



Ettington C of E Primary School Forest School Handbook





The more risks you allow children to take, the better they learn to take care of themselves.'

Roald Dahl

Teaching children about the natural world should be treated as one of the most important events in their lives.'

Thomas Berry



This handbook has been read and understood by:

Name	Signature	Date

Review date:....



Ettington C of E Primary School's Forest School Vision

Forest School at Ettington C of E Primary School offers all children a unique learning experience in a natural environment. Children will have the opportunity to develop an inquisitive and positive relationship with the natural world through hands-on learning experiences. We strongly believe that outdoor learning allows children to engage in the world around them and through these experiences they will increase confidence, self-esteem and respect for our ever-changing world.

Our aim is to give every child the opportunity to:

- Be unique, equal and valued
- Competent to explore and discover
- Take risks and challenge themselves
- Initiate their own learning through choice and determination
- Regularly succeed
- Develop positive relationships with others and themselves
- Develop a positive relationship with the natural world
- Have fun



Rules of Forest School

- Look after your Forest School
- Do not pick anything growing
- Do not lick your fingers or anything else
- Stay within the fence

The Countryside Code

There are five sections of The Countryside Code dedicated to helping us learn how to respect, protect and enjoy the countryside:

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people



Forest School Routines

Procedures to be carried out before each session

- A thorough sweep of the site will be done before each session to check for any litter, glass, animal faeces etc. Any such items will be collected using plastic bags and disposable gloves.
- A written record will be kept of each sweep which will state if any hazards were found and how they were dealt with.
- Fences, gates and hedges will be checked to ensure they are safe and secure.
- Trees will be checked for any broken or dead branches which could fall.
- Dead twigs that are at eye-level will be checked for and removed.
- Weather conditions will be checked before each session.

Session plan

- Children visit toilet and then put on clothing, waterproofs and wellies.
- Line up at back door of classroom and count children.
- Walk to the site discussing things to look for on the way.
- Head count before entering site.
- Discuss any safety issues for the session.
- Walk to base camp.
- Sit down, discuss rules and any safety issues again.
- Listening activity.
- Introduce activity for today and any other activities that are on offer.
- Children engage in either an adult-led or child-initiated activity.
- Discuss session, what they have seen, done, enjoyed and what they would like to do during the next session.
- Children line up at gate and a head count is done.
- Walk back to classroom and change clothing.

Procedures to be carried out after the session

- Clear everything away.
- Ensure the fire is completely extinguished.
- Count all the tools back into storage box.
- Collect assessment sheets and observations.
- Complete evaluation forms.



Health and Safety in the Outdoor Environment

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Ettington C of E Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to maintain safe and healthy working conditions at Ettington C of E Primary School for all staff, pupils and visitors.

http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Health-Safety-Policy-and-Arrangements-2019-version.pdf

Children's Act 1989

Ettington C of E Primary School's Child protection statement:

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. We are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect and follow our procedures to ensure that children receive effective support, protection and justice.

The school's responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children is of paramount importance.

- All children, regardless of age, gender, ability, culture, race, language, religion or sexual identity, have equal rights to protection.
- Children who are safe and feel safe are better equipped to learn.
- This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All adults at the school are required to take all welfare concerns seriously and to encourage children and young people to talk to them about anything that worries them. Staff will always act in the best interest of children.
- Representatives of the whole school community of pupils, parents, staff, volunteers and governors will therefore be involved in reviewing, shaping and developing the school's safeguarding arrangements and child protection policy.
- All staff have an equal responsibility to act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest a child is at risk of harm at home, in the community or in school.
- All staff members will maintain an attitude of 'It could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the interests of the child.
- If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral will be made to Children's Social Care immediately. Anybody can make a referral. If the child's situation does not appear to be improving, any staff member with concerns should press the Designated Safeguarding Lead for reconsideration.



- If a member of staff remains concerned about a child, they can discuss their concerns with the Headteacher, another DSL or contact the Education Safeguarding Manager for additional advice as necessary.
- Pupils and staff involved in child protection issues will receive appropriate support.

