

Goldenhill Primary Academy

Forest School Handbook



Not all
classrooms
have four
walls...

Contents Page

Forest School Ethos Statement	pg. 3
Summary of the Forest School approach to learning. What is Forest School?	pg. 4
The history of Forest School in the UK	pg. 5-6
Communication Strategy	pg. 7-8
<u>Policies</u> • Equal opportunities • Behaviour • Health and Safety/First Aid • Safeguarding • Child going missing off site • Fire Policy • Tool Policy • Clothing • Toileting Considerations	pg. 9-20
Emergency action Plan	pg. 21
<u>Risk assessments</u> • Site • Weather • Activities (shelters, rope/string, fire, water, collecting materials, being off the ground, blindfolds) • Tools (billhooks, saws, penknives, mallets, loppers, potato peelers.	pg. 22-31
3 Year management Plan	pg. 32-33

Ethos

Forest School puts children at the centre of their own learning. It encourages children to become curious about the world around them, it believes in a right to play, a right to take risks and the right to access a woodland environment. Forest School allows children to direct their own learning and make decisions about how they approach different activities and challenges. Forest School promotes reflection as children are given opportunities and time to explore their thoughts, feelings and relationships, which builds positive attitudes and values about themselves and the world around them, and in turn develops intrapersonal skills. All of these factors encourage children who have increased confidence levels, developed independence, raised self-esteem, great communication skills, resilience and high levels of motivation.

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a long-term, holistic process, with a high adult to child ratio and is led by qualified level 3 Forest School leaders. Despite the name, it can take place in any natural outdoor environment either on the school site or in the local area – the more loose parts an area has, the more unlimited, ever changing experiences it provides for children to freely explore. Forest school goes ahead whatever the weather (unless it is dangerous). Forest School provides children with experiences opposed to learning objectives – it is more about the process and the journey rather than the outcome. Children are free to direct their own learning, with the Forest School leader being a catalyst opposed to dictating what they are to do. Forest School leaders provide challenging, but achievable tasks in order to build learners confidence.

Forest School aims to develop:

- Self Awareness
 - Increased confidence and self – esteem
 - Self Regulation
 - Intrinsic motivation
 - Empathy
 - Good social communication skills
 - Independence
 - A positive mental attitude, self-esteem and confidence
 - Better group working and a sense of community
 - An understanding of risk and how to stay safe
-
- Understanding of own and other's needs, developing empathy
 - Improved gross and fine motor skills, communication and language
 - Knowledge of the natural environment
 - Learning how to make healthy choices
 - A positive relationship to learning and meeting new people

History of forest school in the UK

In the UK, the forest school movement began to emerge in the UK in the early 1990s, but it's only in the past decade that it has really gathered force. In 1908, London's first 'open air nursery' was launched for children from the slums. In 1993, a group of nursery nurses from Bridgewater College in Somerset visited Denmark to observe their Early Years/Pre School system. Due to lack of resources and indoor facilities for pre-school children, Danish pre-schools were largely outdoor, child centred and play based. The nursery nurses returned enthused by what they had seen and set up their own Forest School at the college Crèche. They spent time observing children, watching them develop social and emotional skills, grow confidence and bloom in creativity. They were credited with pioneering the Forest School concept in the UK. In 1997, Bridgewater College set up a Forest School training course. In November 2000, Bridgewater College was awarded the Queen's anniversary prize for higher and further education. From 2000, more and more local authorities in England, such as Oxfordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Norfolk and Warwickshire, took up Forest Schools. Other training providers emerged and a group of trainers from England and Wales, with the help of the forestry commission in Wales, developed the open college network qualification. In 2002, a UK definition of Forest School was developed: *An inspirational process that offers children, young people, and adults regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem through hands on learning experiences in a local woodland environment.*

In 2011, Forest School principles were revised;

- Principle 1: Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School.
- Principle 2: Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
- Principle 3: Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners
- Principle 3: Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners

- Principle 5. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
- Principle 6. Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning

Forest Schools has become widely accepted across the UK as a valuable mode of learning for all ages and client groups. Forest Schools have now been adopted by schools, nurserys and community groups, run by trained staff in their own grounds or local woodland and many schools and settings are seeing the long term benefits Forest School has on developing the holistic child.

