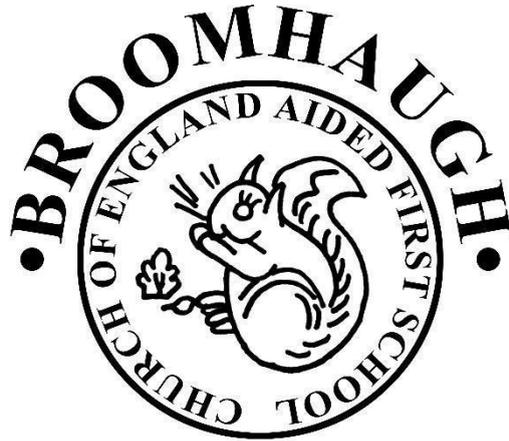


Broomhaugh Church of England First School



FOREST SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Forest Leader Qualifications

Level 3

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The Forest School Ethos

Forest School is a unique method of outdoor education that allows children to develop confidence, independence, self-esteem and awareness and knowledge of the natural environment. They acquire this through hands-on experiences in outdoor and woodland environments. There is much evidence to say that learning that takes place outdoors and whilst they are active is much more powerful and memorable, as all the senses are involved. Children work in a nurturing environment where they are encouraged to try new things and work outside of their comfort zone. Aspirational language is always used and all tasks are achievable; enabling children to build self-esteem and develop confidence to push themselves.

The Forest School concept originates in Denmark where it was found that children who attended Forest School from a young age arrived at school with strong social and communication skills, having the ability to work in groups effectively. They generally had high self-esteem and confidence in their own abilities. This foundation helped them to raise their academic achievements.

Purpose/Aims of Forest School

1. To provide experiences that encourage an appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural world and to develop a sense of awe and wonder..
2. To develop resilience and the ability to assess risk.
3. To increase self-esteem and self confidence.
4. To be able to solve problems and take on challenges.
5. To be able to work with and help others, as well as working independently.
6. To develop practical skills.
7. To be able to light and use fire meaningfully and safely.
8. To be able to use a variety of tools meaningfully and safely.

Forest School at Broomhaugh

- Forest School takes place in a block of sessions for each class group and in most weather conditions. High wind or excessive rain may result in sessions being cancelled for health and safety reasons.
- Forest School takes place within a number of places on our school site. These sites are a work in progress and are being developed to provide the best possible Forest School experiences for our pupils.
- A consent form will need to be signed each year before children can take part in sessions.
- Parents will be given a summary of the FS handbook and a full copy can be found on the school's website, along with all relevant policy documents.
- On Forest School Days children must bring suitable clothing – long sleeved tops and long trousers, waterproof coats, waterproof trousers and boots. The leader will ensure that all children are correctly dressed. If alternatives can't be found then a child will not be able to attend Forest School due to health & safety reasons.
- The sessions are generally a full afternoon, every week, for a term.
- The children take part in a variety of activities, covering all areas of the curriculum. Staff make every effort to ensure that all activities are fully inclusive, thus catering for all ability levels.
- The children are taught a variety of woodland skills through practical hands-on activities. They also learn how to light fires safely.
- Children take part in a variety of food related activities, including cooking on the fire. Children are provided with water and antibacterial gel to wash their hands before they eat.
- The children learn the care and safe use of a wide range of tools. This is an activity supervised by Level 3 Forest School Leaders and is introduced gradually in small steps.
- Children are encouraged to listen attentively to instructions and to take responsibility for their actions.
- The Forest School leaders will keep parents informed and updated regarding all aspects of Forest School.

Benefits of a Forest School Approach

Key Features of Forest Schools

The use of a natural outdoor environment.

Allows every child to have a voice, especially those who find it difficult to communicate in a more conventional learning environment.

Child-led approach to children's learning which is fun and unhurried.

A high adult to child ratio allows children to undertake new experiences and challenges whilst taking appropriate risks.

Long term programme that allows repetition where children come into contact with nature using all their senses.

Supports personalised learning.

Builds children's confidence and self esteem as they are responsible for making their own decisions and are carefully supported to achieve.

Trained adults and facilitators and observers rather than leaders and directors.

*"Too often we think of ourselves as separate from nature, forgetting that we are just a part of it."
- Ray Mears*

Our Forest School Code

- We use our eyes and ears.
- We enter the camp circle when we are invited.
- We leave sticks etc out of the camp circle area.
- We always walk.
- We always think about the risks before choosing whether to do something.
- We keep our hands away from our mouths.
- We can always see the camp circle unless we're with an adult.
- When we climb trees we climb no higher than our own head height.
- We treat others and what they have made with respect.
- We have fun!