Other relevant School Policies

Anti-bullying: http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ANTI-BULLYING-POLICY.pdf

Behaviour: http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Ettington-Behaviour-Policy-2018.19.pdf

Camera and mobile phone: http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ETTINGTON-camera-mobile-phone-policy.pdf

Educational visits and activities: http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Educational-Visits-Activities-Policy.pdf

SEN: http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/SEN-policy-Sept-2018-revised.pdf

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development: http://www.ettingtonprimary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/ETTINGTON-SPIRITUAL-MORAL-SOCIAL-AND-CULTURAL-DEVELOP.pdf



Essential Equipment for Forest School

- First Aid kit
- Emergency Procedures
- Medical forms
- Risk assessments
- School mobile phone
- Clean water
- Accident forms
- Medication for individuals (medication should be clearly labelled staff must have been trained to administer it and parental consent must have been received)
- Hand gel/wet wipes
- Spare clothing
- Carry bag for dirty/wet clothes

Other Equipment

- Plastic bag/bin bag
- Torch
- Bucket of water
- Fire kit (cotton wool, striker, newspaper)
- Tools
- String/rope
- Tissues and kitchen roll
- Pen/paper
- Tarpaulins and pegs
- IPad
- Observation sheets
- Resources for session

Clothing

All adults and children attending Forest School will need to wear appropriate clothing. Waterproofs will be provided by the school. Children will need to have wellies that are kept at school. They will also need to wear suitable clothing on Forest School days to school.

Autumn/Winter/Spring

- Waterproof coat and trousers (provided by school)
- Wellington boots
- Warm hat
- Gloves
- Warm trousers
- Fleece/sweatshirt



Thick socks (pair of thermal ones or 2 pairs of thinner ones)

Summer

- Waterproof coat and trousers (provided by school)
- Wellington boots
- Socks
- Trousers
- Long sleeved top
- Sun hat
- Sun cream

Sun Protection

Ettington C of E Primary School recognises the importance of sun protection and want staff and pupils to enjoy the sun safely.

<u>Shade</u>

- The Forest School site has a large area of natural shade provided by the trees.
- Children will be encouraged to stay in shaded areas.
- If needed, a tarpaulin can be erected to provide extra shade.

Clothing

- Children and staff will be encouraged to wear sun hats.
- Children and staff will be required to wear long sleeve tops and long trousers as stated in the Forest School clothing requirements.

Sun cream

- Parents will be asked to apply long-lasting sun cream before the school day.
- Adults will be encouraged to apply sun cream.



Travel Policy

Forest School sessions take place on Ettington C of E Primary School's site, at the end of the school field.





Address: Ettington C of E Primary School

Churchill Close Ettington

Stratford Upon Avon

CV37 7SP

Travel to and from site:

- Children will exit the classroom via the exterior door and walk to the Forest School gate.
- The children will follow the Forest School Leader to base camp and sit down.
- A second member of staff will ensure the gate is closed and follow the group.
- After the Forest School session the children will follow the Forest School Leader out of the gate and back to the classroom. The second member of staff will ensure the gate is closed.



Forest School Medical Information Form

Child's Full Name Date of Birth Contact Name and relationship to child Home Address Phone numbers Mobile:		
Contact Name and relationship to child Home Address Phone numbers Mobile: Home: Work: Doctor Address:	Child's Full Name	
relationship to child Home Address Phone numbers Mobile: Home: Work: Doctor Address:	Date of Birth	
relationship to child Home Address Phone numbers Mobile: Home: Work: Doctor Address:	Contact Name and	
Phone numbers Mobile: Home: Work: Address:		
Home: Work: Doctor Address:	Home Address	
Work: Doctor Address:	Phone numbers	Mobile:
Doctor Address:		Home:
		Work:
Phone:	Doctor	Address:
		Phone:

Has your child had any of the following?

Illness	Comment	Medication needed Please specify
Asthma/Bronchitis		
Sight/hearing difficulties		
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Allergies e.g. pollen, nuts, materials		
Have they ever been stung by a wasp or bee? If yes, please describe the reaction		
Date of last Tetanus injection		



