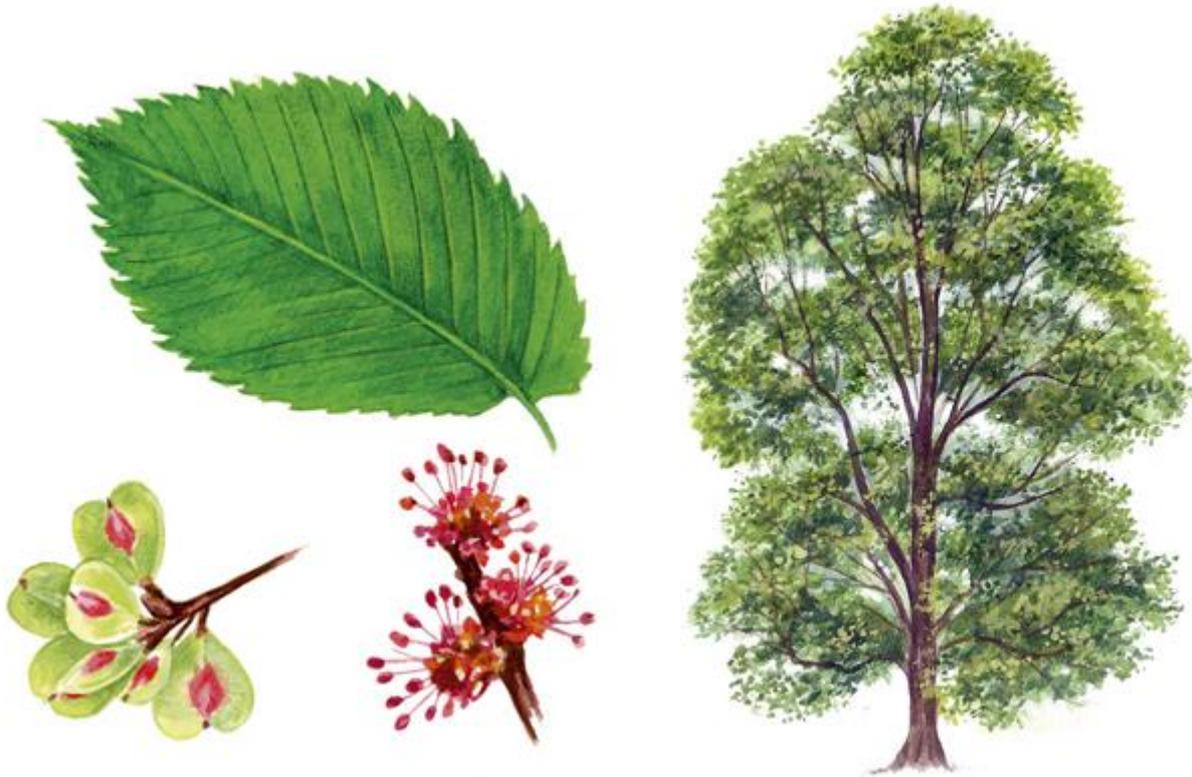


FOREST SCHOOL HANDBOOK



"THERE IS NO BAD WEATHER, ONLY BAD CLOTHING"

CONTENTS

1. WHAT IS FOREST SCHOOL?
2. FOREST SCHOOL ETHOS AND PRINCIPLES
3. WHAT WE OFFER YOUR CHILD
4. ADULT SUPPORTERS AT FOREST SCHOOL
5. THE MANAGEMENT OF THE KINSBOURNECOMMON
NURSERY AND PRE-SCHOOL OF LEARNING FOREST
SCHOOL
6. SESSION INFORMATION
7. FOREST SCHOOL POLICIES
8. CLOTHING GUIDE
9. TOILETING
10. TICKS & DOGS ON SITE & UNINVITED GUESTS
11. USE OF FIRES
12. EATING, DRINKING AND COOKING
13. BOUNDARIES
14. PLAYING WITH STONES AND STICKS
15. TREE CLIMBING
16. TOOL USE
17. CARRYING AND TRANSPORTING MATERIALS
18. AROUND THE LOG CIRCLE
19. SUN EXPOSURE DURING SUMMER MONTHS
20. HIGH WINDS
21. UNWELL CHILDREN
22. ALLERGIES
23. VOLUNTEERS AT FOREST SCHOOL
24. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSION
25. SAFEGUARDING
26. RISK MANAGEMENT
27. HEALTH AND SAFETY
28. EMERGENCY AND FIRST AID EMERGENCY PROCEDURE
29. MISSING CHILD PROCEDURE
30. UNWELL FOREST SCHOOL LEADER PROCEDURE
31. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT
32. BULLYING
33. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY
34. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT OF FS ACTIVITIES
35. CANCELLATION POLICY
36. CONFIDENTIALITY
37. PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS
38. COMPLAINTS

WHAT IS FOREST SCHOOL?

