pulleys failing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All equipment is checked regularly, prior to and post activity. • Leaders will check any pulleys being used and will decommission if a defect is detected.

Blindfold Activities

	Hazards	Control Measures - how to manage the risks safely
1	Tying the blind fold too tight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where possible airline style blindfolds to be used • Blindfolds made from soft materials • The leader will explain how to put the blind folds on carefully
2	Walking into a branch or tree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity area risk assessed by leader prior to commencing and hazards noted or removed. • Group must be made aware of the dangers and considerations of leading someone who is blind folded.
3	Trip/ slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity area risk assessed by leader prior to commencing and hazards noted or removed. • Ensure the group is told to watch out for trip/slip hazards before activity commences. Explain to the group how to communicate effectively, move around safely.
4	Cutting hand on a sharp item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to group to investigate items gently. Tell them there may be rough or sharp parts so to move slowly.
5	Bending over and banging head	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity area risk assessed by leader prior to commencing and hazards noted or removed. • Group must be made aware of dangers of leading someone who is blind folded and need for support and to work together

Water

	Hazards	Control Measures - how to manage the risks safely
1	Getting wet leading to Hypothermia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leader to check weather and take appropriate clothing and equipment (see General Weather risk Assessment)• Spare clothing to be available if appropriate to weather conditions and/or group• Ensure all activities that involve water consider the weather conditions.
2	Health hazards such as disease from standing water, leptospirosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standing water on a site will be assessed by a competent person and advice taken accordingly.• Groups informed of the dangers of Disease from stagnant and standing water.• Hands to be washed before eating or drinking• Encourage parents/guardians to protect open wounds with waterproof plasters prior to visit.

We use the Group Safety at Water Margins produced by the DfES

Clothing For Forest School Days

Winter

Long sleeved top
Hooded top / fleece or thick jumper
Waterproof jacket
Thick socks
Trousers (NOT JEANS OR SHORTS)
Waterproof trousers (For wet and muddy days)
Wellington Boots or walking boots - Wellies that are already in school are perfect
Hat, scarf and gloves

Fashion Boots are not suitable for the woods.



Summer

Long sleeved top
Hooded top / fleece or thick jumper
Waterproof jacket
Thick socks
Trousers (NOT JEANS OR SHORTS)
Waterproof trousers (For wet and muddy days)
Wellington Boots or walking boots - Wellies that are already in school are perfect
Sunhat
Sunglasses

Sunscreen and insect repellent with names on bottles. This is to be applied before school and if further application is needed this is to be done by the child themselves.





12. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Forest School Leaders and practitioners regard their duty of care when working with young people as extremely important. To ensure all individuals (children, workers, volunteers) are safe and protected we ensure the following:-

- * Everyone involved in Forest School is fully briefed on **health and safety, risk assessment** of sites and activities. Staff and volunteers should be made aware of the relevant school policies and ensure that they adhere to the guidance contained in them.
- * **All school staff and regular volunteers have current DBS checks.**
- * Any concerns about a child's physical or mental wellbeing should be shared with the schools named Child Protection Person, so that the schools child protection policy can then be followed.
- * We regard safety and good practice as extremely important and it is the responsibility of individual staff and volunteers to ensure general safety during working.
- * **Confidentiality** should be maintained at all times. Any concerns should only be shared with those who need to know such as the Forest School Leader or Class Teacher who can then ensure the correct channels are then informed.
- * Any volunteers are briefed to understand that **no photographs** of children can be taken on their own personal devices, and those that are taken on school equipment is to be used only by the Forest School Leaders.
- * Any volunteers are made aware that the content of the sessions cannot be shared on social media or through social platforms where any individual children could be identified for **child protection** and confidentiality.
- * All Leaders and helpers are made aware of **confidentiality** and the main safety of all children.



13. Equal opportunities and Inclusion

In Forest School sessions all persons should be treated equally.

We aim to and are committed to:

- * providing a secure environment in which children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
- * making every effort to ensure that all activities are fully inclusive, thus catering for all ability levels
- * ensuring alternative arrangements are made if disability makes accessibility difficult.
- * making inclusion a thread which runs through all of the activities of Forest School.



14. Forest School Information for Support Staff and Accompanying Adults;

Aim

To inform staff and adults supporting Forest School Sessions.

Content of the Day

You will have had time to talk with the group leader about the activities which are planned and how you will be supporting.