Examples of Forest School Activities

<p style="text-align: center;">Ice breaking activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Wooden discs - Name Necklaces * Memory Games – Kim’s game - walking through an area and remembering objects that are there that shouldn’t be there. * Pass The Pine Cone – along a line through legs or over heads * Fairy breath 	<p style="text-align: center;">Making structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lashings & Knots * Making a frame * Shelter & den Building (small & large/natural materials and tarpaulin) * Boat making * Bow and Arrow * Nests
<p style="text-align: center;">Building confidence, establishing trust & supporting emotions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trust Game With Rope – circle of rope. Group lean back onto rope to be held up by it * Meet A Tree * Clay Creatures – make and hide in woods to find * Blindfold games * Night line 	<p style="text-align: center;">Natural art & craft activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Green Crowns * Natural Weaving * Dreamcatchers * Puppet Making * Elder Jewellery * Natural Portraits * Andy Goldsworthy type sculptures
<p style="text-align: center;">Establishing boundaries & exploring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 1-2-3 Where Are You? * Journey Sticks * Badger Trail * Estimating Distances * Maths trails * Animal print trails 	<p style="text-align: center;">Storytelling & music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Stories * Story part discs (pick 5 discs and the story has to include those parts) * Making Music * Xylophones * Windchimes * Potions
<p style="text-align: center;">Listening activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Sound Map * Bird Calling * Find Your Flock * Weaving Hurdle Fences 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tool use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Safe Use Of Tools Check Sheets * Cutting wood for fire * Making Kazoos * See activities above that involve tools * Making/repairing camp (benches, fence)
<p style="text-align: center;">Activities with fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Establishing A Fire Site * Collecting Sticks * Building Fires * Making A Log Screen or * Heat Reflector * Kelly Kettle * Cooking on the fire 	<p style="text-align: center;">Campfire Cooking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Toffee apple slices * Nettle/ vegetable soup * Pizza * Twizzles (dough on sticks. Experiment with fillings) * Stews * S’mores (marshmallow sandwiches) * Bread

Reviewing & evaluating

- * Chuff Line – one end is 'didn't enjoy' the other end is 'did enjoy'. Children place themselves on the line depending on their opinion as you mention different parts of the session
- * Making shapes/words to represent their day (using themselves or natural materials)
- * Talking Tree

Forest School Checklist

Basics necessary for a Forest School Session (on site)

- Tarpaulins – a selection for ground and cover (plus any needed for shelter building activities)
- First aid kit, medication/inhalers as appropriate
- Mobile phone and risk assessments
- Class list/register
- Camera or ipad
- Wood, fire tin (firelighters, fire striker, cotton wool/silver birch bark), water containers x 2, burns first aid kit
- Cooking pans/skillet/dutch oven, kelly kettle, chopping board, knife, bowl, wooden spoon – if appropriate to the activities planned.
- Tea towels, bucket, hand wash, antibacterial gel, toilet roll
- Bin bags
- Set of tools and gloves
- String/rope
- Equipment specific to the day's activities.

Using and storing tools

All tools are counted out and back in at the beginning and end of each session in which they are used. When not in use they are kept secured in a locked shed. Before each tool is used it will be checked for damage and that it is in working order.

Each set of tools are kept in their own tool bag. Children are never allowed to help themselves and will always have adult supervision when collecting, transporting and using tools.

Tools are only used for a specific purpose. Only Forest School leaders will work with children and tools. All leaders will model correct and safe tool use, storage and transportation.

Tools will be checked and cleaned before they are put away.

Risk Assessment Policy Statement

Risk Assessment Policy Statement.

Risk Assessment is an essential part of the Health and Safety management at Broomhaugh CoE First School. The Level 3 Forest School Leaders are responsible for ensuring that all policy and procedures follow best practice and are current with any legal changes and requirements. This responsibility is to be shared with the Health and Safety Coordinator. Before every Forest School session on site risk assessments will be checked .

All members of staff who support on Forest School days are required to have a full understanding of the Risk Assessment Process.

The Risk Assessment Process

Broomhaugh CoE First School will consider all activities, sites and influencing factors that need to be covered to produce comprehensive Risk Assessments.

We will follow the five steps to risk assessment to ensure all risks are minimized.

1. Look for the hazards
2. Decide who might be harmed and how
3. Evaluate the risks and decide whether the existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done.
4. Record our findings
5. Review our assessment and revise it if necessary.

The assessments are written for general welfare, weather, activities, sites or tools and must be acted upon in conjunction with one another as appropriate e.g. the site assessment will constantly be affected by the weather conditions.

All Risk Assessments are reviewed termly and updated as necessary, for example when an incident or near miss has occurred, or legislation has changed. Responsibility for this lies with the Health and Safety Co-Coordinator and Forest School leaders. If there are amendments, updated Risk Assessments must be circulated to all staff involved in Forest School work.

Forest School Fire Policy

Aim

Using fire is an integral part of the Forest School experience and ethos. Children need to experience safe fire to reduce the risk of them putting themselves in danger. Lighting fires under strict guidelines and safety instructions helps children to understand at first hand the risks and how they can be safely controlled and managed.

Showing and explaining how fire works will enable children to gain a better understanding of fire and increase their safe behaviour around fire. Our aim is for children to learn how and when to use fire appropriately. This will make it less likely for children to experiment with fire in an uncontrolled and potentially dangerous situation.