Forest School was first introduced in the 1950s' in Scandinavia with people who had close cultural connections with the woodlands. Forest School is an outdoor education delivery model in which children (or adults) visit natural spaces to learn personal, social and technical skills. It has been defined as an inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence through hands-on learning in a woodland environment.

Forest School is both a pedagogy and a physical entity, with the use often being interchanged.

The Nursery is extremely fortunate to have access to such a variety of different outdoor learning opportunities with the beautiful woodland and common land right on its doorstep.

FOREST SCHOOL ETHOS AND PRINCIPLES

The Forest School ethos has 6 principles (reviewed in 2011 and published by the Forest School association <https://www.forestschoollassociation.org/what-is-forest-school/>) and these are:

- FS is a long-term process of regular sessions, rather than a one-off or infrequent visit; the cycle of planning, observation, adaptation and review links each session.
- FS takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
- FS uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for being, development and learning.
- FS aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
- FS offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
- FS is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice More details about the Forest School ethos and the 6 Forest School principles can be found here: <https://www.forestschoollassociation.org/full-principles-and-criteria-for-good-practice>

Our aim is to advance the education, and promote the wellbeing of children in a safe, secure and stimulating outdoors environment.

We offer your child:

Sessions are planned around the individual's and group's needs, and built upon each week. The Owner is a qualified Level 3 Forest School Leader through a nationally recognised and accredited training, therefore ensuring Forest School is a high quality learning experience. The earlier sessions will concentrate on safety; establishing boundaries and routines and allowing time for the children to become comfortable and confident in our setting. As the children develop in confidence and familiarity with the environment the sessions focus on developing and reinforcing skills, promoting nature connection and developing relationships within the group.

We will regularly share your child's experiences at Forest School with you and always love to hear what they say about the sessions.

“Forest School is an inspirational process that offers children and young people opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self esteem, through hands on learning experiences in a local woodland environment.”

National definition: by Forest School (England) Network

ADULT SUPPORTERS AT FOREST SCHOOL

The role of the Forest School Leader is to allow the children to meet risk and challenges appropriate to their age, personality and stage of development and to ensure their safety. Our sessions aim to foster a supportive and encouraging community, where children feel their contributions are valued and listened to. We support and encourage the children as they build a meaningful connection to nature, igniting their natural curiosity and extending their learning by providing opportunities and guidance skilfully and sensitively, to support all children to reach their full potential.

As Forest School facilitators, we always have a flexible plan for an enjoyable and child-centred session. We take into account and respond to children's needs and interests along with the changing seasons and all they have to offer.

THE MANAGEMENT OF THE KINSBOURNE COMMON NURSERY AND PRE-SCHOOL OF LEARNING FOREST SCHOOL

The Owner of The Kinsbourne Common Nursery and Pre-School is Deborah Campbell who is a qualified Level 3 Forest School Practitioner. She runs two afternoon sessions a week for

children from 18 months old up to five years of age located at Kinsbourne Green Woods as well as areas on Kinsbourne Green Common and the Nursery's enclosed outdoor area in Harpenden, Hertfordshire. The main site is a small woodland.

Session information

To book a session parents/carers can either send an email to kinsbournenursery@btinternet.com or ring Deborah Campbell on Mobile: 07956 463128. When booking you will need to complete our application form located at: https://0da200e0-bd7c-4586-9fde-20ecf5de59a2.filesusr.com/ugd/2c226b_c63d17c3587345ee9ffe755f6c3e9828.pdf

Where we meet

All meeting and collection points will be from The Kinsbourne Common Nursery and Pre-School (St Mary's Church Hall) with the exception of a Tuesday which will be from the entrance at The Kinsbourne Common Hall (Scout Hall). The short walk to Kinsbourne Green Woods is included in our risk assessment for sessions.

Our Forest School Leader or Deputy will maintain the Register, closely supervise and accompany children to the entrance to our site and ensure a headcount is completed on arrival prior to entering the woodland.

