

Forest School Handbook



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Signature page
3. Woodland Management Plan
4. Ecological Impact
5. Location
6. Forest School Staffing and Volunteers
7. Health and Safety at Forest School
8. Risk Management Policy
9. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy (COSHH)
10. First Aid (including Emergency Kit and First Aid checklists)
11. Emergency Procedure
12. Cancellation Procedure
13. Toileting Procedure
14. Tool Policy (including checklist)
15. Fire Safety Policy
16. Food Hygiene Policy
17. Campfire Cooking Policy
18. Missing Child Procedure
19. Equal Opportunities
20. Daily Operating Procedure (including checklist)
21. Safeguarding Children Policy
22. Confidentiality Policy
23. Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
24. Use of Photographs
25. Parent Information and Consent (including form)
26. Qualifications of Forest School Leader
27. Risk Assessments:
 1. Site
 2. Weather
 3. Small Tools and Equipment
 4. Transport
 5. Managed Fire
 6. Collecting Natural Materials
 7. Shelter and Den Building
 8. Tree Climbing
 9. Blindfolds
 10. Rope and String
 11. General Welfare
28. Daily Risk Assessment form
29. Accident, Incident and Near Miss form

1. Introduction

Forest School is an approach to educating students in a natural environment on a regular basis over the **long term** (at Lansdowne, this means an entire academic year as a minimum). This is in order that students can develop a **meaningful and lasting relationship** with the natural world.

It is **student led**, so once students have an understanding of the various opportunities that the outdoors present, they will be in control of how they spend their time.

Forest School is a **holistic** approach to learning and development, and aims to develop the whole child – physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, spiritually etc.

Students are provided with opportunities to take **managed risks** in order to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Since Lansdowne currently does not have the capacity to allow all students to attend Forest School, students are prioritised as follows:

- students who have expressed an interest
- students who staff members feel may benefit from a less structured learning experience
- students that may not have had experience of the natural world before
- students who staff members feel are lacking confidence or self-esteem

Students who particularly enjoy Forest School and students who are particularly benefiting from it may continue year on year, otherwise new students will be invited each academic year.

Lansdowne Forest School was established in 2021, and is run by a qualified Level 3 Forest School Leader. The Forest School is covered by the school's Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurance Policy.

Insurer:

Policy Number:

Renewal Date:

Limit of indemnity:

This document will be reviewed annually by the Forest School Leader

3. Woodland Management Plan

Three Year Woodland Management Plan for ‘The Fort’ (Dulwich Scout Centre)

2021/2 – 2024/5

Factor	Where	Current situation	Target situation	Preventative measures	Monitoring	Method of management	Timescale
Fire Circle	Away from trees, overhanging branches and roots	Must select appropriate area within site with group	An appropriate space for the group to gather to have a fire		Check and rebuild where necessary each visit	Children can help maintain the area	Y1 – build Y2 - maintain Y3 - maintain
Pathways	Main walkways	Currently in good condition	Maintain condition by clearing nettles, trip hazards etc	Clear nettles, trip hazards etc	Check and maintain where necessary each visit	Children can help maintain the area	Y1-3 - maintain
Nettles	Various areas around site	Nettles not a major problem currently	Clear pathways and reduce elsewhere	Cut back to path edge	Check and maintain where necessary each visit	Staff to maintain the area	Y1-3 - maintain

Deadwood pile	Adjacent to tool tree	No dead wood pile	A deadwood pile for insects to thrive	Encourage children to add deadwood to pile	Check and rebuild where necessary each visit Discourage children using from the pile	Children can help maintain pile	Y1- build Y2&3 maintain
Wildlife	In trees / bushes	No man made opportunities for wildlife to flourish	Bird & bat boxes, bug hotels, hedgehog & toad homes	Educate children on protecting and helping wildlife	Check and rebuild where necessary each visit	Children can help monitor and maintain homes	Y1-build Y2 & 3-maintain

4. Ecological Impact Assessment

The Forest School site is located at Dulwich Scout Centre (see maps).

The area is private, and there is a natural boundary of bushes and hedges.

An area away from overhanging trees is set up for a fire pit to ensure a safe working area.

A digging area has been identified which will allow access to worms and insects for birds and other wildlife.

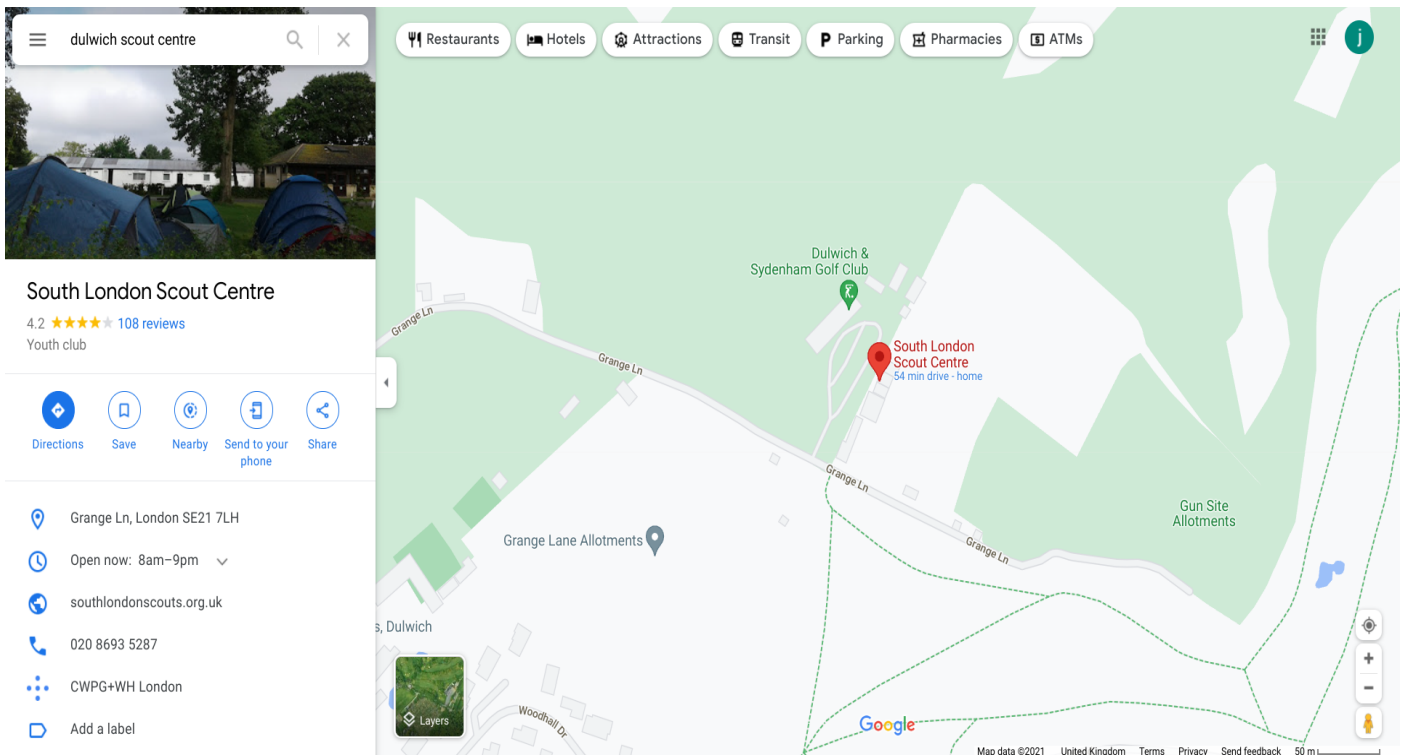
Trees for climbing within the Forest School area will be monitored. Initially we will have two or three trees that the children can climb on for a half term, and then we will change to a different area on the site for the following half term, giving the trees time to rest. This break, together with a one or two week break at the end of each half term during holidays - and the fact that the site will only be used for one morning a week for the first year - will enable us to manage and monitor our impact on the site.

