



# Forest School Handbook

September 2022

Forest School Leader - Mr Patel

## **Information about Forest School**

### **History of Forest Schools**

The origins of Forest Schools extends as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Philosophers and educators including Montessori, Steiner and Froebel all promoted the importance of children accessing the outdoor environment and the importance to children's wellbeing and education. Montessori explains the importance by suggesting being in the outdoors can "satisfy the psychological needs of the body" (Montessori 2017) by allowing children to breathe fresh air, treasure living nature and develop respect for plants and animals. This shows that as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century people were beginning to think about and discuss the importance of allowing children to spend quality time in the outdoors to promote many things from satisfying their physiological needs through to understanding/respecting the flora and fauna.

This ethos did continue into the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the introduction of the scouts and outdoor education centres for children to experience the outdoors first hand. But as education developed, the idea that more classroom based lessons were more important for preparing children for the adult world developed and less thought and consideration was given to letting children explore and understand the outdoor environment.

Fast forward another 20 years and the concept of Forest Schools as we know it was introduced in England. The idea of Forest Schools was first introduced and used in Scandinavia in the 1980 because of insufficient indoor space for children of pre-school age. In the early 90s a group of nursery nurses and lecturers visited a variety of different settings in Sweden and discovered the benefits of a more outdoor based education to the one children were receiving in England. On their return to the UK these practitioners decided to develop their own form of outdoor education programs and training and called it Forest Schools. Forest schools is now nationwide and is adopted as a form of education in many counties across the UK

### **What is Forest Schools?**

Forest Schools is an approach which originated from Scandinavia. It is a unique educational experience which promotes many different skills and ideas such as raising self-esteem, health, wellbeing, confidence, emotional intelligence and team work. As well as promoting the use of the outdoors such as practical learning, discovering and finding out about the natural environment and its uses, physical activity and risk taking.

The children will take part in a variety of activities which not only promote the above but also gives the children hands on opportunities to develop their understanding of many topics such as den building, fire lighting and outdoor cooking, caring for the environment, safe use of tools, coppicing, flora and fauna as well as using a child led approach to planning and learning so the children get the most out of their sessions.

Forest School is run whatever the weather (Unless extreme weather/wind is forecast). Each child will have their own wet suit to take part. We do ask parents to bring in waterproof shoes, gloves, hats, coats etc for the colder or wet weather. We believe the children should experience most weather types and will only be taken out if correct clothing/precautions have been taken to keep them safe and dry.

## **Principles of Forest School**

There are six key Principles which are fundamental to the Forest school ethos and are used to ensure good Forest School practice. They are as follows:

- Principle 1  
Forest school is a long term process of frequent and regular sessions, ideally in a woodland or natural environment. Planning, assessing, observations and adaptation are all key parts of the Forest School process as this feeds back into the program and supports the children's learning, ideas and development.  
*-Our Forest School sessions will take part weekly and will start with a hook for the children to explore and develop their understanding of the outdoor environment. Planning will then take place weekly and will be based on the children's ideas and interests.*
- Principle 2  
Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.  
*-Our Forest School sessions will take place in a small wooded area within our school grounds. As the site is new we will be working closely with the children to think about how we could improve/develop our area whilst maintaining and ensuring we have little ecological impact on the site itself. We aim to use natural resources within the site area that are sustainable and manageable.*
- Principle 3  
Forest Schools offer learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.  
*-Our Forest School will promote the understanding of risks in a safe and manageable way so children feel they are able and willing to take the appropriate risks when they want or need to.*

- Principle 4  
Forest Schools aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confidence, independent and creative learners  
*-Our Forest School will aim to promote the physical, social, emotion, cognitive, spiritual and linguistic skills of the child.*
- Principle 5  
Forest School is run by qualified Forest School Practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.  
*-Our Forest School will be run by Miss Withycombe who is due to receive her Forest School qualification level 3 in Oct 2018. She is outdoor emergency first aid trained and this handbook provides all the relevant policies and procedures to safely run a forest School session.*
- Principle 6  
Forest School uses a range of learner centred processes to create a community for development and learning  
*-Our Forest School approach will consist of a play based approach using ideas from the children to support planning and resourcing of the area. The Forest School Leader will ensure all planning/resources are ready and up to date and support the children in developing their ideas.*

