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Forest School Handbook



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# 1. The Forest School Ethos

The Forest School concept originated in Denmark, and was originally aimed at pre-school children, where it was found that children who had attended forest school then arrived at school with strong social and communication skills, having the ability to work in groups effectively, generally had high self-esteem and a confidence in their own abilities. These foundations helped them to raise their academic achievements.

Forest School is a unique educational experience and process that offers children the opportunity to succeed and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland environment. At its heart is the concept of providing sensory child-led outdoor play, encouraging and stimulating curiosity and absorption.

Children engage in motivating and achievable tasks and activities throughout the year and in almost all weathers, with the appropriate footwear and clothing. Children will work with tools, play, learn and begin to understand the boundaries of behaviour, both physical and social. They will grow in confidence, self- esteem and motivation whilst developing an understanding of the natural world.

A Forest School encourages children to:

* develop personal and social skills
* work through practical problems and challenges
* use tools to create, build or manage
* discover how they learn best
* pursue knowledge that interests them
* learn how to manage failures
* build confidence in decision making and evaluating risk
* develop practical skills
* understand the benefits of a balanced and healthy lifestyle
* explore connections between humans, wildlife and the earth
* regularly experience achievement and success
* reflect on learning and experiences
* develop their language and communication skills
* improve physical motor skills
* become more motivated
* improve their concentration skills
* improve their communication
* and explore the world through all the senses available to them

# 2. What happens at Forest School

Typically, small groups of individuals (depending on child/adult ratio) take part in a programme of six weekly sessions lasting for around two hours. The sessions involve practical hands-on activities which aim to build up participants’ skills, abilities and confidence week by week.

All sessions are designed and led by the Forest School Leader with the help of the school staff. However, Forest School strongly encourages participant–led learning, so as the weeks progress, learners are given more freedom and responsibility to explore their interests and therefore initiate and direct their own learning.

Forest School uses natural resources to stimulate imagination, creativity, and investigation. Activities can include:

* Shelter building
* Natural art
* Using knots and lashings
* Fire lighting
* Animal tracking
* Bug hunts
* Tree investigations
* Climbing and balancing
* Woodwork using tools, e.g. making musical instruments, jewellery, decorative items
* Creating bug homes and bird feeders
* Collecting, identifying and sorting natural materials such as leaves
* Team games

Although Forest school should not be viewed as an outdoor learning provision it presents great opportunities to cross-curricular, spanning a number of subjects, including Math, English, Design & Technology, Science, Music and Art.

# 3. The benefits of Forest School

Forest School is suited to all ages and abilities. The aim of Forest School is to take a holistic approach to developing the person. It is particularly suited to people who have a low sense of self-worth and who struggle for various reasons to learn in a traditional classroom setting.

Completing small achievable tasks, coupled with genuine praise from the Forest School Leader and members of support staff, helps to boost confidence and self-esteem.

For children at school, attitudes to learning are improved as they find that learning can be fun and enjoyable. This new positive outlook is then transferred to the classroom where they are found to be more motivated and able to concentrate better.

Forest School can also:

* Develop physical abilities and help participants to stay active and healthy.
* Heighten self-awareness and improve emotional and social skills.
* Promote co-operative and group working.
* Encourage participants to take care of themselves and others.
* Foster care, appreciation and respect for wildlife and wild places.
* Broaden knowledge and understanding of the natural world.
* Encourage children to take appropriate risks with their learning

# 4. Forest School Staff

Our Forest School is organised and run by Meleena Walsh who is a qualified Level 3 Forest School Leader.

All staff and volunteers have undergone an appropriate selection process to assess their skills and suitability for working with children and have been subject to enhanced DBS checks. All sessions are staffed by a qualified first aider and all staff have access to a recommended first aid kit.

# 5. The Forest School site

Our Forest School takes place in a small woodland area on our rear school field, behind and to the right of the school field. It is made up of mixed deciduous trees, mainly mature, Guelder Rose, Hawthorne, Field Maple, Alder and Elder. There is a fenced off area containing a pond and a mixture of climbing plants such as ivy and some brambles.

The woodland is subject to some level of management at present, but it is the expectation that as our Forest School progresses the site will increase in its ecological diversity and sustainability.

The site is within school grounds and is not accessible to the general public, but the perimeters need to be carefully monitored as the site could be a potential magnet for local youths to enter unlawfully. The site is carefully monitored for tripping hazards and any other potential hazards.

Children taking part in Forest School will also be encouraged to minimise their impact on the site. This will include:

* Finding out about the different animals and plants that live in and amongst the trees
* Learning to respect animals’ homes
* Careful observation of live animals
* Leaving lying deadwood in place
* Taking all materials and litter with them when they leave
* Ensuring that the site is left like they found it

# 6. Location of Woodland Site (52.2195259,0.1244623)



# 7. Our Forest School Code of Conduct

|  |
| --- |
| **Entering the Woodland**    We will enter the Woodland respectfully and know that when at Forest School specific expectations are in place. We will explore, investigate, learn, and play in a manner that will not damage our Woodland environment. We understand that we share our Forest School with plants and animals and that when we are in our Forest School, we are sharing the environment with them. |
| **Boundaries**    Before each session begins children are made aware of the site boundary that they are able to move around in. Children are taught that they do not leave the area to go on the trim trail or the climbing frame. An adult will be able to see the children at all times but allow the children the freedom to explore independently. In the event that an adult loses sight of a child, they will shout ‘1, 2, 3, where are you?’ The children have been taught to respond ‘1, 2, 3, I am here’, or signal in other ways if non-verbal. This enables the leader to trace children who have strayed. Children who are known to need 1-1 support are given the support needed whilst in the Forest School area. |
| **Lighting a fire**    When lighting a fire, the Forest School leader will take control of the operation and all accompanying adults will be briefed before starting. The person in charge of the fire safety and management will wear a clear and visible symbol as a visual cue to the children, we suggest a high vis vest. A lit fire will not be left unattended at any point. A fire may not be lit until it has been confirmed to all that our fire safety equipment is in place. Open fires will be built within a fire square. |

