

Farnborough Road Infant School



Forest School Handbook

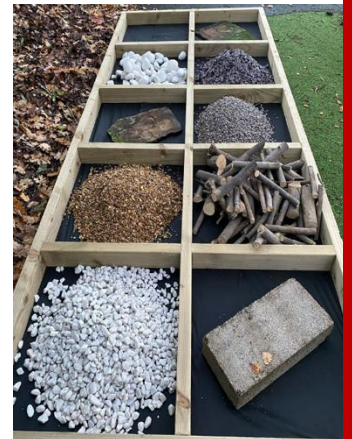
Farnborough Rd, Birkdale, Southport PR8 3DF. Tel: 01704 577637



Farnborough Road Infant School



Forest School Handbook



Contents

What is Forest School and Forest School aims	Page 3
What activities do we do at Forest School	Page 4
The Forest School session and procedures	Page 5
Our Forest School code of conduct	Page 7
The role of the Forest School leader and additional adults	Page 10
Policies and procedures	Page 11
Safe tool use policy	Page 22
Safe fire use safety	Page 23
Essential equipment	Page 24

What is Forest School?

Forest School is an educational experience and process that offers all children the opportunity to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands on learning experiences in a natural environment.

(adapted from the Forest School Association)

At Forest School, children engage in motivating and achievable tasks and activities throughout the year and in almost all weathers. Children will work with tools, play, learn boundaries of behaviour, both physical and social, grow in confidence, self-esteem and motivation whilst developing an understanding of the natural world.

Forest School promotes child initiated learning at its best. Through the sessions, the children choose and drive their own learning and development, at their own pace which is appropriate and meaningful to them. They are able to explore freely and discover whilst learning how to manage risk and challenge which is important for their decision making.

The adults are there to support children, guide if asked, look out for dangers and importantly celebrate the learning taking place.

Aims of Forest School

- To develop the social and emotional well-being of the children through play in a natural and safe outdoor environment.
- To support the physical and mental development of children through games, tasks and problem solving activities.
- To build self confidence and self-esteem in children.
- To develop children's language and communication skills.
- To develop a lifelong love and understanding of the natural environment.
- To give children the skills and tools to succeed elsewhere in their lives.

Where it takes place

The Forest School area is situated in the internal garden in the school grounds. There are various trees and shrubs planted in this area and a small grassy space for the children to explore and use. Through PTA funding this space has been further developed to enable regular Forest School sessions to take place, starting in September 2024. A Forest School expert has recently installed a fire pit with a round sitting area, a digging pit as well as a mud kitchen to enhance the children's outdoor play. The internal garden will be used not only for specific Forest School sessions but also outdoor learning experiences across all year groups. We aim for Forest Schools to take place on a weekly basis on a Wednesday afternoon in all weather conditions.

The children will be provided with a wetsuit to wear for the Forest School sessions, but we kindly ask parents to bring wellingtons, hat, scarf, gloves and a coat if needed to ensure that Forest School is an enjoyable experience. We also ask on hotter days that the children bring hats and sun cream if needed, water will be supplied by school.

What activities do we do there?

Forest School allows children to be a part of a variety of outdoor activities and encourages children to learn about the natural environment as well as developing key social and emotional skills. Some of the activities the children will be a part of are:

- Den building
- The identification of plants and animals
- Exploration of the natural world
- How to look after the natural world
- Use of sustainable resources within the Forest School
- Safe use of fire lighting and cooking
- Use and practice of a variety of knots
- Safe use of tools to support learning
- Different seasons and discussing what will happen in each season
- Developing key social and emotional skills; e.g. spiritual development, health and wellbeing
- Playing in the outdoors
- Taking risks in a safe way
- Building relationships and supporting each other
- Achieving manageable tasks individually and in a group

Forest School Session and Procedures

The sessions are designed to encourage children to feel comfortable playing outdoors and exploring the natural environment. The garden area allows children opportunities to be creative in an outdoor setting and have the space to explore activities that interest them.