For security purposes the Forest School practitioners will only release children to adults known to the setting and if not those with parental responsibility, we will require your advanced permission. Please do try to ensure you collect your child promptly.

THE KINSBOURNE COMMON NURSERY AND PRE-SCHOOL POLICIES

Forest School Clothing Guide

"There is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing!"

Parents/carers

We value and recognise the effort it takes to ensure your child comes prepared, so that they can get the most out of Forest School sessions. In particular, this means making sure they are appropriately dressed. It can be hard to predict just how many layers a child will need but it is

always colder in the shaded woods. Please see below for our recommendations. **Your other crucial role is to embrace the mud! Please do not send your child in their best clothes as they will almost certainly get dirty during the session!**

Layers!

- THE best way to keep warm.
- add one more than you (We can always remove a layer but once cold, it can be hard to warm up)

Waterproof trousers

- Essential!
- Standard 'thin' pair in summer for protection
- Ski trousers ideal in winter OR extra layer under trousers
- All-in-ones not advised for potty/toilet users

Trousers

- Full length for protection
- Extra pair of leggings/tights/thermals under normal trousers in cold weather

Warm socks

- Wellies get very cold!
- Extra pair of wool/ fleece/ fluffy socks inside wellies (Normal socks in wellies are not warm enough for cooler weather)

Waterproof coat

- Preferably with a hood
- Thick and warm in winter (or use an extra fleece layer)

Warm hat

- Preferably covering ears.

Mittens/Gloves

- Thermal and waterproof (Knitted gloves get damp and do not keep little hands warm enough during the colder months. Don't worry about mittens limiting finger movement as the cold is much more limiting!)

Tops

- ALWAYS long sleeves (to minimize risk from stinging nettles and biting insects etc)
- At least 3 layers under coat in winter (eg. top, jumper, fleece and coat, or 'base layer', top, warm jumper and coat)

Waterproof boots

- Wellies are essential!
(Alternatives include snow boots and walking boots)

NB: In summer, wellies, waterproof trousers and light long sleeves are still essential, to protect from thorns, nettles, ticks, insect bites etc. Please also send a sunhat in hot weather, particularly for the walk to and from the site.

Toileting

In the Forest School we have a temporary outdoor toilet shelter where toileting and nappy changes take place. Children are supervised as appropriate when going to the toilet, we support their independence and are respectful of their privacy. If your child wears nappies, please provide spare nappies in their rucksack. As we are very close to both nursery buildings, it is also possible to take children back and use the toilets at these locations when deemed appropriate.

Ticks

Ticks may be present but it is unlikely. We recommend checking your child for ticks after each Forest School session. These appear like small pin-heads on the skin, dark brown or grey in colour, they may grow to the size of a small wart. The safest way to remove them is to use a tick twister which we have in our First Aid kit or can be bought from the local vets for a small charge.

Dogs on site

Dogs may appear on the site, children are reminded not to approach unknown dogs and to “be a tree trunk” by putting their hands by their sides and looking at their roots (feet). The Forest School leader will approach the dog and request the owner puts the dog on a lead, and keeps them on the lead whilst walking nearby during sessions.

Uninvited guests on site

The Forest School Leader should, after ensuring children are fully supervised, approach the uninvited guest and explain that there is a Forest School session in progress and ask them to avoid the area being used for Forest School. If they refuse or become aggressive or abusive the police should be called.

Use of fire

Fires are an important part of our Forest School sessions, we aim to ensure that everyone participating in sessions with fires will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible. Fires will only be used in sessions once the children are familiar with the setting and the Forest School leaders feel they are able to adhere to agreements regarding fire safety. We have a specific risk assessment referring to the use of fires which details the procedure.

Eating, drinking and cooking

We talk to the children about keeping themselves safe in the woods and this means we shouldn't eat or drink anything unless told by an adult it is safe to do so (restricted to snack times usually). We also explain to the children that there are things in the woods that are poisonous and so we remind them not to put their fingers and hands near their mouths and noses where possible. At snack time hands are washed with running warm water and mild soap and we explain to the children why this is important. We may cook a snack on the open fire, this could be items such as pancakes, popcorn and damper-bread, these are cooked by the adults, children may be involved in the cooking process under close supervision, this could be using our specially adapted popcorn popper (two sieves wired together) to cook the popcorn in the fire (at a safe distance) or cooking damper bread or crumpets on sticks. These activities are individually risk assessed and are only carried out with additional adults where necessary to maintain high ratios. The procedures for these activities are detailed within the specific risk assessments. We make snacks a social time during which children and adults eat and drink together. Forest School activities are energetic therefore each session we will provide a healthy snack and a piece of fruit and usually a flapjack or biscuit or similar, and we will provide hot chocolate –perfect to warm us up in winter! Please provide your child with a named water bottle for each session.

