



Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School

Handbook



*“Nature is a tool to get children to experience
not just the wider world but themselves”.*

Stephen Moss

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Forest School Principles

Forest School is defined by six core principles, which were agreed by the UK Forest School community in 2011. In Forest School no single principle takes precedence over the others; instead, they work harmoniously, interlocking to create a unique environment for learning and growth. The six principles are given below and the criteria for good practice relating to each one.



The Long-Term Principle: Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in a woodland or natural environment, rather than a one-off visit. Planning, adaptation, observations and reviewing are integral elements of Forest School.

- Forest School takes place regularly, ideally at least every other week, with the same group of learners, over an extended period of time, if practicable encompassing the seasons.
- A Forest School programme has a structure which is based on the observations and collaborative work between learners and practitioners. This structure should clearly demonstrate progression of learning.
- The initial sessions of any programme establish physical and behavioural boundaries as well as making initial observations on which to base future programme development.

The Nature Principle: Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.

- Whilst woodland is the ideal environment for Forest School, many other sites, some with only a few trees, are able to support good Forest School practice.
- The woodland is ideally situated to match the needs of the programme and the learners, providing them with the space and environment in which to explore and discover.
- A Forest School programme constantly monitors its ecological impact and works within a sustainable site management plan agreed between the landowner/manager, the forest school practitioner and the learners.
- Forest School uses natural resources for inspiration, to enable ideas and to encourage intrinsic motivation.

The Holistic Learning Principle: Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.

- Where appropriate, the Forest School leader will aim to link experiences at Forest School to home, work and /or school education.
- Forest School programme aims to develop, where appropriate, the physical, social, cognitive, linguistic, emotional and spiritual aspects of the learner.

The Risk Principle: Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.

- Forest School opportunities are designed to build on an individual's innate motivation, positive attitudes and/or interests.
- Forest School uses tools and fires only where deemed appropriate to the learners, and dependent on completion of a baseline risk assessment.
- Any Forest School experience follows a Risk-Benefit process managed jointly by the practitioner and learner that is tailored to the developmental stage of the learner.

The Leadership Principle: Forest School is run by qualified Practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional Practice.

- Forest School is led by qualified Forest School practitioners who are required to hold a minimum Level 3 Forest School qualification.
- There is a high ratio of practitioners/adults to learners.
- Practitioners and adults regularly helping at Forest School are subject to relevant checks into their suitability to have prolonged contact with children, young people and vulnerable people.
- Practitioners need to hold an up to date first aid qualification, which includes paediatric (if appropriate) and outdoor elements.
- Forest School is backed by relevant working documents, which contain all the policies and procedures required for running Forest School and which establish the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers.
- The Forest School leader is a reflective practitioner and sees themselves, therefore, as a learner too.

The Community Principle: Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

- A learner-centred pedagogical approach is employed by Forest School that is responsive to the needs and interests of learners.
- The practitioner models pedagogy, which they promote during their programmes through careful planning, appropriate dialogue and relationship building.
- Play and choice are an integral part of the Forest School learning process, and play is recognised as vital to learning and development at Forest School.
- Forest School provides a stimulus for all learning preferences and dispositions.
- Reflective practice is a feature of each session to ensure learners and practitioners can understand their achievements, develop emotional intelligence and plan for the future.

- Practitioner observation is an important element of Forest School pedagogy. Observations feed into 'scaffolding' and tailoring experiences to learning and development at Forest School.

<https://forestschoollassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-good-practice/>

Legal Framework

This handbook is written with regards to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) 2002
- Children's Act 2004
- First Aid at Work Regulations 1989
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulation 1989
- Food Safety Regulations 1995
- GDPR 2018
- DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education
- DfE Health and Safety: Responsibilities and Duties for schools
- DfE Health and Safety for School children
- DfE Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice

School Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Behaviour Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Weather Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Accusations Against Adults Policy

Forest School Health and Safety Policy
(Relevant extract taken from School Policy)

Name of person in school who leads on Forest School activity

- Melanie MacBryde

Our arrangements for developing, organising and running Forest School activity

- Forest School programmes may include activities that are considered higher risk than usual for participants. Each activity will be assessed not only for the risks but also the potential benefits too.
- However, the risk will be reduced by following appropriate procedures for more risky activities, such as tool use and fires, and by carrying out risk assessment covering key hazards that participants may come into contact with during a session.
- Baldwins Gate Primary School Health and Safety Policy sets out a clear statement of intent regarding the school's approach to the health and safety of its children, staff and visitors to the School.

The following are additional measures relating directly to Forest School sessions.

- However many adults accompany Forest School sessions the person in charge is always the trained Forest School Leader.
- The Forest School Leader has overall duty of care for the children in her charge, but all adults are required to take all reasonable steps to ensure children are safe.
- All adult helpers must sign and date a form to show they have read the Forest School's policy and appropriate risk assessments and understand and agree to comply with the general operating procedures for Forest School.
- Whenever the group is off site the Forest School Leader will inform the Headteacher of the group's whereabouts and for how long we intend to stay.
- The Forest School Leader will carry a First Aid kit.
- The Forest School Leader will always carry an Emergency Bag.
- The Forest School Leader will ensure that the Emergency Bag (Happy sack) is correctly stocked.
- The Forest School Leader will always carry a mobile phone and will ensure that there is easy access to a land line if the group is out of range.
- In the event of an emergency, the Forest School Leader will ensure that the School contacts the emergency services. If contact with the School is lost the Leader will contact the emergency services.
- The Forest School Leader will review the risk assessments before every trip and before every school-based session.
- When tools are used the adult: child ratio will always be appropriate to the activity and the children carrying out the activity.

Forest School First Aid Policy
(Relevant extract taken from school policy)

- All incidents, injuries and illness will be managed in line with the above school first aid policy and the forest school emergency procedures document.
- At least one trained first aider will be present during all Forest School sessions/activities.
- The Forest School Lead must hold an Outdoor First Aid Certificate relevant to Forest Schools (appendix 1).
- The Forest School Lead must carry a fully stocked first aid kit, burns kit and emergency bag, during all forest school sessions.
- All staff must be aware of any pupils that have care plans, specific care needs, medical conditions or illnesses, and carry where applicable the appropriate medication e.g. an adrenalin auto injector or inhaler.
- Forest School Lead to carry a Walkie-talkie, to be able to contact school staff in the event of an incident, where additional help maybe required.
- In the event of an illness or accident resulting in injury, the Forest School Lead will make an initial assessment and decide on the appropriate action from the following:
 - Provide first aid until the injury has been resolved.
 - If additional support is required, use walkie-talkie to contact school for assistance from a colleague or the emergency services.
 - Forest School Lead to make decision on whether the injured person should be moved or placed in a recovery position.
 - Forest School Lead to judge if a pupil is too unwell to continue to take part in the session and either return into school or to contact parents/carers for collection. If collected, next steps will be recommended to parents.
 - If emergency services are called, a member of staff will contact parents immediately.
 - The Forest School Lead will complete an accident report form on the same day or as soon as is reasonably practical.

Emergency Bag	First Aid Kit	Burns Kit
First Aid kit Burns Kit Survival bag Blanket and roll mat Fire blanket Torch Small tarpaulin Tissues and paper towels in a plastic bag Hand wash gel Baby wipes Fresh water container Spare socks, waterproofs, hat and gloves (size appropriate for group) Sugary snack Emergency action plan First Aid Incident book Casualty monitoring card Emergency services script Walkie- talkie Pupil care plans and applicable medication	Instant ice packs Antiseptic wipes Eye irrigation solution Eye dressings Plasters, mixed sizes Triangular bandages Self-adhesive wound dressings, mixed sizes Protective gloves Micro pore tape CPR face shield Foil blanket Crepe bandages Scissors Safety pins	Sterile hydrogel burn gel Powder free gloves Conforming bandages Sterile hydrogel dressings Scissors Cling film

The Forest School Leader to ensure these are adequately stocked and replenished.

January 2025

First Aid Qualifications

Mrs V Danks	First Aid at Work	Review November 2026
Mr J Smith	First Aid at Work	Review November 2026
Mr J Smith	Mental Health	October 2027
Ms M MacBryde	Forest School Level 3	Review October 2027
Miss A Clarke	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs J Eggington	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Ms M MacBryde	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2027
Miss D Green	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs H Cartwright	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mr J Ahearne	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs V Danks	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mr J Smith	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028

Mrs J Stonier	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Miss R Ward	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mr J Bowen	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs S Horton	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs L Lowndes	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs S Maude	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mr M Moreton	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs C Parton	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs S Riley	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028
Mrs J Robertson	Paediatric First Aid	Review October 2028

Forest School Food Safety Policy

The Forest School Food Safety policy compliments and should be read in conjunction with the Baldwins Gate CE Primary School's Health and Safety Policy.

During Forest School sessions, children are educated to not eat anything, unless directed by a member of staff during specific cooking sessions. We do not forage in Forest school to ensure we avoid confusing the children about what is safe to eat.

Aim

The aims of our food safety policy are to:

- Ensure food standards and hygiene are met and maintained.
- Ensure the health and safety of all pupils, staff and visitors.
- Ensure all Forest School staff are aware of their role and responsibilities.
- Provide a framework for the safe preparation of food and drink during Forest School sessions.

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, advice from the Department for Education on School Food Standards, Health and Safety in School, The Food Standards Agency (Early years food choking hazards, appendix 2) and the following legislation:

- The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995

Roles and responsibilities

- The Forest School Lead is responsible for ensuring that all staff are aware of the food safety policy and procedures.
- All forest school staff to be responsible for following the food safety procedures, when handling, preparing or cooking food during a forest school session.