The Forest School leader may provide some structure through planned activities, but the children's interests will dictate what each session looks like. Sessions will always include a group gathering where food and drink are shared amongst the children. This activity gives the group the opportunity to gather together and share their experiences. At the end of each session, children will regroup and reflect on their experiences, sharing with the rest of the group what they have enjoyed doing the most.

It is vitally important that the children are suitably dressed so that they keep warm and dry. When the children feel comfortable, they can tackle anything that our weather can throw at them.

Before any session starts the following guidelines will be followed: -

Before assisting on a Forest school session:

All staff, volunteers and parent helpers will familiarise themselves with the Forest school handbook and the policies within it before taking part in the session.

- The Forest School leader will remind parents of the kit list at the beginning of term.
- The Forest school leader will gather all the equipment needed for the session using the check list. The equipment will include the register.
- The Forest School leader will ensure tools are in good condition and the First Aid kit is complete.
- Importantly, the weather will be checked. If the weather is or has the potential to become a risk, such as high winds or storms, the session will unfortunately be cancelled.

On the day of a Forest School session:

- The Forest School leader will carry out a thorough safety sweep of the Forest School to identify and remove or restrict access to any hazards that might cause injury or illness.
- A site sweep form will be completed, on which any hazards that were identified will be documented, and how they were dealt with or will be managed.
- The Forest School leader will collect the children from class. A head count will be taken, and any absences noted.
- The children will be given the opportunity to go to the toilet and collect their Forest School clothing from their peg.
- The Forest School leader will walk the children to the sheltered decking area of the site, then the children will be encouraging to put their wetsuits on and wellington boots independently. There will be a designated space to store the children's school shoes.
- To start the session, all the children will be asked to all sit together in the fire pit sitting area, where the Forest School leader will re-cap on the previous week's activities and discuss the Forest School rules.

- An activity planned by the Forest School Leader will be introduced and should build on the children's interests from previous sessions.
- During the session there will be a mix of adult led and child initiated activities. The children will have an opportunity to play in the Forest School area, with one adult supporting child initiated play, while the other adult introduces and delivers an activity to a group of children. All the children will have the opportunity to play and take part in a structured activity.
- The children will learn a 'call' e.g. "1, 2, 3 where are you?" which will be used every session to gain everyone's attention to return to the sitting area
- Snack/reflection time- At the end of the session, the children will sit together around the fire circle. They will have a drink and a snack, while taking turns to talk about their most enjoyable part of their session. The children will be invited to talk about what they would like to do the following session.

At the end of the session:

- There will be a 'tidying-up' time when everyone will be expected to take part. Staff and children will work together to gather and tidy away resources (to make sure the area is left safe and tidy).
- Any tools used will be counted back into tool bags.
- Children will get changed in the sheltered decking area. They will be encouraged to independently take their wetsuits and wellington boots off and store them away. Once the children have put their school shoes on, they will line up at the door.
- Before leaving the site, the Forest School leader will carry out a headcount.
- We will leave the site with the Forest School leader at the front and a member of staff at the back and return the children back to their classroom.

Procedures to be carried out at the end of each session:

- The Forest School leader will ensure that everything is cleared away.
- Ensure the fire is completely extinguished (if used) and the fire pit is left safe.
- Check all tools against the tick list and store them away.
- Check any other resources used are tidied away (e.g. books, identification sheets etc)
- Knives should be logged back in and stored in a lockable containers.

Who are the Forest School sessions with?

There will be a timetable in place for the Year 1 classes to take it in turns to experience a programme of weekly Forest School sessions. Each programme will last five weeks, containing half a class of up to fifteen children, to ensure there is a high adult to child ratio. The sessions will involve practical hands on activities which aim to develop the children's skills, abilities and confidence week by week.

The Forest School Leader will be supported by a volunteer or student to help with the delivery of the Forest School objectives, including toileting.

Our Forest School Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct is relevant to all participants, adults and children and is framed to create a safe and nurturing learning environment.

Entering the Forest School site

At Forest School we learn to respect the world around us. We will explore, investigate, learn and play in a manner that will not damage our Forest School environment. When we enter the site we will be aware that we share the space with plants, birds and animals and we need to work in a way that will not damage or harm anything.