Boundaries

We will always point out the boundaries to the children and explain that they are for their safety, there may be unseen hazards that mean we can't allow the children to explore beyond certain points. We use hazard warning tape to highlight the boundaries for the children. If children explore hidden areas, an adult should also go into the cover, deep enough to be able to see the children. If an adult loses sight of them, they should call out and await a response.

Playing with stones and sticks

Making patterns with pretty stones and throwing stones and sticks is great fun, we ask children to think of others and use the phrase "throw into a space". Throwing is an important developmental stage and we allow items to be thrown under supervision with careful guidance from leaders. We encourage children to carry sticks if they wish (ideally - shorter than their arm's length but we make sure they think about how close they are to other children). Longer sticks can be dragged or carried with a child at both ends. We discuss agreements with children and ask them to agree not to throw sticks at others and to lay them flat when sitting close to others in the log circle.

Tree climbing

We encourage and support tree climbing when it is safe to do so and with adult spotters. We check ground cover for sharp objects and check 'climbing trees' for loose and rotten branches, suitable trees for climbing are pointed out to children/parents. Children are encouraged to explore to their own limits but adults are near enough to guide and support if one should get into difficulty.

Tool Use

Once it is felt that the children are settled and confident in the setting and are able to adhere to safety agreements tools can be introduced. Tools use (bow-saw, vegetable peelers, hand-drill, hammer, loppers, and secateurs) is taught on a 1:1 basis and are kept in suitable containers in one designated spot. Tools are given out for a purpose and all adults model their correct use, storage and transportation at all times. We use tools in a safe space, away from other active children, and only walking is permitted when carrying them. We have detailed Benefit-Risk Assessments (BRA's) for all Forest School activities including tool use and these are available

for parents/carers to access and read on request. The specific BRA for each tool includes specific details on the procedure for using that tool.

Carrying & transporting materials

The children are encouraged to roll, lift, drag and pull materials, either by hand or using ropes. Heavier objects can be rolled, dragged or carried by several people.

Around the log circle

We will select a regular area for a log circle around a fire pit in our woodland. We will put safety agreements in place regarding the fire-pit area. We will explain and model that the safe way to behave around the log circle is to walk around the outside and to step over the logs to sit down. We will always practice this as if a real fire were being lit. A fire will not be lit until our Forest School leader is satisfied that all children understand this process.

Sun exposure during summer months

Every care is taken to ensure that children are not over exposed to the sun; we work in partnership with parents to facilitate this.

- To protect children from the sun we ask parents/carers to provide a sun hat for use during the Forest School session.
- Notice will be taken of maximum exposure times during weather forecasts
- We require parents/carers to apply high factor sunscreen before the Forest School session.
- Play activities are monitored, and water bottles made accessible, to ensure that children have periods of time in areas of shade so as to prevent them becoming overheated or dehydrated.

High winds

Wind speeds are monitored and risk is assessed according to the features of the specific sites (woodland/ school playground). If appropriate sessions may be cancelled due to high winds.

Unwell children

While it is not our policy to care for sick children, who should be at home until they are well enough to return, we agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being or when they are recovering from illness, if necessary.

- Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting
- Only prescribed medication is administered. It must be in-date and prescribed for the current condition
- Children's prescribed medicines must be stored in their original containers, clearly labelled and are inaccessible to children.
- Parents must give prior written permission for administration of medication.
- Any medicine handed to a member of staff will be locked in our Nursery Kitchen Cupboard (Scout Hall, Tuesday, St Mary's Church Hall, Thursday). If your child becomes ill during a session the staff will give appropriate first aid or care until the parent/carers arrive to collect the child. It is therefore very important to ensure all contact numbers you have given us are up to date. In the unlikely event of a more serious incident, our first-aid trained staff will take appropriate action, seek medical attention and arrange for your child to be taken to hospital if necessary. Consent is sought on the Nursery's Registration Form to allow Forest School leaders to deal with such incidents.

Allergies

We will identify allergens that may be present in food stuffs or that children may come into contact with at Forest School and prevent allergic children from coming into contact with these materials where possible.