In the event of the Forest School site being under water due to severe weather, Forest School will have to be cancelled at times so as not to destroy the area.

5. Location

The site is at Dulwich Scout Centre, which we will approach from the South Circular to avoid tolls.

The minibus will park in the car park.



6. Forest School Staffing

Ratios

All staff will have an enhanced CRB disclosure check, which the school office will maintain a register of.

Staffing ratio for Forest School is **one adult per 4 children** (1:3 if the group contains an EBD student).

Typically, a group of 8 children will have 2 adults supporting to meet students' needs and ensure safety.

Groups are kept small (as they are back at school) to allow staff to cater for the specific needs of our students.

The Forest School Leader will oversee all activities that involve making fire or using tools.

Volunteers

We welcome volunteers from our local community at Forest School – especially those with specific skills of interest eg conservation or wildlife experts.

The role of a Forest School Volunteer when working outdoors is often more rigorous than what is expected of them in an ordinary classroom situation.

It is important that volunteers understand that they cannot be a passive adult in the group, and that they have a responsibility under the guidance and direction of the Forest School Leader to ensure that guidelines, risk assessments, procedures and policies are followed at all times. Ultimate responsibility lies with the Forest School Leader, but they will be expected to contribute to the safety and wellbeing of the group at all times.

Before any volunteer begins a Forest School session, the Forest School Leader will meet with them to go through all guidelines.

All volunteers must have CRB checks by the Local Authority.

Guidelines for all Volunteers

- All volunteers must sign in at the school office on arrival before coming to the Forest School site (or sign in 'remotely' by phone)
- Volunteers will be told that the disciplining of children is the responsibility of the Forest School Leader
- When escorting children to a toilet, volunteers should not go into the toilet – even if the pupil requests help. The volunteer should find a member of staff to assist
- Volunteers should become familiar with the Forest School Handbook
- Volunteers should take part in pre session briefings from the Forest School Leader
- Volunteers should promote the ethos of Forest Schools to raise self-esteem and confidence
- Volunteers should assist in monitoring children in activities
- Volunteers should assist children with their kit when needed
- Volunteers will only be accepted when they have read and signed to say they agree to the policies and procedures within the Forest School Handbook

7. Health and Safety

Health and Safety at Work Act (HASWA)

The HASWA outlines the responsibilities of employers (in this case the Forest School Leader) and also of employees (adults working in the group). The main considerations relevant to Forest School sessions are detailed below:

Employers must	How this will be done
Tell you about the risks to your health and safety	Adults will be asked to read the risk assessment(s) at the beginning of the session
Tell you how to do your job safely	The Forest School Leader will introduce the adults involved in the activities and inform them of safety considerations
Ensure that safe working practices and appropriate policies are in place to safeguard its staff and users	Adults will record accidents and incidents, and review whether they could have been avoided. The Forest School Leader will make appropriate changes to procedures and policies, as necessary
Inform you how to get First Aid	The Forest School Leader will have a First Aid kit and administer First Aid
Tell you what to do in an emergency	Staff will be given a copy of the Emergency Procedures at the start of their involvement in Forest Schools
Provide you with the protection you may need to fulfil your role	Relevant safety equipment will be given to anybody who needs it
Take care of their own health and safety and that of people who may be affected by what they do (or don't do)	Adults must actively manage risks by reporting, reducing or removing them where possible, providing it is safe to do so
Co-operate with others on health and safety, and not interfere with, or misuse anything provided for health and safety or welfare	Follow the health and safety advice given during the session by the Forest School Leader, or seek advice if uncertain. Nobody should interfere with safety equipment, such as the First Aid kit, other essential equipment or protective equipment

The Forest School Health and Safety Policy is an addendum to the School Health and Safety Policy and does not change the school's position on Health and Safety matters set out in the original document.

For Forest Schools to run safely, the Forest School Leader will:

- Ensure that at least one qualified first aider is on site at all times
- Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment
- Follow policy and practice found in the Handbook
- Make sure all adults on site have knowledge of all guidelines

- Ensure that all adults are familiar with all emergency procedures, reporting and recording
- Make and share risk assessments before sessions
- Ensure that volunteers are aware of their responsibilities towards the children
- Fully investigate any accidents and use information for future risk assessments
- Keep to the legal adult: child ratio
- Make sure all safety equipment is in good working order

The Forest School Leader is responsible for the maintenance of the first aid kits and any tools that are used on site.

Pupil Responsibility for Health and Safety

All pupils will be responsible for:

- Complying with school rules and procedures plus any instructions given in an emergency
- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others
- Co-operating with Forest School Leader and any other staff and volunteers on site
- Using equipment in the way they have been instructed
- Remembering to use personal protective equipment provided when needed
- Dressing appropriately for weather conditions and safety
- Abiding by all safety requirements when using a fire pit
- Reporting to the Forest School Leader or staff member anything they think could be harmful or dangerous on site

8. Risk Management Policy

Lansdowne aims to develop children's self-esteem, independence and motivation to learn in a safe environment. In order that these aims can be met, the Forest School Leader will:

- Consistently apply the 5 step approach to risk assessment for all Forest School activities:
 - **Look out for hazards**
 - Decide who may be harmed and how
 - **Evaluate the risks** and decide whether existing controls are adequate or whether more should be done
 - **Record findings**, including daily amendments to standing risk assessments based on site visits and observations
 - **Review assessments** on a regular basis (or if circumstances change, which may affect the rigour of the assessment) and revise if necessary
- Carry out site risk assessments on each site where the activities will take place on a seasonal basis
- Pre-visit checks will be carried out by the Forest School Leader on sites to be used prior to a day's activities, as near to the start of the activity as is reasonably practicable. The finding will be recorded on a **Daily Risk Assessment form**
- Complete an **Activity Risk/Benefit assessment** for every activity to be undertaken at Forest School
- Ensure **all staff and volunteer helpers have read the relevant Site and Activity risk assessments** prior to the session
- **Stop activities** if in the opinion of the Forest School Leader weather conditions such as high winds or the threat of electrical storms make practice unsafe
- Inform staff, volunteers and children of potential hazards and methods of working in order to minimise their risk further
- Involve staff, volunteers and children in risk assessment, as appropriate, as part of learning
- Ensure legal guidelines regarding off site activities, adequate insurance and parental permissions are met
- Ensure that **all staff, volunteers and children are aware of the emergency procedures** for the Forest School site
- **Be responsible for teaching children adequate skills in order to keep themselves safe**, particularly in relation to the use of hand tools and fire
- Ensure **children and adults will have access to drinking water** during sessions
- Ensure a **nil-by-mouth policy is adopted in all Forest School sessions – except for food cooked as part of a fully risk assessed Forest School activity**

9. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy (COSHH)

At Lansdowne Forest School we currently only use domestic substances (eg soap).

