

Forest School Handbook

Forest School Handbook: Ysgol Maes-y-Felin: Declaration

I, hereby, sign to confirm that I have read the Forest School Handbook.

Signed	Role	Date
M Duffy	FSL3 Trainee	May 2023
Megan Wilde	Nurture Class Teacher	May 2023
T Nellist	Acting Deputy Headteacher	May 2023
M Duffy	FSL3 Leader	May 2024
T Nellist	Acting Deputy Headteacher	May 2024

Forest School Handbook

Handbook Contents List

Emergency Action Plan and Prevention

- First Aid Casualty Monitoring Forms
- Forest School Site Risk Assessment
- Open Fire Risk Assessment
- Play Risk Assessment
- Tools and Equipment Risk Assessment
- Rules and Procedures
- Forest School Policy
- Fire Policy
- Hand Tool Policy
- Rules and Procedures
- Health and Safety procedures

To be Taken into the Eco Area for Forest School Sessions

- First aid kit
- Mobile phone
- Forest school handbook
- Water for fire
- Fire blanket
- Snacks, drinks & cups
- Whistle
- Tissues
- Baby wipes
- Happy sacks
- Bin bag
- Hand gel
- Hand washing essentials
- Tools and equipment required for the session

First Aid Kit Contents

- 4 triangular bandages
- 4 pairs of non-latex gloves
- 20 plasters in a selection of sizes
- 2 eye pads
- 2 crepe bandages
- 2 large unmedicated wound dressings
- 6 medium unmedicated wound dressings
- 1 roll micropore tape

Forest School Handbook

- 2 instant ice packs
- Burns kit
- Sterile water or 10 antiseptic wipes
- 2 foil blankets
- Casualty monitoring card
- Accident record forms
- Emergency action plan
- Record of regular checks & re-stocks

Forest School Handbook

Forest School Policy

Vision Statement

Ysgol Maes Y Felin school aims to use the natural outdoor woodland area to offer the children an insight into the Forest School ethos. This approach to outdoor learning encourages children to become independent, use their imagination, take appropriate risks within boundaries and initiate learning for themselves. Forest School is a holistic approach to learning, incorporating children's individuality and develops their skills for lifelong learning. It can cover all six areas of learning, including the emotional and spiritual aspects of learning where self-esteem and self-confidence can grow and positive relationships with peers can be formed. Forest School explore the outdoors and the natural environment with practical activities all year round. It develops peer learning with the adults providing support and enabling activities to take place. The child's interest will be at the forefront of any activity.

Ysgol Maes y Felin School has many additional policies which will be adhered to alongside this policy during Forest School sessions within our woodland.

Legislation considered for policy

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- Race Relations Acts 1976 & 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1986
- Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001
- Children Act 2004

Implementation

Risk assessments, good practice, Forest School activities, rules for tools and fire etc. can all be found within the Forest School guidebook which contains everything you need to know about our Forest School sessions, e.g. procedures, risk assessments, environmental impacts etc. A Forest School file is taken into the woodland on each visit, this contains vital information needed for each session which includes procedures in the event of an emergency etc.

Equality and Diversity

All children will be included with all activities and no form of discrimination will take place. Reasonable adjustments will be made to make it inclusive for all. Inclusion is a thread which runs through all of the Forest School activities regardless of a child's ability, disability, gender, race, culture, etc. Ysgol Maes y Felin School has an Inclusion, Additional Needs Policy and an Equality and Diversity Policy which will be adhered to during Forest School Sessions.

Forest School Handbook

Health and Safety

Forest School sessions by their nature encourage children to develop their own risk management skills and will support them to become responsible for themselves and others around them. Children will be reminded of rules and safe play if they are considered too dangerous. Ratios within the woodland area remain the same as indoors as we are still on the school premises (1 adult to 8 children or with an Early Years Professional 1 adult to 13 children).

Risk Assessment Policy

Risk assessments will be carried out before each visit and for the use of all tools and equipment. Dynamic risk assessments will be in place to cover other eventualities. The Forest School Leader will assess weather conditions regularly and will evacuate the area if they become too extreme. All Children and adults will wear appropriate clothing depending upon the weather conditions. An open fire risk assessment will be carried out before a fire is allowed and protection procedures followed. A Forest School Leader will be present at all times and Children will be reminded of safe practice.

Risk Assessments will include:

- the site of the Forest School
- individual Risk Assessments for tools (bill hook, bow saw, mallets, knives)
- open fire
- pond area
- garden tools
- wide games
- knives and potato peelers
- blind fold activities

First Aid

Five staff within the school have first aid qualifications. One member of staff with first aid training will be present at forest school sessions where possible. If an emergency situation arises staff will deal with the casualty, staff will also ensure the safety of all other Children within the group and the possible need to evacuate them indoors. Seek emergency help if needed. There will be a first aid kit taken into the woodland area and extra first aid equipment is located with the school. Contact the parents and complete the accident report forms, contact HSE if it is a serious accident. Emergency procedures are within the Forest Schools Sessions handbook which is taken into the woodland each session. Ensure all staff are aware of medical conditions of the Children and inhalers, epi pens etc. are taken into woodland.

Use of Tools

Children and adults will be trained in the use of each tool before they use it. Tools will be counted in and out and checked against an inventory. Tools will be stored safely and kept out of the reach of Children. They will be cleaned after each use to

Forest School Handbook

prolong their life, broken and damaged tools will not be used. Children and adults will be informed of rules, safety and how to use before they use. Tools use will be on a ratio of one to one when required for the tool being used as not all tools will require 1:1.