- Parents will record details of any allergies your children may have on our Registration Form, please provide as much detailed information as possible about the nature of the allergy/ies
- We don't allow children to eat or pick anything in the woodland without an adult being present
- All snack food provided by Forest School will take into consideration any allergies that a child might have and if necessary, will exclude nuts or other allergens from the setting.

Volunteers at The Kinsbourne Common Forest School

There is no expectation that parents/carers should take part in the Forest School sessions. Nonetheless, our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. The Nursery Team see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for your child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the team.
- Sharing their own special interests with the children.
- Taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting.
- Joining in community activities in which the setting takes part.
- Building friendships with other parents in the setting.
- Contributing to your child's individual planning.

We maintain a high ratio of adults to children; additional staff will be included where appropriate. We ensure new staff members are introduced to the whole team which helps us to:

- give time, attention and focus to individual children
- plan and carry-out activities such as cooking or tool use
- help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide
- encourage the children to explore and be adventurous in their play through activities that require greater adult supervision such as tree climbing.

All staff are required to have a DBS check and a First Aid certificate. All new staff members complete an appropriate induction period which will include:

- Introduction to the rest of the team members
- Provide information about where important items and documents are kept
- Familiarising the new member of staff with procedures for managing confidential information
- Provide details of the tasks and daily routines to be completed

We require new members of staff to:

- Familiarise themselves with the woodland, the health and safety and the emergency and missing child procedures,
- The Benefit-Risk- Assessments for all activities, must be read, and signed and dated prior to completing their induction period.
- Read the policies and procedures and adhere to the information contained within them

Once the induction period is successfully completed the new member of staff is able to be a fully involved member of the team.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

The Kinsbourne Common Forest School is committed to equal opportunities for all and we wish to provide an environment in which people feel equally valued. We promote the individuality of all, irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We will adapt activities to ensure that everyone can participate, where necessary will seek expert advice to allow us to fully support children with additional needs of any nature. Where possible, we will keep spare sets of waterproof clothing to ensure that bad weather is not a barrier to taking part. We take our duty of care when working with children extremely seriously.

To ensure all individuals (children and workers) are safe and protected we undertake the following: -

- Everyone involved in Forest School is briefed on health and safety, risk assessment of sites and activities.
- Forest School leader and the nursery team should be aware of the relevant policies and ensure that they adhere to the guidance contained in them
- All staff members have completed DBS checks to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

Safeguarding

Forest School leaders are committed to protecting children from maltreatment, preventing impairment of children's health or development, ensuring the children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

- The Forest School Leader has completed a DBS check to ensure she is suitable to work with children.
- All team members have completed safeguarding training. The Leader, the morning Deputy (Tany Fisher) and the afternoon Deputy (Sonal Zala) have also completed Designated Safeguarding training.
- Any concerns about a child's physical or mental wellbeing should be shared with Forest School's Safeguarding Person (the Forest School leader or her Deputies) as soon as possible, but within 24 hours. The Forest School leader will report any incident or concern to the relevant body as soon as possible (The Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership – Tel **0300 123 4043**).
- Should any member of staff or adult helper have any disclosure made to them that is potentially a safeguarding issue this must be immediately reported to the Forest School leader and notes should be taken by the adult as soon as possible after any disclosure is made.
- Any concerns should be kept confidential and only be shared with those who need to know, such as the Forest School Leader who can then ensure the correct channels are then informed.

Risk management

Our Benefit- Risk Assessment (BRA) procedure ensures that all children (and adults) at Forest School remain as safe as reasonably possible, whilst allowing the children to experience some degree of appropriate 'risk', which is important for their learning, development and enjoyment! We plan our activities and write our BRA taking into account the benefits of the activity for the children. Our BRA's are working documents and a copy of these is available onsite during the sessions.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of all participants is central to everything we do within a Forest School programme. We encourage children to play an active part in undertaking risk assessments in the language we use and the discussions we have. The ethos of Forest School instils in our children, the ability to take measured risks, appropriate to their age and developmental stage, and to carefully consider the repercussions of their actions. Our Forest School Leader is fully trained in risk assessment and first aid. Risk assessments are maintained and evaluated at regular intervals throughout the year. Our site is assessed seasonally, prior to every session and risk assessments for activities are completed and available as working documents for use by all staff; we keep first aid equipment at the site.