Procedures

General

- Forest School Lead to complete a risk assessment prior to the session.
- All staff to be made aware of any food allergy or dietary requirements prior to the session.
- Where required allergy medication to be in emergency kit bag.
- All labels/ingredients checked on all food products prior to session in relation to food allergies.
- Ingredients/food for children that have allergies to be kept separate at all times to avoid cross contamination (separate cooking equipment may be required).
- Anyone who is feeling ill with stomach problems, diarrhoea or vomiting, will not take part in the session and a member of staff will follow the school/forest school first aid policy and procedures and emergency procedures.

Food Preparation, transport and storage

- Hands washing facilities will be available during the session, to wash hands thoroughly and any cuts/grazes covered in the correct manner (blue plaster or ideally gloves) before handling and preparing food.
- Food to be prepared on a suitable, clean surface and not on the ground, where appropriate food to be prepared in the school kitchen.
- Food to be stored in clean containers and transported in a cool bag/box to and from the forest school site and to remain closed in between use to avoid attracting insects.
- Food to be stored at the correct temperature.
- All 'use by' dates checked on food before eating.
- Raw meats to be stored separately from other food.
- Water for cooking to be provided in a cleaned, sealed container.
- All pots and pans to be cleaned prior to cooking and transported to site in a sealed container.
- All hair to be tied back prior to preparing and handling food.

Handling, cooking and eating

- Fresh, clean water and soap available for everyone to wash hands prior, during and after handling food or cooking equipment.
- Children are taught how to prepare and cook food safely following the applicable risk assessment and fire procedures.
- All food to be checked by an adult to ensure it is fully cooked prior to eating.
- All food to be eaten during the forest school session, any food leftover should be disposed of and not reheated.
- Children will be asked to sit down to eat their food, either around the fire circle or in a designated eating area.

Clearing away and cleaning up

- All food not eaten or cooked to be placed in black bin bags and disposed of in the school bin at the end of the session.
- The forest school area is to be checked to ensure that there are no food traces to avoid pests and wildlife being attracted to the area.
- All cooking equipment to be washed in hot, soapy water and stored away.

Training

- All forest school staff should have access to food hygiene training if they wish to do so.
- At least one member of forest school staff to hold a Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for Catering qualification, during sessions where food is being handled (appendix 1).

January 2025

Appendix 1

Food Hygiene Qualifications

Staff Member	Qualification	Review Date
Ms M MacBryde	Level 2	11 th Feb 2027
Mrs V Danks	Level 2	9 th Dec 2027
Mr J Smith	Level 2	19 th Nov 2027
Mrs J Stonier	Level 2	19 th Nov 2027
Mrs S Maude	Level 2	19 th Dec 2026
Mrs J Egginton	Level 2	4 th Dec 2026

Date Written	March 2025
Reviewed By	M MacBryde
Review Date	March 2026

Early years food choking hazards

Below is a table of advice on key foods for care givers who are involved with preparing and serving food for babies and young children (under 5 years old)

Vegetable and fruits	Advice
Pips or stones in fruit	Always check beforehand and remove hard pips or stones from fruit.
Small fruits	Cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, berries, strawberries and cherry tomatoes, into small pieces: cut lengthways and then again cut them in halves (quarters).
Large fruits and firm fruits	Cut large fruits like melon and firm fruits like apple into slices instead of small chunks. For very young children, consider grating or mashing firm fruits, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Vegetables	Cut vegetables like carrots, cucumber and celery into narrow batons. For very young children consider grating or mashing firm vegetables and legumes like butter beans, chickpeas and tofu, or softening them up by steaming or simmering.
Skin on fruit and vegetables	Consider removing the skin from fruit and vegetables, especially for very young children. Peeled fruit and vegetables can be swallowed more easily.
Cooking fruit and vegetables	Consider softening firm fruit and vegetables (such as carrots, broccoli, yam and apples) by steaming or simmering until soft. Serve cut into slices or narrow batons.
Meat and fish	Advice
Sausages and hot dogs	Cut sausages and hot dogs into short strips. Cut them in half and then lengthways or as thinly as possible. Peeling the skin off the sausages helps them to be swallowed more easily.
Meat or fish	Remove bones from meat or fish. Cut meat into strips as thinly as possible. Remove skin and fat from meat and fish, it will help the food pass smoothly down the throat.
Cheese	Advice
Grate or cut cheese	Grate or cut cheese into short strips. Cut lumps of cheese as narrow as possible.
Nuts and seeds	Advice
Chop or flake whole nuts	Chop or flake whole nuts, peanuts and seeds. Whole nuts should not be given to children under five years old.
Bread	Advice
White bread and other breads	White bread can form a ball shape with a dough-like texture at the back of a child's throat, if not chewed properly. Brown bread or toasted white bread are good alternatives. Cut bread, chapatis, naan bread and other breads into narrow strips.
Snacks and other foods	Advice
Popcorn	Do not give babies and young children popcorn.
Chewing gum and marshmallows	Do not give babies and young children chewing gum or marshmallows.
Peanut butter	Do not give babies and young children peanut butter on its own, only use as a spread.
Jelly cubes	Do not give babies and young children raw jelly cubes.
Boiled sweets and ice cubes	Do not give babies and young children boiled, hard, gooey, sticky or cough sweets, or ice cubes.
Raisins and other dried fruits	Do not give babies under the age of 1 whole raisins or dried fruits. Cut them into small pieces.

Make sure food is prepared appropriately for children under 5 years old, see: <https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/weaning/>

It is also advisable that care givers are familiar with how to respond to a choking incident, see: How to stop a child from choking: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-stop-a-child-from-choking/> and How to resuscitate a child: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/first-aid-and-safety/first-aid/how-to-resuscitate-a-child/>

Forest School Behaviour Policy **(Relevant extract taken from school policy)**

Aims & links

- Build relationships, trust, self-esteem, independence and a motivation to learn.
- Build awareness to respect and care for individuals and the natural environment.
- Build an awareness of acceptable and responsible behaviour in an outdoor environment.
- All forest school staff to model positive behaviour.
- Maintain consistent boundaries and rules, that are reinforced at the start of each session, so that pupils can explore independently and safely, whilst behaving appropriately.
- Create opportunities where children learn to work together, developing social skills, sharing resources and problem solving.
- Set up tasks and activities that enable children to achieve, allowing them to develop pride in their achievements and become confident learners.

Sanctions

- All forest school staff to be made aware of children with specific behaviour needs.
- Wherever possible challenging behaviour is managed in line with the school's behavioural policy.
- Wherever possible challenging behaviour will be dealt with during the forest school session and will only be fed back to the class teacher, deputy head or head teacher for information only.
- If challenging behaviour continues and a pupil behaves in a manner that puts them, other pupils and adults at risk of harm, the following will happen:
 - The class teacher, Deputy Head or Headteacher will be informed by walkie-talkie by the Forest School Lead.
 - Where possible the pupil will be returned to the school building under supervision.
 - If the pupil cannot be returned to the classroom, a member of forest school staff will supervise the pupil in an area away from the main group.
 - If there is repeated challenging behaviour in further forest school sessions, then discussions will be held in conjunction with the headteacher as to the next course of action.
- All incidents are to be recorded in the Forest School Incident book.
- Forest School must not be used as a reward-based activity nor should it be taken away as a consequence of behaviour within the school day, all teachers and support staff within the school should be made aware of this.

Forest School Equality Policy
(Relevant extract taken from school policy)

The Forest School Association exists to promote and support 'Quality Forest School for all'. It is committed to developing an organisation that is free from all forms of unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination. – Quote taken from Forest School Association Website

Within Forest School at Baldwins Gate CE Primary School we aim to build an inclusive ethos, promote equality of opportunity and create an all-equal environment with a sense of belonging where children feel safe, secure and valued.

We aim to build this ethos by:

- Ensuring that activities and resources are available to all and that any medical conditions, allergies or individual additional needs are taken into consideration and adaptations made where necessary.
- Ensuring that the Forest School area is accessible to all users and again making any adaptations where necessary.
- That the Forest School Lead will liaise with SENCO, Teachers and Support staff to ensure that all pupil individual needs are identified prior to any sessions.
- That pupils with additional needs will have additional support where necessary to allow them full access to the sessions (in addition to the normal staffing requirements).
- Ensuring that there is a respectful, understanding of different religious and cultural beliefs and that at times some activities may not be appropriate for all.
- Ensuring that we use a variety of materials and activities that reflect different cultures and learning styles.
- Encouraging children to participate in all activities; allowing them to take the lead and learn in their own style, voice their thoughts, feelings, opinions to ensure they feel listened too and valued, and increase confidence and self-esteem.

Forest School Weather Policy

Aim

At Baldwins Gate School we value the experience of children taking part in Forest School Sessions irrespective of the weather conditions, however we have a responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and adults.

The Forest School Lead will assess the weather forecast (using a local forecast) prior to any session and decide as to the suitability of the session, which may lead to adaptations to the session or cancellation in extreme conditions.

The Forest School Lead will complete a site check prior to every session to check for fallen trees, branches and sticks. In addition to these checks, there will be an additional site check after a storm has occurred.

The Forest School Lead will ensure that all children and adults are appropriately dressed prior to the session and parents are advised on a regular basis of the clothing requirements.