## Where it takes place

The Forest School area is situated on the playing field within the school grounds. It has a small wooded area with a variety of trees/shrubs for the children to explore and use. We aim for Forest Schools to take place on a weekly basis on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday afternoon in all weather conditions. The children will be provided with a full wet suit to take part in Forest Schools, but we kindly ask parents to bring **wellingtons, hat, scarf, gloves and a coat** if needed to ensure that Forest Schools 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 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
- Use and practice of a variety of knots
- Safe use of Fire lighting and cooking
- 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 tools to support learning
- Different seasons/what happens 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/supporting each other
- Achieving manageable tasks individually and in a group

### **Routine in Forest School**

Forest School will run on a weekly basis with our Nursery children and as an after school club. The children will attend in groups of 15 and each group. Nursery will go to the Forest School on a Friday and the after school club will be on a Monday.

Each child will be required to dress themselves appropriately for the weather and all children will be required to wear a splash suit in the colder and wetter weather.

The children will arrive at the Forest School and sit in the benched or logged area so that learning for the session can be introduced. This learning can range from simple team building activities to den building or fire lighting (fire lighting is dependent on age and maturity of the children). The children will then have an opportunity to play in the Forest School area with one adult being a Learning Leader, while the other adult introduces and delivers an activity to a group of children. All children will have the opportunity to play and take part in a structured activity.

The children will be required to care and maintain the area with support, as well as ensuring they are maintaining and using equipment in a safe way. The children will also be encouraged to use a Wellie wash to ensure clothing is cleaned, dried and then stored correctly for use in the next session.

### **Extreme Weather**

We aim to use Forest Schools in most weather conditions. However, in certain circumstances this may not be possible. This will mainly be because of high winds/heavy snow or thunder storms. We aim to try and assess the weather before any Forest School session and have an alternative plan if necessary.

If children are unable to use Forest School for any of the reasons discussed they will take part in pre-planned activities within the classroom.

## **Who are the Forest School sessions with?**

Initially the Forest School will be introduced and delivered to our Nursery children on a weekly basis and rolled out to the rest of the school through an after school club. Each term will allow a different group of children to have access to the Forest School Site.

The Forest School Leader will be supported by another member of staff to help with the delivery of the Forest School objectives, including toileting and first aid.

Timetable in place for Autumn term 2022. Opportunities provided for all children, from Nursery to Year 6, to have learning opportunities in the Forest School.

## **Emergency Plan**

### Site details:

The site is situated across the playing field, in a small wooded area on the school grounds. The grounds are privately owned/maintained by the school.

The address of site is:

Woden Primary School  
Springfield Road  
Wolverhampton  
West Midlands  
WV10 0LH  
01902 558880

A staff member will take a mobile phone with the school offices number on to ring if needed to be contacted.

### Access:

If an ambulance is needed on site, they can either report to the main reception or if a serious incident has occurred access for the ambulance can be made through a side gate leading on to the playground and next to the Forest School. The address above will be used if any correspondence is needed with the emergency services.

The Forest School Lead will remain in the Forest School area at all times unless there is an emergency. The Forest School Lead is outdoor and paediatric first aid trained alongside the other staff member who is paediatric first aid trained.

The supporting staff member will alert the Head teacher of any issues which have arisen if possible or will remain on site to keep other children calm and will also phone for help/support if needed.

### **Phone number of help/assistance:**

In the case of a serious emergency the Forest School Lead will ring the emergency services **999** and send for the appropriate service.

Secondly the Forest School Lead will contact the Schools Reception to inform them of the situation and to deal with any access issues for service vehicles.

### **Emergency contact details**

**School office's number: (01902) 558880**

**Next of kin/medical details of staff members held in the School office.**

### **Fire Drill**

In the event of a fire the alarm in school will ring continuously and the school will be evacuated. The children in Forest School will make an orderly line and join the rest of the school on the school playground. There they will be separated into their class groups and a register will be taken by their class teacher.

**The assembly point for Reception is the far left hand side of the playground.**

### **Lock down policy**

As part of CLPT we have a plan for 'lockdowns'.