In line with school policy this will be kept under review in order to determine if we need a more detailed COSHH plan going forward.

10.First Aid (the Forest School Leader is responsible for First Aid and is a qualified outdoor first aid practitioner)

Emergency Kit Checklist

1. Emergency Procedure (see below)
2. Whistle
3. Thermal Blanket/Survival Bag
4. Small ground sheet
5. Fresh bottled drinking water
6. Chocolate
7. High Vis vest
8. Spare socks, hats and gloves
9. Toilet paper in plastic bag
10. Baby wipes
11. Sanitiser gel

First Aid Kit Checklist:

1. Student specific medications and emergency procedures including inhalers and epi pens
2. 1x resuscitation face shield
3. 3 pairs of protective gloves
4. 5 eye irrigation solution sachets
5. 20x saline cleansing wipes
6. Sterile dressings
7. 5 large plasters/10 medium plasters/15 small plasters
8. Roller bandage material
9. 1 roll of micropore tape
10. 2 triangle bandages
11. Safety pins
12. 2 ice packs
13. Bite and Sting Relief Spray
14. Sanitiser gel
15. Fire blanket
16. Burn relief spray
17. Clingfilm

Emergency Procedure

1. **A whistle will be blown** as a signal to stop what you are doing, gather with a member of staff, be silent and wait for instructions

2. The Forest School Leader will **assess the situation**, the nature and extent of the injury/ accident
3. They will **ensure the rest of the group are safe** from danger and adequately supervised
4. In serious cases, the **Emergency Services may be contacted** (see below) using the emergency phone carried by the Forest School Leader
5. Then the **school will be notified**. The school office will be responsible for contacting the injured party's emergency contact
6. The rest of the **group will be supervised away from the incident** and if in danger will be moved to safety
7. **One member of staff will meet the ambulance** at the road side and direct the crew to the incident site
8. If the injured party is taken to hospital, **one member of staff will go with them** and the school office will be updated (the injured party's emergency contact will be updated about the situation by the school office)
9. If anyone is lost, they know to meet at the **meeting point - the Warden's Hut-** which students are shown at the start of each session
10. An **accident form** will be completed later
11. A **RIDDOR record** will be created, along with an Accident report for any death, serious injury or 7 day injury
12. A **RIDDOR record** will be created, along with an **incident report** for any serious near miss incident at or in the vicinity of the Forest School site.

Emergency Contact Numbers:

- School Office: **0207 737 3713**
- Forest School Leader (Joe Hilton): **0770 880 9494**
- Site address and telephone number:
 - **Grange Ln, London SE21 7LH**
 - **0208 6935287**

11.Cancellation Procedure

Lansdowne Forest School will take place at the usual site in all weathers except for high winds or where there is a risk of an electrical storm.

Forest School will also be cancelled if the minimum ratio of adults to pupils cannot be achieved.
Forest School will also be cancelled if the Forest School Leader is absent.

Volunteers will be advised by a telephone call.

12.Toileting Procedure

Before a Forest School session children will be encouraged to visit the toilet.

During a Forest School session, children needing the toilet will be escorted to the toilets at the Scout Centre.

13.Tool Policy

Lansdowne Forest School uses the following tools:

- Bill hook
- Mallet
- Sheath knife
- Stick peeler
- Bow saw
- Loppers
- Kelly kettle

The Forest School Leader also uses a penknife for cutting string and rope.

Tools are used with 1:3 adult:child supervision minimum.

The Forest School Leader is responsible for overseeing safe use and maintenance of all tools.

A checklist of the items stored in the Tool Bags and Tool Boxes will be kept to ensure that all items are returned safely at the end of each session.

The Tool Boxes are kept locked at all times. The Forest School leader is responsible for the safe keeping of the key. The Tool Bag and Tool Box are kept locked in the Forest School room when not being used at sessions.

Activity risk assessments are completed for all activities involving the use of tools.

14.Fire Safety Policy

Campfires are an important part of Forest School and are used in many sessions.

Lansdowne aims to ensure that all adults and children participating in sessions with fires will do so safely and with as little risk to their health and safety as possible.

Location

Only the campfire area will be used for campfires.

The area will always be kept clear of low branches.

A fire bowl is used to prevent the spread of fire.

Positioning of Children and Adults

The fire area is surrounded by **cones** at least 1.5 metre from the fire bowl, and seats will be positioned beyond these.

When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to cross the area immediately surrounding the fire without permission.

A fire will not be lit with a group until all children have demonstrated that they can do this safely.

When working with fire, long hair must be tied back and scarves secured.

Children are not permitted to throw anything onto the fire.

Advice on the appropriate way for dealing with smoke will be given to the children.

If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.

If wind direction is variable, the leader should rearrange the seating if at all possible.

When working with fire on the ground (eg when using Kelly Kettles), students must adopt the “**respect**” **position** (one knee down, one knee up).

Fire Lighting

Training has been provided to the Forest School Leader regarding the correct way to construct and light a fire.

Safety and Responsibility

- A Fire Blanket, bucket of water and burns kit must be available. Cling film is carried in the emergency rucksack
- Only adults are permitted to light fires, unless children are under the direct supervision of the Forest School Leader
- Fires are lit using a flint and steel onto cotton wool and tinder. Vaseline may be used to support fire lighting if necessary
- No plastics are to be burnt
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown, from the side of the fire. The hand should never go near the fire

Extinguishing

- All fires must be extinguished at the end of a session
- Whenever possible, all fuels should be burnt off to ash
- At the end of the session, the fire must be doused down with water using a bucket and stirred until all smoke and steam has ceased
- Large build ups of ash need to be dispersed. This must only be done when it has completely cooled. It should be finely scattered through the woodland to enable natural decomposition

15. Food Hygiene

Lansdowne maintains high food hygiene standards in relation to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of food.

- **A risk assessment will be completed for any activity involving the preparing and/or consuming of food** items. This will include attention to the purchase, storage, preparation and serving of any food items to prevent the growth of bacteria and food contamination
- Food/ingredients will be stored at correct temperatures prior to the session and checked to ensure they are in date and not subject to any contamination by pests, mould etc. A cool box will be used to transport and store any ingredients requiring refrigeration prior to use at the Forest School site. All such ingredients must be used within 2 hours
- Unrefrigerated food will be served to children within 4 hours of preparation
- All utensils, crockery etc will be checked to ensure they are clean before use
- Waste food will be disposed of promptly
- When food items are to be consumed during a session, warm water with anti-bacterial soap will be provided for hand washing
- Children and adults will be required to wash their hands immediately prior to preparing and/or eating food
- **All medical records must be checked** to ensure that no food item or ingredient is given to a child or adult with an allergy to it
- Cooked food will not be reheated

16.Campfire Cooking Policy

The Food Hygiene policy will be followed when cooking on a campfire.

