

Forest School Risk Assessment

| Significant Hazards / Risks | Level | Control / Actions | Risk Benefits |
|--|---------------|--|---|
| <p>Exploring the site</p> <p>Uneven ground, branches and trees roots on the ground. Branches and shrubs at eye level</p> | <p>Medium</p> | <p>Children well supervised, awareness talks and Reminders. Make children aware of any known hazards around the area that have appeared such as exposed tree roots. Ensure appropriate</p> | <p>Promoting physical development and awareness of the difference in surroundings.</p> <p>Encouraging children</p> |
| <p>Missing child</p> <p>A child may wander off or go missing during a Forest School session.</p> | <p>Low</p> | <p>Children told and asked to repeat boundaries and Forest school rules. Regular headcount. No access out of school</p> | <p>Children to realise the importance of following rules and working as a group.</p> <p>Building relationships</p> |
| <p>Bites and stings from bees / wasps and stinging nettles.</p> | <p>Low</p> | <p>Warn not to catch bees / wasps and be aware of stinging nettles.</p> <p>Long trousers and closed footwear to be worn.</p> <p>Nettles to be cleared.</p> | <p>Opportunity to study how different insects move around.</p> <p>Displaying a positive approach to insects rather than being</p> |
| <p>Allergies or children's existing conditions.</p> | <p>Low</p> | <p>All staff to be aware of any known allergies or existing conditions and be aware of treatment</p> | <p>Promote knowledge and independence in identifying and avoiding allergens.</p> |

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| Mushrooms and fungi | Low | Ensure children do not eat anything they find and keep their hands out of their mouths and wash them thoroughly after the session. Obvious mushrooms to be cleaned | Promote knowledge and independence in identifying and avoiding mushrooms and fungi. Identify similarities to foods |
|---------------------|-----|--|--|

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|--|--------|---|--|
| Poisonous Plants | Low | Site to be inspected prior to sessions, staff to be aware of poisonous plants and children not to pick anything that's living and growing, keep fingers out of their mouths. Wash | Promote knowledge and independence in identifying and avoiding poisonous plants. Understanding the natural world and |
| Building dens or other activities using sticks and branches - risk of sharp objects. | Low | Children to be aware of dangers and carry / hold sticks carefully being aware of others around them. Injuries / accidents to be dealt with | Opportunity to work as a team safely, to problem solve and scaffold each other. Opportunities to develop motor skills, |
| Animal droppings | Low | Children to be made aware not to touch or pick up any animal droppings. The forest school leader will check the grounds prior to sessions and will remove and dispose of any | To understand the importance of hygiene. |
| Falling branches | Low | Site checked regularly to ensure no fallen or | Children to learn to risk assess for |
| Using string | Low | Children to be instructed how to use string to make dens and tie sticks together. Close | Practicing knots and learning new skills involving following instructions |
| Sharp branches and thorns | Medium | Children to be aware, any cuts or injuries to be dealt with by the first aider. Larger cuts / more serious injuries to be dealt with in school. In the event of severe injuries 999 to be called. | Children to be self aware, identify dangers and scaffold peers. Encourages self confidence in a new |

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| Small tools Potato peelers, knives, | High | Safety talk given and repeated. Close | Building confidence and gaining new |
| Larger tools -Sheaf Knife, loppers, bow saw and Billhook. | High | Safety talk given and repeated prior to use of tools. Leader will demonstrate proper tool use techniques. Strict use of tools on a 1:1 basis under very close supervision. Gloves to be used on the hand not holding the tool. Only trained Forest School | Supporting communication skills: listening, understanding and learning new vocabulary. Hand and eye co-ordination, |
| Fire lighting & camp fire. | High | Safety talk given prior to lighting each fire with reminder of rules for the fire circle, children asked to say / repeat the rules to ensure they have understood them. Fire circle laid out with clear boundaries; children only go in the fire circle when invited by the Forest School leader on a 1:1 basis. Water is always available at the side of the fire and sticks etc to be collected before the fire is lit. Gloves used when needed. Children to sit on benches while the fire is lit. Only trained Forest School Leader to light | Development of awareness and respect of fire. Working as a team and building trusting relationships and self confidence. Children learn to be aware of danger and risk take as well as learning how to light and maintain a fire safely. Gaining new experiences that empower them to use their initiative and enjoy the natural |

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| Cooking food | High | <p>As fire lighting & camp fire.</p> <p>Any food cooked will be under close supervision with the adult mainly cooking the food and ensuring it is cooled</p> | <p>See lighting and camp fire.</p> <p>Children learn about cooking and being independent as well as learning life skills</p> |
| Extreme Weather | Low | <p>Encourage children to work in shaded areas during extreme heat. Ensure children take a break during the session to hydrate. Encourage children to wear a sunhat and long sleeved top during hot weather.</p> <p>During cold months encourage children to wear suitable cold weather clothing. Remind parents to provide warmer clothing during winter.</p> | <p>Awareness of learning to dress in appropriate clothing for certain weather conditions.</p> <p>Learning about the current weather forecast.</p> |