Lockdown procedures are important and would be used in response to an internal or external incident which could be a threat to the safety of staff and children in the school.

Lockdown procedures may be activated in response to any number of situations, these may be:

1. A reported incident, disturbance in the local community
2. An intruder on the site
3. A warning being received regarding a local risk of air pollution (smoke plume, gas cloud etc)
4. A major fire in the vicinity of the school
5. The close proximity of any dangers/risks which are deemed serious enough for lock down protocol to be initiated.

In order to warn of these dangers verbal signals.

In the event of an actual lockdown parents will be notified by a text message as soon as possible.

The school's lockdown plan is as follows:

#### Signal

Signal for Lockdown: verbal (through phone call)

Signal for all clear: verbal (through phone call)

#### Lockdown

In the event of a Lockdown whilst Forest School's is taking place the children will be asked to head into the circular section of tree and wait quietly until the all clear is given. The Forest School Lead will close and secure the gate leading onto the field to secure access to the playing field and Forest School area. In the event of an incident occurring in Forest Schools, all children will be evacuated back into the school if safe and taken back to their classrooms. A message/phone call will be sent to the office/Head teacher in this instance.

Procedure:

- Ensure all pupils are safe in the circular section of trees and are hidden from view/or return to School and go to classrooms.
- Lock/secure entrance points to prevent the intruder entering the Forest School site.
- Dial 999.
- Take action to increase protection. Staff to: block access points, stay still, hide children in the shrubs/tree canopy if you can, keep children quiet
- Ensure that pupils, staff and visitors are aware of an exit in case an intruder does gain access.
- If possible, check for missing pupils/staff/visitors.



- Remain in place until the all clear signal has been given

### Partial Lockdown

Partial lockdown is a precautionary measure but puts the school in a state of readiness should the situation escalate.

Procedure:

- All outside activity to cease immediately, pupils and staff return to building.
- All staff and pupils remain in building and external doors and windows locked.
- Movement may be permitted within the building dependent upon circumstances but this must be supervised by a member of staff.

### Communication to parents

Parents will be told (either verbally or via text):

“After an incident today the school was placed in lockdown at ..... Procedures and policies were followed and all members of staff and children are safe.”

### **Photography/social media**

All staff are aware of children who are not allowed photos taken/used in specific ways. See home/school agreement forms for specific children if unsure.

### **Visitors**

The Forest School site is a secure area within the School grounds and is private land owned by the school. There should not be any visitors to the school grounds unless arranged by prior appointment. In the case of trespassers, the Forest School Lead will address the issue and report to the Head teacher.

All visitors must report to the School Reception before entering school. This is to ensure that all visitors are signed in and have been allocated a badge. The office staff will then take any visitors to the appropriate staff members.

### **Register**

A register for each session will be done on an excel spreadsheet and then printed off to be taken with the Forest School Lead to the Forest School site. See an example of Spreadsheet below:



**Pre-session risk assessment**

**Venue/Activity/Group Specific Risk Assessment (VAGRA)**

This VAGRA Risk Assessment is designed to complete the requirements for a written risk assessment, applying the LA generic risk assessment to the specific requirements of the user.

**Establishment:** Woden Primary School

**Group size:**

**Location / Purpose:** Forest School

**Leader:**

**Other accompanying staff:**

Risk Rating:  
A-severity x B-Likelihood  
  
Gives risk rating between 0-100

Identifying the hazards – assessing the risk: <i>Weather, poisons, tree damage, faeces, boundary disturbance</i>	A-severity	B-likelihood	Risk rating	Control measure	A-severity	B-Likelihood	Final Risk Rating
<b>Weather conditions:</b>							
<b>Poisons:</b>							
<b>Tree Damage:</b>							
<b>Animals-faeces</b>							
<b>Unwanted visitors-rubbish etc</b>							

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## Site risk assessment

### Venue/Activity/Group Specific Risk Assessment (VAGRA)

This VAGRA Risk Assessment is designed to complete the requirements for a written risk assessment, applying the LA generic risk assessment to the specific requirements of the user.