Communication Strategy

Class Teachers

- The Forest School leader will communicate with the class teacher about any particular needs of the class
- The Forest School leader is responsible for evaluating each session and feeding this information back to the Class Teacher where relevant, including any behavioural issues that have been dealt with

Parents/Carers

- The Forest School leader will send letters to parents/carers informing them of any equipment/kit children will need and examples of the activities that children will experience
- Parents will be asked to sign and return a consent form giving consent for their child to take part in the Forest School sessions.
- The Forest School Leader will keep and maintain a section on the school website giving full information concerning Forest School provision at the school. Regular updates and pictures will be presented in the School newsletter/twitter account
- Forest School booklet will be uploaded to website for parents/carers to view

Volunteers/Helpers

- All helpers/assistants supporting Forest School sessions are to read the handbook before being permitted to support groups
- Helpers/assistants will be responsible for familiarising themselves with policies and risk assessments and will sign to confirm that they understand their roles and responsibilities
- The Forest School leader will familiarise the helper/assistant with the 'experience' for the session ahead
- Assistants and volunteers will be informed of the plan for each session in advance
- The helper/assistant will feed any observations back to the Forest School leader at the end of the session so that 'experiences' for the next session can be informed
- All adults attending Forest School will receive a copy of the Emergency Action Plan which will be kept in the school's Forest School Handbook, in the 'emergency rucksack'

Site manager

- The Forest School leader will inform the Site Manager of any hazards or concerns about the Forest School site
- The Site Manager will communicate any hazards on the site or around the perimeter before a session commences
- The Site Manager, in conjunction with the Forest School leader, is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Forest

Equal opportunities Policy

Aims:

As an academy, we aim to produce a safe and secure environment where all can learn without anxiety and where there is mutual respect for other people and the environment. We are committed to promoting respect and equality across all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender identity, and preparing pupils for life in diverse 21st Century Britain. We tackle discrimination quickly and firmly and aim to make equality of opportunity a reality for our children. We recognise and pay attention to the different groups of learners within our academy:

- Males and females
- Learners with different sexual orientations and gender identities (including LGBT);
- Minority ethnic and faith groups
- Learners with English as an additional language
- Learners with special educational needs
- Learners with a disability
- Gifted and Talented learners
- Learners who are at risk of disaffection or exclusion.

Objectives:

- To ensure that all learners have equal access to a rich, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.
- To advance equality of opportunity by ensuring that teaching, learning and the curriculum promote equality, celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion by fostering good relations.
- To eliminate any discrimination, harassment and victimisation. To ensure that no-one is unfairly or illegally disadvantaged as a consequence of their age, disability, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic or national origin, disability or religious beliefs.
- To recognize and celebrate diversity within our community whilst promoting community cohesion.
- To ensure that this policy is applied to all we do.
- To ensure that children are set challenging but achievable targets, allowing each individual to succeed.

Behaviour Policy

The main purpose of the policy is to encourage good behaviour rather than focus on unwanted behaviour.

Aims

- To provide a safe and caring environment, where children feel safe to make mistakes and to learn from them
- To develop the social skills needed for interaction with others and re-inforce collaborative behaviour and teamwork
- To develop a sense of responsibility for their actions and a responsibility for the world around them
- To raise self-esteem and confidence by promoting positive attitudes.
- To show consistently high expectations
- Develop children's ability to be independent and motivated
- Promote an awareness, respect and care for other individuals and for the natural environment.
- Develop a sense of pride in their achievements

The role of the forest school leader

- Model positive behaviour and be a positive role model at all times
- Create a positive environment/atmosphere which encourages and reinforces caring, nurturing and acceptable behaviour towards one another, the natural environment and equipment we use
- Establish and agree mutual behaviour guide lines/rules with the group
- To maintain safety at all times
- To ensure that the needs of the children are central to the Forest School ethos, including learning styles, social, emotional and physical and behavioural needs Give verbal praise to children as they participate in the forest school activities
- Create opportunities for participants to talk about feelings
- Involve participants in a range of engaging activities/ experiences
- Ensure 'small achievable tasks' which are challenging yet achievable

The role of the children

- Listen carefully and respond to instructions and requests, especially those concerning safety
- Develop and maintain an acceptable attitude towards one another, the environment and all equipment

- Take part in developing Forest School rules with the rest of the group and the Forest School leader

Rewards

Forest School rewards will be in line with the school's reward system. Forest School Leaders may issue Forest Dojos for

- Good work
- Good behaviour
- Working well as a team
- Helping others
- Being caring
- Looking after the environment
- Perseverance/determination

Sanctions

Where sanctions need to be given, the Forest School Leader will ensure the following steps are adhered to:

- The Forest School Leader will try to re-engage the child in the first instance
- A verbal warning will be given by the Forest School Leader by taking the child to one side and reminding them of the agreed Forest School rules
- The children will be given time out from the activity. They will be moved away from the activity to a designated area for two minutes (FS/KS1) or five minutes (KS2)
- If three time-outs are given in one session, the child will have to go back to another classroom (escorted by the Forest School assistant) and a letter will be sent home to the child's parents/carers
- If the child's actions are placing the group or an individual at risk, the child will be escorted back into school to work in another classroom

Health and Safety/First Aid Policy

Aims:

At Goldenhill Primary Academy, the health and safety of the children, staff and visitors is our primary concern. The following policies within this handbook are in addition to the main school policies and do not replace them. They are the minimum requirements for the safe running of Forest Schools. The forest school leader is responsible for the safe running of Forest Schools therefore, has a duty of care for the children. However all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.

Objectives:

- Before a session commences all staff involved in the sessions have access to activity plans and risk assessments associated with the activities.
- Appropriate Risk assessments are carried out (Tools, Fire, Activities, Site, Weather)
- A Daily site risk assessment – A daily site risk assessment (safety sweep) will be carried out before the site is used to ensure that there are no changes to the site which could cause harm. This should be taken with extra caution following high winds and other bad weather. It should be carried out by the forest school leader who will ensure the site is safe for use
- Due to the nature of Forest Schools the children may come up with a new activity during a session and therefore reasonable steps will be taken to ensure the activity is safe. An activity risk assessment form will be completed asap following that session
- The Level 3 qualified leader will always be present during sessions
- The Forest School leader has an up-to-date certificate in ITC Outdoor First Aid and is in charge of first aid arrangement
- The Forest School Leader has overall duty of care for the children in their charge, but all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.
- All adult helpers must read this handbook and appropriate risk assessments and understand and agree to comply with the general operating procedures for Forest School.
- The Forest School Leader or assistant will carry a first aid kit **and** Emergency bag.
- A summary of medical information relating to each child and/or specific care plans are carried by the FS leader and medication will be carried (e.g. inhalers, epi pens)

- Staff will be advised of any specific medical information they should be aware of. The leader will also ensure a mobile phone and walkie talkie are available in the area during each session.

Safeguarding Policy

Aims:

Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. This policy applies to all members of staff in our school, including all permanent, temporary and support staff, governors, volunteers, contractors and external service or activity providers

- To promote and prioritise the safety and welfare needs of pupils.
- To protect pupils from maltreatment and prevent the impairment of their health and development.
- To ensure that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, enabling them to have the best outcomes in life.
- To support pupils development in ways that will foster security, confidence, resilience and independence.
- To provide an environment in which pupils feel safe, secure, valued, respected, listened to, and confident to approach trusted adults if they are in difficulties.
- To raise the awareness of all teaching and non-teaching staff and volunteers of their responsibilities to safeguard children.
- To ensure that all members of the school community respond to cases of suspected abuse or neglect consistently, sensitively, professionally and in ways which best support the needs of the child.

Objectives:

- All new members of staff, including newly-qualified teachers, teaching assistants and supply staff, will be given induction that includes basic child protection training on how to recognise signs of abuse, how to respond to any concerns, e-safety and familiarisation with the safeguarding and child protection policy, staff code of conduct, and Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education: 2016.
- Discuss your concerns with the DSL Mr. Steven Martin, or in their absence, with the Deputy DSL Mrs. Claire Meadowcroft as soon as possible, before the child leaves for the day. It is important that

the child is not sent home at the end of the day without taking the right protective action.

- Complete a referral using the Academy's online Safeguarding programme (My Concerns) by going to the following website: <https://myconcern.education> or complete the child protection record of concern form and pass it to the DSL. If the DSL or their deputy is not available, you can speak to another senior member of staff or you can contact the locality social worker yourself for a consultation about the action you need to take. However, if you are sure this is a safeguarding concern, then you should contact the Safeguarding Referral Team on 235100 and make the referral.
- Forest School sessions are led by a trained Forest School Leader, supported by members of staff and parent volunteers.
- Everyone involved in Forest School is fully briefed on health and safety, risk assessment of sites and activities.
- Staff and volunteers are made aware of the relevant school policies and procedures and ensure that they adhere to the guidance contained in them. All staff and volunteers have current DBS checks.