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| **At the Fire Circle**    An open fire will only be lit within a demarcated fire square or raised fire bowl. A fire circle using log sitting stools or benches will be established around the perimeter, at a minimum of 1.5m away from the fire square/fire bowl. No one may enter the fire circle perimeter unless invited to do so by an adult. There is no running past the fire circle. No items must be carried and placed within the fire circle unless by an adult. If you wish to move around the fire to a new stool/seat you must step out of the circle and walk around the outside of the circle. Even when the fire is unlit, we will treat it as if it is lit. |
| **Using Tools**    All tools have their own clear code of conduct for correct use which will include consideration of specific personal protective equipment, correct use of a specific body posture, and consideration of the appropriate types of activity that each tool may be used for. |
| **Picking up and playing with sticks**    Children can carry sticks shorter than their arm’s length but are encouraged to think about how close they are to other children. The sticks should be held with the tip pointing towards the ground. Longer sticks may be dragged or carried with the help of another person when each person is at either end. Sticks must not be thrown. Sticks must not be pulled from living trees. |
| **Picking up and playing with stones/bricks**    Stones/bricks may be picked up and transported but children must be aware of obstacles and peers. Children often like to make patterns and pictures with them and bricks may be used in construction projects. Stones may not be thrown, unless it is in a controlled location under the supervision of an adult. Stones/bricks may be dropped but thought must be given to whether it is safe to do so, i.e. what is beneath where I am dropping it? |

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| **Digging**    Digging overly large holes is not encouraged as it can damage the natural environment. A designated mud station will be set up where children can explore a range of activities including excavating soil, mixing mud and transporting. Children may carefully move soil to look for insects and their habitats using fingers or small sticks found within the forest, but deep holes should not be made. |
| **Collecting wood**    Wood is collected for fire lighting purposes. It is collected in four thicknesses – matchstick sized, pencil sized, thumb sized, and wrist sized. Sticks may be collected for creating pictures and patterns but should be collected sparingly so as not to disrupt creature habitats. Sticks should not be removed from the site and resources will be available within the Forest School area for activities where natural resources cannot be found on the site. Green sticks, such as Elder and Ash will be provided by the Forest School Leader when needed for crafting activities. |
| **Eating and Drinking**    Nil by mouth policy (No pick no lick) for anything found in the area unless this activity has been specifically planned for during the session. Children must be reminded not to put their fingers or hands in their mouths or noses. A hygiene station will be set up in a designated area and children will be encouraged to wash their hands prior to consuming drinks and snacks. |
| **Rope and String Use**    We encourage the collection and transportation of materials. We do not encourage children to use ropes or string to tie up each other. If a child has a good idea and wants to tie up something, for example a tarp or a swing, an adult should help them as needed, modelling appropriate knot tying and modelling how to talk through ideas and decisions. |

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| **Carrying and Transporting Materials**    Children are encouraged to practice horizontal trajectory by rolling, dragging, or pulling materials, either by using their hands or by using ropes. When lifting children will be encouraged to follow the safe lifting model by bending their knees and keeping their back straight. Safe lifting should always be modelled by adults. Heavier objects should be rolled, lifted or carried by more people working together.  (Safe lifting risk assessment) |
| **Toileting**    Children are invited to use the toilets before we leave the school buildings. Children will be allowed to return to the school building with an accompanying adult (if necessary). |
| **Leaving the Site**    We work according to the ethos ‘leave no trace’ that we were in the wood as much as is reasonably possible. Shelters should be taken down, imported materials need to be removed, unless these are being retained for a follow-on activity. Where this is the case the objects will be managed to limit impact on flora and fauna. All equipment is carefully counted out and back in again, especially when using tools (these should be situated in the designated tool station) and tent pegs.  Moving parts will be stored in a manner that is considerate to the natural flora and fauna.  Rubbish will always be removed. If artefacts have been found or made these may be taken off the site with the consent of an adult. |
| **Tree Climbing**  An adult must be present when children climb trees in the Forest School. The ground cover should be checked for ‘sharp objects’ and the tree marked as suitable for climbing. A visual check must be made for loose and rotten branches. Children are permitted to explore to their own limits or to a maximum height of 1.5m. An adult should remain within the area with no encumbrance to their hands, ready to catch a child should the situation arise. The adult should not be invasive to the child’s exploration. |

# 8. Suggested Activities for Forest Schools

Activities for Forest Schools are diverse and numerous, but it should be reminded that the ethos is to create independent learners who are inspired to try out their own ideas, explore their own interests and to attempt new ideas.

Some activities might include:

* Shelter building
* Fire lighting
* Tool use
* Studying wildlife
* Playing team and group games
* Sensory activities
* Tracking games
* Cooking on an open fire
* Using a Kelly/Ghillie Kettle
* Rope and string work
* Art and sculpture work
* Woodland and traditional craft
* Developing stories and drama, and meeting imaginary characters
* Physical movement activities

# 9. A typical Forest School session

Each Forest School session follows a simple routine. The session starts with participants getting ready to go outside by putting on seasonal/weather appropriate clothing – waterproof coats, trousers and wellington boots etc. Rules and routines are discussed whilst still in class and children help gather any resources that may be needed for the session.

The group will then walk to the Forest School site and participate in a circuit of the site (this allows for week-on-week observations of the area). The group will then be seated around the fire circle. The register will be taken, and a number of children will be selected for end of session tasks. i.e. cup collector, washing up etc.

The circle is central to everything that happens at Forest School. It is a focal point where the group assembles and socialises. At the start of the session, participants and Leaders sit together and talk about what structured activities will be taking place, and then asking the children for their ideas/thoughts on how they will use their self-lead play.