**Establishment:** Woden Primary School

**Group size:**

**Location / Purpose:** Forest School

**Leader:**

**Other accompanying staff:**

Risk Rating:  
A-severity x B-Likelihood  
Gives risk rating between 0-100

Identifying the hazards – assessing the risk: <i>Weather, poisons, tree damage, faeces, boundary disturbance</i>	A-severity	B-likelihood	Risk rating	Control measure	A-severity	B-Likelihood	Final Risk Rating
<b>Boundaries</b> Hazard-Loss of a child Health and safety-May not be able to see the child.	8	4	32	Ensure all Boundaries leading to public pathways are maintained. Place cones on the edge of the Forest School boundaries and make children aware they cannot pass these	8	2	16
<b>Extreme Weather</b> Hazard-Health and safety of children, falling branches, extreme cold or heat.	9	5	45	Check weather on the morning of Forest School-If extreme wind/rain/snow etc the children will stay inside and have another activity prepared. For milder weather the children must wear appropriate clothing-e.g Wellingtons/Waterproof all in one/Sun cream	9	1	9

<b>Tree damage</b> Hazard-falling or lose branches.	9	5	45	Check site before every session and record any tree damage as soon as possible. Ensure and keep a record of the yearly Tree Survey	9	2	18
<b>Fruit bearing Trees</b> Hazard-poisoning/allergic reaction.	7	8	56	Discuss and explain to the children that all fruit found in Forest School must not be touched or eaten. If there is an abundance on the floor, ideally remove before Forest School session starts	7	6	42
<b>Blossom/Flowering Shrubs</b> Hazard-poisoning/allergic reaction.	7	8	56	Discuss and explain to the children that all flowers found in Forest School must not be touched or eaten. Explain that this is their home and they should not be picked.	7	6	42
<b>Poisons</b> Hazard-poisoning.	8	8	64	Have a comprehensive list of tree/Shrubs within the forest School setting and explain to the children if any of the trees etc should be avoided.	8	5	45
<b>Nettles</b> Hazard-Sting-allergic reaction.	5	6	30	Show the children what nettles are and explain that if we brush against them with bare skin they will sting. Encourage the children to wear appropriate clothing and be aware of their surroundings. Also show the children how to soothe a nettle themselves.	5	6	30
<b>Low lying branches</b> Hazard-Children can walk into the branch.	6	6	36	Show the children how to move branches using their arm in a way that doesn't harm themselves/others or the branches. Check site and cut back any branches which may be hazardous.	6	4	24

<b>Tree Climbing</b> Hazard-falls from the tree/splinters	8	5	40	Show children which trees can be climbed. The tree can only be climbed as high as the child is tall. Restrict tree climbing to 1-2 children at a time.	8	5	40
<b>Lost child</b> Hazard-Health and safety	10	5	50	Play game 1, 2, 3, Where are you? To encourage the children to shout if they are lost. Also ensure boundaries are in place every session, all borders to the school grounds are maintained. Always have one member of staff as a Learning Leader. Have a strategy to bring the children back, e.g tambourine, 1, 2 ,3 come and find me. Take a register and count children on and off the site.	10	3	30
<b>Slippery logs/roots/ground</b> Hazard-slips, trips and falls	5	7	35	Make children aware that areas can be slippery after wet weather and ask them to be careful when moving around the site. Consider closing off the climbing tree if too wet.	5	5	25
<b>Dead animals/faeces</b> Hazard-unhygienic, could spread infection	4	5	20	Check site before every session and record findings. If any dead animals found, report to the caretaker for removal.	3	2	6
<b>Mud Kitchen</b> Hazard-Slips, trips and falls	5	5	25	Encourage the children to walk in the Mud kitchen area as it could be slippery and make sure all children wash their hands after playing in this area.	3	2	6