Risk Assessments/Staff experience

All activities on the site are thoroughly risk assessed and copies of these can be found in the Forest Schools Handbook. You should be familiarized with these by the group leader prior to the session. The Group Leaders are Qualified Forest Schools Level 3 Practitioners.

Safety Guidelines

There are certain procedures we use at Forest School with the children, such as safe conduct around the fire area or safe use of tools. All adults must follow these actions and demonstrate good practice to the children throughout the session. Children will copy what they see rather than what they hear.

First Aid and General Health

First Aid kits are carried with the group at all times. We have a large one held at the Fire Pit Area alongside the Burns First Aid Kit. Any specific children's medication will be held by the leader at all times. **You must make the Group Leader aware of any medical issues you may have.**

Staff Clothing

We will be out in all weathers so it is important that you are dressed appropriately. Layers of clothing and waterproof outer wear, suitable walking boots or wellies with thick socks to keep feet warm. We need to be warm and comfortable as we are there to support the children. We also need to act as role models for the children. Feeling cold and damp isn't fun and can be dangerous. Hats and gloves are needed in the winter and sunhats, sun cream and glasses for the summer. Jeans should not be worn as they become very cold and dangerous when wet.

Toilets

We are able to use the toilets in school, however we encourage the children to use the toilets before sessions begin! We have water for hand washing and anti-bacterial gel on site.

Poor Weather

Our intention is to go out in all weather. If the weather is severely windy we will cancel the session as severe wind makes the forest site very dangerous.

If you would like more information please speak to Miss Baxter or Mrs Hutchinson our L3 Forest Leaders.



15. Forest School Information and Parental Agreement

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a form of education that takes place in the outdoor environment where they are encouraged to work individually and as a team, to solve problems, assess risks, communicate with others and respect and appreciate the countryside. It enhances their school curriculum by giving them memorable and real life experiences. When outside the children cover all areas of the curriculum and much of what we do is used to enthuse and encourage writing and other activities when back in the classroom. Our experience is that the children get a huge amount out of outdoor learning; increased self-esteem, team building, cooperation, mathematical investigation, speaking and listening, scientific enquiry and storytelling to name just a few!

Content of the Day

The leader of each visit plans carefully to develop the children's Forest school skills as well as to enhance work covered at school. Please feel free to speak to your child's class teacher or Forest School leader to find out more about what they will be doing or have done in the past

Risk Assessments/Staff experience

All activities on the site are thoroughly risk assessed and copies of these can be found in the Forest Schools Handbook. You should be familiarized with these by the group leader prior to the session. The Group Leaders are Qualified Forest Schools Level 3 Practitioners.

Safety Guidelines

Children develop a strong understanding of the Forest School rules and have a great respect for the environment that we work in. Leaders lead by example from the clothes they wear to how they behave round the fire and with tools. Generally children will copy what they see rather than what they hear.

First Aid and General Health

First Aid kits are carried with the group at all times. We have a large one held at the Fire Pit Area alongside the Burns First Aid Kit. Any specific children's medication will be held by the leader at all times.

Clothing

We will be out in all weathers so it is important that the children are dressed appropriately. Layers of clothing and waterproof outer wear, suitable walking boots or wellies with warm socks to keep feet warm. They must be warm and comfortable as feeling cold and damp isn't fun and can be dangerous. Hats and gloves for winter and sunhats and glasses for the summer.

Toilets

We are able to use the school toilets, however we encourage all children to use them before our session begins. We have water for hand washing and anti-bacterial gel on site.

Poor Weather

Our intention is to go out in all weather. If the weather is severely windy we will cancel the session as sever wind makes the forest site very dangerous.



Corbridge and Broomhaugh Federation of Schools Forest School

I _____ have read the attached information.

- * I agree to my child taking part in Forest School Days whilst they attend Corbridge and Broomhaugh Federation of First Schools.
- * I understand that the staff and Forest School leaders take my child's safety and educational development seriously and support the planning and activities that they do.
- * I will ensure that my child attends Forest School days fully equipped and prepared for the day.
- * I understand that if I have any questions, I can seek advice from my child's class teacher or one of the Forest School Leaders.
- * I DO/ DO NOT consent to photographs being taken of my child during the sessions.

Photographs may be shared on SCHOOL WEBSITE
TWITTER

Signed

Name of Child

Date.....