Boundaries

During their first Forest School session children will learn where the physical boundaries for activities are and any no-go zones.

Each group will work together to generate some rules for safe and happy learning and children will understand that they are expected to follow them. This will include an agreed call back sign to enable speedy return if needed or wanted by the Forest School Leader. For example, the leader calls, “1, 2, 3, where are you?” The children will be taught to reply, “1, 2, 3 I’m here” through games and practising it each session.

Forest School rules

The rules for Forest School will be introduced to the children on the first session and reinforced during every session.

- Speak politely to each other
- Treat each other with respect
- We do not eat anything we find
- Our hands must be kept out of our mouths
- We must wash our hands after Forest School and before we eat a snack at Forest School
- We must stay within the given boundaries of Forest School
- We come back straight away to “base” when the whistle is blown
- No walking through the fire circle
- At Forest School we care for all living things and take particular care of our special site
- We do not pick living flowers or plants.
- When you hear “1, 2, 3 where are you” answer with “1, 2, 3 I’m here”

Respect the Environment

This will involve learning how our actions may affect the living things around us. This may be achieved by encouraging participants to distinguish living things from dead, and to agree that nothing alive should be picked or destroyed.

Respecting Other People

At Forest School, we aim to create a feeling of belonging and unity. We expect all individuals to respect their peers, their belongings and their creations. Many activities delivered at Forest School aim to promote team building.

Looking Eyes, Listening Ears

As our Forest School sessions are delivered outside, there are numerous natural hazards. Each site and activity is risk assessed, but individuals are encouraged to risk assess their surroundings and activities themselves. Using their eyes to watch where they are going and their ears to listen to safety guidelines will ensure they have a fun and safe experience at Forest School.

The Fire Circle

For everyone's safety, no one is allowed to walk or run inside the fire circle even if there is no fire lit. We use wooden benches to mark out our fire pit area and to sit on. If anyone wants to move around the circle or change places, they must step out of the circle and walk around the outside. The fire is kept within a wooden square in the centre of the circle. Children may be invited to approach the square for cooking or fire lighting but only under adult supervision.

Fire lighting

A fire can only be lit if our fire safety equipment is present and correct. The Forest School Leader will always take the lead during fire lighting. All helpers will be briefed prior to a fire lighting session to set out protocols. A lit fire will never be left unattended. Open fires will only be lit in the fire square or in the raised fire pits.

Collecting natural materials

Natural materials are collected for art, sculpture and woodland craft. Children are encouraged to look for the materials themselves, but leaders will supervise to check that nothing harmful is gathered. Children are not allowed to eat anything gathered on foraging trips without adult supervision.

Carrying larger materials

Children are encouraged to roll, lift, drag and to pull materials, either by using their hands or by using ropes. We encourage safe lifting by bending our knees and keeping our backs straight. Safe lifting should always be modelled by adults. Heavier objects should be rolled, lifted or carried by more people working together.

Digging

When investigating the environment, children may carefully move logs or stones to look for insects, taking care not to harm the creatures or destroy their habitat. They can dig under the soil using their fingers or use small sticks, but they may not use tools to dig deep holes. Deeper digging opportunities will be enjoyed in the digging pit area or included in the planting activities.

Using tools

Children will be taught the correct way to use tools at Forest school. This will include the use of safety equipment, including posture and developing an awareness of others around them. Some tools will have a marked zone for their use. All tools use will be under strict adult supervision.

Sticks and stones

Throwing sticks and stones is not permitted at Forest School. Children may pick up sticks shorter than their arm to carry pointed down to activities, they will be encouraged to remember to be careful around other children. Longer sticks must be dragged behind them. Stones may be picked up and transported. Children often like to make patterns and pictures with them. Stones may not be thrown.

String, ropes and knots

Children will learn a useful selection of knots for different uses. Adults will supervise activities where ropes are tied to trees for tarps or shelters. Safety tapes will be used if ropes are considered to be in dangerous locations. Children are also shown how to use ropes and string to move or carry materials.