<b>Other people using the site.</b> Hazard-unwanted waste left on the site.	8	8	64	The site does sometimes get visitors outside the school hours. To ensure no danger to the children, a pre site risk assessment must be carried out before every session and any significant issues reported to the Head.	8	3	24
<b>Rubbish</b> Hazard-Hazardous material-bad for wildlife and growth	5	4	20	Check site before the Forest School session and remove any rubbish.	1	1	1
<b>Concrete floor</b> Hazard-hard surface-bumps and scraps	6	4	24	Try to get coverage of leaf litter over concreted area.	6	3	18
<b>Tool use-Drills/Saws etc</b> Hazard-cuts, scraps and fingers becoming trapped,	9	6	54	Show the children how to manage and use a variety of tools accurately and safely. Provide PPE equipment if necessary and provide any additional equipment. E.g a clamp/saw horse. Always have an adult present when the children are using tools.	9	4	36
<b>Fire</b> Hazard-Burns and scalds	9	5	45	Ensure that there is a fire triangle around the fire. There is at least a 1.2 metre squared space around the fire area. Adults must always adopt the respect position. Fire blanket and at least 10 litres of water must always be present on site when using fire.	9	4	36
<b>Allergies</b> Hazard-Allergic reaction	9	8	72	All record of allergies are kept within the School. Any Epi pens/inhalers etc must be taken with the children to the site. All this is recorded on the register.	9	6	54

<b>Log seating</b> Hazard-bumps and scraps-possibility of log falling onto the child	5	4	20	Explain to the children that the seating is to be sat on and if standing on it be careful when moving from one to the other. Children will be made aware that the logs should not be moved.	5	3	15
<b>Den building</b> Hazard-trips, falls, bumps and bruises	5	6	30	Model with the children how to move long pieces of wood safely and make them aware of ropes/pegs when den building.	5	4	20
<b>Wild Animals</b> Bites, falling into Dens, scratches	8	2	16	Check for any signs of wild animals such as foxes. Keep children away from areas animals have been spotted.	8	1	8



## **Activity Risk Assessment**

### **Venue/Activity/Group Specific Risk Assessment (VAGRA)**

This VAGRA Risk Assessment is designed to complete the requirements for a written risk assessment, applying the LA generic risk assessment to the specific requirements of the user.

**Establishment:** Woden Primary School

**Group size:**

**Location / Purpose:** Forest School

**Leader:**

**Other accompanying staff:**

<u>Activity Description:</u>				
Hazard and Harm	A-Severity	B-Likelihood	Control measure and precautions	Final Risk Rating

## **Session Plan**



Forest School Session  
Plan

<b>Class:</b>	<b>Size:</b>
<b>Leader:</b>	<b>Week:</b>
<b>Date:</b>	

**Learning objective:**

<b>Previous knowledge expected from children:</b>	<b>Key words/concepts:</b>
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**Session outline**

<b>Warm up/arrival:</b>	
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<b>Introduction:</b>	
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<b>Activity:</b>	
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<b>Main focus:</b>	
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<b>Free exploration:</b>	
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<b>Plenary:</b>	
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**Walk back to school**

**Key health and safety points:**

**Wet/ hot weather option:**

**Session evaluation: scoring 10 excellent – 1 poor**

Outcomes met		Behaviour/engagement		Timing / pace	
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**Observations:**

**How did the session go? What went well? What didn't go well?  
Key learning and development aspects for participants and leaders**

**What went well:**

**What didn't go well:**

**Next steps-Recommendations for future sessions.  
Ideas for next session:**



## **Toileting**

All children will be toileted before they go to the Forest School site, however during the session children may need to go to the toilet. The girl's and boy's toilets are both situated across the school playground and just inside the door. There is a clear view from the Forest School site across the playground so children will be in sight of an adult. Until the children are comfortable with going to the toilet with a buddy or alone the supporting adult will escort the children if needed.

## **Policies**

### **Play policy**

We are committed to supporting the importance of play, both indoors and outdoors, and the value of risk taking. Practitioners support children's play throughout the session taking into account the age, interests and individual needs of the child. We provide provision in which children can play in a safe and secure environment. Transitions between daily activities, where possible should not interrupt the children's play experiences and routines in the afternoon are flexible. Children are encouraged to make choices and think critically through independent play in on a one to one, small group or larger group. Each adult is responsible for providing play opportunities, on location at the setting and when off site on visits e.g. Forest School or farm trips. Play is children's work. Free play, including outdoors as this is integral part of the curriculum, is a fundamental part of a child's day in EYFS. Through play children can explore, investigate, discover, create, practice, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate knowledge already gained to help develop new skills for now and in the future. It is essential for keeping children healthy and reaching important social, emotional, and cognitive developmental milestones. It also helps children to manage anxiety and become resilient.