Forest School Site Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment for (Activity/Process/Operation)	Forest School Sessions
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Assessment Date	6/1/20	Review Date	20/4/20
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What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What existing control measures are in place to reduce / prevent the risk?	Considering existing controls, what is the current risk level	Risk Benefits
Slips, trips and falls	Children and adults	 Children and adults to wear appropriate footwear. Children given clear boundaries to the areas they can access. Trails and paths to be routinely monitored for obstacles or potential dangers such as falling branches. First Aid kit 	Low	 Development of motor skills. Improved balance. Encourages increased awareness of environment and self.
Insect bites and stings	Children and adults	 Children and adults to wear long sleeves and trousers. All medical forms completed advising of any known allergic reactions. First Aid kit 	Low	 Opportunity to observe the ways different minibeasts move around, communicate and smell or taste. Other than bees and wasps most



				minibeasts are generally safe for children to capture and observe.
Consuming plants, berries etc	Children	 Children made aware of risks of plants (no licking, no picking) Children will not eat or drink whilst engaged with activities. Children to clean hands before eating or drinking (Wipes/gels) 	Low	 Children can identify plants and learn about the differences. Supports awareness of the diversity of plants in the site.
Allergic reaction	Adults and children	 Adults and children completed medical form. First Aid kits Children made aware of risks of plants etc Children and adults to clean hands before eating and drinking (wipes or gels) 	Low	Children are learning about the wildlife and plants in the site.
Fire/cooking	Adults and children	 Fires are only used within the fire circle area. Only the FSL will light the fire. The FSL will never leave the fire unattended. 	Medium	 Development awareness and respect of fire. Physical development Health and self-caremanaging safe behaviour.



		 Fire is surrounded by fire square (1 metre square) Bucket of water will be close to the fire if it needs to be extinguished. Children will be taught about fire safety before the fire is lit. There should be no more than one adult (FSL) and one child at the fire at one time. When cooking go on one knee (respect position). Long hair should be tied back and loose ties or scarves should be removed or tucked away. Fire will only be lit in an area with no low branches. Fires will not be lit on windy days. 	Cooking on fire-learning about changes.
Building shelters	Adults and children	Children to be aware of dangers and taught to carry sticks low with finger over end.	Opportunities to work as a team.Problem solving.



		First Aid kit		 Develop motor skills, practise knots and develop social skills.
Animal faeces	Children	 Children to be made aware not to touch or pick up animal faeces. Children are made aware of any known faeces. Hands to be cleaned before food or drink. Animal excrement will be removed if it poses too much of a risk. 	Low	 Children can use dropping to help identify the wildlife at the site. Understand awareness and hygiene.
Falling branches (deadwood)	Adults and children	 Safety sweep done before each session. Children made aware of risks. 	Low	 Children learn to risk assess themselves.
Low branches	Adults and children	 Safety sweep done before each session. Children made aware of risks. 	Low	 Children learn to risk assess themselves. Possible tree climbing trees. Observation of tree if branches are at eye level.
Tree climbing	Children	 Children can only climb the 'tree climbing' tree. An adult will supervise children when they are climbing. Only one child at a time. 	Medium	 Children learn to risk assess themselves. Increased confidence Gross motor skill development Problem solving



		 There will be a marker on the tree to show how high a child can go (no higher than adult's shoulder) Tree climbing will not take place when it is windy or wet. 		
Concrete slabs-pile near to fence boundary.	Children	 Children will be aware of risks. One person at a time on slabs-climbing and jumping. 	Low	 Children learn to risk assess themselves. Increased confidence Gross motor skill development
Sharp branches and thorns	Children and adults	 Children aware of risks that they pose. Safety sweep to identify and risks and branches removed if necessary. 	Low	 Children's understanding of plants. Children learn to selfassess. Encourages selfconfidence

Signature: S Hudspith



Safety Sweep Evidence

			T
Date:	Time:		Weather:
Name of Forest School Leader:			
Checklist	Yes/No	Comments	
Fallen branches			
Low branches			
Protruding thorns			
Brambles/nettles			
Slippery areas			
Broken glass/needles			
Vandalism/intruders			
Weather effects			
Standing water			_
Boundary fence			
Base camp			
Tool area roped off			
Emergency rucksack			
Equipment ready			
Spare Clothes			
Other hazards identified:			
Action taken:			



Risk Management of Tools

General rules for tool use:

- Tools are stored safely with Forest School Leader having access and responsibility.
- Count tools in and out.
- Always make sure tools are clean and sharp before using.
- Never walk around with tools.
- When using tools with children it should only be with the Forest School Leader.
- Only use tools in the designated tool area.
- Blood bubble: Tools can only be used when the person is in a 'blood bubble' (metre squared space)