Any accidents that occur will be dealt with by a qualified first aider and recorded on the appropriate accident form. The First Aid box is located in the Leader's Forest School Trolley, and any treatment necessary is to be carried out by a member of the team (who are trained in first aid) who would then record it on the accident form. The contents of the first aid kit are maintained by the Forest School leader. Any accidents or incidents are investigated by the Forest School leader and information that is gathered is used to inform future risk assessment and policy making. The Forest School Leader will carry a charged mobile phone which will remain switched on throughout the session. The mobile phone signal is checked at the start of each session. Some of the activities the children may participate in are 'higher-risk' activities (such as tree climbing, low-ropes, campfire cooking or tool use) and these are done under controlled conditions with close supervision and are only available to the children once it is felt the children have a good understanding of the risk and benefits and are able to adhere to safety agreements.

The Nursery also has walkie talkies which are used at times when groups are split (one in enclosed outdoor nursery area and the other in Kinsbourne Green Woods).

Children are encouraged and supported in recognising and managing risk for themselves, through real life situations and experiences. We ensure we have the correct ratio of adults to children before setting out to our woodland (1-3 for under 3's and 1-5 for over 3's). The same goes for some of the activities, e.g. the rope swing is 1:1 (only one child may use the swing at any one time). Tool use such as sawing and whittling are taught on a 1:1 basis and once the child gains a level of competence this can be reduce based on the age of the child and experience level. Parental/emergency contact details for each child (or child and adult if a parent and child session) are recorded on the completed Registration Form should we need to contact parents/emergency contacts.

NB: Staff ratios are higher than stated in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2021) as a result of outdoor activities.

Emergency and First Aid emergency procedure

The following procedure will be followed in the case of an emergency situation:

- Forest School leader alerted or Deputy if the leader is in need of medical assistance
- Secure safety of whole group from further danger and stop all activities

- Call together the group promptly (using emergency nursery whistle if necessary – 3 blows of the whistle means everyone should come back to the Forest School Leader/Deputy)
- First Aider to attend to any casualties with Forest School Leader/Deputy as appropriate and with regard for maintenance of required supervision ratios for the rest of the group.
- A record of changes in casualties' state and anything administered to them to be made if possible.
- Emergency services contacted as necessary, by a member of the team. A charged mobile phone is carried by the Forest School Leader.
- Despatch an adult to meet emergency vehicle at the entrance where possible/necessary.
- Give grid references to 999 operator: AL5 3QE Grid ref. TL 11347 16094
- Informing emergency contact as soon as practicable after the incident if not present at the session.
- Safety of the rest of group will be maintained by the remaining staff away from the scene of the incident if possible, staff or volunteer to return children to the 9th Harpenden Scout Hall (Tuesday) and St Mary's Church Hall (Thursday) . Parents will be contacted if necessary to collect children.
- Incident report should be written by Forest School leader and/or First aid/ incident form completed. Children's safety is maintained as the highest priority at all times in the Forest School. In the unlikely event of a child going missing, our missing child procedure is followed.

Missing child procedure

- As soon as it is noticed that a child is missing, parents, staff inform the Forest School Leader
- Children are called back to the designated circle for that session using the Nursery whistle (3 whistle blows). A head count is taken and register checked, to confirm all other children are present.
- The site is thoroughly checked by the Forest School leader. Staff stay near the designated circle with the other children.
- If the child is not found after 5 minutes, report the missing child to the police via 999 number and provide grid reference AL5 3QE Grid ref. TL 11347 16094
- Contact emergency contact noted on completed Registration Form.
- Upon arrival of parents/carers and or police, the Forest School Leader is responsible for relaying information regarding the circumstances in which the child went missing and the action that has been taken so far.

- Staff to return children to the Scout Hall (Tuesday) and St Mary's Church Hall (Thursday) and phone parents to collect if it is deemed appropriate.
- Forest School leader (and another adult if possible) to continue search until help arrives
- Forest School Leader writes an incident report detailing the events that occurred. The incident would be fully investigated by the Forest School leader taking written statements and reported to appropriate bodies, including RIDDOR as necessary.

Unwell Forest School leader procedure

Should the Forest School leader become ill or injured during a Forest School session, the Deputy would be available to administer first aid and to end the session. The Deputy would administer first aid. The children would be called to the designated circle for that session using the Nursery whistle (blown three times). The Deputy would instruct another member of the team to contact the emergency services if necessary and contact the parents to collect the children to end the session if appropriate. If sufficient staff ratios are in place, then it may be possible that children can be led back to the nursery provision for the rest of the session.