Outdoor play is an integral part of the curriculum and play. It offers opportunities for children to develop their large and small muscles, experience an environment that is different to the inside of the nursery.

Guidance on supporting high quality play within the environment includes:

- Having adequate time to explore and play in the outdoor area.
- Finding out about the living natural world and how to look after it appropriately.
- Using natural and man-made materials to build, shape, assemble on both large and small scale.
- Having space to run and move in a variety of different ways to support gross motor movement
- Providing adequate space for children to use and explore
- Taking manageable risks

### **Behaviour policy**

1. Re-enforcement of good behaviour is more effective than negative punishments.
2. Although there are agreed sanctions for children who misbehave it is the encouragement of good behaviour, which is far more important than punishment. Staff should praise children who behave politely, kindly, sensibly etc. Verbal feedback on behaviour should be given a high priority in and out of class. Good behaviour and positive attitudes should be discussed in P.S.H.E. lessons and in school assemblies. Staff use golden time, stickers, certificates, letters, postcards, raffle tickets and phone calls home to acknowledge and re-enforce positive behaviour as well as academic achievement. Praise should outweigh censure by 3:1 but should be handled in a way that the child feels comfortable.
3. A well-managed, well planned environment decreases potential for problems.
4. Staff should ensure that school activities are well planned and resources well organised as this will ensure every child knows what is expected of them and when. We need to teach behaviour as we teach other aspects of the curriculum. Classes that are well organised with lessons that are well prepared and take into account the range of abilities within the class tend to have few discipline problems. A calm controlled learning environment is conducive to positive learning as well as good behaviour. All children, should be treated sensitively to maintain their self-esteem. Criticism should never damage self-esteem, censure should focus on the behaviour not the child.
5. Staff should take time to explain the reasons for children being asked to do something. They should take every opportunity to keep caring and respect for people and property in high profile. Children should be listened to and spoken to calmly.
6. Every effort should be made to diffuse potential problems before they arise through discussion, good organisation, consultation etc.
7. Certain behaviour, such as bullying, rudeness, fighting, swearing etc. is never acceptable and should always be dealt with when encountered.
8. The school reserves the right to inform parents of unacceptable behaviour, which may in future lead to exclusion. Staff should consult a senior member of staff when behaviour causes concern.

## **Equality Policy**

See non-subject related policies on VLE for full Equality policy.

## **Safeguarding Policy**

See non-subject related policies on VLE for full Safeguarding policy.

## **Lost Child Policy**

Woden Primary School take the health and safety of the children and adults extremely seriously. If in the unlikely event a child cannot be found, the Leader and supporting staff must take the following action:

- The Forest School Leader shall be informed immediately.
- Activity for the rest of the group shall be suspended in order that up to two members of staff, including the Forest School Leader if appropriate, may be released to conduct a search which shall last no more than five minutes.
- The remaining children will be given a low risk activity to complete, within the Camp area by the remaining adults, being mindful not to increase any anxiety in the group.
- If, after the five-minute search, the child has not been located, the Forest School Leader will phone 999 and alert the police.
- Woden Primary's School office will be informed so that they can contact the child's parents or adult's emergency contact and inform them of the situation.
- Staff should corroborate details of the situation, including last known position of the missing child or adult and any timings. These will be recorded in the Accident system T100.

## **Lone Worker**

In Forest Schools we aim for at least two adults to remain in Forest Schools during a session. If for some reason an adult must leave the site, the Forest School Lead must remain responsible and in charge of the group. In this instance the Forest School Lead will ask supporting members of staff to leave the site.

If this occurs the Forest School Lead must have a form of contact with the main reception of the school and must also ensure they have a first aid kit/any other medical equipment e.g inhalers/epi pens on site with them. The children may also be asked to play in a reduced size area so the lone adult can see and monitor all children until supporting staff member returns.

## **Manual Handling**

Courses are taken on a yearly basis by all staff to keep them up to date with Manual handling practices.

## **Tree climbing/ropes/creations**

See Generic site assessment for further information

## **Insurance**

All activities are covered by Schools fully comprehensive cover as long as there is an adequate risk assessment of the site/activity.