Tool	Use	Care
Potato peeler	 Blood bubble Always sit down when using the peeler. Use the peeler away from the body. Peel away from the body towards the ground. 	Use paintbrush to brush away wood chippings.Replace when necessary.Store in a locked box.
Penknife	 Blood bubble Always sit down when using the penknife. Ensure penknife is closed and locked when not in use. Open the penknife away from you when sitting down Always use penknife away from your body. Always ensure children are supported 1:1 	 Wipe with oily cloth. Rub with emery paper. Sharpen regularly.
Bow saw	 Blood bubble Ensure guard is in place when not in use. Use the bow saw with a saw horse whenever possible. Glove on non-sawing hand. Bodies at a right angle. Two people-"me, you, me, you rhythm" 	Wipe clean with a cloth and oil from the non-toothed edge to the toothed edge to ensure all dust and dirt is off the blade.
Pruning saw	 Blood bubble Hold handle and pull blade to make a groove. Push and pull the whole length of blade. 	Use cloth and oil to ensure all dirt and moisture is off blade.
Billhooks	 Blood bubble Do not wear gloves. Two people. One holds billhook, other hold wood. At a 90 degree angle, person holding wood instructs the other "hit". When finished knock wood off by pushing against floor/log. 	Sharpen using sharpening stone.Clean with cloth and oil.



Loppers	Blood bubble	Wipe clean with cloth and oil.
	Unlock	
	Use two hands.	
	Consider wood thickness.	

Every half term the Forest Leader will ensure each tool is thoroughly cleaned and oiled. Wear and tear will be monitored weekly. Any damage or breakages will be logged and reported to the Forest School Leader.

The Forest Leader may use a Kelly Kettle to heat water. Never leave the bung in whilst heating water. Do not put it in until all water has been emptied and it is cool. The bung is only to be in place during storage to keep the chamber clear from forest debris etc.

Item	Transporting	Use
Kelly Kettle	Carry using handle.	1. Fill with water.
		2. Fill base with newspaper, then a few small bits of
		kindling, position piece of cotton wool near to
		opening.
		3. Put kettle back on base making sure it is sturdy and
		handle is at the back.
		4. Light fire through the hole at the bottom (face into wind for extra draft).
		5. Slowly feed extra fuel through chimney.
		6. When it starts to make popping sound (boiling), pick up using two hands.
		7. Pour using handle and by pulling the chain to tilt.



Emergency procedures

Before setting out for a Forest School session a safety sweep will take place. If the weather is deemed dangerous or the site is inaccessible, then the Forest Leader will cancel the session. The Forest School Leader (Sarah Hudspith) and one other member of staff will have their mobile phone which will only be used in and emergency to contact the school office or emergency services.

Minor Incident

- A trained first aider will assess the child and appropriate treatment will be given.
- If needed, the other children will be called back to base camp by another adult. If the incident is at base camp then the other children will group at the opposite end of the Forest School site. These children are to be counted and supervised by other adults.
- Accident book is completed, and parents are informed.

Major Incident

- The same procedure as above will be followed.
- The first aider will give instructions as to who to call, what information to give and what is needed.
 The school office will be contacted. 201/01789 740236/748172

If the emergency services are needed:

- Contact emergency services giving school address and instructions to site. (Press 9 on phone for external call)
- Contact school office so more adults can come to site and meet emergency services.
- Office to ring next of kin.

Fire Evacuation

- Forest School Leader (FSL) or Emergency Responder (ER) shout "Fire"

 Adults and children immediately stop what they are doing and listen to FSL/ER for instructions.
- Adult collects all children at the allocated safe location and complete head count. FSL or ER to locate any missing children if safe to do so.
- Adult makes final head count and evacuate area to KS1 playground.

 FSL contact fire brigade (9)999

 Contact school office 201/901789 740236/748172



Lost Child

- 1. All members of staff to be notified of missing person.
- 2. Gather everyone together and do a head count.
- 3. Ask all adults and children: when was the missing child last seen? What were they doing? What did they say?
- 4. While all children gathered another adult searches the site and boundaries for missing child.
- 5. Ring office **201/901789 740236/748172** to alert them of missing child and organise a search for the missing person in the school grounds and near to school boundaries.
- 6. Contact emergency services if person is not found.
- 7. Contact parents.

Lock down

If the school needs to go into 'Lockdown' the school office will contact the Forest School Leader and will advise what the group needs to do.

The FSL will shout "School".

All children and adults will line up at gate and a headcount will be done.

The group will return to school via the key code access door on the KS1 playground and return to classroom.