A risk assessment will be completed for all activities involving cooking on the campfire.

All hair will be tied back and loose clothing secured prior to cooking on a campfire.

17.Missing Child Procedure

Lansdowne puts the safety of its children foremost and to achieve this we will discuss and agree the site boundary at the start of each session.

Students are regularly reminded that if they are lost they should head to the **meeting point - the Scout Centre** - which students are shown at the start of each session.

In the event of a child discovered missing from a group, **a whistle will sound** for all children to gather around our base camp (fire pit).

The school will be contacted immediately to appraise them of the situation.

One adult will check the Scout Centre, while the other will search the site.

The **FSL will keep the children occupied** with an activity.

If after 5 minutes the child has not been located, the Forest School Leader will phone the school office to check if the school has been contacted by a member of the public.

If the child has still not been located, **the school office will call 999, and then contact parents/ carers** to inform them of the situation.

Staff will record details of the situation, including the last known position of the missing child and any timings. These will be recorded on the accident and emergency form.

18.Equal Opportunities

Lansdowne actively promotes the inclusion of all children and adults into Forest School sessions, and will endeavour to ensure that the opportunities for learning, development and participation are available to everyone, irrespective of race, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation or age.

Lansdowne will follow the schools Inclusion Policy. This Policy can be found on the school website.

Principles of Equal Opportunity in Forest School:

- Discrimination is unacceptable
- Each child and teacher will endeavour to personally contribute towards a happy, caring environment by showing respect for each other and the environment
- Forest School is committed to emphasising the common elements and values of our multiple cultures rather than highlighting conflicting areas
- Forest School will encourage involvement of the wider community in developing equal opportunities education
- Forest School will contribute towards raising self esteem of all
- Allow access for all children to all aspects of the curriculum
- Challenge negative stereotypes
- Promote positive attitudes

19. Daily Operating Procedure

Before the session

- A session plan will be completed, taking into account observations, interest areas and learning points from the previous sessions. All adults will read the session plan prior to the session
- Activity risk assessment forms will be completed/updated for each planned activity. All adults will read the forms relevant to a particular session before it starts
- All staff will have read the latest Site Risk Assessment, which will be relevant to the current season
- The Forest School Leader will check that enough adults are present for the session to go ahead and that the weather conditions allow it to take place
- A daily risk assessment will be completed
- The equipment required for the session will be assembled, checked and prepared ready for taking to the site
- All children will be registered by their class teacher. They will then get changed for Forest School, go to the toilet and apply sun cream where necessary
- The pre session checklist will be undertaken

During the session

- A headcount will be undertaken on arrival at Forest School and whenever the group is brought back together
- The Forest School base camp area will be set up and the boundary agreed
- Risks will be continually assessed and appropriate action taken to reduce or remove and risks found

After the session

- A headcount will be undertaken at the end of the session
- If the Tool Bag and/or Tool Box have been taken to the site, the contents will be checked by the Forest School leader to ensure that no items are missing
- The Forest School leader will return the penknife to the Tool Box and clean, check and maintain tools, as required. The Tool Box will then be locked
- A session evaluation will be completed by the Forest School Leader, along with any observations that may be useful to class teachers and SLT

20.Safeguarding Children Policy

Lansdowne fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding children. All staff and volunteers are responsible for keeping children safe. In particular:

- Ensuring all children have a safe environment at Forest School in which to learn and develop
- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of volunteers to work with children
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe
- Implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan

Lansdowne will follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This can be found on the school website.

21. Confidentiality Policy

Lansdowne School will adhere to the school's Confidentiality Policy. This can be found on the school website.

The Forest School Leader will maintain all paperwork and registers relevant to Forest School and will share anything deemed necessary with SLT. All confidential paperwork is stored in the office.

Any Pastoral or Safeguarding matters will also be reported to the DSL.

All computer files containing information will be stored securely on the school network.

Any discussion within Forest School about a child's learning is to be kept confidential at all times. It is not the place of a staff member or volunteer to talk about children in their care outside of school premises unless in the capacity of a professional nature. If a member of staff is found talking about and naming children, it could lead to a disciplinary matter. In the event of a volunteer doing so, they would be asked to relinquish their role within our school.

Compliments and Complaints Procedure

See School Complaints and compliments policy.

If a parent/carer/volunteer wishes to make a complaint about any occurrences concerning Forest School, they can talk to the Forest School Leader or class teacher initially.

22. Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy

Good behaviour is positively encouraged within Lansdowne Forest School, with much emphasis on self-discipline, courtesy and consideration for others. We recognise that children respond well to praise and therefore use it freely to promote good behaviour. We also do all that we can to prevent bullying, by reinforcing the school ethos in which bullying is regarded as unacceptable. Our Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policies can be found on the website.

We aim to:

- Build self esteem, independence, motivation and learning in a safe environment
- Reinforce collaborative behaviour
- Promote awareness, respect and care for others
- Have a consistent approach to expectations both inside and outside of school
- Develop an awareness of acceptable behaviour in an outdoor environment
- Develop both children's and adults pride in their achievements

To do this, the Forest School Leader will:

- Create a positive environment to encourage caring, nurturing and acceptable behaviour to all i.e. one another, the environment and the equipment we will be using
- Be mindful of the need to maintain safety at all times
- Establish clearly defined standards of expected behaviour

- Place the needs of the children, including their preferred learning styles, behavioural needs and school curriculum to maximise individual success and raise self esteem
- Provide a positive role model for children and volunteers
- Promote effective relationships in which all are accepted, valued and treated equally

The children will:

- Listen carefully to instructions and requests especially concerning safety
- Develop a positive attitude towards the environment and one another

Consequences

There will be rewards that can be achieved throughout Forest School Learning. If sanctions need to be given, the Forest School Leader will take the following steps:

- Re-engage the child in the activity
- Give a verbal warning by taking the child to one side and reminding them of the importance of safe / good behaviour and what we are trying to achieve
- Give the child thinking time away from the activity (time out)
- If a further timeout is required the child's parents/carers will be informed of the behaviour and the child will miss the next session

The Forest School Leader will aim to make each new session a new beginning – a fresh start.

If a child's actions are placing themselves or others in danger, the following will happen:

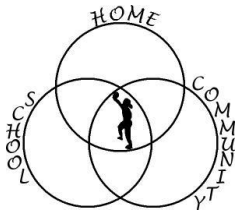
- The session will end early and the group will be taken back to school where they will spend time discussing the incident and the importance of appropriate behaviour at Forest School, before continuing their learning in the classroom if possible
- Parents will be invited to come into school and talk with both the Forest Schools Leader, head teacher and their child as to how they may solve this
- Where behaviour cannot be resolved and is deemed unsafe, the child will need to be excluded from Forest School sessions
- In all cases of behaviour that does not meet expectations, an incident report will be completed by the Forest School Leader and kept in the main school file

23. Use of Photographs

Photographs will be taken in accordance with Lansdowne Use of Photography policy. See Appendix

24. Parental Consent

Parental consent for Forest School Participation will be obtained prior to the first session a child attends.