Eating and drinking

Only snacks and drinks provided by the Forest School leader may be consumed on site. Wild fruits, berries and / or fungi must not be picked or consumed at any time. Anti-bacterial hand wash, wipes or sanitiser gel will be provided for hand washing before eating or drinking any snacks during Forest School. This will include food the children have cooked on the fire. Food allergies will be noted as part of the risk assessment for the cooking activity.

Leaving the site

At the end of each session there will be a short time of reflection before the participants leave the site. All personal belongings must be taken away, any craft created can be taken home, and the site must be left clean and tidy ready for the next group/next session.

Roles and responsibilities of the Forest School leader and additional adults

Farnborough Road Infants Forest School is planned and led by Miss Iddon. Sessions may be supported by other Farnborough Infant School staff, volunteers or students.

The Forest School leader is responsible for the safety and well-being of the children and risk assesses the site, daily conditions and all activities before and during the session. A leader will develop the children's confidence and self-esteem by planning activities which, once known, can be child-led during Forest School promoting decision making by the children.

Observations and evaluations will help to develop the children during further Forest School sessions and ensure that Forest School caters for all the children.

It is the duty of the Forest School leader to:

- Provide users and staff with the relevant information relating to Forest School before sessions are implemented.
- Ensure that all equipment and the resources are safe to use, with the accompanying personal protective equipment.
- Undertake a risk assessment and safety sweep before each session.
- Brief adults involved on the health and safety considerations before each session.
- Come prepared with a First Aid kit and other items listed in the 'Essential Equipment' section of this handbook.
- The Forest School leader will make observations and evaluate each session to help plan and respond to the children's needs and interests in subsequent sessions.

Role of Teaching Assistants/Volunteers/Students

- To support the Forest School leader in ensuring children stay within the designated area.
- It is important adults alert the Forest School leader immediately if a child is missing, seriously hurt or misbehaving in a way that could lead to others getting hurt.
- We ask all adults to praise good behaviour and allow children the freedom to explore and play without adult interruption whenever safely possible.
- Before going to Forest School area, check that children are wearing clothing and footwear appropriate for the weather and time of year.
- To assist keeping the children healthy and safe by helping them to recognise and avoid hazards such as harmful plants, germs, trip hazards etc.
- To support children's learning and development as modelled by the Forest School leader. For example, through answering questions and responding to activity cues without 'over influencing' the activity.
- The behaviour of the group is the responsibility of the group leader. Reflection areas will be available for those individuals who need time to think about their actions. Individuals that express behaviour that puts themselves or others at risk will be asked to leave the session and taken back into their classroom.
- Forest School is intended to be child led. During free play please allow children to play and learn as independently as possible and try to resist the temptation to lead their play.

Policies and Procedures

Health and Safety aspects for Forest School

We will be doing our Forest School sessions in a the internal garden of the school site. There will be a Forest School leader Miss Lucy Iddon, who will be supported by an additional adult from school. All children that attend will have gained parental consent prior to starting the Forest School programme. Due to the site being recently landscaped, we will plant and develop the environment over time.

The health and safety of all participants is central to everything we do within a Forest School programme. We encourage children to play an active part in undertaking risk assessments in the language we use and the discussions we have. The ethos of Forest School instils in our children, the ability to take measured risks, appropriate to their age and developmental stage, and to carefully consider the repercussions of their actions. The Forest School leader is fully trained in risk assessment and emergency outdoor First Aid.

Risk Management

Risk assessments are maintained and evaluated at regular intervals throughout the year. Our site is assessed prior to every session and risk assessments for activities are completed, these will be available as working documents for use by all staff and volunteers. An activity risk assessment will be completed prior to an activity that may require it. These include, whittling, cutting wood, shelter building, fire lighting and cooking on an open fire, as well as palm drilling. We keep First Aid equipment on the site.

There are five steps to risk assessment we will follow:

- We look for potential hazards such as litter, damaged branches, animal waste.
- We decide who might be at harm and how
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate to minimise potential risk or should more be done.
- Record the findings.
- Review the action and revise if necessary.