Child going missing off site Policy

Objectives:

- Appropriate adult to child ratios
- FS and KS1 children to be accompanied to the toilet by an adult.
KS2 children to let an adult know when they need the toilet so they can be counted out and back in again.
- Entrances and exits are secure
- Adults to be prepared to challenge and deal with unauthorized people on the school site
- Adults to be aware of visitors and contractors
- All adults to be wearing identification badges
- Ratios of children to adults

In the event of a child has gone missing in school:

- Inform the Head teacher/Senior Leadership Team
- Search the premises
- Check the CCTV footage
- If the child is still not found then contact the police giving full details of the child
- Search the immediate area surrounding the school
- Contact the child's parents
- When the child is found review security procedures

Fire Policy

Aims:

Campfires are an important part of Forest School and are used in many different ways, from sharing stories, singing together, preparing and cooking meals, or just to warm up with a cup of cocoa. Children will learn about the many benefits and uses of fire, but also of the dangers. They will learn how to start a fire successfully and the components needed and also how to respect it. Goldenhill Primary Academy aims to ensure that all adults and children making Forest School fires will do so safely and with little risk to their health and to the environment as possible.

Objectives:

- Only agreed areas will be used for campfires (designated fire circle)
- Fire pit is to be enclosed by logs (as a barrier) to prevent the spread of fire
- Fire circle seating area at least 2m away from the fire pit
- Children are not permitted to access the area without permission
- When allowed to access the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the seating logs in order to enter and exit.
- Designated gap for entrance and exit between seating logs
- Participants must sit on logs, ensuring legs are drawn into the log and not outstretched to prevent any tripping hazard
- Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move
- Children will be taught how to change seats by standing, stepping over the log and then walking around the outside of the seating area. They must never cross the inner area
- Long sleeves and trousers must always be worn.
- The Forest School leader will take control of the fires lighting process with the help from children and accompanying adults
- If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- Adults to be present around the fire at all times when lit
- A lit fire will not be left unattended at any point
- There is to be no running in the fire area

- Children will help to collect tinder and kindling (dry grasses, very dry leaves, birch bark from the floor, very fine twigs/varied twig thickness)
- Forest School Leader to carry supply of tinder if wet
- Forest School leader will encourage children to collect sticks that make a clear snapping sound when broken opposed to bending as these are drier and are easier to fuel a fire with
- Forest School leader to carry supply of fuel in case wet
- Flint and steel will be used to create a spark to light the fire and children will be taught what order to add different materials/sizes of twig in order to fuel the fire but not suffocate
- Fires will be built with the session length in mind and with an aim for them to extinguish naturally by the end of the session.
- No flammable liquids are to be used to light or accelerate fires
- No plastics are to be burnt
- Sticks/wood must be placed, not thrown on to the fire
- All fires must be fully extinguished at the end of a session (usually by allowing the fire to burn to ash)
- Water should then be poured over the hot ashes in circular motions from the outside inwards
- The ashes should then be spread to further aid cooling until all smoke/steam has ceased
- A fire should not be lit until it has been confirmed that fire safety equipment is in reach (fire blanket, water bucket, fire gloves, burns first aid kit)

Tool Policy

Aims:

Tools and safe use of tools are an important part of Forest School. Their use will be carefully managed by the Forest School Leader with an area of the site set aside for tool use.

Objectives:

- A summary
- Introduction to each tool will be given and modelled by an official 'Tool talk'. Good practice will be demonstrated by the Forest School Leaders at all times
- Tools will be introduced to the children only when the Forest School Leader feels the children are ready(emotionally and Physically)
- All tools will be used on a 1:1 adult to child ratio when using them.
- Specific tool risk assessments are carried out and reviewed on a regular basis.
- All tools will be returned to the tool box and locked away at the end of each session. This is the Forest School leaders responsibility
- All resources and equipment are checked regularly. Any unsafe, worn out, dirty or damaged equipment is repaired and cleaned, or replaced.
- Adults participating must receive basic training on the safe use of tools before being allowed to use them with children.
- Tool safety checks are completed by the Forest School Leader. If any tools are deemed unsafe for purpose, they are removed to either be fixed or replaced
- Through safe modelling of tools, children and adults are taught how to check a tool before using as a matter of routine.

Clothing Policy

Children must come appropriately equipped for Forest School. Children may not be allowed to take part in Forest School if they are not wearing appropriate clothing due to health and safety and comfort.