Wind	• Forest School Lead to refer to the Beaufort Scale to make an appropriate judgement. If the wind is 7 or above the session will be postponed as there is a danger of fallen branches or trees. • FSL to be aware of the possibility of falling branches and trees at any times, especially in windy conditions.
Rain	• Forest School Leads discretion for the session to go ahead in heavy rain. • Children to wear waterproof outer clothing and wellies. • Tarpaulins available for shelter. • Warm drinks to be available in the Forest School area. • Children to have dry clothes to change into if required.
Thunder and Lightening	• Sessions will not take place in these weather conditions, if an electrical storm occurs during the session, all children and staff will return immediately to the school building, leaving all equipment outside.
Snow, hail and ice	• Forest School Leads discretion for the session to go ahead in snow, hail or ice. • If a sudden hailstorm occurs shelter under tarpaulin or return immediately to the school building, leaving all equipment outside. • Warm drinks to be available in the Forest School area. • Children to wear waterproof outer clothing, wellies, gloves and hats. • Warm up through active games. • Light campfire for warmth. • Consider shortening the session.

Hot and Sunny	• Forest School Leads discretion for the session to go ahead in hot, sunny conditions. • Suncream to be applied prior to the session. • Sunhats to be worn. • Water bottles to be taken outside. • Use tarpaulin for shade.
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Beaufort scale

Handy reference for wind speeds and helping to make a judgement call on windy days.

Beaufort number	Wind Speed (mph)	Seaman's term		Effects on Land
0	Under 1	Calm		Calm; smoke rises vertically.
1	1-3	Light Air		Smoke drift indicates wind direction; vanes do not move.
2	4-7	Light Breeze		Wind felt on face; leaves rustle; vanes begin to move.
3	8-12	Gentle Breeze		Leaves, small twigs in constant motion; light flags extended.
4	13-18	Moderate Breeze		Dust, leaves and loose paper raised up; small branches move.
5	19-24	Fresh Breeze		Small trees begin to sway.
6	25-31	Strong Breeze		Large branches of trees in motion; whistling heard in wires.
7	32-38	Moderate Gale		Whole trees in motion; resistance felt in walking against the wind.
8	39-46	Fresh Gale		Twigs and small branches broken off trees.
9	47-54	Strong Gale		Slight structural damage occurs; slate blown from roofs.
10	55-63	Whole Gale		Seldom experienced on land; trees broken; structural damage occurs.
11	64-72	Storm		Very rarely experienced on land; usually with widespread damage.
12	73 or higher	Hurricane Force		Violence and destruction.

Forest School Roles and Responsibilities

There are various roles and responsibilities that lie within Forest School, it is important that everyone is aware of these and acts accordingly.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring staff adhere to all relevant policies.
- Ensuring that all Forest School Risk Assessments are completed to identify, evaluate and manage all risks associated with the site and activities.
- Ensuring there are policies and procedures in place to monitor and report any incidents.
- Liaising with the SENCO and the Forest School Lead to ensure that Forest School is inclusive for pupils with SEND.
- Appointing a Forest School Lead with the relevant experience and qualifications, including Outdoor First Aid
- Arranging the purchase of any forest school resources.
- Arranging the school's insurance to provide the appropriate cover for all forest school activities.

The Forest School Leader is responsible for:

- Conducting a detailed site risk assessment prior to every forest school session.
- Following all forest school risk assessments for the site, activities and tools.
- Keeping and maintaining an incident log to record all forest school incidents that happen during any session.
- Ensuring all forest school staff are aware, understand and follow forest school policies and procedures.
- Ensuring all pupils, staff and volunteers have a clear understanding of what is expected of them during each session.
- Monitoring safety at all times.
- Organising emergency procedures when necessary.
- Ensuring there is a fully stocked first aid kit during each session and administering first aid where necessary
- Supervision and instruction of tool use, cleaning and storage, ensuring the correct ratios are adhered to all times.
- Ensuring all necessary equipment is available in the forest school area.
- Planning and delivering forest school sessions, that instil respect and appreciation for the environment, whilst being engaging and developing pupils' skills.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Modelling good practice.
- Carrying out delegated roles and responsibilities.
- Following all relevant policies and procedures.
- Ensuring pupils are always supervised and accounted for.
- Reporting any concerns or incidents to the forest school lead and where necessary, the Headteacher, Safeguarding Lead and SENCO.

- Supporting children to manage their own risks.
- Ensuring children are following the rules and deal with challenging behaviour in line with the Behavioural policy.

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Review Date	March 2026

Forest School Ratios Policy

At Baldwins Gate CE Primary School our Forest School sessions are designed to encourage children to develop their own risk management skills and to become responsible for themselves and others around them. The outdoor space gives children the freedom for a different type of learning and access to activities that are not possible within the classroom. It is important for sessions to be a success and have the appropriate staffing requirements.

- During a standard Forest School session, the ratio of adults to children will be 1:8.
- If there are children within the group that require 1:1 support, these adults will not count in the staffing ratios.
- When taking part in tool activities, fire and cooking the ratios will decrease, please see individual risk assessments.
- All Staffing ratios are at the discretion of the forest school lead.

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Forest School Conservation Policy

Forest School is defined by six core principles, principle two is 'The Nature Principle' and is focused on the development of the relationship between the learner and environment. It is important for children to learn to be aware of their environment and sustainability. We aim to do this by:

- Encouraging children to be respectful, responsible and to have an appreciation for the world in which they live and to not purposely damage the woodland environment.
- Encouraging the wildlife and the plants growing in the woodland at Baldwins Gate Primary School. We aim to balance the benefits the woodland provides the children with care for the environment.
- Using recycled and sustainable resources to help us to maintain our school woodland environment.
- It is important that deadwood is not cleared from the site as this is essential to habitats and to encourage biodiversity.
- Ensuring that when a forest school session is finished 'we leave no trace' and the site is left how it was found and all rubbish to be collected and disposed of correctly.
- When collecting natural resources from the site, in the first instance it will be taken from the forest floor, where this is not possible pupils will only take small pieces of leaves, twigs and flowers and where possible take from abundant plants and trees.
- The Forest School Lead monitoring the site to ensure that areas do not become overused. This may mean relocating high traffic areas to give the ground chance to recover.
- The Forest School Lead following the 'Three-year site management plan' and 'Environmental Impact Assessment', that has been agreed between the Headteacher and the Forest School Lead.

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Forest School. Risk Management and Assessment Policy

Forest School Sessions by their design offer a degree of risk (principle three) that children learn to manage, however the Forest School Lead is responsible for everyone's safety therefore the following procedures are in place:

- Identify hazards.
- Assess who may be harmed and how.
- Evaluate the risks and decide on the necessary controls.
- Record the risk and the control measures.
- Review the risk assessments regularly and update where necessary.

Daily site risk assessment

Prior to any forest school session going ahead the following will happen:

- A daily site risk assessment (safety sweep) will be carried out to ensure there have been no changes to the site that could potentially cause harm.
- Following adverse weather conditions additional site checks will be made, regardless of whether there is a forest school session.
- Following the daily site risk assessment The Forest School Lead (where possible) will carry out the work required to make the site safe, removing hazards or marking off any unsafe areas).
- The Forest School Lead also holds the discretion to cancel any session if the site is deemed unsafe.

Activity Specific risk assessment

When planning activities, including tools, fire and cooking for Forest Schools, any hazards associated with that activity, that are at risk of causing harm, should be considered. These should be recorded on an activity risk assessment with suitable control measures taken to control and minimise the risk.

Dynamic risk assessment

This is a risk assessment that is done in the exact moment that something new is happening. It allows you to continuously process and identify hazards and assess the risks that are being taken.

In line with principle three it is to be expected that pupils will create new ideas and activities during forest school sessions, therefore reasonable steps will be taken to ensure these activities are safe. Where appropriate an activity risk assessment will be completed as soon as is reasonably possible.

Date Written	March 2025
Reviewed By	M MacBryde
Review Date	March 2026

Forest School Risk Assessment Procedure

The Forest School Risk Assessment procedure compliments and should be read in conjunction with the Baldwins Gate Primary School Forest School's risk management and assessment policy.

Site Risk Assessment

- Regularly reviewed in relation to site changes
- Leads into the daily site risk assessment.
- Carried out by the Forest School Leader and shared with all appropriate adults.

Daily Site Risk Assessment

- Carried out before learners arrive.
- Recorded on a laminate sheet (to be cleaned and used each session).
- Where a hazard has been identified, the Forest School Lead will carry out any work needed to make the area safe or mark the area of the hazard.
- Forest School Lead considers if any risks identified change the nature of the session or cause the session to be cancelled.

Activity Specific Risk Assessments

- Relevant and unique for every activity carried out.
- Control measures minimise the risk to all participants.
- Can be dynamic, carried out by the Forest School Leader when an unexpected activity occurs. If this activity is likely to reoccur in future sessions, a written risk assessment will be completed.
- Tool talk before every tool is used.
- Risk assessments will be available to all adults before and during sessions.
- Regularly reviewed in relation to site changes.

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Forest School First Aid/Emergency Procedures

The Forest School First Aid and Emergency Procedures compliments and should be read in conjunction with the Baldwins Gate Primary School's First Aid Policy and Health and Safety Policy.

- Forest School Leaders hold an Outdoor First Aid Certificate relevant to Forest Schools.
- There are also a number of trained Paediatric First Aiders within the school setting
- A First Aid kit will be onsite for each session, and medication for children who require it will be in the emergency bag.
- In the event of an incident requiring medical attention, assessment and treatment will first be carried out by the Forest School Leader.
- Should further intervention be required, the appropriate actions will be taken following the Baldwins Gate Primary School First Aid Policy and Forest School First Aid Policy.
- In the event of an emergency, appropriate action should be taken to ensure that participants are accounted for and their safety is prioritised.
- A signal (3 sharp blasts on a whistle) will be given to alert participants to the event, as per safety briefing on first session.
- Relevant authorities should be notified and the headteacher or SLT informed.
- In the case of an accident, Forest School staff will be required to fill in the First Aid Incident Book with a date and signature.
- All forest school staff to read and understand the forest school handbook so they are aware of what to do in the case of an emergency so that appropriate care can be given to participants, or in the case in which the Forest School Leader is involved in the emergency situation and requires a basic level of treatment.