Safe Fire Procedures

- Have the Fire bucket to hand and Fire Burns First Aid Kit—know how to use them.
- Children to enter fire circle only when invited.
- If approaching the fire there will be a maximum of 4 at any one time.
- Kneel on one knee only for ease of moving backwards.
- Red fire proof gloves kept within reach.
- No bags or sticks are to be brought into the fire circle.
- For cooking purposes the fire will be allowed to die down to embers of a suitable size.
- A metal grid will be used for barbecues or for pots to stand on.
- When moving pots or serving, the supervising adult will maintain a clear area inside which no-one else is allowed.
- The children's first fire experience will be a dry run of the procedures so children can be shown the entry and exit procedures before a fire is lit.
- In later and subsequent sessions the fire may be lit by the Qualified Forest Leader before the children arrive.
- **Use of a Kelly or Storm Kettle**
The Kelly kettle is a water boiler that is a water-jacket, double walled aluminium chimney with a removable aluminium fire pan. To use, a small fire is built in the pan, the water filled chimney is placed on top and the fire heats the jacketed water. This is not an open fire.

When used the Kelly kettle is stood inside a marked area and is treated the same as a fire pit. The biggest potential hazard from it is a burn from touching the outside. This is minimized by adopting the same procedures around it as a fire. Pouring water from it is carried out within the clear area away from the group.

- In all situations where fire is being used or demonstrated, a Burns First Aid Kit, suitably

qualified adult and the means to extinguish the fire are always present.

- This policy should be read in conjunction with the Fire Pit Procedures and Fire Risk Assessment.

Kelly Kettle

taken from Forest Schools OCN Level 3 Archimedes Handout Booklet p25

Have Fire bucket to hand and Fire Burns First Aid Kit—know how to use them
Stay with the kettles at all times

- Place kettle on a firm FLAT surface - it has a high centre of gravity
- Have air hole on opposite side to spout
- Remove cork when putting on fire
- Keep spout on opposite side to you
- Have red fire gloves available

- Make a small WAFFLE fire lay in the bottom of the fire tray to aid circulation
- Use a COTTON PAD teased apart
- Scrape magnesium on if required
- Use SWEDISH FIRE STEEL to light
- Place on TINDER—silver birch bark
- Place on KINDLING—folded silver birch twigs, elder (DRY STANDING DEAD WOOD)
- Put kettle on to help draw the flame
- BE PATIENT
- Put FUEL small pieces down the chimney
- When boiling remove from base with gloves
- Place on a flat surface
- Allow fire to go out naturally

Forest School Waste Policy

Aim

The ethos of Forest School is very much related to taking care of the environment. Children need to make the links between what they see and do and the impact this can have. Ensuring there is no waste left when we leave the woods is essential.

Explaining why we need to leave no waste is an essential element of caring for ourselves and the environment we live in. The Countryside Code has a section titled Protect the Environment, which states that litter should be taken home. We aim to support this as it is a criminal offence to drop litter.

The main type of waste relates to food, litter, water and the fire pit.

1. Food

- All members of the group will be informed that any food that is not eaten or has fallen on the ground will be taken back with the individuals.
- Food left in the woods can cause harm to the fauna in the wood.
- Waste food will not be burned in the fire.
- It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure all their rubbish and waste food is removed with them.
- The group leader will always check the site before leaving.

2. Litter

- All members of the group will be made aware of issues surrounding left litter such as spoiling the landscape, endangering wildlife, polluting soil and water.

3. Water

- Water is a very valuable resource and needs to be seen as such.
- Water is needed for drinking (this will be held in a specified water container), hand washing and the fire pit.
- Water used for hand washing will be recycled by being used to put out the fire.

Forest School Risk Assessments

Fire

This activity risk assessment must be used in conjunction with:

Risk Assessments: General Welfare & Weather
 Site Specific Woodland Assessment
 Related Activity Risk Assessments

Procedures: Lifting
 Site safety
 Tool Use and storage

	Hazards	Control Measures - how to manage the risks safely
1	Burns from igniting the fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The group will be briefed on Forest Schools Fire Safety Policy. ● Any group lighting fire will do so at arm's length using fire lighter kits (magnesium block and striker only) ● Matches and firelighters only to be used by the Forest Leader when required.
2	Burns from cooking, kettles, pans, burning wood, hot water or fire pit rocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Group will be briefed on the Forest Schools fire safety policy and procedures in the fire area ● The leader will remove all items from the fire area. ● All children will be seated when passed any hot item. ● Everyone to move round in the fire zone in a safe and controlled manner. ● Fire First Aid kit to be readily available and water bucket ● Children cooking on fire to be re-briefed immediately prior to activity, on their required actions.
3	Burns from hot food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All participants will be told about the dangers of eating food directly from the fire. ● Children will shown suitable time scales for eating food once removed from the fire.
4	Setting surrounding ground and vegetation areas alight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fire pit will be strategically placed with minimum risk of setting surrounding foliage alight. ● Burning sticks not to be removed from the fire. ● Ensure that all feeding of the fire is carried out using suitable sized sticks that do not cross the barrier. ● Large amounts of water are available to extinguish prior to leaving the site
5	Slipping, tripping, and falling on to the fire once alight.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure there is a safe working distance from fire to prevent slipping. Seating around the fire will be at a distance of min. 2 meters and will be raised off the ground to aid easy exit and reduce risk of falling. ● Group needs to understand safety zone procedure. ● Ensure that the group has a full understanding on how to position themselves correctly when using the fire, so if a slip or fall occurs neither they nor any other group member will make contact with the fire. ● All shown route into area around fire and the way to approach the fire. ● Children to kneel with 1 knee up, 1 down (Respect position) to maintain balance position. ● Children shown how to push off backwards from that position, to stand before they leave the fire area.