Use of Fires

- A Forest School Leader must always be present when a fire is lit and must never be left unattended. There must always be water available to extinguish the fire.
- Children will be reminded of the fire pit procedures at each and every visit.
- Walk behind the log seats and stand behind the log.
- Step over and sit down on the log seat.
- Stand up, turn around and step over the log.
- Children are not allowed to cross the inner circle unless directed by an adult.

Environment

Wherever possible, environmentally friendly products and recycled materials will be used. Ysgol Maes Y Felin will promote environmental awareness and care for our environment. Conservation issues and sustainability will also be supported. The woodland will be maintained to ensure the survival of all native flora and fauna and new flora will be introduced if needed. We will remove all litter and debris we take into the woodland and have regular litter picks to remove other refuse which is in the area. We will be caring towards our neighbours and try to minimise the amount of smoke and noise produced. Brambles and nettles will be removed from the main pathways but will be allowed to grow in other area of the woodland. Branches at eye level and below on the main pathways will be removed to avoid injuries for people entering the woodland unsupervised (without the Forest School Leader), they will remain on all other trees. Dead and fallen branches will be removed if deemed to be unsafe, however if they are safe to be left they will be to preserve habitats. Branches that are removed will be chopped and stored in the log store and used as fire wood. During the winter months large stones and logs will be left alone to avoid disturbing hibernating creatures. There will be areas created where wood is allowed to rot to encourage insects to thrive, wild flowers will be allowed to grow and children encouraged to enjoy them growing rather than pick them. A hedgerow will be introduced around the edge of the eco area and maintained to encourage small wildlife to live in the woods.

Roles and Responsibilities

Forest School Leader: will have a level 3 Forest School Leader qualification, CRB enhanced disclosure and work alongside a trained first aider.

Forest School Leader will have the overall responsibility for:

Forest School Handbook

- risk assessments for each session, pre-visit site checks and continuous safety monitoring.
- planning for sessions, differentiation for individual children's needs.
- ensuring necessary equipment is taken into woodland.
- administration of first aid and first aid kit.
- supervision of tools use, cleaning and storing.
- organising emergency procedures.

Staff / children / volunteers: will model good practice throughout the session, carry out delegated roles and responsibilities, extend children's learning where appropriate by asking extended questions support children to manage their own risk, remind children of rules and boundaries, be aware of dangers within Forest School and monitor levels of safety at all times, support the Forest School Leader to run the sessions.

Monitoring of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually but may also be influenced earlier by new research and government guidelines.

Date	Staff Member	Review Date
May 2023	T Nellist: Acting Deputy Headteacher	May 2025
May 2023	M Duffy Trainee FSL3	May 2025

Site Risk Assessment Form

Forest School Handbook

Address:	Ysgol Maes-Y-Felin Pen Y Maes Road Holywell CH8 7EN	Phone Number of Site:	(01352) 711366
Directions for Ambulance:	Forest school sessions are located at the rear of the school in the school Eco-Area.	Commencement Date:	May 2024
What3words:	///ticked.headings.Childrens	Review Date:	May 2025

Hospital Information:

Glan Clwyd A&E Boddlewydan (01745 583910)

Minor Injuries @ Holywell Community Hospital 8am-8pm (01352 711833)

Description of Site:

The area is owned by Ysgol Maes y Felin and is within their school grounds surrounded by high fences and trees. The site is used by the school. Large fauna cannot access the area, however smaller fauna such as cats, hedgehogs, badgers, foxes and rabbits can enter.

The site is a small area with a mixture of flora including ferns, bramble and nettles. There is no access for vehicles into the eco area. There is also a fenced pond in the area. On one side of the eco area, there are residential properties, the other side is overlooked by both Ysgol Maes y Felin and Ysgol Treffynnon. Debris often comes into the area through both sides. There is a fire pit area within the eco area which is surrounded by tree trunk benches.

Forest School Handbook

	Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Level of risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?
1	Nettles and Brambles	Stinging	All Childrens and staff	Medium	Make children aware, clear pathways and main play areas.	Low	Lead Forest School Staff Prior to visit
2	Berried Flora	Poisoning	Staff and children	Medium	Inform all children not to pick or eat berries. Wash hands before eating any food.	Low	Lead Forest School Staff During sessions
3	Tree roots and stumps	Tripping	All staff and children	Medium	Inform all to take care in eco area, clear walkways of bramble roots where possible. Use red triangles to highlight tree stumps.	Low	All On visit
4	Tree branches	Branches falling Children falling	All staff and children	Medium	Pre-visit & continuous risk check. Remove hanging dead wood and branches. Remind children of risks.	Low	Lead Forest School Staff Prior to & on visit

Forest School Handbook

	Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Level of Risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?
5	Faeces	Contamination	All staff and children	Medium	Clear faeces in site check prior to session. Pre-visit & continuous risk check. Remove and discard safely.	Low	Lead Forest School Staff Prior to & on session
6	Debris and rubbish	Litter	All	Low	Pre-visit & continuous risk check. Instruct children not to pick up rubbish and to inform an adult if they find something. Adult to remove item safely.	Low	Lead Forest School Staff Prior to & on session
7	Fire	Burns Out of control flames	All	High	Trained staff present at all times and safety procedures are followed. Separate risk assessment is available further into the handbook	Medium	Lead Forest School Staff Prior to & on session

