



North Beckton Primary School



Forest School's Handbook



1. Rules of Forest Schools

- Look after your Forest Schools area.
 - Do not pick anything growing.
- Do not put your fingers or anything else in your mouth.
 - You must always have fun.

The Countryside Code

There are five sections of The Countryside Code dedicated to helping us learn how to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home.
 - Keep dogs under close control.
 - Consider other people.

2. Session routine and procedure

Procedures to be carried out before each session

- A thorough sweep of the site will be done before each session to check for any litter, glass, animal faeces, etc. Any such items should be collected using plastic bags and disposable gloves.
- A written record will be kept on each sweep. This should state if any hazards were found and how they were dealt with.
- Trees will be checked for any broken or dead branches which may fall.
- Check the weather - If the weather is, or has the potential to become a risk, such as high winds or storms, the session will unfortunately be cancelled.

Session Plan:

- Put on clothes, wellies.
- Walk to area discussing things to be seen on the way.
- Discuss any safety issues of the day.
- Walk to base camp.
- Sit down, discuss rules and any safety issues again.
- Main activity (see teachers planning for each session)
- Self select snack/drink; ensure wet wipes for cleaning hands first.
- Discuss session and allow children to choose to feedback.
- Return to setting and remove clothing.

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

- Clear everything away
- Ensure the fire is completely extinguished
- Check all the tools against the tick-list and store them away
- Check any other resources (books/ identification sheets etc.)

3. Legislation & Health and Safety Policies

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 (being adults working with the group).
- The employer has a general duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees and any equipment used by them.
- The employee is responsible for their own health and safety, also other people who might be affected by their actions.
- The Children act 1989 brings together most private and public law about children in one single paper. The key areas include the ratios for offsite visits, equal opportunities, communications with parents and police checks (CRB for staff and volunteers).
- The Forest School Leader or Assistant will always take a first aid kit into the forest at every session.

The school policies are kept online on the school system and hard copies are kept at the office.

4. Essential equipment list

The Forest School Leader will provide and be responsible for the 'Essential Equipment' rucksack containing the First Aid bag, wellbeing pack and so on. Other children and adults should not use anything from this bag unless instructed to do so, or if implementing emergency procedures. The rucksack will always include these items:



- First Aid kit
- Water bottle with water for drinking/washing.
- Register with emergency numbers/contact numbers.
- Mobile phone.
- Newspaper.
- Matches.
- Wet wipes.
- Protective gloves.
- Scissors.

5. Clothing list (For everyone)

We provide all children with waterproof trousers.

During the winter months, children and adults should come prepared to each session with:

- Wooly hat and scarf
- Gloves
- Jacket/ Waterproof coat
- Fleece/ sweatshirt
- Wellies
- Layers
- Extra socks

In the summer months, children and adults will need to come prepared to each session with:

- Sun hat
- A thin, long sleeved top and jumper
- Sturdy shoes/ walking boots or wellingtons
- A spare pair of trousers and socks
- A waterproof coat

This clothing list applies to everybody involved in Forest School sessions, and is important for a number of safety reasons. Please be aware that sandals/ flip flops are never suitable for Forest School sessions.



6. Travel Policy

The travel policy is kept in the risk assessment folder on the school's system. The risk assessment for travelling on the school mini bus is also stored in the folder. (Files can be found there)

7. Medical and emergency contact details

Children's Information forms must be completed and given to staff at the beginning of your child's first session. Every person involved in Forest School sessions, including staff, children and volunteers, must have a medical form, which will be kept in a folder in the 'Essential Equipment' rucksack. This folder will contain confidential information, and as such, must only be accessed by the Forest School Leader or other North Beckton staff.

Forest School medical information form:

Child full name	
Date of birth	
Contact name and relationship to child	
Home address	
Phone numbers	Home Work Mobile
Doctor	Address Phone

Has your child had any of the following?

Illness	Comments	Medication needed please specify
Asthma/Bronchitis		
Sight/hearing difficulties		
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Allergies: e.g. pollen, nuts, materials		
Have you ever been stung by a wasp or bee? If yes, describe the reactions		
Date of last Tetanus injection		

Signed:

Date:

8. Risk Assessment and risk management

Risk management is all about identifying and managing any significant chance of harm.