Forest School Risk Assessments

General Welfare and Weather

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders aware of daily weather report before beginning activities and will choose to curtail the session if deemed unsafe. ● Leaders to monitor the group closely to identify any discomfort at an early stage and take appropriate action (particularly in cold and wet weather)
2	High winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Groups will not enter the woodlands when the wind is high. ● Leader will make decisions on weather before the group enters the woods.
3	Inappropriate footwear and / or clothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A list of appropriate clothing is given to parents in advance of the sessions.. ● Curtail the session if a group is inadequately equipped.
4	General health and Welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders to provide appropriate advice and monitor individuals throughout activities. ● Ensure regular food and drink breaks. ● Ensure medical info regarding food and or drink allergies is correctly identified.
5	Sunburn and heatstroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parents and Guardians will be advised to send suncream and sunhats with their children in sunny weather. As per the school policy, children will be required to apply their suncream before going outside. ● Group are advised to wear appropriate clothing, hats and sun protection. (see parents info)
6	Medical problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leader will have an up to date medical info sheet which will ensure they are aware of any medical considerations. ● Leader to ensure all consent forms are completed prior to any session and that they are aware of any allergies and medical considerations. ● Leader will carry and keep a record of consent forms.
7	Accident or health problem occurring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders are qualified Paediatric First Aiders in outdoor settings and carry /or have immediately available First Aid Kits and emergency shelter. ● Leaders to carry mobile phones. ● Leaders to note any medical information on children and support staff and helpers. ● Leader will take control of any accident or health situations assisted by school staff.

Forest School Risk Assessments

Collecting Natural Materials

This activity risk assessment must be used in conjunction with:

Risk Assessments: General Welfare & Weather

Procedures: Lifting

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Injury from lifting materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders to ensure a group understands and practices correct lifting procedures. ● Lifting Procedures implemented.
2	Getting stung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider avoiding areas that contain stinging plants and insects. ● Demonstrate and explain which plants may sting.
3	Cutting hands on litter and debris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Area to be risk assessed regarding the occurrence of litter. ● Ensure the group is aware of potential hazards and investigate areas carefully. If litter is observed leader to be informed and the group told not to touch it.
4	Trip/slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the group is told to watch out for trip/slip hazards before activity commences. Explain to the group how to move around safely not running or pushing. ● Activity area has its own risk assessment which considers trip and slip hazards.
5	Banging into Low Branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Areas chosen to avoid sites with eye height branches. ● Ensure groups are aware of any dangers these hazards may pose. Make sure the group move carefully around the wood without moving quickly.
6	Animal faeces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaders to carry antibacterial wipes in case of contact with animal faeces. ● Groups told to avoid contact with animal faeces
7	Lifting and swinging sticks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The group are shown how to lift and carry sticks carefully. ● The leader will step in to control a situation where branches are not being carried correctly.
8	Fungus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Areas with high numbers of fungi have not been observed on site ● The group are shown a fungus or pictures of them so that they can avoid touching them if they appear.
9	Toxic Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to areas containing toxic plants will be restricted. ● The group will be told not to eat anything that they find and will clean their hands before eating food.

Forest School Risk Assessments

Building shelters

This activity risk assessment must be used in conjunction with:

Risk Assessments: General Welfare & Weather

Procedures: Lifting

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Knots slipping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific knots and lashing systems are used for larger shelter construction. ● The group need to have practiced and understand lashing before being involved in more major construction.
2	Shelter collapsing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The group are advised on how and where to construct their shelters. ● The sites chosen and materials being used must be appropriate to avoid sharp points.
3	Poking eye on shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The group are advised to avoid using materials with potential dangerous spikes on them. ● The materials used should be monitored to avoid sharp points.
4	Banging heads on shelters.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The group are advised not to run or move quickly inside or in and out of shelters. ● Group to move sensibly around the shelter making area.
5	Trip Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procedures are followed to ensure equipment being used for shelter making is stored appropriately. ● The group are to be made aware of procedures for equipment and building materials to avoid trip hazards
6	Injury from use of tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Procedures are followed for tool use before activity commences. ● The group need to follow Safe Tool use procedures to ensure the area is kept safe and ensure proper tool handling occurs.
7	Lifting Heavy Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lifting procedures are to be followed ● Medical forms highlighted that identify potential problems such as back/knee injuries. ● Group needs to practice lifting techniques and to be encouraged to work as a team to carry heavier items.