Many activities take place in or around the circle, such as natural art and woodwork. At the end of each session participants reconvene at the circle to have a drink and a snack. When appropriate this may involve lighting a fire at the base of a Kelly/Ghillie Kettle to heat water for warm drinks. The children will be encouraged to share their thoughts about the session and offer any ideas for the next session. If necessary, the Forest School Leader will discuss minor behavioural issues with the group or re-tell a story encouraging the children to participate.

Early sessions involve children getting to know the site and learning basic safety rules. They will then move on to more complex and detailed tasks and are given more “free time” for self-lead learning.

At the end of each session, participants help Leaders to pack away the tools and materials they have been using and help to return the woodland to the state in which they found it.

# 10. Equipment for Forest School

In addition to tools suited to the planned for activities, the Forest School leader will always take an **emergency bag** with them.

The contents of the **emergency bag** will vary depending on the time of year and weather conditions, the site being used, and the planned for activities according to the relevant risk assessments and daily risk assessment. There are **essential items that should be carried out for every session.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Set of spare clothes (for inclement weather) | Fire strike / cotton wool / kindling |
| Spare clear plastic bags and bin liners | Squash, hot chocolate powder and biscuits |
| Wet wipes | Plastic beakers |
| Tarpaulins & tent pegs | Plastic plates |
| Washing up bowl, washing up liquid , tea towel | Disposable gloves |
| Whistle for use in emergencies | String and rope |
| Insect repellent (summer) | Fire blanket and bucket |
| Pen and paper | Drinking water in suitable container (dated) |
| Kelly/Ghillie kettle and gloves | Spare water in suitable container |

**Emergency procedure information**

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| --- | --- |
| Mobile phone with emergency contact numbers – in school. | At a glance sheet - children’s medical and contact information |
| Staff handbook and emergency procedures in water-proof folder | Risk assessments |

**First aid kit**

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| --- | --- |
| First aid guidance booklet | Disposable gloves (latex free) |
| Cling film | Safety pins |
| Sterile unmedicated dressings | Eye bandage |
| Triangular bandages | Eye wash |
| Cleansing wipes | Instant ice pack |
| Space blankets x 1 | Burn Gel x 4 |

**Activities equipment**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Wood – ash, hazel, elder, willow | Beads |
| Wool, ribbon, string | Felt pens and charcoal |
| Scissors | Paint brushes |
| Pots for mixing natural dyes | Masking tape |
| Cotton sheet | Clay |
| Hand spades | Sieves |
| Loose Parts (crates, logs, bricks) | Bug pots, spoons, paintbrushes, ID sheets |

**Tools**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tool bags and toolbox | Knives x 4 in lockable box |
| Bow saws 12” x 3 | Loppers x 1 |
| Potato peelers x 4 fixed blade x 4 Y blade | Work gloves - adults: 4 & children’s: 10 |
| Tent pegs (blunt ended) x 20 | Rope – various sizes inc. poly prop. |
| Pruning saws x 1 | Billhooks none |

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# 11. The Forest School Session

## INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Forest School is a unique educational programme run by trained Leaders. It helps children and young people to develop their confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in the outdoor natural environment.

**Forest School provides:**

* A safe, supportive and positive environment for learning and discovery.
* Session plans and risk assessments for all activities.
* Activities that link to the National Curriculum and the Coppice skills-based curriculum and cater for different learning styles.
* High adult to child ratios, enabling individual one-to-one and small group work.
* Monitoring and reporting of individual children’s progress and development.
* Greater involvement of parents in their children’s education through the invitation to take part in a Forest School session with their children.

**Responsibilities**

### Clothing

It is our responsibility to ensure that children are appropriately dressed for Forest School sessions. Any child not wearing appropriate clothing will not be able to participate.

We will provide a shelter from the elements, but it is still important that pupils wear clothes that are warm and that are OK to get wet and muddy. These are: warm trousers; a long-sleeved jumper, fleece or t-shirt; a vest or t-shirt underneath; thick socks - thermal if possible or two pairs of thinner ones.

### Discipline

It is our responsibility to discipline and manage participating pupils. It is good practice for the same member of staff to attend each of the six sessions, to maintain continuity for the children.

### Safety and First Aid

The Forest School Leader (Meleena Walsh) is a qualified first aider and carries a recommended first aid kit. Activities are thoroughly risk assessed and staff continuously monitor the safety of the group as activities progress. An emergency plan has been drawn up, which will be followed in the unlikely event of an accident.

All staff and volunteers have undergone an appropriate selection process to assess their skills and suitability for working with children and have been subject to enhanced DBS.

Forest School follows the same high staff to pupil ratio as all areas of the curriculum and activities at Milton Road Primary School.

### Cancellation

Forest School sessions usually take place outdoors whatever the weather. However, sessions may need to be moved to a more open site within the school grounds if there are high winds, a cap of wind speed at 25mph for working under trees.

# 12. ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT:

* First Aid Kit (See contents list, contents review record)
* Burns Kit
* Emergency Procedures
* Medical information for each individual and Emergency contact details for every member of the group (adults & children)
* Risk Assessments
* Communication Device - mobile phone.
* Clean Water
* Emergency whistle
* Accident forms
* Medication for individuals (if not appropriate for the individual to carry the medication for themselves it should be clearly labelled – staff must have been trained to administer it and parental consent must have been received)
* Appropriate Clothing
* Fire Box including Fire Blanket

### Clothing

No child or adult 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 or attachment of ticks, which 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. In the forest it can often be cooler than expected under the shade of the trees.

Clothing list:

* 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
* 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 unsuitable clothing!” Alfred Wainwright MBE, A Coast to Coast Walk***

Staff must also be aware of how children in their class react to different weathers and how this affects their sensory processing.

There may be the availability of spare clothing, but this will need to be matched to the child prior to the session and checked for suitability.