Lansdowne School
49 Combermere Road
London
SW9 9QD
Tel: 020-7737-3713

Executive Headteacher: Linda Adams *M.Ed, PGCSE*
(Autism)

Email Address:
executiveheadteacher@lansdowne.lambeth.sch.uk



1st December 2022

Dear parent / carer,

The purpose of this letter is to give you some detailed information about Lansdowne's Forest School sessions – and to invite your child to join us weekly over the coming term (January through to Easter) – **on Tuesdays**.

If you have any questions that aren't answered here, please ask us; we want to share the enthusiasm we have for this relatively new venture with you.

We also have a Forest School handbook which contains all of our detailed policies and procedures. This is available for you to read via the school office.

The Ethos Behind Forest School

Forest School is the name for an approach to educating students in the outdoors on a regular basis, over the long term. This is in order that, alongside their learning, students can develop a relationship with and love of the outdoors.

It is student led, so once students have an understanding of the various opportunities that the outdoors present, they will be in control of how we spend our time.

Forest School is a holistic approach to learning and development, and aims to develop the whole child – physically, mentally, emotionally, socially etc.

Students will be provided with opportunities to take managed risks in order to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.

Where the students will be going and how they will get there

Sessions take place at The South London Scout Centre (/ The Fort). The students are taken there by the school mini bus, along with three members of staff.

The sessions are held on **Tuesday mornings**, and students will attend for one 'big term' ie from September to Christmas, January to Easter, or April to the summer holidays. The site is private and we will be working within a clearly defined boundary.

Staffing and ratios

The ratio for the sessions is 1:3.

A maximum of 6 students will be taken for each session as a general rule.

The Forest School leader is Mr Hilton. Mr Hilton is soon to be a qualified level 3 Forest School leader and is outdoor first aid trained.

As in school, all staff who attend Forest School will hold an up to date DBS check.

What the students need to bring

It is important that students are dressed appropriately for the weather, and come prepared for unexpected weather changes.

If your child arrives without appropriate clothing, we will do our best to equip them but it is not guaranteed that they will be able to take part in the session.

Please note: **students should come to school dressed in their forest school clothes**. If it is particularly wet they may want to bring a change of clothes to change into when they return to school (they can change into their PE kit if they don't have a change of clothing with them).

Kit List

- **Wellies or walking boots** - trainers are not suitable
- Warm layers in colder months – **vests, jumpers / fleeces, thick socks**. It is much better to have several thinner layers than one thick layer
- **Warm hat and gloves** in colder months
- **Waterproof coat and trousers**
- Long sleeve tops and trousers (no shorts – even in the summer); these help to prevent ticks, stings, bites and scratches
- Sun hat and sun screen in summer - even though we have coverage from the trees the site is quite open

Clearly clothing requirements will change with the seasons – and sometimes even from day to day! So please keep an eye on the forecast and dress your child appropriately.

Please also remember to label all clothing.

What will the students be doing at Forest School?

Whilst at Forest School students will enjoy a range of activities as well as supervised but unstructured play.

Each session will have a plan; however, plans will be flexible so that they can be guided by events, and by what the students want to do.

Examples of the types of structured activities the students will participate in are:

- Shelter building
- Fire making
- Tree and leaf recognition
- Conservation
- Bug hunting
- Arts and crafts
- Tree climbing
- Cooking
- Whittling
- Story telling

We will make the most of the unique resources available by using lots of natural materials.

We will also work (with appropriate adult supervision) with tools and fire in order to encourage confidence, self-esteem, independence and team work.

Forest School sessions will follow a structure so that the students quickly feel comfortable.

We will begin sessions by setting up camp: putting up a shelter to protect us from the rain, and building a fire to keep us warm.

We will then play a game to warm up.

We will introduce a new main activity each session.

Sessions will end with some social time around the fire. We will normally cook a marshmallow and have a hot drink, and play a group game.

The Forest School leader will ensure that the programme for Forest School is fun and of educational value.

Risk Assessments and safety information

The Forest School hand book contains the risk assessments for the Forest School and its activities.

These will be updated as necessary to take seasonal changes/conditions into account.

In addition, the site will be assessed before each session starts. The health and safety of the students and adults is paramount at all times throughout any activity and session.

An integral part of the Forest School experience is that students will experience the outdoors in all weathers.

With the exception of high winds and thunderstorms, please assume that your child will be outside when they take part in Forest School, even if it is a shortened session.

Insurance for all the Forest School activities is included within the school's policy.

Our policies reflect the school policies but are adapted for the Forest School environment.

Tool use

Using a small hand tool is an important part of Forest School as it enables the students to develop new practical skills that help them to develop self-confidence.

Over time, students will learn to use various tools such as vegetable peelers, sheath knives and hand saws.

An inventory of tools will be maintained and all tools will be checked, cleaned and stored in a secure box at the end of a session to ensure they remain safe to use.

Rules are set out clearly at the beginning of each session.

Fire safety

A small camp-fire is an integral part of all Forest Schools.

We will regularly use a fire during sessions, and will normally end with a warm drink and a snack cooked on the fire.

Fire safety is therefore an extremely important aspect of Forest School.

The key points of fire safety are:

- The fire is only lit in the designated area
- The fire is in a drum / pan to prevent the spread of fire
- Students are seated / stood in a circle, 1 meter away from the fire. Students are not allowed to walk across the circle; if they get up to move, they step back out of the circle and walk around the outside
- Fires will normally be lit by an adult (or a student under close adult supervision); students may be allowed to feed the fire under close adult supervision and following strict rules
- The fire will always be supervised by an adult when lit and will never be left unattended
- There will always be a fire bucket of water and a fire blanket by the fire circle
- The students will be taught of the fire circle rules at their first visit to Forest School, and then reminded weekly thereafter

Please note: **if your child has asthma, we can position them 'upstream' and / or at a greater distance from the fire** so that they aren't overly exposed to smoke.

Additionally, we try to keep smoke to a minimum by only making small fires and using pre-dried wood.

Cooking and eating

The following principles will always be followed:

- All food is stored in airtight containers
- Only clean equipment is used
- All staff are aware, and have a copy of special dietary needs of students with food allergies and any medication will be in the Forest School leaders bag
- Everyone should wash their hands before handling food and drink (using anti-bacterial wipes or gel)
- Food will be cooked correctly
- All equipment and waste is cleared away from the woods.

Toilet arrangements

Students are encouraged to use the toilet before leaving school.

If the need arises whilst at Forest School, students will be escorted by a member of staff to and from the toilets.

In case of emergency

If there is an injury to adults or students:

- Staff are trained in first aid
- Staff who are not involved in administering first aid will ensure the safety of the other students in the group
- Emergency services will be alerted if necessary
- Accident forms will be completed (and parents will receive a copy)
- Parents will be informed. It is essential that we have up to date contact details for all parents/carers and all emergency contacts
- If you need to contact us, you should do this through the school office

Environmental consideration and Conservation

One of the principles of Forest School is to promote environmental awareness. Students are taught to respect and take responsibility for the world around them.