Forest School Risk Assessments

Using rope or string

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Poor visibility of potential obstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High visibility rope used to span areas for trails in areas which may be considered hazardous to others.• Alternative other markers used to increase visual impact such as hanging bags or objects off the rope or string.
2	Rope Burn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gloves will be worn if an activity involves pulling a heavy rope.• Activities involving rope pulling will be controlled tightly by qualified staff.
3	Trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ropes will be made out of brightly coloured material.• Groups will be practiced at using ropes to avoid putting them where people can trip over them.
4	Entanglement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Groups briefed to leave rope /string at central point and cut required lengths.• Groups not left unsupervised with ropes, string or straps.
5	Catching neck	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ropes left in place to be made out of bright materials or marked accordingly.• Groups using rope will avoid putting them at a height where people could walk into them.
6	Pulleys failing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All equipment is checked regularly, prior to and post activity.• Leaders will check any pulleys being used and will decommission if a defect is detected.

Forest School Risk Assessments

Blindfold Activities

	Hazards	Control Measures - how to manage the risks safely
1	Tying the blind fold too tight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where possible airline style blindfolds to be used• Blindfolds made from soft materials• The leader will explain how to put the blindfolds on carefully
2	Walking into a branch or tree	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity area risk assessed by leader prior to commencing and hazards noted or removed.• Group must be made aware of the dangers and considerations of leading someone who is blindfolded.
3	Trip/ slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity area risk assessed by leader prior to commencing and hazards noted or removed.• Ensure the group is told to watch out for trip/slip hazards before activity commences. Explain to the group how to communicate effectively, move around safely.
4	Cutting hand on a sharp item	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain to group to investigate items gently. Tell them there may be rough or sharp parts so to move slowly.
5	Bending over and banging head	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activity area risk assessed by leader prior to commencing and hazards noted or removed.• Group must be made aware of dangers of leading someone who is blindfolded and need for support and to work together

Forest School Risk Assessments

Tools

Bill Hook

- N**ame: **Billhook** (many different styles available)
- A**nnotate: Handle, cutting edge.
- C**heck: Handle is not loose.
PPE – Glove on non-working hand, long trousers (preferably over trousers/ overalls), steel toe cap boots
- H**andling: Carry at your side with the cutting edge facing down. Pass using handle
- P**urpose: Used for splitting green wood, stripping poles of side branches, hedge-laying, coppicing.
- U**se: Log to be split is placed on secure surface, billhook is placed on top and hit with a wooden mallet. For other uses refer to BTCV manual!
- F**inish: Clean the blade after use, wrap blade before storing in tool bag.
- M**aintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	BILL HOOK Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All Bill Hooks are kept in sheaths when not being used. ● Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	BILL HOOK slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tool maintenance kept sharp and usable. ● No gloves worn. ● Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	BILL HOOK bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and usable. ● Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likelihood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. ● No glove tool.

Axe

Name: **Axe** (small hatchet)

Annotate: Handle, axe head, poll or butt of axe head, curved cutting edge, axe eye

Check: Ensure that the handle is secure in the axe head, check axe eye for damage
PPE – Gloves, long trousers (preferably overtrousers / overalls), working boots.

Handling: Carry at your side with blade sheath in place; some can be worn on belt.

Purpose: Can be used for chopping, whittling and splitting wood.

Use: When chopping with an axe always position yourself to the side of the blade's arc. When whittling with an axe, ensure that you have a glove on the holding hand and that the hand is behind the face of the wood that is being whittled. When splitting wood place the axe head onto the round and strike with a wooden mallet. Do not use metal on metal.

Finish: Clean the axe blade after use; ensure that the head is dry before replacing the blade sheath and storing.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from the axe's cutting edge. Ensure that the bevel is sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone. Always dry the axe thoroughly before storing.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	AXE Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Axes are kept in sheaths when not being used. • Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly. • Carry at side with sheath in place
2	AXE slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance kept sharp and usable. • Gloves worn on holding hand when whittling • Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	AXE bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and usable. • Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likelihood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. • No glove tool when chopping • Do not use metal on metal

Bow Saw

Name: **Bowsaw**

Annotate: Handle, blade, blade clip

Check: Blade is secure and sharp

PPE – Glove on non-working hand. Close fitting glove on working hand if required. Long trousers (preferably overtrousers / overalls), working boots.

Handling: Carry at your side with blade facing down, pass using the handle

Purpose: Used for cutting green and dead wood (blades differ for each type) up to a size determined by the limitations of the handle size

Use: Use stepped cuts for standing live wood. Secure wood lengths before sawing. Use three backward cuts (with hand through blade) to start the cut and then use saw on both push and pull action.

Finish: Clean the cutting edge after use, Clip blade guard on before storing in tool bag

Maintain: When blade gets blunt replace with a new one. Replace damaged or lost blade guards

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Injury during Bow Saw Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All bow saws kept in sheaths when not being used.• Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly in its designated holder.
2	Tool slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tool maintenance keeps bow saw sharp and usable.• Glove worn on the non sawing hand.• Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	Bow Saw blade snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular and effective maintenance of tools.• Glove worn on non sawing hand.• Group to be informed of how a blade should look and that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader.• The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Bow Saw trapping Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hand guards on tools.• Glove worn on non sawing hand.• Leader to ensure group are aware of correct positioning of saw when in use.

