

Forest school risk assessment



Name of assessor:	Date of assessment:	Date of review:	Authorised by:
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Location: Rear playground in Forest School site

Significant Hazards/ Risks	Level	Control/ Actions	Risk Benefits
Exploring the site Uneven ground, branches and trees roots on the ground. Branches and shrubs at eye level	Medium	Children well supervised awareness talks and reminders. Member of staff will be First Aid trained and red hand from shed on hand to send in for additional support if needed	Promoting physical development and awareness of the difference in surroundings. Encouraging children to be self-aware and support their peers.
Missing child A child may wander off or go missing during a Forest School session.	Low	Children told and asked to repeat boundaries and Forest school rules. Regular headcount. No access out of school grounds.	Children to realise the importance of following rules and working as a group. Building relationships and trusting each other.
Bites and stings from bees / wasps and stinging nettles.	Low	Warn not to catch bees / wasps and be aware of stinging nettles. Long trousers and closed footwear to be worn. Nettles to be cleared.	Opportunity to study how different insects move around. Displaying a positive approach to insects rather than being frightened of them
Allergies or children's existing conditions.	Low	All staff to be aware of any known allergies or existing conditions and be aware of treatment required.	Promote knowledge and independence in identifying and avoiding allergens.
Mushrooms and fungi	Low	Ensure children do not eat anything they find and keep their hands out of their mouths and wash them thoroughly after the session. Obvious mushrooms to be cleared away.	Promote knowledge and independence in identifying and avoiding mushrooms and fungi. Identify similarities to foods bought and eaten.

Poisonous plants	Low	Site to be inspected prior to sessions, staff to be aware of poisonous plants and children not to pick anything that is living and growing, keep fingers out of their mouths.	Promote knowledge and independence in identifying and avoiding poisonous plants. Understanding the natural world and what they must not touch.
Building dens or other activities using sticks and branches – risk of sharp objects.	Low	Children to be aware of dangers and carry / hold sticks carefully being aware of others around them. Injuries / accidents to be dealt with accordingly	Opportunity to work as a team safely, to problem solve and scaffold each other. Opportunities to develop motor skills, practice knots and develop social skills.
Animal droppings	Low	Children to be made aware not to touch or pick up any animal droppings. Hands to be cleaned and anti bac gel to be used.	To help children to identify animals from their droppings and other traits. To understand the importance of hygiene.
Falling branches	Low	Site checked regularly to ensure no fallen or dangerous branches.	Children to learn to risk assess for themselves.
Using string	Low	Children to be instructed how to use string to make dens and tie sticks together. Close supervision.	Practicing knots and learning new skills involving following instructions. Encourages creativity
Sharp branches and thorns	Medium	Children to be aware, any cuts or injuries to be dealt with on site. Larger cuts / more serious injuries to be dealt with in school. In the event of severe injuries 999 to be called.	Children to be self aware, identify dangers and scaffold peers. Encourages self confidence in a new and sensory environment.
Small tools Potato peelers, knives, saws,	High	Safety talk given and repeated. Close supervision.	Building confidence and gaining new experiences.
Larger tools –Sheaf Knife, loppers, bow saw and Billhook.	High	Safety talk given and repeated prior to use of tools. Strict use of tools on a 1:1 basis under very close supervision. Gloves to be used on the hand not holding the tool. Only trained Forest School Leader to use tools with children and fire lighting.	Supporting communication skills: listening, understanding and learning new vocabulary. Hand and eye coordination, learning new skills. Risk taking & managing behaviour and frustration.

NB: Children must wear closed footwear in the Forest school area

Red hand kept in the Forest School shed and accessible. First Aid kit kept in Forest School shed.