In a situation where the incident is assessed as minor and able to treat with First Aid:

- Forest School Leader will treat the casualty with first aid on the site.
- Support staff will be required to lead the other children safely away from the incident (if deemed necessary).
- A headcount to take place.
- Whilst waiting for further information, they will be briefed to keep the children calm by playing some simple team games or participating in circle time activities.

In a situation where the pupil is able to carry on the session:

- All pupils to resume normal activities.
- The Forest School Leader will be required to monitor the injured pupil during the session.
- After the session, they will be required to inform the class teacher or supporting adult that has brought the pupil to the session.
- The parents/carers of the pupil will be informed of the incident and the treatment given, either verbally at the end of the day or over the phone verbally.
- The forest school First Aid Incident book to be completed by the Forest School Lead.

- Forest School Lead to risk assess the incident and put any measures in place to prevent any further incidents occurring.

In a situation where the pupil needs to go home:

- The walkie-talkie will be used to communicate the incident to internal staff and assistance requested if required.
- The Forest School Leader or Office staff will contact the parents/carers.
- They will be informed of the accident and treatment given and advised of next steps for medical care and monitoring.
- The other pupils to continue with their session once the pupil has left the site and the forest school leader has returned.
- The forest school First Aid Incident book to be completed by the Forest School Lead (where possible this will have been completed prior to the pupil going home).
- Forest School Lead to risk assess the incident and put any measures in place to prevent any further incidents occurring.
-

In a situation where the casualty cannot be treated by First Aid alone:

- The Forest School Leader will treat the casualty in line with the schools First Aid policy.
- The Forest School Leader to use the walkie-talkie to contact school for assistance from a colleague and/or the emergency services.
- The supporting adult will take the rest of the group and return inside the school building, occupying them and awaiting further instructions.
- Forest School Lead to make decision on whether the injured person should be moved or placed in a recovery position
- If emergency services are called, a member of staff will contact parents immediately
- The Forest School Lead will complete an accident report form on the same day or as soon as is reasonably practical
- Forest School Lead to risk assess the incident and put any measures in place to prevent any further incidents occurring.

In the event of Forest School Leader/staff member being the casualty:

- **If conscious**, able to and the injury requires it, the Forest School Leader will end the session.
- They will use the walkie-talkie to ask for additional support or first aid.
- Once additional support has arrived, the supporting adult is to return inside the school building, occupying the children and awaiting further instructions.
- **If unconscious** or unable to draw the session to a close, the supporting adult will use the walkie-talkie to seek additional support and school first aiders.

- Once support has arrived they will take the pupils and return to the school building, occupying the children and awaiting further instructions.
- School first aiders to follow school first aid policy and procedures.

Following on from any of the above incidents, there may be additional requirements that need to be completed in conjunction with the school Health and Safety policy.

Fire Alarm Procedure

If the fire alarm rings during a forest school session, the following will happen:

- The FSL to blow the whistle 3 times, to alert the children to come immediately to the meeting point.
- The FSL to complete a headcount.
- Then walk the children to the fire meeting point, on the main school playground.

Lockdown Alarm Procedure

If the lockdown alarm rings during a forest school, the following will happen:

- The FSL to blow the whilst 3 times, to alert the children to come immediately to the meeting point.
- The FSL to complete a headcount.
- Then walk the children into the nearest classroom.

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Forest School Lost Child Procedure

In school

During Forest School sessions, the pupils will be regularly counted by calling the group together by shouting 'sticky feet' (a forest school way that pupils know when to come back to the meeting point), during the counting if a pupil is unaccounted for the following will happen:

- Forest School Lead to ask support staff of the Childs location.
- Shout 'sticky feet' again or blow the whistle 3 times.
- Support staff to keep the group together.
- FSL to check the site loudly for 5 minutes.
- Whilst returning to the group, the FSL to use the walkie-talkie to alert staff inside the school building of the missing child.
- Support staff to return inside the school building with the group and await further instructions.
- Staff to continue searching the whole school site.
- Headteacher to call emergency services, after the child has been missing for a total of 10 minutes.
- Headteacher to call the child's parents.

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Forest School Loose dog or Member of the Public Procedure.

In the event that there is a loose dog on school property during a forest school session the following will happen:

- The children will be instructed to stand still.
- A headcount will be completed by the FSL.
- The children will be asked to remain calm and not touch the animal.
- Children will be walked calmly back and return inside to the safety of the school building.
- The FSL will advise the headteacher and the school lockdown policy will be initiated.

In the event that an uninvited member of the public is on school property during a forest school session the following will happen:

- The FSL will check to see if the person is known to the school.
- The FSL will ask the member of public to leave the school area and explain why.
- If the member of public refuses, the FSL will blow the whistle 3 times to gather the children.
- A headcount will be completed by the FSL.
- Then the children will be walked calmly back and return inside to the safety of the school building.
- The FSL will advise the headteacher and the school lockdown policy will be initiated.
- If the member of public has taken any photographs of the session, this information will be reported to the police.

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Forest School Fire Procedure

The Forest School Fire Procedure compliments and should be read in conjunction with the Baldwins Gate Primary School Forest School's sanitation procedure and food safety policy.

As part of the Forest School experience, we believe that campfires are an important and enjoyable experience within Forest School and will be used in a number of sessions.

Location

- Fires may only be lit within a designated, marked fire square.
- The fire circle/seating will be at a distance of 2.0m away from the fire.
- The siting of the fire will avoid any roots and overhanging trees.

Children and adults

- Children/adults must never cross the fire circle and will be informed prior to the session.
- Participants are not permitted to throw anything onto or towards the fire.
- The appropriate clothing (long sleeved tops and trousers) will be worn when working with fire.
- Hair must be tied back.
- All participants will be advised in how to deal with smoke, for example, sitting away from the direction of the line of smoke to avoid smoke and therefore potential discomfort.

Fire lighting

- When firelighting is scheduled, a call must be made to the local fire authority on stating that there will be a controlled fire and specifying the time frame.
- The Forest School Leaders have been appropriately trained in constructing and lighting fires.
- The fire will only be lit once it is confirmed that all safety equipment is in place.
- The fire will be created using safe fire-lighting equipment.

Extinguishing

- The Forest School Lead will ensure the fire is extinguished safely before the session ends (paint the bowl black).
- After the session when fires have been extinguished, a follow up call must be made to the local fire authority to confirm that the controlled fire has ended.
- Where possible, all fuels should be burnt off.
- A minimal trace of fire will be left.
- Any remaining ash will be disposed of either in overgrown areas or bagged and disposed once it is completely cool.

Safety

The following safety equipment must be available prior to any fire being lit and must be situated close to the fire:

- Burns First Aid Kit
- Fire Gloves

- Fire Blanket
- Wet Tea Towel
- Bucket of water
- 5L of water in a suitable container

In addition to the safety equipment, the following precautions are also put in place:

- A fire safety talk will be given to all pupils before a fire is started.
- Direct adult supervision at a ratio of 1:1 must be given to children lighting fires in line with the risk assessment.
- Activities taking place near to the fire involving pupils e.g. cooking, are supervised at a ratio of 1:3
- No plastics will be burnt.
- Any food or liquid cooked on the fire will be done in conjunction with the Food Safety policy.
- Sticks/wood will be placed from the side of the fire, not thrown. All participants will be briefed in how to do this effectively and safely.
- Hands should never go over the fire.
- Fires will be lit using a fire striker to cotton wool. Other tinder may be used in wet conditions.

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Forest School Tool Use Procedure

The Forest School Tool Use procedure compliments and should be read in conjunction with the Baldwins Gate Primary School's Health and Safety policy, risk assessment policy and risk assessment procedure.

Some activities on the Forest School programme may involve the use of tools, such as knives, saws and mallets. Each tool has it's own risk assessment and safe usage sheet which all adults should make themselves familiar with. Ratios will apply when tools are in use, and adults should pay particular attention to safe working distances and ensure children adhere to these.

- The Forest School Leaders are responsible for overseeing and managing safe use and maintenance of all tools.
- Pupils will be taught how to use tools and equipment independently and safely prior to any activity (tool talk).
- During the activity a 'tool circle' will be created using rope as an outline (a tool and an arms length width), pupils are instructed to not enter the tool circle unless invited by the Forest School Lead.
- A whiteboard will be situated within the shed and the tools taken will be noted onto this to ensure that all items are returned safely at the end of each session.
- Tool bags and tools will be kept locked away when they are not in use and only the tools required will be taken out for sessions.
- The keys to the storage area will be kept in a locked cabinet within the office and the Forest School Leader is responsible for the safe-keeping of the key during sessions.
- Knives and sharp bladed tools will be kept in a locked box at all times other than whilst removing the tool, these will be stored in a locked cupboard in the Headteachers office.
- Equipment will be counted and noted when handed out and when taken in.
- The Forest School Leader will carry out relevant maintenance tasks as specified within the tool information sheet outside of Forest School session time.
- If a tool is missing from the checklist, the Forest School Leader will be required to go into the area to find the tool.

Ratios

- The Forest School Lead will assess the risks posed by using tools (see separate tool risk assessments) and implement the correct staff to pupil ratios.
- The ratios will never exceed 1:3.

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Forest School Clothing/PPE Procedure

Clothing

Forest School sessions will take place in all weathers therefore children will require suitable clothing for the season.