Students are encouraged to respect their environment and to be aware of conservation issues of the woodland around them.

We encourage students not to pick flowers/plants/trees, due to safety and environmental consideration.

Where possible, and if appropriate, reclaimed, recycled and sustainable resources will be used to maintain and develop our Forest School site.

Things to remember:

- There is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing!
- Students will be tired, especially in the early weeks of starting Forest School
- They may get muddy

- They may get stung by insects or nettles etc
- They may get minor bumps and scrapes during their adventures

Finally: we hope your child enjoys their time at Forest School and makes memories that will last a lifetime!

.....Please detach and return this sheet.....

Lansdowne Forest School Permission Form

Child's name

- I understand that my child will have to bring their own outdoor clothing and footwear for Forest School sessions
- I understand that my child will be transported to Forest School in the mini bus
- I understand that my child may, at an appropriate level, have the opportunity to work with hand tools and small fires through the course of their Forest School session
- I understand that, on occasions, my child may walk with the group (with adult supervision) to the local shops (eg to buy resources)

- I am happy for my child to attend Forest School this term **Yes / No**

Name of Parent/Carer.....

Signed.....

Date.....

25. Qualifications of the FS Leader

- Teacher trained (PGCE) with 15 years experience teaching
- Forest School Leader Qualification (Level 3)
- Safeguarding trained
- Outdoor first aid trained (May 2021, updated every 3 years)

26.Risk Assessments

1.Site: Dulwich Scout Centre

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Falling Deadwood – minor to serious injury	Adults and children	Medium / Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site assessment Remove hanging dead wood 	Cordon off areas to avoid until hazard removed	Low
Low branches, minor injury - scratches, stings	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site assessment identify areas to avoid Remind children of risks and brief on avoiding low branches 		Low
Roots, stumps and logs, trips and falls-	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site assessment Remove hazards on main pathways Remind children of risks and brief on trip hazards 		Low

Brambles / nettles - minor injury - scratches, stings	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate clothing and footwear is worn 		Low
Fungi / berries – poisoning	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform all children not to pick or eat berries, plants or fungi • Forest School practitioners able to recognise common poisonous and stinging plants • Participants taught to recognise and avoid potentially dangerous common plants e.g. stinging nettles • Forest School practitioners trained in Outdoor First Aid 	If there are children within the group who are known to put things in their mouths supervise closely	Low

Stings and Bites – allergic reaction	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate clothing and footwear is worn by attendees at all times • Check area for bee or wasp nests and avoid • First aid available on site • In the event of anaphylactic shock seek medical aid (999) 	If children who are known to have allergic reactions are on site carry appropriate medicine or Epi pen	Low
Litter – minor injury	Adults and children		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bin bags available on site • Correct places to put litter and other general waste whilst in forest school identified • Children to inform adults if they come across litter on site. 		Low
Animal faeces - contamination	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check site regularly • If present adult to remove and discard safely 		Low
Uneven pathways / floor surfaces – trips and falls	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure correct footwear and clothing is worn at all times by all attendees 		Low

<p>Damage to boundary - Risk of children straying from site, unauthorised persons entering the site, dogs entering the site</p>	<p>Adults and children</p>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Site boundary checked by Forest School Leader during sessions ● In the event of the boundary being damaged and allowing access: ● Temporarily secure area ● Keep children away from area ● Monitor ● Check site for additional risks that may have occurred as a result of the damage. For example increased litter, animal faeces etc. and deal with appropriately 		<p>Low</p>
---	----------------------------	------------	--	--	------------

2. Weather

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

<p>Weather conditions – various: too hot -sunburn, heat exhaustion, too cold - hyperthermia, too wet - hypothermia,</p>	<p>Adults and children</p>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check local weather conditions and forecast prior to going on site ● Brief participants and staff on appropriate clothing, footwear, dependent upon weather conditions ● Clothing / footwear check before going on to site ● Children to use sun cream and sun hats as per school policy ● Provide temporary shade or rain cover ● In the event of severe weather stop session and return to school 		<p>Low</p>
---	----------------------------	------------	--	--	------------

<p>High Winds- potential damage to trees and standing structures. Possible injury from falling branches, debris in eyes</p>	<p>Adults and children</p>	<p>Medium / Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check local weather conditions and forecast prior to going on site ● Stop session if winds become excessive and loose branches/ trees become dislodged or if they look unstable ● Avoid areas with standing deadwood ● Dismantle temporary shelters which may become hazardous ● Following high winds check for fallen trees, canopy for hanging timber and the integrity of any standing structures 		
---	------------------------------------	-------------------------	--	--	--

3.Small Tools & Equipment

Tool / Equipment	Bill Hook				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residua l Risk Rating

<p>Incorrect or improper use of bill hook</p> <p>Resulting in cuts grazing and / or bruising</p>	<p>Children & Adults</p> <p>Person using tool and those in close proximity</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety talk given and followed ● Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained ● Ensure all tools are well maintained ● Tool only used in designated area, unless approved and supervised by designated leader ● 'No running' policy in vicinity of those using tools ● No glove needed on hand using tool, helping hand gloved ● First aid kit kept close to hand ● Blade covered when not in use and stored in tool bag ● Tools counted in and out each session ● Adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals as required ● Visual check of tools before use ● Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	<p>Low</p>
--	--	---------------	---	--	------------

Tool / Equipment	Bow Saw				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

Incorrect or improper use of bow saw - resulting in cuts and / or grazing	Children & Adults Person using tool and those in close proximity – children are likely to be working in pairs.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety talk given and followed ● Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained ● Ensure all tools are well maintained ● ‘No running’ policy in vicinity of those using tools ● No glove needed on hand using tool, helping hand gloved ● First aid kit kept close to hand ● Blade guard used when not in use and stored in tool bag / box ● Tools counted in and out each session ● Adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals as required ● Visual check of tools before use ● Check blade tension ● Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	Low
---	---	--------	--	---	-----

Tool / Equipment	Loppers				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

Incorrect or improper use of loppers	Children & Adults	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety talk given and followed • Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained • 'No running' policy in vicinity of those using tools • No gloves needed both hands using tool • First aid kit kept close to hand • When not in use stored in tool bag / box • Tools counted in and out each session • Adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check understanding with individuals • Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	Low
Falling branches	Person using tool and those in close proximity				
Cuts and bruising					

Tool / Equipment	Sheath Knife				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

<p>Incorrect or improper use of knife - potential risk of cuts or wounding</p>	<p>Children & Adults Person using tool and those in close proximity</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety talk given and followed ● Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained ● Used only in a designated area unless approved and supervised by leader ● 'No running' policy in vicinity of those using tools ● No glove needed on hand using tool, helping hand gloved ● Tools maintained / sharpened during extended use ● First aid kit kept close to hand ● Kept in sheath when not in use and stored in tool bag / box ● Tools counted in and out each session ● Adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals as required ● Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	<p>Low</p>
--	--	---------------	---	--	------------