Designated person roles and responsibilities

Forest School Leader

- Plan and lead the session
- Safety sweeps and risk assessments
- Completed medical forms available
- Introduce and re-iterate rules and boundaries
- Brief other adults
- Model activities and observe learning
- Set out and tidy equipment
- Make observations
- Assess and deal with any first aid or emergencies.

Assistant 1

- Keep children in sight
- Reinforce rules and boundaries
- Model activities and observe learning
- Help set up and tidy equipment away
- Prepare snack/drinks
- Help children with dressing/undressing
- Make observations

Assistant 2

- Reinforce rules and boundaries
- Model activities and observe learning
- Help set up and tidy equipment away
- Help children with dressing/undressing
- Make observations
- Toilet runs

Toilet arrangements

All children will use the toilet before each Forest School session. The closest toilets are accessed via the KS1 playground. Children to be accompanied by an adult to walk across field and playground if necessary.

Insurance Provider

Zurich Municipal

QLA-0ZAA02-0203



Ecological Impact of Forest School

We aim to encourage and demonstrate a respect for the environment. This assessment describes the impact of the operation of a Forest School in the physical environment at Ettington C of E Primary School. It describes what is in place to mitigate any negative effects.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Impact</u>	Mitigation
Tree climbing and shelter building	 Damage to plants and trees. Soil compaction from regular use Breaking leaves and sticks would deplete resources and could destroy habitats. 	 Restrict activities to trees that are suitable and can tolerate the activity. Restrict activities so tree climbing, and den building aren't available every session. Designate a fixed location for den building, leaving other areas free to grow as normal.
Collecting wood	 Dead wood is important to any woodland ecology as it has a multitude of uses, from homes for minibeasts to beds for fungi, so a lack of it is bad for any woodland habitat. 	 Limit the frequency and evaluate the amount of dry, dead wood around the woodland before removing any. Collect only the minimum amount needed. Reserve specific areas for deadwood conservation.
Collecting natural materials (sticks, leaves etc for activities)	Damage to plants	 No picking no licking motto always applies. Ensure that only fallen leaves or flowers are collected.
Cooking	 Food waste may attract animals to the site or increase the numbers of certain species, leading to adverse changes in biodiversity. 	 Take all left-over food back to school in a bin bag for suitable disposal.
Fire	 Using wood from our woodland could destroy habitats and diminish our supplies. Lighting a fire on the ground will damage the soil and change the way it behaves. Risk of setting woodland on fire. 	 Designate a fixed location for fires, leaving other areas free to grow as normal. Ensure that all fires are fully extinguished before leaving the site



Fire can travel underground to roots even after extinguished.

Three Year Sustainability Plan

Factor	Area	Current situation	Target situation	Preventative	Checked/managed by	Timescale
				measures		
Pathways	Main walkways	Bark covered	Maintain bark cover	Discourage digging	All adults	Year 1: Maintain
				on paths and moving	Review with children	Year 2: Maintain
				the bark.	regularly.	Year 3: Maintain
Nettles	Main walkways,	Currently grown in	Cut back so children	Cut back in some	Adults each visit.	Year 1: Cut back
	den areas	den areas and	can access some	areas that pose a risk		Year 2: Maintain
		blocking some	areas.	to the children and		Year 3: Maintain
		areas.		leave other areas.		
				Educate children on		
				safety.		
Wildlife	Trees, bushes,	*To be monitored	Create bug shelter	oug shelter Educate children on	All adults and children	Year 1: Monitor
	ground		Identify different	supporting/looking		and identify
			habitats/wildlife	after wildlife.		current wildlife.
			that are living in the			Year 2: Create
			Forest School site.			bug shelter and
						maintain health
						of trees.
						Year 3: Maintain
						health of trees
						and review
						wildlife habitats.
Deadwood	All over	No dead wood pile;	Leave a dead wood	Encourage children	Adults	Year 1: Create a
		spread all over site.	pile to encourage	to put onto pile and	Reviewed with	dead wood pile
			wildlife.	not use it.	chidren regularly.	Year 2: Continue
						to build.



						Year 3: Maintain deadwood pile
Wild flowers	All over	*To be monitored	Monitor footfall	Consider resting area for a couple of months	Adults	Year 1: Monitor and identify Year 2: Monitor Year 3: Monitor/consider resting months
Trees	All over	Mostly silver birch trees. Other trees in site also. Two potential climbing trees identified.	Monitor growth and stability of trees.	Consider cutting back. Resting climbing tree.	Adults	Year 1: Monitor Year 2: Monitor Year 3: Monitor