Forest School Handbook

	Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Level of Risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?
9	Perimeter fence and gates	Escape of children	Children	Low	Ensure all gates are closed and main school gates are locked	Low	All On visit
10	Mushrooms and Fungi	Poisoning	All	Medium	Inform all children and adults to look only, no touching.	Low	All On visit
11	Bees, Wasps and Adders	Stings and bites	All	Medium	Check area for nests. If a nest is found then avoid contact. First aider always on school site. Seek medical aid (999) if there is an anaphylactic shock.	Low	All On visit

Forest School Handbook

	Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Level of Risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?
12	Tools	Cuts, grazes and amputations	All	Medium	Tools stored away in shed. Used on a one to one basis, strict supervision. Correct use of tools <i>Separate risk assessment for each tool is available further into the handbook</i>	Low	All On visit
14	Ropes and swings	Falls, rope burns.	Staff and Children	Medium	Check quality of ropes and knots. Staff dynamically risk assess throughout session. First aider on site at all times.	Low	All On visit
15	Trees	Falls and falling branches	All	High	Support children to manage their own risks. Dynamically risk assess throughout session. First aider on site at all times	Medium	All On visit

Forest School Handbook

	Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Level of Risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?
16	Pond/water	Falling in, drowning,	All	High	See separate pond RA. Make sure children stay behind the fenced section and in viewing areas.	Medium	All, on visit

Forest School Handbook

Emergency Arrangements

Serious Accident: Seek additional adult help, provide first aid, call ambulance 999, inform parents (next of kin). Return all other children into the classroom, keep them calm, read stories, sing songs etc. Write up accident report form, inform HSE, assess risk assessment and make new adjustments for future.

Minor Accident: Provide first aid, complete accident report form, inform parents (carer), assess risk assessment and adjust, where necessary, for the future.

Weather Change: Make dynamic risk assessment, seek shelter or return to the classroom.

Safety Advice

Clothing: Long trousers and long sleeves, warm clothing in cold weather, waterproof clothing in wet weather. Safety gauntlets at fire, work wear gloves for using tools and collecting rubbish. Spare clothing available in classroom for emergencies.

Communication: Mobile phone, phone school office.

First Aid: Woodland first aid kit to be taken for each visit. *See handbook for full list of what is needed.*

Food and Drink: Wash hands before eating, take snacks and drink for full sessions, take cups, wet wipes and kitchen roll. *See handbook for full list of what is needed.*

Children's safety advice: Remind children of the rules whilst being outside. *See handbook for full list.*

Staff safety advice: Staff to discuss any worries before entering the site before each session and decide if it is safe to enter as a team. Consider weather, environment, state of site etc.

Further Comments

The overall hazard rating for the site is low as long as health and safety guidelines are followed. *Forest School Handbook contains the operational plan for the Forest School sessions.*

Review Site assessment form and update annually or before should incidents or changes occur.

Forest School Handbook

Signature	Role	Review Date
M Duffy	Forest School Trainee Leader	May 2025
Tamsin Nellist	Deputy Headteacher	May 2025
D Thomas	Head Teacher	May 2025

Forest School Handbook

Open Fire Risk Assessment

Hazard	Risk	Who could be harmed and how	Level of risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?	Benefits of fire in Forest school
Fire and heat <i>Responsibility of FS leader managing the fire</i>	Burns to skin and clothes	Children and staff	High	Seating 2 metres away from main fire in a circle. Children reminded to walk around outside of fire circle. Staff and Children to use correct stance when going near fire. Correct PPE worn. Long Hair tied back	Medium	Staff throughout session	Social interaction, Communication, warmth, cooking, learning life skills, socialising, sharing stories around fire, independence, teamwork, holistic benefits e.g: reflection, relaxation. Learning to light a fire safely. Emotional well-being, Concentration skills,

Forest School Handbook

Hazard	Risk	Who could be harmed and how	Level of risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?	Benefits of fire in Forest school
Fire getting out of control <i>Responsibility of FS Leader to dynamically RA Variables when starting fire.</i>	Burns to children and adults, damage to site and surrounding areas	Children and staff and site	Medium	Forest school leader with FS staff to assess prior to starting fire and during the session weather conditions and wind speed.	Low	Responsibility of FS Leader to dynamically RA Variables when starting fire.	Safety Awareness, Physical skills, learning to manage risk,
Falls into fire	Burns	Children and staff	High	All Staff and Children to use correct stance when going near fire. Seating 2 metres away from main fire in a circle. Children reminded to walk around outside of fire circle.	Low	Children to follow fire rules. Staff to supervise and remind at all times movement around fire circle.	

Forest School Handbook

Hazard	Risk	Who could be harmed and how	Level of risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?	Benefits of fire in Forest school
Smoke	Coughing Difficulty breathing	Children and staff	Medium	Seating 2 metres away from main fire in a circle. Children reminded to walk around outside of fire circle. Move away from direction smoke is blowing. Monitor wind speed.	Low	Children to follow instructions about not sitting in direct smoke. Staff to reinforce. FS lead to monitor changes that may increase smoke and intervene when needed.	