Risk Assessment of Site

Hazard	Harm	People at risk	Measures to be taken	Responsibilities
Waste/litter	Glass, metal cans, plastic packaging	All	Pre-visit check and continuous monitoring. Children not to pick up rubbish but inform adult if they see something hazardous. Remove and dispose of safely following school procedure for waste disposal.	Leader prior to and during the visit
Animal droppings	Contamination and disease	All	Pre-visit check and continuous monitoring. Remove and dispose of safely following school procedure for waste disposal.	Leader prior to and during the visit
Trees	Falls	Children	Leader with Outdoor First Aid always present.	All on visit
Tree branches	Branches falling	All	Pre-check and continuous risk check to look for dead branches and damage to trees. Remove hanging dead wood. Remind children of risks.	Leader prior to and during the visit.

Tree sticks	Hitting Poking Scraping	Children	Establish safe stick rules. Sticks for playing – arm length maximum Sticks for den building to be dragged to site check around before lifting.	All on visit
Berries and other seeds on flora	Poisoning	Children	Inform children not to pick and eat berries without an adult present. Remind children not to put anything in their mouths. Wash hands carefully before eating.	All on visit
Fungi	Poisoning	All	Remind all participates to “look, don’t touch fungi and mushrooms”.	All on visit
Nestles and other weeds	Stinging Allergic reaction	All	Make participants aware of nettles and other weeds. Keep central play area clear of nettles and weeds. All participants to wear long trousers.	Leader prior to visit and all on visit
Bees, Wasps and Mosquitos	Stings Bites	All	Check area for nests. Avoid contact with bees and wasps. Leader with Outdoor First Aid always present. Call 999 if anaphylaxis reaction to sting.	Leader prior to visit and all on visit

			Children to wear long trousers.	
Fire	Burns Fire out of control	All	Leader with Outdoor First Aid always present. Fire only in one allotted fire location. Separate risk assessment in handbook.	Leader prior to and on visit
Fire Lighting	Fingertip burns from matches Sparks in eyes	Forest School Leader	Leader with Outdoor First Aid always present. Fire lighting on a one to one basis or in a small group dependant on age and activity. Strict supervision by all staff. Children taught safe and correct methods of lighting fires. First Aid – eye wash.	All on visit
Cooking	Burns to the mouth Burns to hand when handling pan, tinfoil, cooking stick	All	Leader with Outdoor First Aid always present. Cooking on a one to one basis or in small group dependant on age and activity. Strict supervision by all staff. Children taught safe and correct handling of cooking implements. Gauntlets/gloves provided	All on visit

Inappropriate behaviour	Disruption to the activity Physical harm to self or causing accidents to others Deliberate harm to others Compromise of safety rules e.g. by fire or with tools	All	Leaders to watch for sign of frustration or aggression. Practice de-escalation techniques. 1-1 TA or SLT to assist or remove participant. Staff to remove other participants to safety if required.	On visit
Tools	Cuts Grazes Amputation Puncture Wounds	All	Tools stored away on site. Tools stored in a locked toolbox until needed. Used on a one to one basis or in small group dependant on age and activity. Strict supervision by all staff Children taught safe and correct use of different tools. Separate risk assessments for tools in handbook.	All on visit
Ropes	Burns Whipping Injuries	All	Remind children and adults to use gloves when using ropes to hoist or drag. Remind all to take care when ropes are thrown, e.g. over branches when den building.	All on visit

Insurance

The Forest School programme is fully insured by Birkbeck Insurance.

Staff Ratios

There will be 15 children per session, with a qualified Forest School leader and an additional adult.

First Aid

Any accidents that occur will be dealt with by a qualified First Aider and recorded appropriately using the school's accident slips. The First Aid bag is hung up on the wall next, under the sheltered decking area, above the wellington boot rack. The contents of the First Aid kit are maintained by the Forest School leader.

Any accidents or incidents are investigated by the Forest School leader and information that is gathered is used to inform future risk assessment and policy making. Some of the activities the children may participate in are 'higher-risk' activities (such as campfire cooking or tool use) and these are done under controlled conditions with close supervision and are only available to the children once it is felt the children have a good understanding of the risk and benefits and are able to adhere to safety agreements. Children are encouraged and supported in recognising and managing risk for themselves, through real life situations and experiences.