This shows the most common risks associated with Forest School. School staff must always implement the measures outlined.

Hazard	Measure to control hazard
Uneven ground, holes and slopes	Tell children to watch out for these hazards.
Allergies e.g. e.g. pollen, nuts, materials	Staff should take certain measures for children with allergies. Asthma sufferers may need to take regular breaks

Fire	Fire should be supervised. A restriction zone should be created around the fire. All people should be informed of the hazard. Children should be given instructions of how to move safely in the fire zone.
Tools	Tools should only be used under supervision. The children should be told how to use the tools. Behaviour expectations should be reinforced. Tools should be stored away safely.
Insect bites and stings	Harmful insects should be identified. The insects should be avoided and staff and children should be told about the hazard.
Low or dangerous branches	Remove the damaged branches and tell the children to be careful.
Moving and lifting	If the sticks are large they should be lifted in pairs. Self lifting advice should be given.
Cuts, burns and other injuries	A first aid kit should be nearby. Child should be referred to the first aider.
Poisonous berries/fungi	Tell the children not to touch or eat the berries or fungi. There is a handbook available to point out any poisonous flora. Wash hands before eating any food.
Disease or infection	Cover any wounds. The area should be risk assessed. Staff should know of the symptoms and seek medical advice if an infection is suspected.
Food-choking	Children must sit down when they are eating.
Clothing and weather	Sessions will take place in all weather conditions except the extremes so children must be appropriately dressed.
Trips and slips	Advise groups to wear appropriate footwear and walk carefully.



A full risk assessment is carried out every term. The risk assessment is checked, signed and dated 3 times a year (January, April and September). The latest Risk Assessment is kept in the Forest School Handbook.

Safety Sweep evidence

Before each forest school session there will be a safety sweep of the Forest School site to look for and assess immediate risks. All safety sweeps will be recorded and filed by the Forest School leader.

Date:	Time:	Weather:
Name of Forest School leader:		

Checklist	Yes/No	Comments
Fallen branches		
Brambles/nettles		
Low branches		
Slippery areas		
Weather effects		
Protruding thorns		
Emergency rucksack		
Equipment ready		
Base camp		
Tool area roped off		

Other hazards identified:
Actions taken:

9. Risk Management of tools and equipment

Tools are all counted in and out and are kept in suitable containers in one designated spot. Children must never be allowed to help themselves. Tools are given out for a purpose and all adults should model their correct use, storage and transportation at all times.

General rules for tool use:

- Children must **only** use tools under the supervision of the **Forest School Leader**
- Always sit down when using penknives
- Ensure that penknives are closed and locked when not in use.
- Always open penknives away from you
- Always use penknives away from your body, with nobody within an arm's length from you
- Ensure guards are in place when tools are not being used
- Do not help yourself to tools
- Always return tools to the tool box after use
- Tools must only be used in the **designated tool area**
- Do not walk around with tools
- Ensure safe storage and responsibility by Forest School leader at the Forest School site.
- Ensure safe storage at school with nominated Forest School Leader access and responsibility.

Potato peelers - for peeling and sharpening sticks.

1:2 ratio, kneeling on one knee and always cutting away from the body, supporting wood on bent non-dominant knee and ensuring safe distance from other people. When walking with peeler keep arm to



the side and point down. Safe temporary storage is to store the blade end in soil.

Penknife:

It must be kept with the Forest School Leader. You must always sit down when using the knife. Ensure the knife is closed and locked when not in use. Use the knife away from your body. 1:2 ratio dependent on age and experience.

Secateurs - for cutting and pruning

1:1 ratio, ensure fingers are clear from blade. When carrying ensure blades are locked closed and pointing towards the floor.

Loppers - for cutting and pruning sticks up to 5cm diameter

1:1 ratio, ensure hands are clear from blades and only cut wood below head height. When carrying hold under fixed arm horizontal to ground, ensure blade points toward the floor. Safe storage is to lean the loppers against a tree trunk blade down and within sight of an adult who has responsibility for them.