Hammer

Name: Hammer

Annotate: Handle, grip, claw, head.

Check: Handle and grip are secure. **PPE - do not wear gloves when using hammer. Long trousers, working boots.**

Handling: Carry at your side by the handle.

Purpose: Used for knocking in nails.

Use: Always use it on a secure work base. Keep loose hair and clothing tied back. Where possible, secure nail in a clothes peg to start off. Raise hammer and hit the nail repeatedly until it has gone in far enough.

Finish: Clean the hammer after use. Store in box or bag.

Maintain: Keep the hammer clean, dry and free from grease.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Injury during hammer transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hammers to be transported securely within tool box or bag.• Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Injury sustained during use to drive nails into wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not wear gloves when using hammer.• If working with a partner to steady the wood, maintain good communication and only hit work piece when both are ready.• Where possible, secure nail in peg for initial driving in of nail to avoid injury to fingers.
3	Face or eye injury sustained during use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate safe posture and tool use.• Ensure adequate work space around user.
4	Injury caused by using damaged or broken tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group leader to inspect tools at each session.• Any defective tool to be discarded

Palm Drill

Name: Palm Drill

Annotate: Handle, drill bit

Check: Drill bit is secure and in good working order. **PPE - glove on non-working hand. Close fitting glove on working hand if required. Long trousers, working boots.**

Handling: Carry at your side, drill bit pointing down.

Purpose: Used for drilling holes in wood.

Use: Always use it on a secure work base. Keep loose hair and clothing tied back. Wear a glove on the bracing hand, apply pressure and keep turning the drill to make a hole.

Finish: Clean the palm drill after use. Store in box or bag.

Maintain: Keep the palm drill clean and dry. Replace when drill becomes too blunt to use.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Injury during Palm Drill transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Store palm drills in their own box or bag within easy reach.● Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Tool slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Always work on a secure work base.● Glove worn on the bracing hand.● Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	Injury from broken or damaged tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● All breakages and damage to be reported to the leader immediately.● The leader will decommission the tool if broken.

Pruning Saw

Name: Pruning saw

Annotate: Handle, blade, hinge, lock.

Check: Blade is secure and sharp, hinge secure, lock works.
PPE – Glove on non-working hand. Close fitting glove on working hand if required. Long trousers (preferably overtrousers / overalls), working boots.

Handling: Carry folded, pass using the handle or folded.

Purpose: Used for cutting green and dead wood, up to about 10cm + depending upon size of blade.

Use: Use stepped cuts for standing live wood. Secure wood lengths before sawing. Establish a groove to start the cut, most pruning saws work on the pull action.

Finish: Clean the cutting edge after use, fold and secure blade before storing in tool bag.

Maintain: When blade gets blunt replace with a new one.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Pruning saw Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All Pruning saws are kept in sheaths when not being used.• Leader to ensure group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Pruning saw slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tool maintenance kept sharp and usable.• Gloves worn on non sawing hand.• Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group.
3	Pruning saw Blade Snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and usable.• Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likelihood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group.• Glove worn on non tool hand.• The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported to the leader.• The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Pruning Saw Trapping Hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leader to ensure group knows the correct positioning of saw when in use.

Loppers

Name: **Loppers** (Bypass or Anvil types)

Annotate: Handles (grips), shaft, hinge, pivot nut, cutting edge

Check: Grips are not damaged or loose, extension locks (if present), cutting edge is clean, hinge free to open and close and secure
PPE – Gloves, long trousers (preferably overtrousers / overalls), working boots.

Handling: Carry at your side with hand on shaft, pass shaft first

Purpose: Used for cutting branches up to 7cm diameter approx.

Use: Use length of shaft to give maximum leverage, put wood to be cut as close to the hinge as possible, be aware of your own working space being clear of obstructions / trip hazards etc. Make sure area to be cut is clear of people. When cutting above head height a hard hat may be necessary.

Finish: Clean the cutting edge after use, close cutting edge before storing in tool bag.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Loppers Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All loppers are kept in sheaths when not being used. • Leader to ensure group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Loppers slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance kept sharp and usable. • Gloves worn to prevent slipping. • Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group. • Group needs to know the tool's capacity to prevent the tool failing to cut and bouncing off.
3	Loppers bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and usable. • Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likelihood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. • No glove tool.
4	Loppers snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. • The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.

Secateurs

Name: **Secateurs** (Bypass or anvil type)

Annotate: Handles (grips), hinge, pivot nut, cutting edge, securing mechanism & spring

Check: Grips are not damaged or loose, cutting edge is clean, hinge free to open and close and secure, securing mechanism works
PPE – Gloves on non-working hand, long trousers (preferably overtrousers / overalls), working boots.

Handling: Make sure secateurs are closed. Carry at your side with hand on shaft, pass handles first

Purpose: Used for cutting small branches up to 2.5cm diameter approx.

Use: Use length of handles to give maximum leverage, put wood to be cut as close to the hinge as possible, be aware of your own working space being clear of obstructions / trip hazards etc. Make sure area to be cut is clear of people.