Tool / Equipment	Stick Peeler				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
<p>Incorrect or improper use of stick peeler</p> <p>Risk of cuts and grazes</p>	<p>Children & Adults</p> <p>Person using tool and those in close proximity</p>	<p>Medium / low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety talk given and followed ● Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained ● Work only in designated area ● 'No running' policy in vicinity of those using tools ● No glove needed on hand using tool, helping hand gloved ● First aid kit kept close to hand ● When not in use stored in tool bag / box ● Tools counted in and out each session ● Adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals ● Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	<p>Low</p>

Tool / Equipment	Mallet				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
<p>Incorrect or improper use of mallet</p> <p>Risk of bruising / fractures</p>	<p>Children & Adults</p> <p>Person using tool and those in close proximity</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety talk given and followed • Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained • 'No running' policy in vicinity of those using tools • No glove needed on hand using tool, other hand gloved • First aid kit kept close to hand • When not in use stored in tool bag / box • Tools counted in and out each session • Adult supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check understanding with individuals • Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	Low

Tool / Equipment	Kelly Kettle				
Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

<p>Incorrect or improper use of Kelly Kettle</p> <p>Risk of burns from fire and hot metal sides</p> <p>Risk of scalding from water and steam</p>	<p>Children & Adults</p> <p>Person using tool and those in close proximity</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety talk given and followed ● General fire precautions adhered to (see separate risk assessment and policy / procedure.) ● Ensure it is on a sturdy level non flammable base (it has a high centre of gravity) ● Ensure cork is removed from spout and spout is pointing away from individuals using the kettle ● Feed flames through chimney ● Make sure air hole opposite side to spout ● Do not leave unattended ● Use fire safety gloves when handling ● Safe working area maintained clear of obstacles and safe working distance maintained ● 'No running' policy in vicinity of Kettle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals ● Any child behaving inappropriately stopped 	<p>Low</p>
--	--	---------------	---	--	------------

4. Transport

Hazard observed	Who may be harmed ?	Risk rating before controls	Control Measures	Risk rating after controls	Control measures by: Initial
Injury as a result of road traffic accident	Pupils, staff and other adult helpers	<u>High</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use of known driver (member of staff) ● All group members to sit forward facing and wearing seatbelts at all times ● Members of staff to be positioned adjacent to emergency exit of minibus ● Pupils are not to distract the driver in any way ● Driver not to use mobile phone whilst vehicle in motion 	<u>Low</u>	

Falls from moving vehicles	Pupils, staff and other adult helpers	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strict supervision at all times ● Pupils to be given clear safety instructions prior to disembarkation and told to stay seated until vehicle has stopped ● Members of staff to be positioned adjacent to emergency exit of minibus ● pupils should lead off coach in single file with adults at the front and rear of group ● Staff to be seated at varied locations throughout minibus to ensure effective supervision ● Before embarking on any trip all pupils are to be counted on to the coach ● When disembarking a coach all pupils are to be counted off the coach 	Low	
----------------------------	---------------------------------------	--------	--	-----	--

Falls in moving vehicle	Pupils, staff and other adult helpers	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group members to stay seated with seatbelts fastened whilst vehicle is moving ● Walk down the vehicle holding seat tops at a slow pace when necessary 	Low	
Struck by moving vehicles	Pupils, staff and other adult helps	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strict supervision at all times ● Pupils to be appropriately supervised across any car parks / roads with stopping points chosen to minimise the need to cross car parks and / or roads ● Pupils to be made aware of safe collection points 	Low	

Sickness / medical conditions	Pupils, staff and other adult helpers	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sick bags / buckets and appropriate paper towels and disinfectants should be carried in case of sickness ● Children who are prone to travel sickness should avoid sitting near the wheels of the bus and should sit towards to the front. They should make themselves known to staff members ● If medication for travel sickness is taken prior to journey, ensure teachers are aware of this ● Be aware of any allergies / medical conditions that children suffer from before visit and ensure that proper precautions are taken 	Low	
-------------------------------	---------------------------------------	--------	---	-----	--

Vehicle Breakdown	Pupils, staff and other adult helps	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Leader to assess risks and decide on course of action dependent on weather, communications, position of breakdown, age of pupils ● If possible, choose a safe place to stop and get group out of vehicle if appropriate to weather, age, behaviour of pupils and call breakdown recovery and school ● Put hazard light on and call 999 if on roadside and cannot disembark ● Vehicle to have current MOT, be regularly serviced and maintained. Ensure that vehicle breakdown cover is maintained ● Before setting off, ensure there is enough fuel in the bus for the whole journey ● Ensure group has means of summoning assistance in case of breakdown ● If vehicle to be exited follow controls as per being stuck by moving vehicles 	Low	
-------------------	-------------------------------------	--------	--	-----	--

5.Managed Fire

Supervised lighting of small fire, supervised lighting of Kelly Kettles

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Burns / scalds	Children & Adults	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety talk given ● Well defined fire area (1.5 metre marked fire circle) with practiced procedure for entering and leaving it ● Keep area clear of obstacles ● 'No running' policy in vicinity of camp fire ● Water/first aid kit kept close to hand ● Fire not to be left unattended by adult ● Fire gloves available for those working with the fire ● Fire extinguished once activity completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals ● Any child behaving inappropriately will be asked to leave the fire area 	Low
Smoke inhalation	Children Staff	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safety briefing ● Fire management ● Use appropriate material for fire ● Take account of wind direction and weather conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where known asthma sufferers are present ensure inhalers and medications are present on site 	Low / Medium

Setting fire to surroundings	Children Staff	Low / Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use designated site • Appropriate management of fire • Take stock of weather and ground conditions • Ensure means of extinguishing fire is available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of a grass fire ensure children who are most at risk from smoke inhalation are positioned away from potential smoke path 	Low
Explosion	Children Staff	Low / Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires • No containers or rocks to be placed on fire • Remove cork from storm / Kelly Kettle if being used 		Low

6. Collecting Natural Materials

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Inappropriate footwear and clothing - Slips, trips and snagging	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants advised before starting Forest School sessions with regard to suitable clothing and footwear • Before going on site participants checked • On site advice with respect to particular activities, for example, fastening open coats when using bow saw etc 		Low

<p>Lifting and carrying - risk of back injury, muscle strain injury</p>	<p>Adults and children</p>	<p>Low / Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants taught appropriate lifting and carrying techniques, leader to model, prior to activity. Participants subsequently asked to model techniques. ● Encourage participants to work together ● Encourage participants to consider appropriate routes that avoid obstructions ● Discuss spatial awareness especially prior to carrying longer materials 		<p>Low</p>
<p>Collecting firewood / building materials</p> <p>Risk of splinters, thorns cuts and grazes</p>	<p>Adults and children</p>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants made aware of risks ● Identification of thorn bearing plants ● Work gloves available 		<p>Low</p>