### First Aid Kit and Burns Kit

* Contact Cards (location using postcode and OS grid reference)
* Latex Gloves
* Bandages
* Burns gel
* Burn dressing
* Dressings
* Eye wash
* Scissors
* Cotton wool
* Antiseptic wipes
* Medication for individual children
* Tick removers
* Sterile water
* Cling film
* Blood bag (disposal sack for medical waste)
* Bites and stings cream or spray (parental permission required)

### Essential Fire Equipment

* Flame retardant gauntlet gloves
* Fire Blanket
* Bucket of water
* Fire steel
* Cotton wool
* Lint
* Wood shavings
* Petroleum jelly

# 13. Using and Storing Tools

A designated tool station will be set up in the Forest School area if the activities for the session require 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 in the Forest 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 must never be allowed to help themselves and will always have adult supervision when collecting, transporting and using tools.

Tools are only used for a specific purpose. All adults should model correct and safe tool use, storage and transportation at all times. When using a tool, they are used 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. Only walking is permitted when transporting a tool.

# 14. Risk assessments

### Food safety and cooking procedure

Food and drink preparation and sitting together whilst eating and drinking are important parts of Forest School.

This procedure has been devised using advice in *Preventing Food Poisoning - Good Hygiene at Home* published by the Food Standards Agency and *10 Ways to Prevent Food Poisoning* on the NHS Choices website.

We will provide hand washing facilities at each session where food and/or drink is prepared and will ensure that all staff, volunteers and participants follow the Forest School food hygiene rules.

### Forest School food hygiene rules

Everyone involved in Forest School should be involved in food safety and follow the food hygiene rules as specified in Appendix B. If you spot a problem, please point it out to the Forest School Leader.

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. 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.

### Guidelines for using tools

General – Risk assessments have been carried out for all the tools used in the Forest School setting. All staff should read these risk assessments before using any tools and before instructing any children.

All tools are stored safely in a locked cupboard when in the school by the FSL and must only be carried to and from the sire by adults. At the site, tools are stored safely, and children understand not to use them without an adult. There is a designated tool station and children and adults are advised not to walk around carrying tools.

* 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 hand.
* 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 – do not 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.

Hand drills – used to make patterns on wood or holes through small sticks or wood cookies.

* Always sit down
* Wear gloves on both hands as drill handle cogs can catch the skin and the bit can slip.

Billhooks – use for cleaving wood (not to be used by children)

* 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

* 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 cut proof 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 the sharp end of potato peeler.
* Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work.
* Children only to use when sitting or kneeling – remind them not to move around when using the peeler.

Tent Pegs – (when used to hollow out elder piths)

* Rest the wood you are working with on the ground or on a bench and not on your leg.
* Poke out the piths away from your body towards the ground, and not towards you.
* Keep a safe distance from other people and be aware of those around you while you work.
* Children only to use when sitting or kneeling – remind them not to move around when using the tent pegs.

## Forest School site risk assessment

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Hazard** | **Risk** |  | **Safety measures** |
| Trip hazards:   * Uneven ground / holes * Wet slippery surface * Muddy ground * Icy ground | Medium |        | Verbal/visual instruction to walk carefully  and look where they are walking  Wear appropriate footwear  Mark off area if necessary  Remove obvious trip hazards on pre-visit site check if possible |
| Low branches causing eye injuries | Medium |  | Point out location of low branches |
| Brambles, prickly or thorny plants and stinging nettles | Medium |  | Show location of any brambles and stinging nettles and ask children them to avoid them |
| Insect bites and stings | Low |  | Verbal/visual warning to not approach or try to catch bees and wasps |
|  |  |  | Monitor site for nest activity and avoid nest sites |
|  |  |  | Keep arms and legs covered |
|  |  |  | Check anyone with severe allergies has their epi-pen and can administer it |
| Tasty looking fruit/berries and fungi | Low |  | Verbal/visual instruction that some fruit/berries and fungi are poisonous, and should not be eaten |
|  |  |  | Ensure hands are washed before eating and verbal instruction to keep hands away from face |
| Nuts, e.g. horse chestnut, hazel, acorns | Low |    | Be aware of children with allergies  Check anyone with severe allergies has their epi-pen and can administer it |
| Harmful litter, e.g. metal, glass, hypodermic needles | Low |  | Remove harmful litter during pre-visit site check |
|  |  |  | Point out location of any harmful litter as activity progresses and remove |
| Contact with harmful substances - soil | Low |  | Ensure hands are washed before eating and verbal instruction to keep hands away from face |
| Exposure to the elements – rain, wind, snow, ice | Low |  | Make sure that children are wearing appropriate clothing |
|  |  |  | Use tarpaulins for shelter |
|  |  |  | In extreme cases work indoors and have alternative activities plan |
| Exposure to the elements – sun | Low |  | Work in shade |
|  |  |  | Wear hats |
|  |  |  | Check sunscreen is being worn |
|  |  |  | Provide regular drinks |
| High winds | Low |  | Avoid areas with trees – work in playing field |
|  |  |  | In extreme cases work indoors and have alternative activities plan |
| Structural damage to trees | Low |  | Check branches during pre-visit site check |
|  |  |  | If area’s unsafe, work in meadow or work indoors and have alternative activities plan |
| Animal faeces | Low |  | Look out for faeces during pre-visit site check and remove |
|  |  |  | Point out location of faeces during session so it can be avoided |
|  |  |  | Wash hands thoroughly if anyone encounters faeces |
| Fencing perimeter | Low |  | Pre session checks to assess any gaps in the school fence. |

# 

# 15. Fire Policy

As part of the Forest school experience it is desirable to have an open fire at times within the woodland to allow the children to enhance their learning and development with some risky activities. Encounters with risk help children to manage their coping strategies and discover and explore the world through real experiences. This policy sets out the guidelines to follow to ensure safe practice is a thread throughout the activity.

## Aim

To use fire safely as part of the Forest School experience.

## Method

Fires must only be lit after a risk assessment has been carried out and they must only be within the fire circle area. This includes the use of Kelly/Ghillie Kettles. There must always be a trained adult present within the fire circle when a fire is lit or hot embers remain, never leave a fire unattended.