Forest School Handbook

Hazard	Risk	Who could be harmed and how	Level of risk before measures	Measures in Place	Level of Risk after measures	Who will do this? When?	Benefits of fire in Forest school
Hot Embers	Burns to body, damage to site and nature.	Children, staff and site	Low	Only staff to discard Hot embers and remove safely from site.	Low	FS lead to ensure site is safe and embers discarded correctly prior to leaving site.	

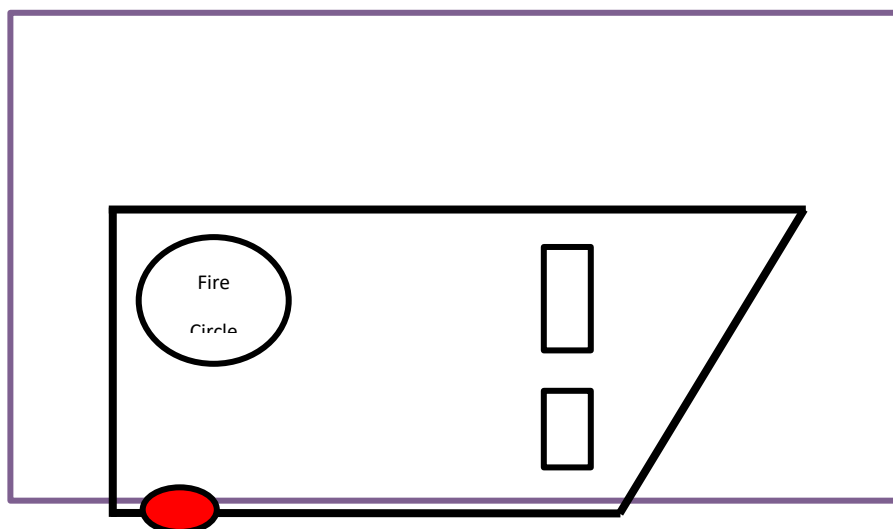
Forest School Handbook

Elements of Risk	Risk Prevention and Control
Fire and heat causing burning to skin and clothes.	• Supervision of the fire, one person to be sat beside fire at all times while alight or hot embers remain, to ensure children do not have unsupervised access. • Children to be supervised and attend the fire with an additional adult in group sizes of no more than 10 (depending upon the nature of the child). 2 adults will be present when children are beside the fire. • Children will be given rules and safety advice and dangers of fire prior to visiting the fire. • First aiders and first aid box and water bucket will be available for burns.
Fire getting out of control	• As above. • Fire will be in a stone pit surrounded by stones to prevent the fire escaping the area. • Fire area will be away from buildings. • The fire will not be under overhanging trees which may catch alight. • A bucket of water will be available to extinguish flames. • A fire blanket will be available to wrap around person who may be alight.
Falls into fire	• As above. • Children will be told to walk around the outside of the seating area, not run when around the fire.
Smoke	• The position of the fire will be away from buildings. • The wind direction will be constantly assessed and children advised to move out of the smoke.
Heat from hot embers when the fire has been extinguished.	• When the fire activity is finished the embers will be dampened and cooled with water. • Hot embers remaining will be placed in a metal container and kept away from children.

Forest School Handbook

Management Procedures of the Campfire

- Entry into the fire circle is at the left end of the eco area of the picture.
- Emergency exit is circled in red.
- Path behind barrier fence to allow children to see into all of the fire pit area.
- Benches in a circle around fire in middle.
- Fire space is not too big and surrounded by a circle of stones.
- 2-meter space between fire and benches.
- 1-meter wide gap behind benches.
- Log store kept 1 meter behind a bench.
- Soil in area is not peat.
- There are no overhanging trees.
- There are no brambles or roots in this area, holes have been filled.
- Emergency water kept in a red bucket, beside log store at all times.
- First aid kit and Forest School handbook kept behind fire circle.



Forest School Handbook

Method Statement

The purpose of this activity is to offer the children an acceptable risk activity to enhance their learning opportunities and own coping strategies. If we only provide a sanitised environment and risk adverse activities, then children will not explore and discover the world for themselves, they will only experience a safety conscious environment. However, safeguards must be in place to ensure the activity is at an appropriate level for their abilities and understanding without turning the activity into a safety-first pursuit. Encounters with certain types of risk help children to learn how to manage those risks. The risk benefit of the fire area will constantly be monitored by staff.

Rules and Procedures

Arrival and Departures

- At least 2 members of staff to complete head count to ensure a double check.
- Complete register before leaving the school building, this is to be taken to the woods.
- Head count before you leave the premises.
- One member of staff leads, another at rear.
- Head count upon arrival at fire circle.
- Head count at snack time.
- Head count before leaving the woods.
- Head count upon arriving back indoors.
- Monitor children coming in and out of site to use toilet facilities.

Fire Circle

- Enter the fire circle and walk behind the circle of tree stumps.
- When everyone is in the circle stop, step over the stumps and sit down.
- No one walks in the area between the fire and benches without permission of the forest school leader.
- If you want to leave the circle stand up and step back over your stump.
- Walk around the outside of the tree stumps and leave the fire circle.

Cooking and Food Hygiene:

- No more than four people (adults and children) at the fire.
- Kneel on one knee so you can move backwards and are sturdy so you do not fall over. If required children or adults may feel sturdier on both knees, this can be determined by the child's needs or capabilities on an individual basis.
- All food must be prepared with designated cutlery/knives/chopping boards that are for food use only. These must be cleaned in a washing up area separate from the handwashing station. Staff must ensure no cross contamination between food products.