Tool use such as sawing, and whittling are taught on a 1:1 basis and once the child gains a level of competence this can be reduced based on the age of the child and experience level.

Accident and Emergency Procedures

First Aid	<p>In the event of an accident, stop the activity immediately and follow guidelines straight away:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Follow Policy and Procedures Document, any illness or injury to be treated by a qualified First Aider.2. Check Dr ABC, Administer First Aid.3. Remove others in the group from the situation, ensuring they are safe.4. Notify school office. And if necessary call for further assistance or notify emergency services.5. Have medical details available in medical bag and notify parents/guardians as appropriate.6. All accidents, however minor, must be reported to the Headteacher who will complete an accident report form.7. Follow up to parents as usual.
------------------	---

Missing Child	<p>1. On discovery of a missing child use, "1, 2, 3, where are you? Procedure and recall rest of the group. Take the rest of the group back inside the school building, ensuring they are safe.</p> <p>2. Straight away commence immediate search in the vicinity then inside the school building.</p> <p>3. Immediately notify school office.</p> <p>4. Secretary will notify the Headteacher and a decision will be made on whether to notify the police, then the parent or guardian.</p>
Death or serious Incident	<p>In an event of a serious accident, stop activity immediately and follow the guidelines straight away:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Follow First Aid procedures 2. Remain with casualty and remove others in the group from the situation, ensuring they are safe 3. Immediately notify school office 4. School to inform emergency services.
Behaviour Problems	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk to the child to help calm them down. 2. Remove other children from the area of risk, if it is deemed to be necessary. 3. Inform office and call for help as needed. 4. Debrief child after calming down period. 5. Log incident. 6. Inform parents/guardian. 7. Create risk assessment, if necessary. 8. Close supervision and monitoring of behaviour.
Fire Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you come across an unexpected fire or if your own fire gets out of control, the Forest School Leader should ensure that the group are moved away to a safe position. 2. If it is a small fire that you feel that you are able to extinguish yourself safely, use a fire blanket or water from the fire safety kit to put it out. 3. If the fire is out of control, the Forest School Leader should call the Emergency Services on 999 for assistance to extinguish the fire. 4. They should also call the school to request for additional back up to assist taking the children back to school with the assisting adult. 5. The school office/staff will provide extra assistance to organise the movement of the Emergency Services. 6. The Forest School Leader should stay in a safe position close to the Forest School site to wait for the Emergency Services.
Injury to Forest School Leader	<p>If the Forest School Leader is involved in an accident, then another responsible adult or pupil should use the laminated First Aid visual and hand to the nearest teacher/member of staff next to the site. Alternatively, the adult can call the school office from a mobile phone carried by the Forest School Leader to request for back up support and the school First Aider. If required, they should then call 999.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Speak slowly and clearly. 2. Describe the incident and give patients description/current condition.

	<p>3. Advise of location.</p> <p>4. The back-up member of staff or other remaining adults will gather the group of children and take them back to school to keep them safe. The assisting adult will stay with the casualty, following guidance from Emergency Services and will monitor their well-being.</p> <p>5. If the fire is lit, it should be extinguished by an adult. Any tools will be gathered and put in a safe place. Resources and other materials will be left.</p> <p>6. The school office/staff will provide extra assistance to organise the movement of the Emergency Services.</p> <p>7. An incident/accident report will be completed and recorded, If required a RIDDOR form should also be completed.</p>
--	---

Accident reporting procedure

Cancellation

If the weather is windy the Forest School leader will look at the weather predictions for the day, if the wind speed is between 32-42 miles per hour the session will be cancelled for health & safety issues. If there are sudden changes in the weather such as high winds or thunder storms the group will be evacuated according. If the session is cancelled for any other reasons the Forest School leader will inform the learners, the class teacher and the headteacher.

Fire Alarm Procedures

In case of a fire alarm, children will follow the fire evacuation procedure and proceed to the fire safety point on the playground. All children will remain with the Forest School leader with a register of those in attendance.