Forest School Kit

- Wellies/Walking Boots/Trainers
- Waterproof coat/trousers
- Appropriate clothes that are okay to get muddy
- Jumper/fleece
- Hat/Gloves/Scarf
- Sunhat
- Sun cream

Toileting Considerations

Children will be encouraged to use the toilet before beginning a session in order to avoid too many trips during the session and to avoid having to take off all the waterproofs again. Adults and children are advised that tool use will be stopped during toilet visits due to the ratio of staff remaining. KS2 children are able to go unattended, KS1 and FS must be accompanied by an adult.

Emergency Action Plan

In the event of an injured child

- In case of emergency, Forest School assistant to oversee the rest of the group, moving them away from the injured person and take them back to their classroom
- Miss Belfield (Forest School Leader) to carry out First Aid or decide whether the emergency services need to be contacted.
- In the event that a child needs to be taken to hospital, Miss Belfield to stay with the casualty until emergency services arrives
- Mobile Phone signal is strong in the Forest area. Once emergency services have been contacted, the school office must be informed that they are on their way and office staff should ensure there is a clear access and that parents have been called
- A member of staff is to accompany the child to the hospital until parent/carer arrives

In the event of an injured adult

- Office is to be called for assistance of another adult, who will then take the rest of the group back to their classroom
- Forest School Leader to carry out First Aid or decide whether the emergency services need to be contacted. Forest School leader to stay with adult until emergency services arrive.

In the event of an injured Forest School Leader

- Office is to be called for assistance of another adult, who will then take the rest of the group back to their classroom
- Other adult/Forest School assistant to carry out First Aid or decide whether the emergency services need to be contacted. Adult to stay with Forest School leader until emergency services arrive.

Minor injuries would be treated as they would within school and recorded on an accident/incident form and reported to parents and carers in line with school policy



Risk Assessment - Site



Location: Goldenhill Primary Academy				Name: Victoria Belfield					
Description of Site: The site is in very early stages of development as this is the first year of Forest School. The site is on the school ground surrounded by high fences and gates. Large fauna cannot access the area, however smaller fauna such as cats, hedgehogs, foxes and rabbits can enter. The site is a small broadleaved woodland with a mixture of flora including brambles, nettles and a variety of trees. The site is on a bank, with one main tarmacked path running through 1/3 of it. There is no access for vehicles into the woodland area. The area has no running, still or boggy water sections. At the bottom of the site, is the school itself, towards the top of the site is the playing fields and to either side of the site are fairly quiet roads.									
Hazard	Harm	People at Risk	Existing Preventative Measures	Probability (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Rating (1-25)	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits
Insects/Wasps/plants and fungi	Possible allergic reaction Poisoning Choking	All visitors to site	Find out about known allergic reactions within group • Warn children about wasps • Discuss poisonous plants and fungi – warn children not to eat anything or put fingers in mouth • Everyone to wash hands before eating • Carry antiseptic wipes	2	4	8	Ensure all children are aware that they should eat nothing from the forest.	FS leader, assistants and children	Children will be aware that they are not to eat anything that they find in the forest, nor touch their mouth without washing hands.
Mud /animal faeces/litter/dirty hands	Infection	All visitors to site	Provide wet wipes and water/hand sanitizer • Ensure hand cleaning before lunch and at end of session Ensure children do not put hands in mouth	2	2	4	Hand washing area set up at all times	FS leader, assistants and children	Cuts and grazes can be cleaned instantly. Clean hands will stop the spread of infection from mud/plants etc.
Falling Branches	Head injury /other Cuts Bumps	All visitors to site	Cancel visit in excessive wind Do not use areas where branches are unstable until they have been removed	1	5	5	Checks for unstable branches in session site survey each	FS leader	Limits possibility to very low of children being hurt from falling branch

							time the site is used		
Low Branches	Eye injury Cuts/scratches	All visitors to site	Remove any low branches/head height	1	5	5	FS leader and Site supervisor to undertake regular site survey for low branches	FS Leader/Site Supervisor	Limits possibility of face injuries due to low hanging branches
Uneven/Slippery Ground	Slips/trips and falls	All visitors to site	Safety talk to be given at start of activity • Pre visit site and remove any trip hazards Children to be made aware of uneven ground Cones around any animal warrens/holes Running zone/No running zone	3	2	6	Site survey before each FS Session	FS leader/Site supervisor	Avoids slips/trips from obvious hazards/uneven ground