Forest School Handbook

- Staff to wear gloves when preparing food. Children and staff to ensure correct handwashing procedures are followed before and after food preparation.
- At least one member of staff should have a Level 2 Basic Food hygiene certificate.
- Food preparation should take place on the designated food table.

Stick Rule

- If you play with a stick be aware of other children in your close proximity. Children are able to explore and use sticks in their play. Forest school staff and children can dynamically risk assess their play and if they need help carrying or using larger sticks they can ask a friend or staff for help. Playing with sticks offers lots of benefits for children including physical development and problem solving. Children can also work together to help to move larger sticks around the site.

Where to Play

- Do not go out of the Eco-Area.
- Across the site but never within the fire circle when fire is lit.

Find an Adult

- If you are hurt, sad or feel frightened
- If someone else is hurt, sad or feels frightened
- If you see rubbish or something that will hurt you like glass or cans, (do not pick the rubbish up, an adult will)
- If you hear the whistle
- If you see a stranger

Missing Child / ren

- Children walk to the woodland and are counted before they enter, when they arrive, at snack times, before they leave the woodland and when they arrive back in the building
- Children are asked to play within the woodland with the designated highlighted boundary
- Upon realising a child may be missing, another head count will be completed to check the first count was correct, then a register will be checked to see which child/ren is missing.
- One member of staff will remain with the other children, one will check the woodland area, while one will check the outskirts.
- If the child is not found, one member of staff will stay on the outskirts while the other checks inside the building and then Ysgol Maes y Felin Missing Child Policy and Procedure will take over. See *policies in the school office*.

Forest School Handbook

First Aid

- A first aid kit specific to Forest School sessions will be kept within the fire circle area during the session time. The first aid kit will be checked regularly to ensure it is complete and in date.
- There will always be a qualified first aider in school and they will administer first aid where needed. Ysgol Maes y Felin First Aid Policy will take over. *See policies in the school office.*
- If additional help is needed or in the event of serious injury:
Administer first aid, another member of staff to alert help or call emergency services, 999.
- Member of staff to gather remainder of children and return into school building.
- First aider to remain with casualty and continue to monitor, follow first aid outdoor guidelines.
- Ensure someone directs the emergency services to the casualty
- Inform parents / carers as soon as possible
- Complete all accident report forms and inform HSE as soon as possible if injury is severe.

When calling 999, be ready with the following information:

- Your name
- Telephone number – (01352)711366, or a personal mobile number
- Site Location – Ysgol Maes y Felin School, Pen y Maes Road, CH8 7EN, however for ambulance to come please use CH8 7BB.
- Description of the casualty accident / injury / symptoms.

Safeguarding Children and Disclosure

If a safeguarding concern or a disclosure became apparent during forest school sessions the staff member would follow the policy and procedures set out in safeguarding training which all school staff are trained in annually. All staff are DBS checked every 3 years and have Level 1 Safeguarding training annually. Certain staff members are trained to Level 2 and 3 safeguarding. Ysgol Maes y Felin Safeguarding Children's Policy and Procedures must be followed at all times. *See policies in the school office.*

Intruders

Inform a colleague if an intruder is present, ask them to gather the children to a safe area and make an informed choice on whether to contact the police, 999. If possible, and if safe to do so, greet the intruder politely, remain a safe distance, ask them their business, direct them to reception if needed. Remember your own safety as well as the children's do not approach the intruder if they appear angry or agitated. Remain calm and try to keep the intruder away from the children without coming into physical contact with them.

Forest School Handbook

Weather

If weather is extremely windy it may be advisable to stay indoors as branches and trees may fall as site is quite exposed. If weather changes during the session, return to the building. Ensure children are correctly dressed for all weathers. Sessions may be able to take place in certain weather conditions e.g. rain but the severity etc. will be dynamically risk assessed by staff. Staff to monitor weather in relation to safety of having an open fire (e.g.) wind direction etc.

Data Protection

All data is stored securely in the school office. Register forms for each session are locked in the class cupboard before and after every session. Forest school register to be stored in eco area shed during sessions then locked away in nurture class storeroom ready for next session.

Manual Handling

When lifting an object off the ground staff should use a straight back and be in the squatting position. Staff should not lift any objects out of their own capabilities. All heavy objects can be stored in the Eco Area shed to avoid staff having to lift lots of resources to each session.

Visitor Protocol

Ysgol Maes Y Felin Visitor protocol should be followed at all times (available in school office). Visitors should report to school reception area on arrival. Visitors should be signed in and out of site every time the visit. Visitors should have relevant DBS and documentation to be in the school building.

Forest School Handbook

Essential Equipment List

At every outdoor Ysgol Maes y Felin Forest School session, the following equipment must be present:

- First Aid Kit
- Burns First Aid Kit
- Medical details of participants (in school office as not leaving school site these are easily accessible)
- Allergy forms of participants (if needed)
- Mobile phones
- Accident forms (within school medical room)
- Risk Assessments of site and activities taking place with directions to site and emergency contact numbers
- Water
- Pan
- Fire gloves
- Wafter
- Tool kit
- Fire bucket
- Fire blanket
- Hand Wash bowl with hand wash (until permanent station working)
- Anti-bacterial gel
- 2 x Towels (One hand one tea towel)
- Work gloves
- Fire Bag - matches, striker, cotton wool, paper and fire lighters.
- Rubbish / recycle and compost boxes
- String rope and scissors
- Drink bag/box
- Hot choc, Tea Coffee, Milk, Sugar, Biscuits, Cups (if needed)
- Grills are at the sites
- Waterproofs and wellies available in school.
- Water bucket for fire and 5litres of water within.