- This information is communicated to parents/carers at least one week prior to any sessions commencing.
- There is spare kit available in school so children can still attend the sessions.
- Parents/carers are strongly advised (regardless of the weather) that children should always wear long sleeved tops and long trousers (to provide protection from stinging plants and insects) and sturdy shoes that they do not mind getting muddy.
- Children to attend school in their forest school clothing on the day of their sessions, with additional forest school clothing and footwear in a bag.

Clothing requirements are as follows:

- Long sleeved top
- Long trousers – no jeans
- Waterproof trousers or waterproof all in one
- Waterproof coat
- Wellington boots
- Closed toe/sturdy shoes e.g. trainers
- Spare clothes to change into if clothes become wet

Hot Weather:

- Sunhat
- Sun cream

Cold Weather:

- Extra layers
- Warm jumper
- Hat and gloves
- Thick socks.

PPE

If the sessions require the use of tools, PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) will be available as outlined within the tool specific risk assessments. It is the responsibility of the Forest School Leader to ensure that the PPE is used correctly by the participant and fits appropriately. In the case of incorrectly fitting PPE, they will not participate in the activity.

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Forest School Sanitation Procedures

Sanitation must be considered during Forest School sessions.

Toileting

- All pupils to use the toilets in school prior to the forest school session beginning.
- The Forest School Leader will make staff and children aware of what toilets can be access during the session
- Pupils using the toilet will only be supervised by a member of staff where necessary.
- Forest School Lead to use the walkie-talkie to communicate to staff in school if a child is going to use the toilet without supervision.
- Any accidents will be managed and dealt with appropriately.

Hand Washing

- Hand washing must be encouraged at the end of every session and prior to the cooking of any food or food-based activities (see food safety policy).
- Water and soap or hand sanitiser will be readily available for all learners and adults.

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Forest School Accusations Against Adults Procedure

The Forest School Accusation against Adults procedure compliments and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Baldwins Gate CE Primary School Safeguarding Policy
 - Baldwins Gate CE Primary School Complaints Procedure
 - Baldwins Gate CE Primary School Staff Code of conduct
 - Forest School Code of conduct for adults
 - Baldwins Gate CE Primary School Whistleblowing Policy
 - Department for Education Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Any accusation against any staff or volunteer will be taken seriously and reported to the headteacher immediately, if the headteacher is not available then it should be reported to the member of staff acting as headteacher.
 - If the accusation is against the headteacher, then the allegation should be raised with the Chair of Governors. If the Chair of Governors is not available, then it should be reported to the Vice Chair of Governors.
 - The Headteacher/ Chair of Governors will then follow the appropriate policy and procedure.
 - If a member of staff or volunteer do not feel confident raising their concern with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, they can contact LADO directly themselves on: **0300 111 8007.**

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Forest School Complaints Procedure

Please refer to Baldwins Gate CE Primary School Complaints Procedure, which follows guidelines set by the Department for Education.

The main points are:

- Understanding the difference between a concern and a complaint.
- A concern or complaint can be made by any parent, carer or member of the public about any of the provision or services we provide.
- A concern or complaint can be made in person, writing or by telephone.
- Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher or headteacher, if this remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint.
- Complaints against school staff (except the Headteacher) should be made to the Headteacher, via the school office.
- The Headteacher will then follow the complaints procedure.

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Forest School Code of Conduct for Adults procedure.

The Forest School Code of Conduct for Adults procedure compliments and should be read in conjunction with:

- The Baldwins Gate Primary School Safeguarding policy
- The Baldwins Gate Primary School Staff Code of Conduct
- Forest School Roles and Responsibilities

All adults should adhere to the following:

- Have an understanding of the Forest School Principles and Ethos in order to ensure child-led learning can take place.
- Support and encourage pupils on their forest school adventure.
- To observe and monitor pupils and record the findings.
- To plan/assist the session.
- To ensure pupils are respectful to each other, adults and the natural environment.
- To help with the setting up of equipment and sessions.
- To ensure that all equipment, materials and tools are safe to use.
- To keep up to date with all Forest School policies, procedures and risk assessments.
- To follow the ecological three year plan.
- Model positive behaviour.

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Forest School Daily Procedure

The Forest School Daily Procedure compliments and should be read in conjunction with:

- Forest School roles and responsibility policy
- Forest School ratios policy
- Forest School weather policy
- Baldwins Gate First Aid policy

Prior to the session

- The daily site risk assessment will have been carried out and any changes deemed necessary to ensure the site is safe to be actioned.
- A session plan will be completed by the Forest School Leader and reflections from the previous session will be considered. All supporting adults will be briefed prior to the session.
- Forest School Lead to check all equipment to ensure it is ready to be used.
- Water carrier filled with warm water, for handwashing.
- All planned activities will have been risk assessed and shared with all supporting adults.
- Forest School Lead to prepare any resources, ready for transporting to site.
- Forest School Lead to ensure the adult/child ratios are appropriate for the session planned.
- The Forest School Lead to collect the children from their class and take a register of the group.
- Forest School Lead to ensure the children are appropriately dressed for the weather.

During the session

- A regular headcount to be taken (sticky feet).
- All staff to be aware of dynamic risk assessments through the session.
- All staff to be ensuring that behaviour is appropriate.
- All staff to be supporting and encouraging pupils.

After the session

- All children to return to the seating area for a headcount.
- The tool bag will be checked alongside the whiteboard within the shed. In the event of a missing item, the Forest School Leader is responsible to find the item.
- Tools will be maintained after use in line with the tool use policy and then stored away.
- All other resources to be packed away in the shed.
- Resources from inside the school to be put to one side, ready for transportation.
- A session reflection/evaluation will be completed by the Forest School Leader.
- The first Aid Kit will be restocked if it has been used.
- Medical forms will be filled out if there is an accident.
- Any notes from the session to be shared with the Forest School Lead so that amendments can be made to any future planning.

- Children to be taken back to their classroom and any relevant information shared with the class teacher.

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Forest School Daily Site Check

Checklist	Date
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Fallen branches						
Low branches						
Broken branches						
Roots						
Tree Stumps						
Protruding thorns						
Brambles						
Nettles						
Litter						
Boundary fences						
Animal Faeces						
Slippery areas						
Standing water						
Tadpoles						
Fungi						
Mole Hills						
Storage Shed						
Mud Kitchen						
Fire circle seating						
Wood piles						
Hand wash station						

Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit: Forest School activities provide a few potential risks that can be controlled and managed. There are numerous benefits for children to be exposed to those risks. When learning to use tools in an activity the children will gain an understanding of the correct, safe use of sharp tools and how it can achieve something. Forest School activities will help to improve fine and gross motor skills and encourage teamwork. Children will develop resilience, confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and the ability to risk assess themselves. They will also learn to make a decision that will keep themselves and others safe.

Billhooks allow children to understand the use of, see and work with a large, bladed tool and to follow instructions.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: Oct 2025
Title: The use of Billhooks during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of Billhook	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts from contact with the blade	High	- FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool - Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length	All staff	Low

			• Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Glove to be worn on non-tool hand • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing of a Billhook	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• Only the FSL will carry the billhook either in the tool bag or protective cover • The billhook will never be passed • The children will never carry the billhook • FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of billhook • Billhook to be placed on the ground facing the stump the learner is using	All staff	Low
Storing the Billhook	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts while placing	High	• Only FSL to give out tools	All staff	Low

	tool/removing from storage		• FSL to count and record tools that go in and out • Billhook stored in a protective cover, in a tool bag and in a locked store • Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School sessions in a safe area away from others		
Incorrect use of the Billhook	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to insufficient training of pupils	High	• A billhook is only used to split wood • Another person is to assist using a billhook with a mallet • FSL to give tool talk • Tool circle to be sited away from main group • Good communication between user and assistant	All staff	Low

Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit: Forest School activities provide a few potential risks that can be controlled and managed. There are numerous benefits for children to be exposed to those risks. When learning to use tools in an activity the children will gain an understanding of the correct, safe use of sharp tools and how it can achieve something. Forest School activities will help to improve fine and gross motor skills and encourage teamwork. Children will develop resilience, confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and the ability to risk assess themselves. They will also learn to make a decision that will keep themselves and others safe.

The Bit and Brace allows children to see how a manual tool can make a hole in wood, they can also learn and understand the mechanics.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025
Title: The use of Bit and Brace during Forest School activities					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of Bit and Brace	Pupils and staff injury/cuts from lack of control	High	- FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool	All staff	Low

			• Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length • Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Glove to be worn on non-tool hand • Bit and Brace to be placed on the ground, side of the body and bit pointing behind • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing a Bit and Brace	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of Bit and Brace • Bit and Brace is never passed and only carried by the FSL • Children to not run around with the Bit and Brace • Children to not run around in or near the tool area	All staff	Low

Storing the Bit and Brace	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts from sharp drill bit and moveable brace, cog/handle	High	• Only FSL to give out tools • FSL to count and record tools that go in and out • Bit and Brace stored in a tool bag and in a locked store • Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School sessions in a safe area away from others	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of the Bit and Brace	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to insufficient training of pupils	High	• Bit and Brace only to be used to drill holes through wood • Someone is to always assist in the use of the Bit and Brace • FSL to give tool talk • Tool circle to be sited away from main group • Good communication between user and assistant	All staff	Low

Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit: Forest School activities provide a few potential risks that can be controlled and managed. There are numerous benefits for children to be exposed to those risks. When learning to use tools in an activity the children will gain an understanding of the correct, safe use of sharp tools and how it can achieve something. Forest School activities will help to improve fine and gross motor skills and encourage teamwork. Children will develop resilience, confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and the ability to risk assess themselves. They will also learn to make a decision that will keep themselves and others safe.