Finish: Clean the cutting edge after use, close cutting edge and secure before storing in tool bag.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Secateurs Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Secateurs are kept in protective carriers when not being used. • Leader to ensure group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Secateurs slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance kept sharp and usable. • No gloves worn on working hand to prevent slipping. • Leader to ensure the group have a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group. •
3	Secateurs bouncing off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. Kept sharp and usable. • Group to be informed on how to position the tool correctly when using to reduce the likelihood of a slip occurring and ensuring no contact with any member of the group. • No glove tool. • Group needs to know the tool's capacity to prevent the tool failing to cut and bouncing off.
4	Secateurs breaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. • The group should know that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.

Sheath/Penknife

- N**ame: **Penknife** (Sheath, locking or non-locking types)
- A**nnotate: Handle, blade, hinge (folding types), lock
- C**heck: Blade secure, hinge secure, locking device functions
PPE – Glove on non-working hand, long trousers, (preferably over trousers/ overalls) working boots.
- H**andling: Close or sheath the knife when not in use. Pass using handle
- P**urpose: Used for cutting, shaping, de-barking and carving
- U**se: Sit or stand comfortably and securely. Lock elbows in to body and work the blade moving away from you. Check you have enough personal space to work safely.
- F**inish: Clean the blade after use, close or sheath blade before storing in tool bag.
- M**aintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet or dry sharpening stone

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Sheath Knife Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Sheath knives kept in sheaths when not being used. • Leader to ensure group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly in its designated holder.
2	Tool slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance keeps knifesharp and usable. • Gloves worn on non working hand. • Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group. • “Seatbelt position! Plug yourself in!” Non working hand holds wood to be whittled across body and to the side (like a seat belt). Working hand whittles away from body. • Sufficient spacing between tool users
3	Blade snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. • Group to be informed of how a blade should look and that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Sheath Knife storage during a session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knives need to be in their sheath hanging from their tether. • When not in use they should be returned to the correct storage box.

Potato Peeler

Name: Potato peeler

Annotate: Handle, cutting edge

Check: Blade secure

PPE – Glove on non-working hand, working boots.

Handling: Carry at your side using handle, pass handle first

Purpose: Used for de-barking sticks

Use: Stand or sit securely, lock elbows in to body and work the blade moving away from you. Check you have enough personal space to work safely.

Finish: Clean the cutting edge after use, store in tool bag or box.

Maintain: Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, replace when blunt.

	Hazard	Control Measures – how to manage the risks safely
1	Potato peeler Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry at side using handle, pass the handle first • Leader to ensure group has a full understanding on how to carry the tool correctly.
2	Tool slipping when being used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool maintenance keeps peeler sharp and usable. • Gloves worn on non working hand. • Leader to ensure the group has a full understanding on how to position the tool correctly when using it so if a slip occurs it will not make contact with them or any member of the group. • “Seatbelt position! Plug yourself in!” Non working hand holds wood to be whittled across body and to the side (like a seat belt). Working hand whittles away from body. • Sufficient spacing between tool users
3	Blade snapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and effective maintenance of tools. • Group to be informed of how a blade should look and that if a problem has occurred with a tool it should be reported immediately to the leader. • The leader will decommission the tool.
4	Peeler storage during a session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When not in use they should be returned to the correct storage box.

Water (Off-Site Visits)

	Hazards	Control Measures - how to manage the risks safely
1	Drowning in stream (Water courses less than 4 meters wide) or shallow ponds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where water is present on a project site the group are to be given safety brief. ● Leader will confirm beforehand that there are no underwater hazards (such as rocks or roots which can trap feet, rusty cans or wire which can cut, or strong currents). ● Leader to obtain weather forecast before visit and ascertain likelihood of water levels rapidly rising. ● If planning to enter the water, children will clearly be told the depth to which they can go. This will normally be no more than knee level. ● The access point will be clearly marked and will be a shallow sloping piece of ground where the bank is not slippery, and there is no deep mud or vegetation. ● Briefing the group that pushing or dragging others is unsafe and unacceptable ● Allow children into the water in supervised small groups, 1 group at a time.
2	Drowning in rivers (water courses greater than 4 meters wide) or deep ponds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A comprehensive site specific risk assessment will be carried out in the event that activities must be undertaken near a river or deep water.
3	Getting wet leading to Hypothermia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leader to check weather and take appropriate clothing and equipment (see General Weather risk Assessment) ● Spare clothing to be available if appropriate to weather conditions and/or group ● Ensure all activities that involve water consider the weather conditions.
4	Health hazards such as disease from standing water, leptospirosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standing water on a site will be assessed by a competent person and advice taken accordingly. ● Groups informed of the dangers of Disease from stagnant and standing water. ● Hands to be washed before eating or drinking ● Encourage parents/guardians to protect open wounds with waterproof plasters prior to visit.