Behaviour management

Forest School aims to promote and develop in all participants:

- a recognition that all behaviour is a form of communication
- self-esteem, independence and the motivation to learn
- an awareness of, respect and care for self, for other individuals and for the natural environment
- an understanding of the value of collaborative behaviour
- the confidence and ability to meet risk whilst feeling supported to remain safe
- a recognition of and sense of pride in individual strengths and achievements. Forest School environment is, by natural design and planned intention through the Forest School Principles, an environment that offers greater freedom through the avoidance of unnecessary rules and boundaries, with a primary focus on keeping ourselves and others safe, in an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and respect.

Our Forest School Leader will:

- agree necessary and appropriate boundaries with all participants, in line with risk assessments and appropriate policies, and ensure participants are reminded of these at the start of each session and additionally as required (Golden Rules).
- Lead by example, ensuring safety and learning through care, respect, and positivity
- Create a positive environment which encourages and reinforces caring, nurturing and respectful behaviour between all participants as well as towards the natural environment and equipment.
- Promote and foster effective relationships through observation and interaction, in which all are accepted, valued and treated fairly.
- Be mindful of the need to maintain safety at all times.
- Place the needs of the children, including needs linked to their developmental levels, preferred learning styles, social, emotional and behavioural needs at the centre of the Forest School experience to maximise individual success and promote positive outcomes.
- Give specific feedback and praise to children when demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviour, to promote understanding of the ethos and to encourage self-regulation through self-awareness.

In the event that a child is exhibiting “challenging behaviour” we take an empathetic approach whereby we seek to support the child and help them to feel heard and valued. We adapt our approach to suit the children and monitor closely noticing particular areas that might present a challenge for them and then pre-emptively seek to support them through it, providing a voice if appropriate.

Bullying

Bullying is a deliberate, aggressive and repeated action, which is carried out with intent to cause harm or distress to others. Young children are keen observers and more likely to copy behaviours, which mimic the actions of others, especially the actions of people they have established a relationship with. These are learnt behaviours rather than premeditated behaviours because pre-school aged children do not have sufficiently sophisticated cognition to carry out the type of bullying an older child can do. However, this behaviour does require addressing and the Forest School leader would approach the situation calmly, stopping any hurtful actions, acknowledging the feelings of those involved, gathering information, restating the issue to help children reflect, regain control of the situation and resolve the situation themselves. If necessary, children can be accompanied and removed from the group in order to

calm down and if appropriate helped to reflect on what has happened. Any aggressive behaviour by children towards other children will result in a Forest School Leader intervening immediately to challenge and prevent escalation. Should any behaviour become a cause for concern regarding bullying, or should any child make an allegation of bullying this will be investigated by the Forest School leaders who will listen to the child/ren, keep factual records of incident/s, arrange to have a restorative conversation with all children involved (if appropriate), continue to monitor the situation and inform the parents of the children involved.

Environmental Considerations and sustainability Forest School has environmental awareness at the heart of its ethos. Wherever possible, and appropriate, environmentally friendly products and recycled materials are used. Environmental good practice is modelled by adults, showing children that the world in which we live in should be cared for. Involving children in site checks, recycling of waste and considerations of how we leave our site will help to support this. We bring in materials such as logs and kindling for the fire, and remove waste and dispose of fire remains with care and consideration for the environment.

- The fire pit is in the same location to reduce our impact.
- We bring in water to reduce our ecological impact
- We will monitor the site to identify any impact we are having on the environment.
- Any rubbish will be removed after each session.
- The site will be rested over the summer to help with regeneration.
- We will create log pile habits to encourage insect life.

Assessment of impact of Forest School activities

There are many ways that running a Forest School programme can affect the ecology of the site these can be in a negative or positive way. Firstly the biggest positive way is the impact of fostering a love of nature in our next generation, through their knowledge and love of nature, the ecological impact of the next generation can be a gentle one. This is a summary of our ecological assessment, a more detailed assessment of our site is contained within our woodland management document which is available on request.