Prior to the fire pit being built the soil or bedrock must have been assessed to avoid a fire being lit on a flammable surface such as peat. The fire should be surrounded by a 1 metre square of double logs to provide a good barrier to the fire in case a learner loses balance. Pegs should be used to prevent the logs being knocked. Fires should not be lit close to overhanging branches or on a windy day.

There must be an adequate supply of fire water close to the fire pit to ensure there is enough water available to extinguish the fire if it gets out of control. A fire blanket must be brought into the woodland to wrap round someone if their clothes become alight. Fireproof gauntlets should be kept at the fire area to allow adults to pick up hot items.

Before visiting the area, the children should have had the opportunity to ask questions and be given information about fire safety. When at the fire circle the rules should be demonstrated for the children to see. There should be no more than 2 people, adults and children, within the fire circle next to the fire at any one time. The best position for cooking is on one knee (the respect position) so you can move backwards easily and remain stable. Long hair should be tied back, tassels and ties tucked away, and scarves removed.

## Monitoring of policy

This policy will be reviewed annually but may also be influenced earlier by new research and government guidelines.

## Kelly/Ghillie Kettle

The Forest leader may use this to heat water. Never leave the bung in whilst heating water. This is only to be in place during storage so as to keep the chamber clear from forest debris or insects and minibeasts. Once the fire is going in the Kelly Kettle base carefully add the chimney top to it by holding the handle parallel to the ground and supported on each side by your hands.

When lit, do not stand directly over, or look straight down the chimney. Never blow into the top. When pouring out the water support the base by holding the bung chain in one hand and the handle with the other. To put the fire out, pour the remaining water into the base. When not in use all tools will be securely locked away in the tool shed. Tools should be checked and cleaned before they are put away. Half termly the Forest Leader will ensure that each tool is thoroughly cleaned and oiled. Wear and tear will be monitored daily.

# 16. Health and Safety Policies & Procedures

Milton Road Primary School sets out clear statements of intent regarding the Whole School’s approach to the health and safety of its children, staff and visitors to the School and the School Site.

Provided below is a list of additional points and measures which relate directly to our Forest School sessions.

There will be the appropriate leader to participant ratio at Forest School. The number of Leaders means that participants can safely experience activities like climbing trees, walking across logs blindfolded, lighting (controlled) fires and using knives that are usually considered too risky in other situations. It also means that Leaders are able to give individuals one-to-one attention when needed, and to lead small group work.

All activities are thoroughly risk assessed before the start of each session and Leaders continue to monitor the safety of the group as activities evolve. There is always a trained first aider present at each session and a written emergency plan to follow.

## ROUTINE PROCEDURES

To ensure the safety of children and adults attending Forest School sessions, there are certain checks that need to be made before, during and at the end of each session. It is the Forest School Leader’s responsibility to ensure that all checks have been completed.

The following health and safety checklist provides a reminder of all routine procedures. These must be used at each Forest School session.

### Pre-visit checks

* Run through the site risk assessment and amend/update as necessary. Remove all visible litter and faeces.
* Remove obvious trip hazards and mark off areas as out-of-bounds as and when appropriate.
* Cut any overhanging vegetation from paths.
* Ensure risk assessments are completed for all activities.
* Erect shelter(s) dependent on the weather condition and the year group that are attending the session.
* Ensure that the Forest School circle is in a usable state.
* Set up hygiene station.
* Check that the forest school rucksack contains all necessary items (see section on *Forest School equipment*), including all emergency procedure information, a stocked and in date first aid kit, fire blanket and dated fresh water.
* Check all the materials and resources needed for the activities are prepared.
* Check that all tools (if being used) are in good working order.
* Check that the mobile phone is in working order, has sufficient credit and is fully charged.

### At the start of the session

* Take register and head count.
* Remind children about physical boundaries (use visual cues when needed) and that they must stay within these. With the younger year groups, it might be necessary in the first sessions, and at the beginning of each session play a game to reinforce this.
* Remind children how they should behave and how to stay safe on site (see site risk assessment).
* Explain the need for, and principles of, fire safety.

### Throughout the session

* Be vigilant.
* Remind children of how to stay safe by highlighting potential hazards (see individual *activity risk assessments*), reminding them of the boundaries and asking that they make an adult aware of any possible hazards that they spot.
* Carry out regular head counts at the start of activities and at break time.
* Take photos and make observations of individual children.
* Use de-escalation techniques whenever possible when dealing with behavioural issues.

### At the end of the session

* Carry out a final head count and escort the group back to the school.
* Count and pack up all equipment.
* Count and pack up all resources.
* Clear fire area and make safe. Remove ash and cover over the site of fire.
* Evaluate the session.

## WHAT TO WEAR WHEN TAKING PART IN FOREST SCHOOL

### Winter

* Waterproof coat
* Waterproof trousers
* Wellington boots or suitable outdoor boots.
* Warm hat, scarf and gloves
* Warm trousers
* Long-sleeved jumper or fleece
* Long-sleeved top
* Vest or t-shirt
* Thick socks - thermal if possible or two pairs of thinner ones

### Summer

* Waterproof coat and waterproof trousers in bag
* Walking boots, trainers or wellington boots - sandals are not suitable
* Sun hat
* Sunscreen
* Long-sleeved top or light shirt - to protect shoulders and arms
* Light trousers - shorts/skirts are not suitable

## Adult Roles & Responsibilities

See Appendix A

## Ambulance procedure

Call the emergency service/s that you require on **999 from a landline or 112 from a mobile**. Notify a member of Senior Management.

Location of the nearest working landline if mobile not working / no signal is situated in the PPA room.

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

Arrange for someone to open unlock the gate exiting the staff car park and stand in a visible position to alert the ambulance.

Don’t hang up until you are told to do so by the call taker.

Try to stay calm.

## Missing person procedure

The following procedure should be instigated and followed by the Forest School Leader responsible for a group in the event of any person (adult or child) going missing from the Forest School group.