Risk Assessment – Weather



Location: Goldenhill Primary Academy				Name: Victoria Belfield					
Description of Site: The site is in very early stages of development as this is the first year of Forest School. The site is on the school ground surrounded by high fences and gates. Large fauna cannot access the area, however smaller fauna such as cats, hedgehogs, foxes and rabbits can enter. The site is a small broadleaved woodland with a mixture of flora including brambles, nettles and a variety of trees. The site is on a bank, with one main tarmacked path running through 1/3 of it. There is no access for vehicles into the woodland area. The area has no running, still or boggy water sections. At the bottom of the site, is the school itself, towards the top of the site is the playing fields and to either side of the site are fairly quiet roads.									
Hazard	Harm	People at Risk	Existing Preventative Measures	Probability (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Rating (1-25)	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits
Sun	Sunburn Dehydration Heatstroke	All	Clothing/equipment Policy (which is also sent to parents).	1	3	6	Spare sunhats to be left in school Cups of water for each child Sun cream – either to be applied by parent/guardian before school OR permission slip to allow the school to apply Stay in the shade of the trees	FS Leader Parents/Guardians	By ensuring sun cream is applied, children have plenty to drink and that we stay in the shade, there is a very slim probability of harm
Snow/Ice	Slip Frostbite	All	Ensure suitable footwear is worn Clothing/equipment Policy (which is also sent to parents). In severe ice/cold Forest School sessions will be rearranged/moved indoors	2	4	8	Children will not be allowed to attend the Forest School session if they are not adequately clothed	FS Leader Parents/Guardians	By not allowing children to attend Forest School is they are not clothed appropriately, this will ensure that any potential harm

									from the weather is minimised.
Rain	Slip	All	Ensure suitable footwear is worn Keep to paths where possible	2	3	6	Children will not be allowed to attend the Forest School session if sensible shoes are not worn	FS Leader Parents/Guardians	By not allowing children to attend Forest School if they are not clothed appropriately, this will ensure that any potential harm from the weather is minimised.
Wind	Falling branches	All	In extreme winds, Forest School sessions will be rearranged/moved indoors. Ensure site is surveyed before each FS session to check for any unsafe branches and that area will be coned off until it has been dealt with.	1	4	4	Site supervisor to be informed immediately of any unsafe branches/trees	FS Leader Site Supervisor	By cancelling Forest School sessions in excessive winds and by not using any 'unsafe' areas, this limits the probability for harm by wind.
Thunder and Lightning	Struck by Lightning	All	In occurrence of Thunder and Lightning, Forest School sessions will be rearranged/moved indoors	N/A	N/A	N/A	In occurrence of Thunder and Lightning, Forest School sessions will be rearranged/moved indoors	FS Leader	By cancelling/moving session, harm from storms is removed from FS session completely



Risk Assessment – Activities



Location: Goldenhill Primary Academy				Name: Victoria Belfield					
Description of Site: The site is in very early stages of development as this is the first year of Forest School. The site is on the school ground surrounded by high fences and gates. Large fauna cannot access the area, however smaller fauna such as cats, hedgehogs, foxes and rabbits can enter. The site is a small broadleaved woodland with a mixture of flora including brambles, nettles and a variety of trees. The site is on a bank, with one main tarmacked path running through 1/3 of it. There is no access for vehicles into the woodland area. The area has no running, still or boggy water sections. At the bottom of the site, is the school itself, towards the top of the site is the playing fields and to either side of the site are fairly quiet roads.									
Hazard	Harm	People at Risk	Existing Preventative Measures	Probability (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Rating (1-25)	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits
Rope/string	Rope burns, tripping up, snagging, rope burns, strangulation	Everyone using rope/string	Safety instructions given and good practice demonstrated prior to using rope/string. Model how to use/gather and where to put when not in use. Adults to monitor during activities Ensure children are aware to take care when tightening, pulling, tying knots to avoid burns, snagging etc.	1	4	4	Laminated cards modelling different types of knot. Ensure that children never put rope around their neck for any purpose	FS leader/assistants	Children are aware how to use rope/string safely in order to limit injury
Collecting natural materials (sticks/branches)	Lifting injuries, slips, trips, cuts, grazes, thorns, splinters	Everyone collecting/touching materials	Safety instructions given about what can/cannot be lifted and how larger objects should be carried e.g. long branches should be dragged behind them, not carried. (See Site RA for slips/trips/falls). Make children aware where thorny/nettle areas are and	2	2	4	(See Site RA)	FS leaders/assistants	Children know how to safely drag larger objects in order to avoid injury and are aware where nettles/thorns are in order to avoid being stung/spiked