A Bowsaw allows children to see how different types of blades can be used to cut different types of wood and to take responsibility for a large bladed tool.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025
Title: The use of a Bowsaw during Forest School activities					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of a Bowsaw	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts from sharp blade	High	● Keep the guard on ● FSL to give tool talk ● FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool	All staff	Low

			• Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length • Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Glove to be worn on non-tool hand • Bowsaw to be placed on the ground, blade facing towards user • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing a Bowsaw	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• Keep the guard on • FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of bowsaw • Bowsaw only to be passed in the tool circle, offering the handle to the receiver with the guard on • Carry by holding the top of the bow, alongside body with the blade facing	All staff	Low

			down towards the ground with guard on. • Children to not run around with the bowsaw • Children to not run around in or near the tool area		
Storing a Bowsaw	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts while placing tool/removing from storage	High	• Only FSL to give out tools • FSL to count and record tools that go in and out • Bowsaws stored with the guard on, in a tool bag and in a locked store • Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School sessions in a safe area away from others	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of a Bowsaw	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to insufficient training of pupils	High	• Bowsaw only for wood that is thicker than a 10p piece • Correct blade to be selected • Raker – greenwood • Peg – deadwood • FSL to give tool talk • Tool circle to be sited away from main group • Good communication between user and assistant	All staff	Low

Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit: Forest School activities provide a few potential risks that can be controlled and managed. There are numerous benefits for children to be exposed to those risks. When learning to use tools in an activity the children will gain an understanding of the correct, safe use of sharp tools and how it can achieve something. Forest School activities will help to improve fine and gross motor skills and encourage teamwork. Children will develop resilience, confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and the ability to risk assess themselves. They will also learn to make a decision that will keep themselves and others safe.

A campfire gives children the experience of cooking and eating outdoors, whilst having the responsibility of keeping themselves safe by an open fire.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: October 2025
Title: The use of Fire (campfire) during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Open Fire	Pupils and staff Burns from being too close to the fire	High	- FSL to give safety talk to all pupils and staff before lighting a fire - Pupils to be supervised at all times - Ratio 1:3 when cooking	All staff	Low

			• Pupils must be 2m away from the fire • Pupils to only enter the cooking area when invited by the FSL • Fire gloves must be worn when cooking • The following safety items are required, fire gloves, bucket filled with a minimum of 5 litres of water, tea towel, burns kit and first aid kit • First Aider to be present • Regular reminders of safety rules • Pupils taught how to sit on logs correctly, to approach from behind • Pupils told to not cross the fire circle		
Moving around the fire pit area	Pupils and staff Burn, bruise or cut from tripping or falling within the firepit area	High	• Pupils taught to not cross the fire circle • Pupils taught to walk around the outside of the fire circle • If pupils need to move seats, they walk around the outside of the fire circle • When cooking over fire, pupils to kneel on one knee to remain stable • No loose items on the ground	All staff	Low

			• FSL to check for any trip hazards prior to lighting a fire • Seats to be 2m away from the fire • Pupils to not have any loose clothing/shoelaces • Hair to be tied back • Pupils reminded to not run near the fire circle		
Out of control fire	Pupils and staff Burn from being caught by moving flames	High	• Fire to be in a fire pit, squared off by logs or bricks to keep it contained • Position of fire to be away from buildings and overhanging branches • A bucket filled with a minimum of 5 litres of water and damp tea towel close to hand • Pupils asked to move away immediately from the fire circle if fire shows signs of being out of control • FSL to pour water over fire until it is extinguished • No flammable liquids to light or maintain a fire	All staff	Low

Inhalation of smoke	Pupils and staff Inhalation of smoke by sitting close to the fire which may result in coughing, smarting of eyes and difficulty breathing	High	• FSL to position fire away from buildings and assess wind direction • Fire to not be used in windy conditions • FSL to identify wind direction and sit pupils upwind • Only dry and suitable wood to be used • All staff to be aware of any asthmatic pupils and ensure they have inhalers • If smoke blows in the direction of a pupil, they are to walk around the outside of the fire circle to a different seat • If necessary, seating can be moved further back • If necessary, activity can be ended by FSL extinguishing the fire	All staff	Low
Sitting too close to the fire	Pupils and Staff Impact of hot embers, causing burns	High	• FSL to cool the firepit with water and paint the bowl black • FSL to remain by firepit while hot embers remain	All staff	Low

			• Pupils advised to not touch the firepit even when the fire has been put out as it may still be hot		
Clothing, footwear and long hair	Pupils and Staff Trips and falls from unsuitable clothing, footwear and hair dangling in face	High	• FSL to check pupils are wearing suitable outdoor protective clothing • All hair to be tied up • Zips and buttons securely fastened • Appropriate shoes with a decent grip	All staff	Low
Extinguishing the fire	Pupils and staff		• Where possible allow the fire to burn out • Wring the damp cloth on the embers • Then pour on water • Stir the water coating the firepit (painting it black) • Leave the firepit to cool completely • Pour the waste into a bramble or waste area		

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The children learn to risk assess for themselves what materials they should and shouldn't pick and to look out for the hazards that might cause them harm whilst they are doing so.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025
Title: Collecting natural materials during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Protruding tree roots, stumps and uneven ground, causing possible injury	Pupils and staff Cuts/grazes/bruises due to slips, trips and falls	High	- Sensible, protective footwear to be worn by all children and staff - Children taught how to risk assess the site by looking for roots, stumps and uneven ground - Site assessed daily by FSL prior to any sessions - First Aid Kit and First Aider always present	All staff	Low
Uneven or slippery paths may cause injury	Pupils and staff Cuts/grazes/bruises due to slips, trips or falls	High	- Adults to lead the children - Children to walk and not run - Children taught how to risk assess, looking out for potential hazards - FSL to daily site assessment prior to any session, any paths requiring repair, reporting to Office	All staff	Low

Animal burrows	Pupils and staff Cuts/grazes/bruises due to slips, trips and falls	High	• Daily site check prior to any session and if necessary, areas taped off • Staff and pupils made aware of the hazard and told to stay away • Burrows to be left undisturbed	All staff	Low
Low overhead hanging branches	Pupils and staff Injury to face from whipping of branches	High	• Daily site checked out prior to session • Low hanging branches of eye height, removed if necessary • Children taught to risk assess for low hanging branches	All staff	Low
Stings, bites and scratches from nettles, brambles and insects	Pupils and staff Bites, stings and scratches	High	• Children taught about the potential flora and fauna hazards • Encourage children to identify them independently • Site maintenance to be carried out in line with management plan, to prevent overgrowing of nettles and brambles	All staff	Low
Illness due to collecting of toxic and poisonous plants	Pupils and staff Sickness	High	• Children taught to identify toxic and poisonous plants • Daily site check by FSL to assess site	All staff	Low

			• If any toxic or poisonous plants are identified, then the area must be restricted • Toxic and poisonous plants to be dealt with in line with the site management plan • Children to be taught to not put anything in their mouths or lick their fingers		
Lifting materials that are too heavy or too big for collection	Pupils and staff Bruises and bumps to limbs	High	• Children taught to respect nature by only taking small amounts of any flora and fauna • Branches to be carried on their own up to their own height	All staff	Low
Litter on site	Pupils and staff Illness from litter contamination or germs. Cuts/injury due to sharp litter edges	High	• Daily site check to assess • Remove litter appropriately and dispose of in line with school policy	All staff	Low
Animal faeces	Pupils and staff – Infection or disease from contact with the hazard	High	• Daily site check • Hazard removed where necessary • Gloves to be worn • Tied in a liner and disposed of in line with school sanitation procedure	All staff	Low

			• Hand washing to be carried out by anyone dealing with the hazard		
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Fire Strikers give children a hands-on experience of lighting a fire and learning what tools they need to be able to do so. They also learn how to become responsible for fire safety.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025
Title: The use of Fire Strikers during Forest School activities					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of Fire Strikers to light a fire	Pupils and staff Friction/heat burns from use of fire striker	High	- FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool	All staff	Low

			• Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length • Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the fire circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing of Fire Striker	Pupils and staff Injury due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of Fire Striker • Fire Circle rules apply • Pupils to be 2m away from any fire lighting activity • Children to not run around in or near the fire circle • FSL to ensure all fires extinguished after the activity	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of Fire Striker	Pupils and staff	High	• FSL to give tool talk	All staff	Low

	Burns due to insufficient training of pupils		• FSL to give step by step instructions • Fire Lighter only to be used to start a campfire or to practice lighting a campfire • Fire circle to be sited away from main group • Good communication between FSL and pupils • Fire Strikers to be kept in a secure box and locked away. • Only FSL to give out tools • FSL to count and record tools that go in and out		
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The Kelly Kettle shows children another tool in forest school that can be used to boil water. They can learn how the process works and that you don't need to have a big open fire.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: Oct 2025
Title: The use of Kelly/Storm Kettle during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Open Fire including the fire in the base of the Kelly kettle	Pupils and staff Burns from being too close to the kettle	High	- FSL to give safety talk to all pupils and staff before lighting a fire - Pupils to be supervised at all times - Ratio up to 1:3 when cooking	All staff	Low