Additional

- Resources for activities

Check that all tools taken into the woodland have been accounted for and returned to the designated box or bag when you leave, to ensure the safety of others who use the woodland after you. This list should avoid anything being left behind.

Forest School Handbook

Use of Fire Policy

Introduction

As part of the Forest School experience, it is beneficial to have an open fire at times within the woodland to allow the children to enhance their learning and development. This policy sets out the guidelines to follow to ensure safe practice is delivered throughout the activity.

Objective

To use fire safely as part of the Forest School experience.

Method for fires

Fires will only be lit by a train forest school leader, allowing children to assist and support as directed by Forest school staff. A risk assessment will be carried out before lighting a fire and fires will only be within the fire circle area. There will always be a trained adult present within their fire circle when a fire is lit or hot embers remain, a fire will never be left unattended.

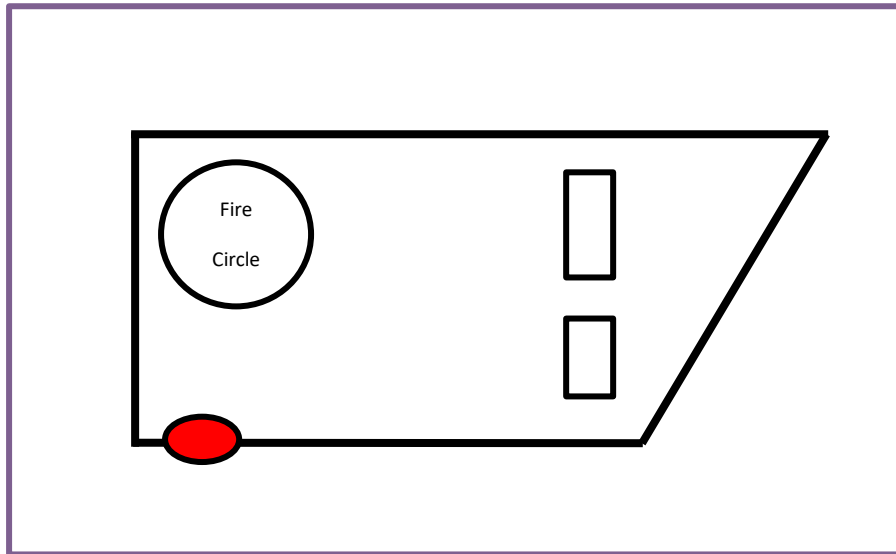
Prior to the fire area being built, the soil or bedrock must have been assessed to avoid a fire being lit on a flammable surface such as peat. The fire will be surrounded by large stones and contained in a fire pit. Fires will always be lit in the designated fire circle, there will be 8ft overhead clearance and seats around the circle will be places 1.5 meters away from the fire wok.

There will be an adequate supply of fire water close to the fire circle to ensure there is enough water available to extinguish the fire if it gets out of control or should someone get burnt. Fire proof gloves will be kept at the fire area to allow adults to pick up hot items. Children will only help around the fire when a adult has asked to and will always wear fire retardant gloves.

Before lighting the fire, there will be at least one introductory session for the children. This will include introducing the rules of the fire circle as well as how to enter and exit the area. When at the fire circle, the rules will be reiterated to the children. There will be ratios of 1:4 at the fire but this could vary at the leader's discretion. A safe stance will be used for cooking, long hair will be tied back and scarves / ties removed. A bucket will be stowed next to the fire circle containing 5liters of cold water. This bucket will be covered with a towel. This is to be used in the event of a child or adult burning themselves. The towel is covering the bucket to prevent foreign objects falling into the bucket.

Forest School Handbook

Date	Authorized Signature	Review Date
May 2023	T Nellist: Acting Deputy Headteacher	May 2025
May 2023	M Duffy: Trainee FSL3 Leader	May 2025



Forest School Handbook

Safe Use of Hand Tool Policy

Introduction

As part of the Forest School experience, it is beneficial to use hand tools. This allows children to develop new skills and progress to maintain the woodland. Children and adults will be trained through tool talks on safe handling of the tools and will work with a trained level 3 forest school member of staff to develop their own skills.

Objective

To allow children and adults to use tools safely within the woodland setting.

Method

Before any tool is used, a tool talk must be given to each child or adult at the beginning of each session. These can be found within the Forest School Handbook and Guidebook. Procedures must be followed at all times, this includes the position of the adult or child's body when using the tool.

Tools will be stored safely in a designated bag or equipment shed. Staff to be aware of tools being used and stored correctly when not in use. All tools will be counted in and out at the start and end of each session to ensure no tools get left within the woodland or lost.

All tools will be checked for damage or wear before use, damaged tools will be disposed of safely or repaired. Tools will be cleaned, repaired and maintained on a regular basis.

- Wooden handles will be checked for cracks and splintering
- Metal heads will be checked that they are not moving and are firmly in place
- Blades will be checked for chips, dents, cracks or rust
- Sheaths and guards will be kept clean, oils and waxes will be used to maintain handles.
- Oil such as WD40 will be used for moving mechanisms
- Rust can be sanded off and blades sharpened by an adult using a sharpening stone

Monitoring of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually but may also be influenced earlier by new research and government guidelines.