Stinging and or poisonous plants	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader aware of location of main source of stinging plants and able to make participants aware • Awareness of any known allergies or reactions amongst group • General rule of not eating things found on site and hand washing after handling materials 		Low
Bug hunting – Risk of bites, stings, allergies when handling insects	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for any known allergies before commencing activities • Handling of insects kept to minimum with use of appropriate equipment e.g. nets and pots • Focus on observation 		Low

7. Shelter and Den Building

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
---------------	------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	---	----------------------

<p>Lifting Injury Risk of cuts and splinters. Muscular injuries</p>	<p>Children & Adults</p>	<p>Low to Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Children given guidance and taught how to safely lift, carry and transport materials ● Safety talk given with regards to size of materials used ● Use only natural materials found on the ground for frames plus string or rope ● Gloves available ● Appropriate footwear and clothing to limit likelihood of tripping, slipping or becoming snagged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check understanding with individuals ● Any child behaving inappropriately will be asked to leave the fire area 	<p>Low</p>
<p>Shelter Falling Down Risk of head injury, fractures, cuts and bruises</p>	<p>Children Staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants taught appropriate building techniques ● Participants taught safe and effective knots as part of their Forest School lessons ● Safety talk given with regards to size of materials used ● Mainly use light tarpaulins to provide frame cover, Natural materials may also be used but it will not generally be sustainable on the site ● If high winds occur and shelters look unstable, they will be taken down or session will be terminated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct adult supervision if required 	<p>Low</p>

<p>Ropes and string. Possibility of strangulation or choking where suspended between trees. Rope burns. Trips and falls leading to fractures, bruises or sprains</p>	<p>Children Staff</p>	<p>Medium / Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participants taught safe and effective knots as part of their Forest School lessons ● Avoid ropes across pathways ● Use rope of a bright colour to increase visibility in the woodland, or high visibility tape attached to guy ropes to ensure they are visible 		<p>Low</p>
---	-----------------------	---------------------	--	--	------------

8. Tree Climbing (and activities where individuals are off the ground)

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

<p>Fall from tree Risk of possible fractures, bruising cuts or scratches</p>	<p>Children & Adults</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Height limit set. 1.5 to 1.8m ● Only one person in tree at a time ● Immediate area below tree to be cleared of loose material such as branches or rocks ● Appropriate footwear and clothing to limit likelihood of slipping or becoming snagged ● Before climbing individuals to assess suitability of tree ● If children choose to climb a tree they must be confident they can get up and down unaided ● Ropes not to be used in trees ● No climbing during high winds or wet weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During first sessions children to identify trees and discuss suitability for climbing with leader ● Children behaving inappropriately will be asked stop climbing 	<p>Low</p>
<p>Branch breaking Risk of falling resulting in possible fractures, bruising cuts and scratches</p>	<p>Children Staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before climbing individuals to assess suitability of branches to bear weight ● One child in a tree at a time ● No climbing during high winds or wet weather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leader to discuss how to spot trees or branches to avoid 	<p>Low</p>
<p>Hammocks Fall climbing in or out of hammock</p>	<p>Children Staff</p>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify suitable site ● Adult to supervise positioning hammock ● Ensure ground below hammock is clear ● Model how to climb in and out of hammock safely ● Ensure group are aware not to push people when they are in hammock 		<p>Low</p>

<p>Activities where participants are lifted and or carried. These may be undertook as part of team building exercises. Risk of slips and trips resulting in fall and or dropping of person being carried</p>	<p>Children Staff</p>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lifting procedures modelled then supervised ● Chosen area for task flat and free of obstacles under foot ● Trip hazards removed ● Any equipment used suitable for task 		<p>Low</p>
---	---------------------------	------------	---	--	------------

9. Blindfolds

Blindfolds have many uses in the forest school setting. One of the simplest activities is using a blindfold to heighten the awareness of sound with a seated child. However, they may also be used for activities that involve a greater level of movement and therefore risk.

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating

Trips and slips. Collisions and bumps into people and objects	Children & Adults	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Site chosen for activity carefully ● Discuss the risks posed by wearing a blindfold with the group ● Model how to guide or supervise (if they are following a line) someone ● Explain to group to investigate items gently ● Tell them there may be rough or sharp parts so move slowly ● Monitor and observe activity closely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group must be made aware of the dangers and considerations of leading someone who is blindfolded 	Low
--	-------------------	-----	---	--	-----

10.Rope and String

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Visibility	Children & Adults	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brighter coloured rope and string used if possible otherwise high visibility tape attached to increase visibility 		Low
Tripping	Children Staff	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bright coloured rope or tape used as described above ● When using rope participants will be taught to avoid placing them where people can trip over them ● Participants taught how to store and carry rope and string 		Low

Catching neck	Children Staff	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above Avoid putting ropes or strings at head height wherever possible 		
Entanglement	Children Staff	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ropes and string to be stored and carried correctly Any excess rope or string to be secured 		Low
Rope Burn	Children Staff	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gloves available when rope is being used to pull something 		Low

11. General Welfare

Hazard / Risk	Persons at Risk?	Initial Risk Rating	Normal Control Measures	Additional Control Measures <i>Ensure these are considered and amended before any individual activity is undertaken.</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Inappropriate footwear and clothing. Slips, trips and snagging. Risk of hypothermia sun burn etc.	Adults and children	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants advised before starting Forest School sessions with regard to suitable clothing and footwear Before going on site participants checked On site advice with respect to particular activities, for example, fastening open coats when using bow saw etc. 	School Sun Safety Policy	Low

<p>General health and welfare</p>	<p>Adults and children</p>	<p>Medium / Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure medical needs for each child are known liaising with class teacher ● Use individual risk assessment form to ensure that they are aware of any allergies/medical considerations ● Carry any inhalers / medicines as indicated on individual medical plans 		<p>Low</p>
<p>Emotional / behavioural management</p>	<p>Children</p>	<p>Medium / Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure any existing care plans are followed ● Use individual risk assessment form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deescalation strategies used as per school behaviour policy ● Positive Handling (Restraint of Pupils) Policy – In the event of a pupil having to be restrained staff would be expected to follow this policy 	<p>Low</p>

27. Daily Site Risk Assessment form (attach to session risk assessment)

Date: _____

Areas to check	Changes today	New risks	Control Actions	New level
Canopy layer · Deadwood overhead · Leaning, dead trees				
Shrub layer · Deadwood hanging · Deadwood standing				
Field layer · Eye level branches · Poisonous plants · Sharp Flora				
Ground layer · Hidden logs, pallets and tyres in grass · Broken glass & rubbish · Holes, ditches etc · Slope · Fungi · Animal faeces				
Structures · Shelter · Fire pit · Logs/ tree stumps				
Tools (checked in and out and for condition)				

This form must be completed before any forest school session by the forest school leader

28. Accident, Incident and Near Miss form

This form should be completed if anyone is harmed or nearly harmed during a Forest School session.

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 / involved person/s _____

Where did the accident / incident take place? _____

Date and time of accident / incident _____

Who else was present? _____

What happened? _____

What action was taken _____

Whom did you notify and when _____

Follow up/further action required _____

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

Signed _____

Date _____