* Carry out 1, 2, 3 routine. This signals that everyone should move to the Forest School circle.
* Conduct a head count to check that all other members of the group are present.
* Have two members of staff or volunteers stay with the group at the Forest School circle and await further instructions.
* Send the remaining staff and volunteers to search the immediate area for an agreed length of time (e.g. 10 minutes). Arrange for them to return to the agreed meeting place at an agreed time.
* Ensure that each of the searchers has a mobile phone with sufficient credit and battery life. Searchers should stay within an area they know and be aware of their own safety.
* If the missing person is not found in the agreed length of time, everyone should walk to the school. Here the rest of the group can wait in safety and comfort.
* Alert school staff to the fact that there is a missing person.
* Organise a second search party. Any staff member who knows the site can be recruited to help this second search. Searchers should work in pairs with at least one carrying a mobile phone with sufficient credit and battery life. Arrange for them to search for a specified length of time (e.g. 20 minutes) and return to reception at an agreed time.

**If the missing person is not found by this second search, then with SLT consent, contact the police. The decision may be made to do this while the second search is in progress depending on circumstances.**

At this point, a decision will need to be made regarding the rest of the group, in consultation with the SLT. It is likely that once they have changed out of their waterproofs, it will be best for the children to return to normal lessons.

Areas for search:

* All outside fields and areas.
* The school car park
* Toilets within school
* All classrooms and cloakrooms in school. Little Cherries Pre-school.

After the incident is over, complete a full report using the Incident Report Form.

## Fire procedure

* 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 the area to a safe location – Playground meeting point in case of fire.
* Alert SLT and instruct one person to call the fire brigade and give directions to the site.
* Ask a second person to telephone the emergency numbers (see *emergency plan*).
* Arrange for someone to stand at the entrance to the school to direct emergency services.

## Campfire procedure

Milton Road Forest School provides opportunities for children to get closer to nature and the outdoors through a variety of activities, which include learning about fire safety and how to make fires through the use of Kelly/Ghillie kettles. Children may also have the opportunity to cook from a range of easy recipes. *(Appendix B Food Hygiene Procedures).* Children may also get the opportunity to light their own fires on an earth-based surface or in small metal containers. This will only take place under strict supervision, with a one-to-one adult to child ratio.

The Forest School Leader is skilled and practiced in fire-building and management. Kelly/Ghillie kettles and small fires only will be used and lit in the centre of the Forest School circle.

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.

## Boundary setting

In the first Forest School session, both physical and behavioural boundaries are agreed with the children. At each subsequent session, these boundaries are revisited and reinforced.

## Developing routines – Sessions 1 and 2

* When they arrive at the Forest School site, children are shown how to sit round the Forest School circle (step over tree stumps and sit down).
* The need for, and principles of, fire safety are explained. This will include the rule that when Kelly/Ghillie kettles or a fire are being used in the centre of the circle, only one child at a time is permitted to approach the Kelly/Ghillie kettle or fire, on instruction from the Forest School Leader.
* The children are shown how to move around the circle (step out of the circle and walk around outside).
* For young children (Foundation and KS1), a game is then played to reinforce this – Leaders call out different statements that will relate to certain children in the group. E.g. “Everyone who has brown hair step outside and move around the circle” and so on.

In subsequent sessions, children will be asked to recall how they should behave at the Forest School circle. Depending on the behaviour and ability of the group, the use of Kelly/Ghillie kettles and/or lit fires will usually be introduced in much later sessions.

## Engendering responsibility

Through practicing these established routines, the children at Forest School will be able to enforce/remind others how to behave. Peers expect responsible behaviour and to a degree will be self-policing.

## Forest School Leaders’ routine campfire and use of Kelly/Ghillie kettle and campfire procedures

To ensure that everyone stays safe on site and that risk is managed effectively, Forest School Leaders will follow a routine campfire and Kelly/Ghillie kettle procedure.

Forest School Leaders will:

* Keep igniters in a safe location.
* Ensure there is a supply of water/soil/sand to dowse the fire.
* Always carry a fire blanket, which will be securely fastened in an upright position within reach of the fire area.
* Ascertain the location and size of the fire to be built and plan accordingly including fuel stocks.
* Carry out a pre-visit site check and risk assess the site and the activity.
* Be prepared to abandon the activity in the event of unforeseen circumstances rendering the activity unsafe and have another activity on standby.
* Alert the fire brigade in advance if necessary, to avoid false alarm and misidentification of Forest School fires as being uncontrolled.
* Dowse fires at completion and check them after 30 minutes to ensure that they have not spread.

When lighting fires, Forest School Leaders will:

* Not wear loose clothing and tie long hair back and ensure that children have their hair tied back and also have no loose clothing.
* Kneel on one knee for ease of moving backwards and to ensure even weight distribution to inhibit falling into the fire area.
* Wear fire gauntlets.
* Allow only one child at a time to help with fire construction / approach the fire.
* Try to keep away from the smoke.
* Put out the fire with water when finished.

When using Kelly/Ghillie kettles, Forest School Leaders will:

* Only light a fire in the tray of the Kelly/Ghillie kettle in the centre of the Forest School circle.
* Kneel on one knee for ease of moving backwards and to ensure even weight distribution to inhibit falling into the fire area.
* Never place the kettle on the fire without containing water.
* Only fill the kettle with water when cool.
* Place the tray of the kettle on a flat surface.
* Remove the cork before putting the kettle on the fire.
* Keep the spout on the opposite side to themselves and others.
* Remove the kettle from fire when the water starts to boil.
* Remove the kettle from the fire with the handle held vertically, using the chain to support it in an upright position.

## Toilet and shelter facilities at Forest School

### Toilet facilities

There are no toilets at the Forest School site. Children attending Forest School sessions will be informed in advance of the situation, and all children will be asked to go to the toilet before they leave the school building.

Children who need the toilet will be able to access the toilet in school. An assisting adult will accompany all children if necessary.