Group Safety at Water Margins:

<https://oeapng.info/downloads/download-info/7i-group-safety-at-water-margins/>

Clothing and Equipment For Forest School Days

Winter

Vest or T-shirt
Long sleeved top
Hooded top / fleece or thick jumper
Waterproof jacket
Thick socks (thermal or two pairs of thin ones)
Trousers (NOT JEANS)
Waterproof trousers
Wellington Boots or walking boots
Hat, scarf and gloves

Summer

Long sleeved top
Hooded top / fleece
Waterproof jacket
Thick socks (thermal or two pairs of thin ones)
Light trousers (NOT JEANS)
Waterproof trousers
Wellington Boots or walking boots
Sunhat
Sunglasses

Sunscreen and insect repellent with names on bottles.

named water bottle

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Forest School Leaders and practitioners regard their duty of care when working with young people as extremely important. To ensure all individuals (children, workers, volunteers) are safe and protected we ensure the following:-

- * Everyone involved in Forest School is fully briefed on health and safety, risk assessment of sites and activities. Staff and volunteers should be made aware of the relevant school policies and ensure that they adhere to the guidance contained in them.
- * All school staff and regular volunteers have current CRB checks.
- * Any concerns about a child's physical or mental wellbeing should be shared with the schools named Child Protection Person, so that the schools child protection policy can then be followed.
- * We regard safety and good practice as crucially important and it is the responsibility of individual staff and volunteers to ensure general safety during working.
- * Confidentiality should be maintained at all times. Any concerns should only be shared with those who need to know such as the Forest School Leader or Class Teacher who can then ensure the correct channels are then informed.

Our School safeguarding policy can be found here:

http://www.broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk/website/school_policies/100475

- Designated Safeguarding Lead - Jen Ainsley (telephone: 01434 682374)
(email: jennifer.ainsley@broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk)
- Designated Safeguarding Deputy - Suz Hart (telephone: 01434 682374)
(email: suzanne.hart@broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk)

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

In Forest School sessions all persons should be treated equally.

We aim to and are committed to:

- * providing a secure environment in which children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued;
- * making every effort to ensure that all activities are fully inclusive, thus catering for all ability levels
- * ensuring alternative arrangements are made if disability makes accessibility difficult.
- * making inclusion a thread which runs through all of the activities of Forest School.

We follow the school policies on SEND and inclusion. They can be found here:

http://www.broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk/website/send_special_educational_needs_and_disabilities/136911

http://www.broomhaugh.northumberland.sch.uk/website/school_policies/100475

Forest School Information for Support Staff and Accompanying Adults

What is Forest School?

Forest School is a form of education that takes place in the outdoor environment where children are encouraged to work individually and as a team, to solve problems, assess risks, communicate with others and respect and appreciate the countryside. It enhances their school curriculum by giving them memorable and real life experiences. When outside the children cover all areas of the curriculum and some of what we do is used to enthuse and encourage writing and other activities when back in the classroom. Our experience is that the children get a huge amount out of outdoor learning; increased self-esteem, team building, cooperation, mathematical investigation, speaking and listening, scientific enquiry and storytelling to name just a few!

Content of the Session

You will have had time to talk with the group leader about the activities which are planned and how you will be supporting.

Risk Assessments/Staff experience

All activities on the site are thoroughly risk assessed and copies of these can be found in the Forest Schools Handbook. You should be made familiar with these by the group leader prior to the session. The Group Leaders are Qualified Forest Schools Level 3 Practitioners.

Safety Guidelines

There are certain procedures we use at Forest School with the children, such as safe conduct around the fire area or safe use of tools. All adults must follow these actions and demonstrate good practice to the children throughout the session. Children will copy what they see rather than what they hear.

First Aid and General Health

First Aid kits are carried with the group leaders at all times. There is one held at the Fire Pit Area alongside the Burns First Aid Kit when we have a fire. Any specific children's medication will be held by the leader at all times. **You must make the Group Leader aware of any medical issues you may have.**

Staff Clothing

We will be out in all weathers so it is important that you are dressed appropriately. Layers of clothing and waterproof outerwear, suitable walking boots or wellies with thick socks to keep feet warm. We need to be warm and comfortable as we are there to support the children. We also need to act as role models for the children. Feeling cold and damp isn't fun and can be dangerous. Hats and gloves are needed in the winter and sunhats and sun cream for the summer. Jeans should not be worn as they become very cold and dangerous when wet.

Toilets

Our school toilets are accessible from our Forest School site.

Poor Weather

Our intention is to go out in all weather. If the weather is severely windy we will cancel the session as severe wind makes the forest site very dangerous.

**If you would like more information please speak to
Sarah Curtis and Helen Hunter L3 Forest Leaders.**

Broomhaugh Church of England First School Forest School Parental Agreement

I _____ have read the attached information.

* I agree to my child taking part in Forest School sessions whilst they attend Broomhaugh Church of England First School Forest School.

* I understand that the staff and Forest School leaders take my child's safety and educational development seriously and support the planning and activities that they do.

* I will ensure that my child attends Forest School sessions fully equipped and prepared for the day.

* I understand that if I have any questions, I can seek advice from my child's class teacher or one of the Forest School Leaders.

Signed

Name of Child

Date.....