			warn them not to collect from this area.						
Climbing Trees	Falls, cuts, lacerations, entanglement, disturbance of animal homes (wasp nests, bees, birds), head injury	Those climbing trees and those around the tree area	Weather check to decide if too slippery or risky. Children help to assess whether a surface is safe to climb on Specific climbing trees to be used and checked over before each climbing activity for hazards/safety/strength Climbers to be supervised at all times One climber at a time Children not to climb above the leader's shoulder Demonstrate or guide on climbing skills and enable confidence to build gradually through experimentation and experience under supervision Assess for animal homes/life (although as only climbing to shoulder height, this is very unlikely) Climbers to ensure they are not wearing any jewellery/loose clothing Safe behaviour modelled Spectators to be standing at a safe distance from tree to avoid being fallen on	3	2	6	Safety mats placed below tree	FS leader, Assistant, Participants	Injuries from any falls minimised
Blindfold Games	Bumps, trips, panic, disorientation	Those wearing blindfolds and others around them	Safety instructions given prior to activity Ensure children are aware of their surroundings Children given option to just close eyes not wear blindfold or peep.	1	1	1	Ensure children are aware of surroundings each session	FS leader	Children feel safe to say whether they would prefer not to wear a blindfold and if they choose to

			Make children feel safe to say if they feel uncomfortable wearing blindfold						wear one then they are aware of their surroundings to minimise the likelihood of trips.
--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	---



Risk Assessment - Tools



Location: Goldenhill Primary Academy				Name: Victoria Belfield					
Description of Site: Description of Site: The site is in very early stages of development as this is the first year of Forest School. The site is on the school ground surrounded by high fences and gates. Large fauna cannot access the area, however smaller fauna such as cats, hedgehogs, foxes and rabbits can enter. The site is a small broadleaved woodland with a mixture of flora including brambles, nettles and a variety of trees. The site is on a bank, with one main tarmacked path running through 1/3 of it. There is no access for vehicles into the woodland area. The area has no running, still or boggy water sections. At the bottom of the site, is the school itself, towards the top of the site is the playing fields and to either side of the site are fairly quiet roads.									
Hazard	Harm	People at Risk	Existing Preventative Measures	Probability (1-5)	Severity (1-5)	Rating (1-25)	New preventative measures	Who? When?	Benefits
Bow Saw	Wounds	Anyone using tools/ around tools	Demonstrate tool talk to all group (description of tool including working parts, how to carry tool, how to pass tool, how and where to store tool, how and when to use tool, safe working distances from other people, PPE required for use of tool) Appropriate Ratio for group size, ability and age. Glove on the helper hand Designated staff member to hold outdoor first aid certificate First aid kit close by. Tools counted in and out at the end of each session. Respect position Remind other children to stay clear of tools if they are not using them Keep the blade on the saw in all times when not in use and in the tool box	2	5	10	Designated 'tool' area Locked tool area	FS Leader/ Assistant	Minimising risk of injury through tool usage
Bill hook	Wounds	Anyone using tools/ around tools	Demonstrate tool talk to all group (description of tool including working parts, how to carry tool, how to pass tool, how and where to store tool, how and	2	5	10	Designated 'tool' area Locked tool area	FS Leader/ Assistant	Minimising risk of injury

			when to use tool, safe working distances from other people, PPE required for use of tool) Appropriate Ratio for group size, ability and age. Designated staff member to hold outdoor first aid certificate First aid kit close by at all times Tools counted in and out at the end of each session. Respect position. Remind other children to stay clear of tools if they are not using them. Keep the cover on at all times when not in use and in the tool box.						through tool usage
Knives	Wounds	Anyone using tools/ around tools	Demonstrate tool talk to all group (description of tool including working parts, how to carry tool, how to pass tool, how and where to store tool, how and when to use tool, safe working distances from other people, PPE required for use of tool). Appropriate Ratio for group size, ability and age. Designated staff member to hold outdoor first aid certificate Glove on the helper hand First aid kit close by Tools counted in and out at the end of each session. Whittle away and across body Remind other children to stay clear of tools if they are not using them Keep the cover on at all times when not in use and in the tool box	2	5	10	Designated 'tool' area Locked tool area	FS Leader/ Assistant	Minimising risk of injury through tool usage
Mallet	Bumps, grazes and, bruise, fracture, breakages	Anyone using tools/ around tools	Demonstrate tool talk to all group (description of tool including working parts, how to carry tool, how to pass tool, how and where to store tool, how and when to use tool, safe working distances from other people, PPE required for use of tool) Appropriate Ratio for group size, ability and age Designated staff member to hold outdoor first aid certificate No glove needed First aid kit close by	2	4	8	Designated 'tool' area Locked tool area	FS Leader/ Assistant	Minimising risk of injury through tool usage