## **Landowner agreement**

The Forest School site is on private land owned by the school and we have permission of the Head Teacher to implement Forest Schools on the site. There are currently no protection orders in place and a tree survey is done on a yearly basis through the Wolverhampton Tree Service. The next survey is due 5<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

## Ecological impact

<b>Site Name:</b> Woden Primary School  <b>Address:</b> Woden Primary School Springfield Road Wolverhampton West Midlands WV10 0LH		<b>Location:</b> Wooded area of the school field Woden Primary School Springfield Road Wolverhampton West Midlands WV10 0LH
<b>History of the Site:</b> Grass land owned by the school and the field is used for outdoor PE sessions and Sports day. The Forest School site is to the one end of the field surrounded by trees.		Stakeholders: CLPT (Central Learning Partnership Trust)
<b>Site description:</b> The site is on the School field of the School. It has a concreted area surrounded in trees with benches, and a grassed area with fruit trees. The area also contains a variety of native tree species including oak, beech and wild cherry. It is surrounded by a security fence which runs alongside a public pathway and park. There is no running water to the site and no water source.		
<b>Special features of the site and any special species:</b> N/A		
<b>Vision for the site:</b> To develop its use as a Forest School by developing and extending the current woodland to include more native species of tree and to encourage more wildlife to visit the area by providing plants and trees needed for food and shelter. The site will remain in a mostly natural state, with the hopes of making the area more wild and natural to support the children's understanding of the outdoor environment. The introduction of paths and access through different parts of the woodland to extend the Forest School area is a vision of the Forest School Leader.		
<b>Anticipated use of the site:</b> Site will be used in the afternoons, mainly for the EYFS part of the school with the intention of extending the use of it for KS1 and KS2 children. I am particularly interested in the children developing the site themselves based on their own ideas. This could include the older children looking after the site by litter picking etc. The site could also be developed to incorporate storage for equipment.		
<b>Type of impact on your Forest School site through use</b>		<b>Mitigating impact-What can you do about it, and how you involve your group.</b>
Compaction	Footfalls/amount of children using the site could impact on the ground/plants/wildlife if disturbed.	Let the children choose their paths through the Forest School but make them aware of Fauna and Flora which could be affected and make children aware of their impact on the environment by asking them to move



	Pathways	<p>carefully around the Forest School and be aware of branches/plants and animals they may also be using the Forest School.</p> <p>Once paths have been established, encourage the children to use these and be careful when they wander from the designated paths. The use of boundaries would also support and hopefully decrease the level of compaction.</p>
Corruption	<p>Litter within the Forest School</p> <p>Activities/objects used for activities</p>	<p>Forest School Leader/Caretaker of the School routinely pick any litter from the area. Also develop a Friends of Forest School group where children can develop a system to support the care and upkeep of the Forest School. Also ensure all resources/rubbish is taken from the site after each session. Ensure a bin bag is taken to every session so all rubbish can be stored safely and taken away after use.</p> <p>Ensure all activities which involve anything being left in the Forest School are safe for both the Flora and Fauna that resides in the site. This can be done by ensuring activities use biodegradable materials/natural materials which support the environment.</p>
Pollution	<p>Litter within the Forest School</p> <p>Fires</p>	<p>Forest School Leader/Caretaker of the School routinely pick any litter from the area. Also develop a Friends of Forest School group where children can develop a system to support the care and upkeep of the Forest School. Also ensure all resources/rubbish is taken from the site after each session. Also ensure all resources/rubbish is taken from the site after each session. Ensure a bin bag is taken to every session so all rubbish can be stored safely and taken away after use.</p> <p>All fires will be lit in a fire pit due to people visiting the site after school hours. There is a leave no trace policy in place for fires. The Forest School Leader will also assess the suitability of the area designated for fire use to ensure minimal impact on the surrounding environment.</p>