In the event of a lockdown alarm children will move to the nearest available classroom, either class 5 or class 6 and proceed with the lockdown procedure.

Toileting

All children should go to the toilet before entering the Forest School site. If a child needs to go to the toilet during the session, they need to ask for permission from an adult and use the Year 1 toilet (which are nearby to the Forest School site).

Medical and Emergency Contact Details

A parental/guardian consent form must be completed for all children involved in Forest School sessions before the start of the Forest School programme. This form provides up to date medical information. Up to date emergency contact details for each pupil participating are accessible from the school office. The Forest School leader will be aware of any known

allergies or medical needs, this information will be filed confidently in a holder, and stored in the site Forest School bag.

Food safety

Food and drink preparation and sitting together whilst eating and drinking are important parts of Forest School. All adults and learners will wash hands before preparing/cooking/eating food. Plastic bowls with fresh water and soap will be provided. Where soap and water are not possible, anti-bacterial gel will be available. Clean areas will be used such as a tray or a plate to prepare the food. All food will be stored in air tight containers and only clean equipment will be used to prepare food. All equipment and waste must be cleared away to maintain a clean site. Leaders will be responsible for any cooking and will uphold a level 2 food hygiene qualification.

Before all sessions any allergies should have been documented on Forest School reply slips. These should be present on the registers for each session.

Equal Opportunities & Inclusion

We are committed to equal opportunity for all and we create an environment in which people feel equally valued, regardless of their ethnic heritage, social and economic background, gender, ability or disability. 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.

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 outdoor environment is an environment to which we are all entitled to 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.

Confidentiality

Information about participants and staff will be handled and stored in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

- This information will not be shared or discussed with anybody who does not have the right or need to access it.
- Confidential information will be kept in a file marked 'confidential' in the school office, which only the Forest School leader, the Headteacher or the Deputy

Safeguarding

Farnborough Road Infant School has a clear comprehensive safeguarding policy which applies to all Forest School sessions. All staff and volunteers should read and adhere to the guidelines set out in the school policy.

Farnborough Road Infant School sets out the following safeguarding aims which are:

To ensure every child who is a registered pupil at our school is safe and protected from harm.

This means we will always work to:

- Protect children and young people at our school from maltreatment;
- Prevent impairment of our children's and young people's health or development;
- Ensure that children and young people at our school grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- Undertake that role so as to enable children and young people at our school to have the best outcomes.

This policy will give clear direction to staff, volunteers, visitors and parents about expected behaviour and our legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children at our school. Our school fully recognises the contribution it can make to protect children from harm and supporting and promoting the welfare of all children who are registered pupils at

our school. The elements of our policy are prevention, protection and support. This policy applies to all pupils, staff, parents, governors, volunteers and visitors.

Parental Consent

Parents will receive a letter outlining what Forest School is and a consent form to complete, including gaining information of any medical needs and allergies (see appendix with example letter).

Photo Permission

Any pictures taken during Forest School sessions will be used to evidence learning within school. Any pictures used on the school social media pages and the Class Dojo app must be checked against our photo permission register to ensure children have the appropriate permission for their photo to be used.

Safe use of fire

- Risk assessed prior to session (see appendix 1).
- All seating 2m away from open fire.
- Above the fire is clear by minimum 8ft.
- Fire circle will be clear of waste, debris, flammable gases or liquids.
- Over hanging branches or leaves will be cut back.
- Only 2 people are allowed in the fire circle at one time.
- Fire safety gloves must be worn by children cooking on/near the fire.
- The respect position should be used when invited inside the fire circle.
- The fire should be extinguished 20 minutes before the end of the session and checked at the end of the school day.
- At the end of each fire session the Forest School Leader should ensure no trace is left.

All essential items must be collected and placed near the fire circle before the fire is lit.