Bow saws - for cross-cutting wood up to 12 cm diameter

When using the bow saw you must ensure the guard is in place when not in use. The bow saw must only be used with a Forest school leader. The bow saw must always be used in the designated tool area. The bow saw should be used with a saw horse where possible. Children should be told how to hold the Bow Saw. Safe storage should be ensured.

Billhook - All bill hooks should be kept in sheaths when not being used. The billhooks should be stored in a locked container until supervised use begins. The group should have an understanding of how to carry the tool correctly. Children to work in pairs. One child holds the billhook while the second holds the mallet. When eye



contact has been made between the children the child with the mallet strikes the billhook. The billhook is only ever used to split wood and must under no circumstances be swung.

10. Emergency/Incident Procedures

Emergency Evacuation

North Beckton Primary School has set procedures in case of an emergency in school, such as a fire or bomb alert when the building needs to be evacuated. These drills are carried out at least once a term. All staff and children must be familiar with these procedures, and know their own exit route, place of assembly and roll call procedure. The fire safety point is clearly marked in the playground.

Minor Accident: child is assessed by trained outdoor first aider Mrs Girzade and treatment is given as appropriate.

Accident log book is completed and parents/carers are informed straight away.

Major Accident:

Child is assessed by Mrs Girzade, first aid is administered and emergency services are called by her as seen fit. Mrs Girzade uses the emergency script contained in the serious incident kit giving clear information regarding vehicle access. Mrs Girzade refers to child's medical consent form to supply additional information.

If an additional helper is needed he/she will walk towards point of vehicular access in order to direct the emergency vehicle to the site of the incident.

Mrs Girzade will stay with casualty and the rest of the group.



Fire Alerts

- In the event of a fire alert the Forest School Leader or assisting adult will blow the whistle and shout "Fire"
- Upon hearing this, all adults and children should immediately stop what they are doing, leave any tools, resources or belongings, and follow instructions given by the Forest School Leader (i.e., "walk to 'name'/ place" or "walk to me") guided by supporting adults.
- All children and adults must remain outside
- Only when the all clear has been given will registers be sent back to classes enabling children and adults to re-enter the premises

In the event of long term evacuation all children will be taken to safety at Kingsford Community School. Parents will be informed from there.

11. Designated person responsibility

Forest School Leader: Natalija Girzade

First Aider 1: Natalija Girzade

First Aider 2: Rosie Omer

Additional First Aiders in the school include: Mariam Buham

Job cards

Class teacher	Nursery Nurse	Teaching assistant
<p>*Observe key children. To assist the Forest School Leader in observing the children and recording those observations in an appropriate way</p> <p>*Class teacher will be responsible for the learning of the children.</p> <p>*Wear appropriate clothing - positive role modelling!</p> <p>*To assist the Forest School Leader in any Forest School activities as directed, according to the activity, season and weather.</p>	<p>*Incidental observations</p> <p>*To support child-led approach to learning by joining in the fun with the children.</p> <p>*Supervising tree climbing,</p> <p>*Wear appropriate clothing - positive role modelling</p> <p>*To be responsible for hand washing</p>	<p>*To support child-led approach to learning by joining in the fun with the children.</p> <p>*Model language (depending on the topic) through out of session.</p> <p>*Incidental observations</p> <p>*To take children to the toilet(2 at the time)</p> <p>*To make hot chocolate. *To help children to put wellington boots on.</p> <p>* Wear appropriate clothing - positive role modelling</p>
<p>It is the responsibility of all staff present to ensure the children's safety and wellbeing with the support of the forest School leader.</p>		

Every session will be different.

You will be given guidance from the Forest School Leader as to what your role for the session will be.

12. Toileting considerations.

Children are always invited to use the toilets before leaving the classroom. School toilets are close enough for children to be taken to by a responsible adult in groups of no more than 2 at a time.

13. Insurance requirements.

Our insurance provider is AIG Europe Limited. The insurance is designed to provide protection for insured persons (pupils, teaching and support staff, adult volunteers, helpers, assistants and other authorised children) of participating establishments when they are on authorised and organised trips outside the designate school boundaries, other than trips undertaken solely by employees or other authorised adults unless they are for the purpose of assessing or managing future trips to be undertaken by pupils.