Forest School Handbook

Date	Authorized Signature	Review Date
May 2023	T Nellist: Deputy Headteacher	May 2025
May 2023	M Duffy: FSL3 Trainee	May 2025

Forest School Handbook

Tools & Equipment Safe Procedures

Bow Saw - Tool Talk

This is a bow saw

This is the handle

This is the blade

This is the blade cover

I take the cover off like this

This is the cutting edge



When I have finished sawing, I put the blade cover back on like this

I hold the bow saw like this

I walk with the bow saw like this

I pass the bow saw like this

When I am not using the bow saw, I put it with the blade facing in and the handle facing out like this

I use the bow saw to cut anything bigger than a 2 pence piece

When I use the bow saw I use two arms and I hold it away from others like this

When I have finished using the bow saw I put it in the designated place

Glove on non-tool hand

Bill Hook - Tool Talk

This is a bill hook

This is the bill hook cover

This is the handle

This is the blade

This is the cutting edge



Forest School Handbook

I hold the bill hook like this

I walk with the bill hook like this

I pass the bill hook like this

When I am not using the bill hook, I put it on top of the cover with the blade facing inwards and the handle facing forwards

I use the bill hook to cleave (split) wood

When I use the bill hook, I use it with 2 arms on the tool and hold it away from others like this.

When I have finished using the bill hook, I put it back in its cover and place it in the designated place.

No gloves on tool hand

Loppers – Tool Talk

This is a pair of loppers

This is the handle

This is the blade

This is the cutting edge

I hold the loppers like this

I walk with the loppers like this

I pass the loppers like this



When I am not using the loppers, I put them on the ground with the handles facing forwards and the blade facing behind me

I use the loppers to cut anything smaller than a 2 pence piece

When I use the loppers, I use it with 2 arms on the tool and hold it away from others like this.

When I have finished using the loppers, I put them back in their designated place.

No gloves on tool

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Sheath Knife – Tool Talk

This is a sheath knife

This is the handle

This is the sheath

I open by pressing here

This is the blade

This is the cutting edge



I always use on the outside of my body with the blade facing away from me

When not using it I put it back in the sheath like this

I hold it like this

I carry it like this

I pass it like this

When using the sheath knife for cutting string/whittling I always cut down onto a hard surface

I always use it with 2 arms on the tool and hold it away from others.

When I have finished using it, I put them back in their designated place.

Glove on non-tool hand

Potato Peeler – Tool Talk

This is a potato peeler

This is the handle

This is the blade

This is the cutting edge



I hold the potato peeler like this

I walk with the potato peeler like this

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I pass the potato peeler like this

When I am not using the potato peeler, I put it down with the handle facing forward and the blade facing behind me

I use the potato peeler to whittle and peel wood

I use the potato peeler with 2 arms on the tool and hold it away from others

When I have finished using the potato peeler, I put it back in the designated place.

Glove on non-tool hand

Kelly Kettle – Safe Procedures

Have emergency water and fire burns first aid kit close by

Know how to use them

Stay with the kettle at all times

Have fire safety gloves close by kettle

Place kettle on flat non-flammable surface

It has a high centre of gravity

Have air hole on opposite side to spout

Keep spout on opposite side to you

Remove cork from spout when putting kettle on fire

Make a small waffle fire in the bottom of the fire tray

Use cotton pad teased apart

Scrape on magnesium if required

Use Swedish fire steel to light

Place on tinder – silver birch bark

Place on kindling – folded silver birch bark, dry twigs, elder etc

Put kettle on to help draw the flame



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BE PATIENT

Put on fuel, small pieces down the chimney

When boiling remove from base with gloves

Place kettle on flat surface

Allow fire to extinguish naturally

Mallet – Tool Talk

This is a mallet

This is the handle

This is the hitting edge

I hold the mallet like this

I walk with the mallet like this

I pass the mallet like this

When I am not using the mallet, I put it on the ground beside me

I use the mallet with 2 arms on the tool and hold it away from others

I use the mallet to knock in fence posts and pegs.

I use a mallet to the side of my body away from my head.

No gloves on tool – Glove on non-tool hand



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Fire Circle Area – Safe Procedures

Have emergency water and burn first aid kit within fire pit area

Know how to use them

Have fire safety gloves available within reach of fire

Ensure area is suitably supervised at all times

Check fuel is suitable to be burned in area

Carry out risk assessment of area and dynamic risk assessments during session

Enter:

Enter the fire circle from entrance in enclosure fence

Walk around the outside of the benches

Face inwards and step over the bench

Sit down

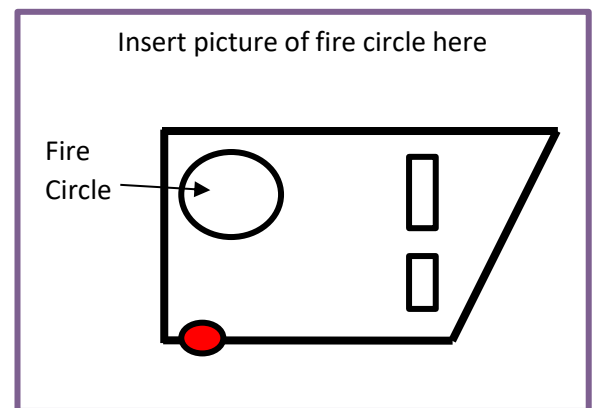
No walking in area between fire and benches

To leave area:

Stand up and step over bench

Walk behind the benches outside of the fire circle

Leave the fire circle area



Cooking:

A maximum of 4 people (children and adults) at fire at any one time

Kneel on one knee for ease of moving backwards and stability

Use clear goggles if needed for smoke

Ensure fire is extinguished correctly and all procedures followed correctly.