### Shelter at the Forest School site

In case of inclement weather, shelter from the elements will always be provided at the Forest School site. This will consist of one or more securely fixed tarpaulins which will provide shade in the summer months and protection from wind, rain and snow in the winter.

### Litter and Wastewater Procedure.

All waste/litter created by Forest School, and any waste/litter will be collected for appropriate disposal.

* The Forest School Leader will provide waste containers.
* All waste produced or found on site during the Forest School session will be placed within the waste containers
* At the end of the Forest School session the Forest School Leader will remove the waste containers for appropriate recycling/disposal.

A small amount of wastewater is created at Forest School, from hand washing and washing up. Solid debris is removed from the water for disposal in the waste containers. The wastewater is then disposed of in the woodland over as wide an area as possible, so it will evaporate quicker.

# 17. Safeguarding Children, Confidentiality and Forest School

Everyone at Milton Road Primary School has a responsibility in relation to child protection.

We are committed to:

* taking all reasonable measures to safeguard and promote the welfare of each child and young person (pupil) in our care
* the practice of safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children and young people
* protecting each pupil from any form of abuse, whether from an adult or another pupil

## Our aims:

* to raise awareness of individual responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse
* to provide a systematic means of monitoring, recording and reporting of concerns and cases
* to provide guidance on recognising and dealing with suspected child abuse
* to provide a framework for inter-agency communication and effective liaison
* to ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection arrangements are remedied without delay
* to ensure that safe recruitment procedures are operated
* to design and operate procedures which promote this policy and which, so far as possible, ensure that teachers and others who are innocent are not prejudiced by false allegations
* to contribute to the operation of appropriate health and safety procedures
* to have regard to and be consistent with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements and guidance.

In addition, adults working within Forest School need to appreciate that when children feel comfortable and content, when their instinct to trust and risk take is encouraged, they may be moved to disclose information which they might have otherwise kept to themselves. Any volunteer, or member of staff, who finds that a child is telling them something that concerns them should follow the course of action set out below in simple steps:

* Listen to the pupil but ask NO leading questions. Allow the child to lead the discussion but do not press for details.
* Keep calm and offer reassurance. Accept what the child says without challenge.
* Make NO promises. You cannot ‘keep a secret’. You should make it understood that there are limits to confidentiality at the start of the disclosure.
* Inform the Child Protection Officer, or the one of the deputy CPO’s.
* Keep an accurate, written record of the conversation, including the date, the time, the place the conversation occurred in and the essence of what was said and done by whom and in whose presence. Keep the record secure and hand it to the CPO.

# 18. Equal Opportunities, Inclusion and Forest School

The mission statement of Milton Road Primary School emphasises the value placed on the individuality of all our children. We are committed to giving each child every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We actively seek to remove the barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude individual children or groups of children. We aim to provide all our children with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement.

We will:

* Ensure equality of access for all children
* Employ a range of styles, including collaborative learning, so that children can value working together
* Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child’s education
* Take account of the performance of all children when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
* Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of children.

Our teachers ensure that our children:

* feel secure and know that their contributions are valued
* appreciate and value the differences in others
* take responsibility for their own actions
* participate safely, in clothing that is appropriate to their religious beliefs
* are taught in groupings that allow them all to experience success
* use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, learning styles and linguistic needs, without stereotyping
* have a common curriculum experience that allows for a range of different learning styles
* have challenging targets that enable them to succeed
* are encouraged to participate fully, regardless of disabilities or medical needs.

Forest School does mean Forest School FOR ALL. We do have a stock of extra all weather clothing but ask that both parents and children think about the usefulness of their clothing for outdoor activities, and to be aware that they are likely to take home muddy and wet clothes after a Forest School session. We encourage a level of risk-taking, always under close adult supervision, and actively foster friendships and collaboration between all children and adults. Forest School activities are always designed to produce success and enjoyment, even when this appears to be of a transitory nature. The Forest environment is an environment to which we are all entitled, and we strongly believe that the experiences we will have there will linger in the memory for years to come. Children with medical needs or disabilities will be helped so that they can take part fully in each Forest School session.

Those children with challenging behaviour will be risk assessed and may need one to one supervision, but their entitlement to participate in Forest School remains the same.

# 19. Risk Assessment Guidelines

A **SITE** risk assessment is undertaken each week and a **ROUTINE** risk assessment and check is made prior to every Forest School session at our Forest site.

In addition, an **ACTIVITY** risk assessment will be established prior to any activity that may require it. These will include, whittling, cutting wood, shelter building, fire lighting and cooking on an open fire, and palm drilling.

Specific additional risk assessments will be undertaken for children whose medical condition or whose behaviour requires them.

The risk assessment process is detailed below:

* We look for potential hazards.
* We decide who might be at risk of harm.
* We think about how harm may occur and the worst outcome that we could face.
* We evaluate the current level of risk.
* We decide on a course of action or set of precautions that will be put in place to minimise the potential risk.
* We then re-evaluate the level of risk once our course of action and precautions have been put in place.
* We create a risk assessment and collate them in the Forest School file.
* We inform all adults with accompanying the group and require them to sign each relevant risk assessment to show that they have read and understood the assessments
* We regularly monitor and review each risk assessment, half termly and as an action is needed.

# 20. Adverse Weather Procedures

We will undertake Forest School sessions if the conditions are deemed dangerous such as in high winds, during thunderstorms, or during periods of extreme cold. We will use the BBC weather online forecast to make judgments about the expected conditions.

The high wind cut off is 25mph for activities working under trees. The Forest School Leader may seek to run the session on the back-playing field if permissible or move the activity into a classroom.

If the temperature is at 0 or below the Forest School Leader may seek to reduce the length of the session, this judgement will be based on an accurate assessment at the time of the session.

The Forest School Leader will make the decision to continue with Forest school or postpone due to bad weather.

When it is wet a shelter will be built immediately by a trained adult so that there is a sheltered area that is available from the start that can be used.