			• Pupils must be 2m away from the fire • Pupils to only enter the cooking area when invited by the FSL • Fire gloves must be worn when cooking • The following safety items are required, fire gloves, bucket filled with a minimum of 5 litres of water, tea towel, burns kit and first aid kit • First Aider to be present • Regular reminders of safety rules • Pupils taught how to sit on logs correctly, to approach from behind • Pupils told to not cross the fire circle		
Handling the kettle	Pupils and staff Burns from spilling the hot water or from direct contact with the kettle.	High	• FSL to have a good knowledge and experience of using the Kelly kettle correctly • The plug is never to be in the spout when in use • The spout should be opposite the blowhole • The kettle should be on a flat surface	All staff	Low

			• As soon as the water starts to bubble it should be removed from the base • Only FSL to move the kettle with the handle held at 90 degrees • Fire gloves must be worn • When pouring ensure cups are on a flat suitable surface • Pupils to be warned drinks may be hot and to wait until cooled		
Moving around the kettle	Pupils and staff Burn, bruise or cut from tripping or falling within the fire pit area	High	• Pupils taught to not cross the fire circle • Pupils taught to walk around the outside of the fire circle • If pupils need to move seats, they walk around the outside of the fire circle • When cooking over fire, pupils to kneel on one knee to remain stable • No loose items on the ground • FSL to check for any trip hazards prior to lighting a fire • Seats to be 2m away from the fire • Pupils to not have any loose clothing/shoelaces • Hair to be tied back	All staff	Low

			• Pupils reminded to not run near the fire circle		
Out of control fire	Pupils and staff Burn from being caught by moving flames	High	• Fire to be in a fire pit, squared off by logs or bricks to keep it contained • Position of fire to be away from buildings and overhanging branches • A bucket filled with a minimum of 5 litres of water and damp tea towel close to hand • Pupils asked to move away immediately from the fire circle if fire shows signs of being out of control • FSL to pour water over fire until it is extinguished • No flammable liquids to light or maintain a fire	All staff	Low
Inhalation of smoke	Pupils and staff – Inhalation of smoke by sitting close to the fire which may result in coughing, smarting of eyes and difficulty breathing	High	• FSL to position fire away from buildings and assess wind direction • Fire to not be used in windy conditions • FSL to identify wind direction and sit pupils upwind	All staff	Low

			• Only dry and suitable wood to be used • All staff to be aware of any asthmatic pupils and ensure they have inhalers • If smoke blows in the direction of a pupil, they are to walk around the outside of the fire circle to a different seat • If necessary, seating can be moved further back • If necessary, activity can be ended by FSL extinguishing the fire		
Sitting too close to the kettle	Pupils and Staff Impact of hot embers, causing burns	High	• When the fire is out the FSL to cool the kettle base with water and put out hot embers with a stick • FSL to remain by kettle while hot embers remain • Pupils advised to not touch the kettle even when the fire has been put out as it may still be hot	All staff	Low
Clothing, footwear and long hair	Pupils and Staff Trips and falls from unsuitable clothing, footwear and hair dangling in face	High	• FSL to check pupils are wearing suitable outdoor protective clothing • All hair to be tied up • Zips and buttons securely fastened	All staff	Low

			• Appropriate shoes with a decent grip		
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Loppers allow children to learn about another tool that can cut wood and they can compare it to their knowledge of other wood cutting tools, like the bowsaw.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025
Title: The use of Loppers during Forest School activities					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of Loppers	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts from contact with the blade	High	- FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool	All staff	Low

			• Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length • Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Glove to be worn on non-tool hand if preferred but not required • Loppers to be placed on the ground, side of the body and blade pointing behind • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing Loppers	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of Loppers • Loppers only to be passed in the tool circle, held out at chest height with the receiver taking the loppers by the handles and then holding it in the holding position	All staff	Low

			• Carry by holding across the body with the blade pointing downwards with one hand on the top handle and one on the bottom in a closed position • Children to not run around with the Loppers • Children to not run around in or near the tool area		
Storing the Loppers	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts while placing tool/removing from storage	High	• Only FSL to give out tools • FSL to count and record tools that go in and out • Loppers stored in a tool bag and in a locked store • Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School sessions in a safe area away from others	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of the Loppers	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to insufficient training of pupils	High	• Loppers only for wood that is thinner than a 10p piece • FSL to give tool talk • If someone is assisting, they must be standing 1m away and wearing gloves	All staff	Low

			• Tool circle to be sited away from main group • Good communication between user and assistant		
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Mallets give children independence to hammer pegs into the ground for shelter building, it also allows them to see how two tools can work together e.g. the Billhook.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025
Title: The use of Mallets during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of a mallet	Pupils and staff Risk of bump or bruise from tool	High	- FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool	All staff	Low

			• Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length • Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Gloves are not necessary • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing a mallet	Pupils and staff Bump or bruise from dropping mallet or by falling/tripping with the mallet in hand	High	• FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of mallet • Mallet is not to be passed but placed on the ground to then be picked up • Carry by holding the handle beside the leg with the head facing down towards the ground • Children to not run around with the mallet	All staff	Low

			Children to not run around in or near the tool area		
Storing the mallet	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts while placing tool/removing from storage	High	- Only FSL to give out tools - FSL to count and record tools that go in and out - Mallets stored in a tool bag and in a locked store - Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School sessions in a safe area away from others	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of the mallet	Pupils and staff Bruise injury from impact of mallet	High	- Mallet only used to assist with a billhook in splitting wood or to hammer pegs into the ground - FSL to give tool talk - Tool circle to be sited away from main group - Good communication between user and assistant	All staff	Low

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Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: October 2025
Title: The use of Knives during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures)) H, M L	Control Measures	Who is responsible	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of a Knife	Pupils and staff – injury/cuts from contact with the blade	High	- Keep the guard on - FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool - Children to work at a safe distance from each other - Starting ratio 1:1	All staff	Low

			• Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Gloves are not required • When using the knife, work to one side of the body, the blade strokes away from the body (in sitting position) • Knife to be placed on the ground when not in use • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using knife is appropriate for learners prior to the session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing a Knife	Pupils and staff – Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• Keep the guard on • FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of knife • Children to not carry or pass the knife • Only FSL to carry the knife from a locked storage box and the tool circle	All staff	Low

			• Knife to be placed onto the ground next to the user • Children to not run around with the knife • Children to not run around in or near the tool area		
Storing the Knives	Pupils and staff – Injury/cuts while placing tool/removing from storage	High	• Only FSL to give out tools • FSL to count and record tools that go in and out • Knives to be stored in the sheath, in a locked box and in a locked cupboard • Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School Sessions in a safe area away from others	FSL	Low
Incorrect use of the Knife	Pupils and staff – Injury/cuts due to insufficient training of pupils	High	• FSL to give tool talk • Tool circle to be sited away from main group • Reminder to stay in the correct sitting position • Good communication between user and assistant		

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Potato Peelers give children the opportunity to hold a small tool on their own and to work on small pieces of wood.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: October 2025
Title: The use of Potato Peelers during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of potato peeler	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts from contact with the blade	High	- FSL to give tool talk - FSL to demonstrate safe use of tool - Children to work at a safe distance from each other, arm and a tool length	All staff	Low

			• Starting ratio 1:1 • Increase to 1:3 at FSL discretion • Gloves are not required • When using the potato peeler, work to one side of the body, the blade strokes away from the body (in sitting position) • Peeler to be placed on the ground, when not in use • First Aid and First Aider always present • FSL to determine if using tool is appropriate for learners prior to session, considering age and ability • Regular reminders of safety rules • No one to enter the tool circle unless invited by the FSL		
Carrying or passing a potato peeler	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the tool	High	• FSL to give tool talk • FSL to demonstrate safe handling of potato peeler • Children to not carry or pass the potato peeler • Only FSL to carry potato peeler from a locked storage box and the tool circle	All staff	Low

			• Peelers to be placed onto the ground next to the user • Children to not run around with the potato peeler • Children to not run around in or near the tool area		
Storing the potato peeler	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts while placing tool/removing from storage	High	• Only FSL to give out tools • FSL to count and record tools that go in and out • Peelers to be stored in a protective cover in a locked box and in a locked cupboard • Cleaning and maintenance to take place regularly and away from Forest School sessions in a safe area away from others	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of potato peelers	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to insufficient training of pupils	High	• FSL to give tool talk • Tool circle to be sited away from main group • Reminder to stay in the correct sitting position • Good communication between user and assistant	All staff	Low

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Rope/Cord allows children to use their imagination with their shelter building and make the activity more challenging by learning how to tie knots. Quite often they will have to work as a team in order to achieve a good shelter.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: Oct 2025
Title: The use of Rope/Cord during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect handling of Role/Cord	Pupils and staff Friction burn, strangulation, trips and falls.	High	Children made aware of dangers surrounding use of rope/cord and the appropriate use	All staff	Low

			• Adult supervision to ensure appropriate use • FSL to check ropes prior to use to ensure free of knots and frayed ends and not likely to break • First Aid and First Aider always present		
Carrying the ropes/cords	Pupils and staff Risk of injury from slips, trips and falls whilst carrying ropes.	High	• Encourage children to carry the rope tied in a bundle and not dragging loose across the floor	All staff	Low
Storing the ropes/cords	Pupils and staff Friction burn, strangulation, trips and falls.	High	• Only FSL to give out ropes. • FSL to count and record ropes that go in and out.	All staff	Low
Incorrect use of ropes/cords	Pupils and staff Friction burn, strangulation, trips and falls.	High	• FSL to give tool talk • Children to made aware of the dangers of the incorrect use • Clearly advise children on the rope/cord usage e.g. den building	All staff	Low

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This requires team building and good communication between pupils, they also learn how to select the correct items to make their shelter and learn resilience if it doesn't work the first time.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: October 2025
Title: Shelter Building during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Using materials to build shelters	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts from using materials	High	Safety talk given prior to activity of building shelters	All staff	Low