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Risk Assessment for Tools and Equipment Use

Benefits of Tool Use

- Develops Hand-eye co-ordination
- Understanding and respect for tools and materials
- Deeper connection with nature
- Develops and encourages Language skills
- Problem solving
- Develops Mathematical skills
- Improves self esteem
- Stress relief
- Improved Dexterity
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Improved Independence
- Role play-creative thinking
- Develops Imagination

Forest School Handbook

Bow Saw

Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Risk level before control measures	Control Measures in place	Risk level after control measures	Who will do this? When?
Inappropriate use of bow saw. Falling Branches The blade is a hazard in itself.	Injury from improper use. The risk is that when it is not used appropriately or when someone slips or doesn't follow safety procedures, this could result in injury.	Person using bow saw and those nearby	Medium	• Inform person using bow saw of tool talk. Talk the person through the tool they want to use. Ensure the person understands the expectation of how to use the tool safely. Do this with each person wanting to use the tool. • Adult to child ratio 1:1 or 2:1 depending on tool • No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on non-tool hand. • First aiders and first aid kit close by • Tools counted in and out each session. • One to one supervision for early years children • Ensure safety of site if using outside of designated tool use area. • If sawing branches from a tree, ensure no one or property will be hurt or damaged when it falls. • Remind others in area to stay clear of tools. • Keep blade cover on when not in use and store in tool bag. • A person assisting holding the branch to be sawn steady will also need to wear gloves.	Low	Forest School Leads During session

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Knives

Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Risk level before control measures	Control Measures in place	Risk level after control measures	Who will do this? When?
Inappropriate use of knives	Injury from improper use.	Person using knife and those nearby	High	• Give clear instruction through a tool talk about the tool and the expectation to use the tool safely. Inform person using knives of tool talk. <i>See Handbook.</i> • No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on non-tool hand. • First aiders and first aid kit close by • Tools counted in and out each session. • One to one supervision for children • Use in designated area for tools. • Keep in cover when not in use and store in tool bag • Remind others in vicinity to stay clear of tools. • Keep blade cover on when not in use and store in tool bag.	Medium	Forest School Leads During session

Forest School Handbook

Loppers

Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Risk level before control measures	Control Measures in place	Risk level after control measures	Who will do this? When?
Improprate use of loppers	Injury from improper use.	Person using loppers and those nearby	Medium	• Give clear instruction through a tool talk about the tool and the expectation to use the tool safely. • Inform person using mallet of tool talk. See <i>Handbook</i>. • No glove needed, both hands will be on tool. • First aiders and first aid kit close by • Tools counted in and out each session. • One to one supervision for children. • Keep in cover when not in use and store in tool bag • Remind others in vicinity to stay clear of tools • If sawing branches from a tree then ensure no one or property will be hurt or damaged when it falls.	Low	Forest School Leads During session

Forest School Handbook

Potato Peeler

Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Risk level before control measures	Control Measures in place	Risk level after control measures	Who will do this? When?
Inappropriate use of potato peeler	Injury from improper use, or not following safety instructions.	Person using potato peeler and those nearby	High	• Give clear instruction through a tool talk about the tool and the expectation to use the tool safely. Inform person using potato peeler of tool talk. <i>See Handbook.</i> • No glove needed on hand using tool, glove on other hand. • First aiders and first aid kit close by • Tools counted in and out each session. • 4:1 ratio supervision for children • Use in designated area for tools (within fire circle). • Keep in cover when not in use and store in tool bag • Remind others in vicinity to stay clear of tools.	Medium	Forest School Leads During session

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Mallet/Hammers

Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Risk level before control measures	Control Measures in place	Risk level after control measures	Who will do this? When?
Inappropriate use of mallet	Injury through improper use of tool Bumps, cuts, bruises and grazes to hands or feet	Person using mallet and those nearby	Medium	• Give clear instruction through a tool talk about the tool and the expectation to use the tool safely. • Inform person using mallet of tool talk. See <i>Handbook</i>. • No glove needed. • First aiders and first aid kit close by • Tools counted in and out each session. • One to one supervision for early years children. • Keep in cover when not in use and store in tool bag • Remind others in vicinity to stay clear of tools	Low	Forest School Leads During session

Forest School Handbook

Spades/Forks/Hoes

Hazard	Risk	People at risk	Risk level before control measures	Control Measures in place	Risk level after control measures	Who will do this? When?
Inappropriate use of garden tool (spade, fork, hoe)	Injury through improper use Cuts, injuries to feet or hands,	Person using the garden tool and those nearby	Medium	• Give clear instruction through a tool talk about the tool and the expectation to use the tool safely. • Tool talk with person using tool • Store safely when not in use • Remind others in vicinity to stay a reasonable distance clear • 1 adult to work with a group of two children max.	Low	Forest school staff during session.