Growth	<p>Developing area within the Forest School may require tree branches to be cut back to allow for space/development of pathways for access to the site.</p> <p>Coppicing/pruning</p> <p>Development of the woodland-Free trees from the Forestry Commission</p>	<p>Ensure yearly Tree Review is undertaken and trees are monitored to ensure they are still healthy. Also ensure care is taken when cutting back branches and ensure that unnecessary work isn't done on the trees.</p> <p>Ensure when pruning or coppicing trees/shrubs within the Forest School that damage is not being done to the original tree structure. If children are taking part in pruning or coppicing, they must be taught to use the equipment safely and correctly to ensure no damage takes place.</p> <p>Ensure area for the new trees is sufficient for the trees size and surrounding established trees. Also ensure saplings are planted in the correct place and have the correct amount of room to flourish. This could be done through a whole school project to develop the area.</p>
Denudation	Use of natural materials	Monitor the use of natural resources in the area, to ensure children are not over harvesting or damaging the woodland site from over harvesting the natural resources.
Degradation	<p>Climbing tree</p> <p>Fires</p>	<p>Ensure tree is routinely checked for general wear. Be aware of any branches which routinely get used to ensure they are still safe for use and damage is not being done. Encourage the children to use the climbing tree on a rota basis. So it is not used every week.</p> <p>Ensure siting of the fire is assess correctly, by being aware of any branches/roots which could get damaged from fire/smoke.</p>

## Management plan

<b>Site name:</b> Woden Primary School <b>Address:</b> Springfield Road Wolverhampton West Midlands WV10 OLH		<b>Location:</b> On the school grounds. To the back of the playground in a wooded area.		
<b>Site Description:</b> The site is on the School field of the School. It has a concreted area surrounded in trees with benches, and a grassed area with fruit trees. The area also contains a variety of native tree species including oak, beech and wild cherry. It is surrounded by a security fence which runs alongside a public pathway and park. There is no running water to the site and no water source.				
<b>Site use:</b> The site will be used four times weekly with the Reception cohort of the school. The children will go in groups of 15 into the Forest School one afternoon a week.				
Factors having an impact (activities, access, resources)	Level of impact (Low, medium and high)	How will this affect the site (e.g compaction, denudation, pollution, disturbance)	Year	How will this be managed?
Footfalls/amount of children that use the site	Low	Compaction/Growth	1	A monthly assessment to be undertaken as a part of the management plan. A checklist to be created to assess damage.
		Compaction/Growth	2	A monthly assessment to be undertaken as a part of the management plan.
		Compaction/Growth	3	A monthly assessment to be undertaken as a part of the management plan.
Fires	Low	Pollution/Degradation	1	Use fire pit to minimise the damage done to the natural habitat.

		Pollution/Degradation	2	Check surrounding area to assess impact of the firepit on the habitat, check tree roots and surrounding flora and fauna for damage.
		Pollution/Degradation	3	Check surrounding area to assess impact of the firepit on the habitat, check tree roots and surrounding flora and fauna for damage.
Cutting back of tree branches for access/safety	Medium	Degradation/ Growth	1	Only cut back branches that need to be cut. Ensure all trees are healthy through yearly tree survey.
		Degradation/Growth	2	Coppice/prune parts of the trees that need to be cut back. Be aware of over pruning.
		Degradation/Growth	3	Coppice/prune parts of the trees that need to be cut back. Be aware of over pruning.
Development of wooded area	Medium	Growth	1	Develop the wooded area of the Forest School by getting trees from the Forestry commission.
		Growth	2	Monitor the growth and stability of the growing trees.
		Growth	3	Monitor the growth and stability of the growing trees.
Tree Climbing	Medium	Degradation/Growth	1	Choose a suitable tree and ensure a limit is set for the amount of children to use the tree. (3 at a time)

		Degradation/Growth	2	Assess tree for sturdiness and check any branches that are used frequently.
		Degradation/Growth	3	Choose another tree in the Forest School to prevent significant damage to plant life.



## **Accident/injury/near miss forms**

All accidents which require medical attention must be recorded on Target 100, which is the school's accident management system. In the case of a head bump, the children will be given a bumped head note to take home with them.

## **First Aid**

All Forest School staff are either Outdoor First Aid trained/paediatric First Aid trained.

First Aid kit comprises of: Bandages, wipes, plasters of varying sizes, clingfilm, tweezers,

## **Health and Safety**

All staff have undertaken a Health and Safety course in the last year.

## **First Aid Forms/RIDOR**

Practitioners in the Forest School follow the Schools First aid and serious accident policy.