			• FSL to advise of the most appropriate place to construct shelters • FSL to give clear instructions on how to build a shelter safely • Children taught how to look for hazards • FSL to ensure procedures are followed and that equipment has been stored correctly and is safe to use • First Aid Kit and First Aider always present • FSL to check Beaufort Scale as shelters should not be built in high winds • Staff to constantly supervise and check ropes/cords are being used safely and correctly • Staff to assist children in securing knots where necessary		
Picking up or carrying materials	Pupils and staff Injury/cuts due to trips and falls while holding the materials	High	• Staff to check materials are appropriate to the type of shelter being made • If collecting wood or logs, children to be aware of the weight and size	All staff	Low

			• Children to assist each other when moving items • Children to be aware of other people around them • Gloves and protective shoes to be worn • Rope/cord to be carried in a loop and not dragging on the ground • Children to not run when carrying materials • Children to check for uneven ground		
Unstable shelter	Pupils and staff Bumps and bruises from shelter collapsing	High	• Shelter to not be made in windy conditions • Heavy wood should not be used • FSL to monitor shelter building, giving support where necessary and checking if safe • Children reminded to not run in or around shelters • Children to stay out of shelters whilst being built to avoid items falling before they are stable	All staff	Low

Protruding branches, roots, logs and rope	Pupils and staff Slips and trips resulting in banged heads and cuts	High	• Children advised not to use any sharp, pointy sticks or wood that is too heavy • Avoid making shelters that have branches sticking out at head height • Any rope or cord used to not be a trip hazard or at neck height • Staff to remove any of the above items if they see them as a hazard	All staff	Low
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Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit: Forest School activities provide a few potential risks that can be controlled and managed. There are numerous benefits for children to be exposed to those risks. When learning to use tools in an activity the children will gain an understanding of the correct, safe use of sharp tools and how it can achieve something. Forest School activities will help to improve fine and gross motor skills and encourage teamwork. Children will develop resilience, confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and the ability to risk assess themselves. They will also learn to make a decision that will keep themselves and others safe.

Tree Climbing gives children the opportunity to do a physical task that they might not normally get the opportunity to do, they also have to learn how to risk assess for themselves and appreciate damage that they may do to the natural environment.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: April 2025	Review Date: October 2025
Title: Tree Climbing during Forest School sessions					
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures	FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Incorrect climbing trees	Pupils Risk of bruise, cut or fracture from	High	- Safety talk given prior to activity - FSL to advise of appropriate place to climb	All staff	Low

	injury climbing/falling		• FSL to give clear instructions on how to climb safely • Children should not bear weight on any branch thinner than their arm • Children should not climb higher than their own height until they are more confident • Children taught how to check for potential hazards • First Aid kit and First Aider always present • FSL to check Beaufort Scale prior to session, winds above 4, climbing will not take place • Staff to constantly supervise and be in sight of climber at all times • Only one climber per tree • Rest of the group kept at a safe distance away • Children to take their time when climbing •		
Inappropriate clothing or footwear	Pupils Risk of bruise, cut or fracture from slipping	High	• FSL to check all children are wearing suitable outdoor protective clothing • All hair must be tied back	All staff	Low

			• Zips and buttons securely fastened • Protective shoes with good grips, must be worn		
Disturbing Habitats	Pupils and staff Bites or stings from disturbed wildlife	High	• Daily site check to identify habitats and avoid the area if required during the session • Give children instructions to remain still, with hands by their sides, if they do disturb anything to avoid risk of injury	All staff	Low
Falling objects from tree (branches or people)	Pupils and staff Head injuries, bruises or grazes	High	• Children told not to stand under the tree • Children made aware of risks of falling objects and advised to stay close to the main trunk • Climbers to be encouraged to test branches for stability before using	All staff	Low

Baldwins Gate CE Primary School

Forest School Risk Assessment

Risk Benefit: Forest School activities provide a few potential risks that can be controlled and managed. There are numerous benefits for children to be exposed to those risks. When learning to use tools in an activity the children will gain an understanding of the correct, safe use of sharp tools and how it can achieve something. Forest School activities will help to improve fine and gross motor skills and encourage teamwork. Children will develop resilience, confidence, self-esteem, self-awareness and the ability to risk assess themselves. They will also learn to make a decision that will keep themselves and others safe.

The Forest School Site allows children to learn in an environment that is very different to the classroom, they learn how to respect the natural world and how time to explore and work at their own pace.

Assessor Name: Melanie MacBryde		Signature:		Date Written: Jan 2025	Review Date: July 2025	
Title: Forest School Site						
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk and how?	Risk Rating (before measures) H, M L	Control Measures		FSL has overall responsibility with support from staff	Risk Rating after
Litter including broken glass	Pupils and staff Cuts, grazes from litter and broken glass	High	• Daily site check • Children to tell adults if they find • any litter or glass on site		All staff	Low

Uneven ground	Pupils and staff Cuts and grazes from slips, trips and falls	High	• Daily site check • Alternative routes if deemed unsafe	All staff	Low
Overhanging branches	Pupils and staff Cuts, bumps and grazes from tree branches	High	• Daily site check • Children taught about risk management and to look out for hazards • Children taught to take precautions when running on the site, especially in cold or wet weather • Trees monitored after periods of high winds	All staff	Low
Dangerous and poisonous plants/fungi	Pupils and staff Stings, scratches, splinters and poisoning	High	• Daily site check • Cordon off hazardous plants if necessary • Children taught how to identify the risks associated with dangerous plants • Children to not put anything in their mouths including their fingers • Hands to be washed during session	All staff	Low
Nettles and brambles	Pupils and Staff Stings, splinters and scratches	High	• Daily site check • Long clothing to be worn throughout all seasons	All staff	Low

			• Brambles and nettles to be cleared as part of the management plan • Children taught to identify the plants that will cause them harm		
Insect bites and stings	Pupils and staff Bites, stings, itching, scratching, allergic reaction and inflammation	High	• Daily site check • Long clothing to be worn in all seasons • Staff to be aware of children with allergies • Children taught to be able to identify insects that might cause them harm	All staff	Low
Animal faeces	Pupils and staff Sickness or infection		• Daily site check • Removed from site appropriately • Hands thoroughly washed		
Animal burrows	Pupils and staff Slips, trips or falls		• Daily site check • Areas cordoned off if required • Staff and pupils made aware to stay away		
Tadpole pond (in a raised water tray)	Pupils and staff Drowning		• Daily site check • Staff and pupils made aware of the dangers • Staff and pupils taught how to behave around the tadpole pond		

			• Pupils to only go over when there is a member of staff		
Boundary fence	Pupils and staff Cuts and bumps from sharp wire if fence is broken. Slips, trips and falls if a foot or clothing gets caught		• Daily site check • Make site manager aware if fence requires fixing • Cordon off the area if required • Make staff and pupils aware		

Forest School Communication Strategy

Who	How	What	Why	When
Forest School Learners	Meeting prior to session to give a brief outline. Continual open lines of communication during all sessions.	To provide basic information and answer any questions or concerns. To advise of behaviour expectations.	To alleviate any worries and explain Forest School Ethos. To keep everyone safe.	Prior to first session and throughout all sessions. Learners encouraged to express opinions and ask questions.
Parents/Carers	Communication from Class Teacher or FSL and school website.	To explain Forest School ethos, expectations of learners, benefits, appropriate clothing, days and consent forms.	So that parents fully understand what will happen during the sessions and that they and their children are prepared.	Three weeks prior to sessions and then continual updates throughout the sessions.
Volunteers	Introductory session with FSL.	FS Handbook, risk assessments and role expectations.	So that they understand the Forest School ethos and can support during the sessions.	Prior to them volunteering for their first session and continually as and when policies, procedures or risk assessments change.
Teaching staff	Staff meeting on Forest School, practical session and the Forest School Handbook.	To explain Forest School ethos, benefits, curriculum links and the expectations for learners.	To give staff the opportunity to take part in sessions and so that they can promote it by understanding the importance of it.	As early in the school year as is possible and to give regular updates as and when there are changes.
Head Teacher/SLT	1:1 meeting.	To provide all information on Forest School ethos, sessions, resources, benefits, curriculum links, risk assessments, policies and procedures,	So that they understand the Forest School ethos and promote the sessions, giving the appropriate level of support to the FSL when needed.	As early in the school year as possible (before 1 st session) and regular meetings to give updates on the success of the sessions and to discuss

		behaviour and site management plan.		and changes or resources required.
Caretaker	Meeting prior to sessions and the caretaker logbook.	To discuss the site management plan and the daily risk assessment.	To keep everyone safe.	Before the first session and then as and when is required.
Governing Body	Meeting on Forest School, practical session and the Forest School Handbook.	To provide all information on Forest School ethos, sessions, resources, benefits, curriculum links, risk assessments, policies and procedures, behaviour and site management plan.	So that they understand the Forest School ethos and promote the sessions, giving the appropriate level of support to the FSL when needed.	As early in the school year as possible (before 1 st sessions) and then as and when is required.
PTFA	Meeting.	To explain Forest School ethos, benefits and curriculum links.	To see if they can provide fundraising support for additional resources.	As early in the school year as is possible (before 1 st session) and then as and when fundraising is required.
Neighbours	Leaflet distributed, school website and local Facebook page.	To explain Forest School ethos.	To make them aware of the activities they may see, hear and smell on site.	At early in the school year as is possible (before 1 st session).
Local Fire Station	Phone call by FSL.	To inform of a controlled fire.	So the local fire station is aware if they receive any calls from neighbours.	Before and after a session where a fire is going to be lit.