- Bucket of water
- Fire blanket
- Burns and first aid kit
- Fire gloves
- Flint and steel, cotton wool, straw
- Kindling, sticks and logs
- Food tools
- Cooking ingredients

Safe use of hand tools

At Forest School our policy on tool use during sessions includes:

- A tool talk will be given before every tool is used
- Gloves to be worn on non tool hand (*helping hand*)
- Safe working distances (two arm's length and a tool away) are to be adapted
- Tools are returned to the locked tool box after use
- Tools are counted in and out by the leader
- Tools provided are to be suitable for the task
- An adult to child ratio of 1:1 or 1:2 (depending on the tool) is essential when working with tools

Maintenance Procedures and Guidance

The tools are to be maintained in a safe condition and where necessary inspected to ensure this remains the case.

- Leader to check tools before each session for any damage
- Leader to be notified of any damage to tools during the session
- Damaged tools to be removed from use

Storage Procedures and Guidance

When not in use, tools are to be stored in a lockable container, where the key or combination holder is the responsibility of the Forest School leader. Tools are only to be stored clean and dry, with any relevant safety guards/covers in place.

Transportation Procedures and Guidance

Tools should always be transported to and from the site within the locked storage containers. All tool movement on site will be conducted in accordance with the H&S policy and follow the relevant methods given in the tools talk.

Safe Use Procedure

All tool use will be preceded by a tools talk delivered by the Forest School leader to ensure that participants have received adequate information, instruction and training. Tools will be suitable for the purpose of the activity. Tools will be used maintaining a 1:1 or 2:1 ratio. Tools are only to be used when suitable PPE is available.

Tool Check Procedure

Forest School leaders are responsible for checking tools before every session. Wearing gloves the leader will check the handle, blade and cutting edge are firmly attached and free from damage. Also, a check will be made to ensure that any safety guards/covers are in place and suitable for their purpose.

In addition to a standard First Aid kit, a Burns Kit should be on site for all sessions where fire is used. Practical First Aid should only be carried out by qualified First Aiders.

Forest School Essential Equipment Kit

In addition to the tools suited to the planned 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, and the planned activities according to the relevant risk assessments and daily risk assessment.

There are of course essential items that should be carried out for each session:

1. First Aid kit
2. Emergency File including:
 - a copy of all risk assessments, and the daily risk assessment
 - the consent forms including medical details
 - near miss, incident and accident report slips
3. Tissues and hand wipes
4. Spare gloves
5. Spare clothing, waterproofs
6. Anti-bacterial hand gel

First Aid Kit

- First Aid kit content will be in line with the health and safety recommendations.
- All kit will be regularly checked for expiry dates, and replaced when needed
- Depleted stocks will be replenished from an existing back up kit before next session.

FIRST AID ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

- Leader to carry mobile phone if it is needed in an emergency and a laminated help 'First Aid' card will be available
- Latex gloves
- Bandages
- Plasters
- Burns gel
- Burn dressing
- Dressings
- Eye wash
- Scissors

- Cotton wool
- Antiseptic wipes
- Medication for individual children
- Sterile water
- Cling film
- Disposable bags for medical waste

Essential Equipment: When having a fire

- Flame retardant gauntlet gloves
- Burns Kit
- Fire Blanket
- Bucket of water
- Fire flint and steel
- Kindling
- Cotton wool
- Matches/fire lighters

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

- First Aid Kit (see contents list above, contents review record)
- Emergency Procedures
- Medical Information – for each individual and *emergency contact procedure*
- Risk Assessments
- Communication Devices (mobile phone– checked for working order and signal strength)
- Clean water
- Emergency whistle
- Emergency life blanket
- Accident form slips
- Medication for individuals (if not appropriate for the individual child 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
- Wet wipes and hand gel
- Spare Clothing
- Thermos of hot water
- Chocolate/sugary food
- Plastic bag
- Roll mat and blanket

ESSENTIAL CLOTHING EQUIPMENT

- Waterproof trousers
- Waterproof coat
- Long sleeved top
- Full length trousers
- Warm socks and a spare pair (wellies can be very cold in the winter)

- Colder months: Gloves and woolly hat
- Warmer months: sun hat and sun cream reminder
-

We work on the principle that “**there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing**”. This clothing list applies to everybody involved in Forest School sessions, and it is important for a number of safety reasons. Sandals/flipflops are never suitable for Forest School sessions, subsequently not wearing the appropriate clothing may be a barrier to participation.