# 21. Designated Person Responsibilities

Forest School Leader: Meleena Walsh

First Aider 1: Meleena Walsh

Additional First Aiders in the school include: Mrs Williman & Mrs Brown-Roche

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs N Burton

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Snape & Mrs A Hall.

# 22. Insurance Requirements

All children and adults undertaking forest schools activities are covered by Stick and Buds Public Liability insurance which is underwritten by Birnbeck Insurance

All children have compulsory personal accident insurance. No child will be taken to Forest School until this condition has been met.

# APPENDIX A – Forest School procedures for Milton Road Staff.

This information is for staff and should be read in conjunction with the rest of the Forest School Handbook. Staff should also refer to the school Health and Safety Policy.

It is the Forest School Lead (FSL) responsibility to:

* Ensure the safety of children and adults as they travel to and from the site
* Ensure the safety of the children and adults whilst at the site
* To provide clear guidance and expectations to the children and adults
* To carry out a safety check of the site prior to the session
* To assess the site at the start of each term
* To review the risk assessment associated with Forest School at least annually and always after any incident
* To check that children are dressed appropriately for the activities to be undertaken and refuse participation if they are not
* To check weather forecasts for the day that the Forest School session is planned and to determine if it is safe to hold the session

It is the Class Teacher and the Teaching Assistant’s responsibility to;

* Ensure the safety of children and adults as they travel to and from the site
* To join in all Forest School activities
* To ask open ended questions and follow the lead of the children (rather than directing them to activities/telling them what to do).
* Provide observations and/or take photographs on a school camera device as supporting evidence for school reports etc.
* To dress appropriately and sensibly for Forest School sessions, bearing in mind that they are role models for the children (i.e. following the same clothing guidelines).

# APPENDIX B – Forest School Food Hygiene Procedures.

* All perishable food must be stored in a cool box / bag and wrapped in appropriate packaging to avoid attracting insects and vermin.
* Food must never be left uncovered at any time.
* All unused food stuffs and packaging must be disposed of appropriately.
* All cleaning products must be kept out of the reach of children.
* Hands must be cleaned before handling food and utensils.
* All water provided By Forest School must be fresh i.e. provided in sealed containers.
* Raw meats must be stored separately to cooked meats in a chilled container.
* Make sure products are used within the ‘use by’ date.
* Do not handle food items if suffering from colds or similar infections.
* Cover all cuts and grazes in the appropriate manner.
* Clean all food utensils and place in storage.
* Children are only permitted to eat at designated times.

Please refer to:

* Your Guide to the Food Hygiene General Regulations, 1970

# APPENDIX C – Accident Report Form – Milton Road Primary School

This form should be completed if anyone is harmed as the result of an accident during a Forest School session. The incident will also be carefully documented on the schools SIMS system.

This document will form the basis of a report should a claim be made, so try to be accurate and complete the whole form. If you would like to add any further information to clarify the incident, please use the reverse of the sheet.

**Name/s of Forest School Leader/s** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of injured person/s** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Address of injured person/s** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **DOB of injured person/s** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Where did the accident take place?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date and time of accident** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Who else was present?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**What happened?** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**What action was taken** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Whom did you notify and when** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Follow up/further action required** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Please delete as appropriate:** Further information is/is not supplied overleaf

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix D - Letter To Parents:

**Forest School at Milton Road Primary School**

Dear Parents,

We are now able to run a Forest School within the school grounds. It is planned that all children should have a ‘Forest School experience’ during their time at Milton Road.

The location will be the strip of woodland on the rear of the school playing-field. The Forest School Leader is Mrs Walsh. Please read the following important information, fill in the Parent School Agreement and return it to your child’s class teacher.

**Information about Forest School**

Forest School is run by trained Leaders and aims to build up children’s skills, abilities, and confidence week by week through practical hands-on activities in the outdoors. It gives them the chance to explore, learn and discover at their own pace in a safe and supportive space.

Forest School uses natural resources to stimulate imagination, creativity, and investigation.

Activities can include:

* Woodwork using tools, e.g. making musical instruments, jewellery, decorative items 
* Natural art
* Fire lighting
* Using knots and lashings
* Shelter building
* Bug hunts

There are many benefits to Forest School. For example, it can:

* Develop physical abilities and help participants to stay active and healthy.
* Heighten self-awareness and improve emotional and social skills.
* Promote cooperative and group working.
* Encourage children to take care of themselves and others.
* Foster care, appreciation and respect for wildlife and wild places.
* Broaden knowledge and understanding of the natural world.

**Safety at Forest School**

There will always be the appropriate adult to participant ratio at Forest School. All activities are thoroughly risk assessed before the start of each session and Leaders continue to monitor the safety of the group as activities progress. There is always a trained first aider present at each session and a written emergency plan to follow.

**Who will be running the Forest School sessions?**

Sessions will be overseen by Forest School Leader Mrs Walsh. She will be assisted by Milton Road school staff.

**What your child needs to wear for Forest School**

The Forest School sessions will take place entirely outside in the wood whatever the weather. We will provide a shelter from the elements, but it is still important that your child wears clothes that are waterproof and warm and that are OK to get wet and muddy.

Your child should wear:

* Waterproof coat
* Waterproof trousers (if they own a pair)
* Wellington boots (or sturdy walking boots)
* Comfortable long trousers
* Comfortable, warm long sleeved top or fleece
* Long sleeved T-shirt.
* Thick socks if the weather’s cold - thermal if possible or two pairs of thinner ones

I hope you and your child/ren will welcome and embrace the opportunity of engaging in the Forest School experience.

Yours faithfully

Rae Snape

# Appendix E - Helper Agreement

I,------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------(volunteer at Forest School)

have read and understood all that is stated in this handbook and had the opportunity to have any questions answered about its contents or my role.

I understand that the Forest Leader oversees the activities within the session and have read the relevant risk assessment for the activities to take place during my session. I have provided my medical and emergency details to the Forest leader.

Signed Dated