			Tools counted in and out at the end of each session. Respect position Remind other children to stay clear of tools if they are not using them						
Loppers	Wounds	Anyone using tools/ around tools	No glove needed Demonstrate tool talk to all group (description of tool including working parts, how to carry tool, how to pass tool, how and where to store tool, how and when to use tool, safe working distances from other people, PPE required for use of tool) Appropriate Ratio for group size, ability and age Designated staff member to hold outdoor first aid certificate First aid kit close by Tools counted in and out at the end of each session Remind other children to stay clear of tools if they are not using them If lopping branches from a tree, ensure no one will be hurt or damaged when it falls.	2	4	8	Designated 'tool' area Locked tool area	FS Leader/ Assistant	Minimising risk of injury through tool usage



Three Year Sustainable Woodland Management Plan 2018-2021



Factor	Where (Location or Map reference)	Current situation	Target situation	Preventative measures	Monitoring	Method of management	Timescale
Pathways	See attached Map/Image	Tarmacked path. Good condition, even in bad weather. Nothing is overgrown and there are no obvious hazards.	To coppice other areas of the site in order to create new paths	Groups to stick to main tarmac paths during winter/wet weather	Monitor paths each week for safety	Children to help identify which areas would be best to open up new paths and help with this	Y1 – Maintain Y2 - Build new paths Y3 - Maintain
Deadwood	Throughout the site	Some fallen sticks/twigs scattered throughout the site	Some collected to make dens Other is used for 'collecting' activities and the rest is left to rot to support nutrient cycle/woodland creatures	Limit to 1 fire per half term Materials used for dens to be reused	Monitor amount of deadwood with the children each half term and make a decision as to how much we should use	Children to identify where deadwood is sparse and use other areas for collection	Y1- Create fire/den building material pile Y2 - Create log seats around a permanent fire circle Y3 - Story telling chair out of deadwood
Nettles	See attached Map/Image	No nettles on main paths but areas of the woodland are covered in nettles and cannot be used by children as there is no way through them	Clear all areas of nettles as this will make the site bigger and far more accessible for groups and activities.	Wear long trousers and suitable footwear, cut back regularly and dig up/clear large patches so area can be used for activities.	Every couple of weeks with the children and involve children in clearing and sometimes making use of the nettles e.g. soup	Fortnightly checks with the children to check to regrowth and to identify when needs cutting back	Y1 - Remove large areas of nettles and cut back other areas Y2 - maintain Y3 - Maintain

Factor	Where (Location or Map reference)	Current situation	Target situation	Preventative measures	Monitoring	Method of management	Timescale
Ground Cover	Throughout the site	Ground cover varies throughout the site depending on canopy and usage of the area	Even out ground cover	Use the path when necessary as to not trample ground cover Use different parts of the site when appropriate to allow for growth	Fortnightly and avoid areas when they seem to be damaged	Children to support in this	Ongoing
Wildlife	Within trees and bushes and on ground	During the summer months, wildlife is disturbed by children as they are allowed to play in the woods at playtime and dinner time. During the winter months, the site is only used by Forest School groups. Some variety of animal species spotted, no variety of plants. A few bug hotels.	To attract more wildlife (plant and animal species) and educate children in the importance of looking after habitats	Educate children in the importance of looking after habitats and helping to create them Remove any litter spotter Reseed when necessary (flowers)	Bird spotting Bug hunting	Children to be involved in creating and looking after habitats and spotting wildlife	Y1 – Remove unusable areas of nettles/bramble from site Y2 – Introduce new species of flower to create diversity. Y3 – Maintain
Fire Circle	See attached Map/Image	Currently used approximately once every half term by Forest School outside agency. Fire circle in early stages of development	Seating (benches/stools) around fire circle. Fire Bowl for ease. Tarpaulin shelter for rain.	Ensure all children are aware of fire safety rules and procedures.	Check safety of circle/sitting before each fire session	Children to help maintain the area	Y1 – Fire Circle Seating Y2 – Fire Bowl Y3 – Shelter