Activity	Impact	How can this be reduced/managed?
Walking/ running and playing in the woods	Compacted earth/ creating pathways. Reduction in	Ask all attendees to tread carefully, follow the existing

Activity	Impact	How can this be reduced/managed?
	biodiversity/ fauna and flora growth	path if there is one. Rest areas of woodland/ routes when possible.
Fire Damage to soil or heat damage	Consider the frequency of fires, to trees - change in pH of the soil (especially if ash is left behind) which can be harmful to plants, and can cause mineral depletion.	Risk of fire spreading if left or not properly extinguished choose the position of the fire pit carefully, in areas that are not of ecological significance, avoiding overhead tree branches and also distance from large trees to mitigate root damage. Dispose of ash – remain in fire pit Extinguish thoroughly and carefully.
Cooking/ eating	Litter dropping from food remains or packaging may attract animals to the site that aren't usually there	Take all litter away with you – leave no trace. Be careful of food waste/ spills and remove from site when you leave.
Collecting natural materials/ deadwood	Damage to plants and or habitats/ loss of food for wildlife if acorns/ seeds collected and removed Damage to plants/ trees if branches/ leaves/ flowers removed Deadwood important habitat for many creatures and bed for fungi	Make agreements about the collecting of natural materials, limits on number of leaves from one tree, only flowers from the ground or seeds etc. where there are a large number of them and impact will be negligible Inform about plants and any rare species or protected plants. Limit collecting and picking activities
Climbing trees	Damage to tree branches/trunk or plants on the forest floor	Restrict to suitable trees- identify to attendees
Making shelters/ rope swings	Trampling on flowers and plants on the forest floor Damage to trees by use of ropes/ risk of breaking	Ask attendees to take care when walking especially in the Spring when flowers are emerging on the forest floor –

Activity	Impact	How can this be reduced/managed?
	branches.	e.g. bluebellies. Take care when placing rope swing to minimise damage to trees and use only suitable trees that can withstand the forces.
Toilet	Used toilet paper will have an ecological impact. Wetwipes contain plastic and are not provided for use at our sessions but may be brought onto site by parents and require careful disposal.	All human waste should be emptied from toilet or potty and buried at the end of the session. Alternatively, disposed of in Nursery bin. Unfortunately, we are unable to install a composting toilet which would reduce our ecological impact due to the nature of the type of land we use (Common Land).
Recycling and waste	Litter could be a hazard to wildlife, chemicals from waste could affect the soil and damage plants. Waste materials have a negative ecological impact	We separate our rubbish at FS into recycling, compost and landfill waste. Children are aware and we explain the benefits of recycling and which type of rubbish goes in which bucket. All types of waste are then removed from site for appropriate disposal.

Cancellation Policy

There may be times when Forest School sessions have to be cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. These may be: -

- Forest School leader illness (or illness of a Forest School leader's child/ren) – which prevents staff / child ratios being met.
- Severe weather conditions, including high wind.

- Any situation that poses a health and safety risk. In the event of this situation arising:
- Cancellation decisions are made as soon as possible and we will inform parents and volunteers via telephone/ and Facebook page.

We will endeavour to run Forest School sessions in Kinsbourne Green Woods whenever possible as well as using the enclosed Nursery outdoor garden; however, we reserve the right to cancel on the day. In this event, the Nursery is able to continue to run sessions from either settings (Tuesday, 9th Harpenden Scout Hall and Thursday, St Mary's Church Hall) .

Confidentiality

It is our intention to respect the privacy of children and their parents and carers. We aim to ensure that all parents and carers can share their information in the confidence that it will only be used to enhance the welfare of their children.

'Share with informed consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is good reason to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.' Information sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers (HMG 2018).

The Forest Leader will maintain all paperwork and Registration forms relevant to Forest School. Registration forms contain names and addresses and potentially information about medical conditions, at the end of the session all confidential paperwork is stored in the office area at the registered address in a designated filing cabinet. Any discussion within Forest School about a child's learning or medical conditions is to be kept confidential at all times.

We treat any personal information (which means data from which you can be identified, including your name, address, e-mail address, etc.) that you provide us, or that we obtain from you, in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act. Under this Act, we have a legal duty to protect any information we collect from you. Any amendments to this policy will continue to be in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. For further information please see our privacy policy which can be found on our website

www.kinsbournecommonnursery.com

Photographs & Videos

Forest School staff often take photos of the children at play, to support our planning and assessment and for promotional reasons. Permission to take photographs during sessions, and for these photographs to be used on social media and in marketing materials, is sought via the application form prior to each session and children for whom we do not have permission to include in photographs will not be included. All photographs are stored securely and anonymously in line with our GDPR policy, if parents request that their data is removed all photos will be deleted. Any identifiable (photos of the front of faces) photographs are not stored elsewhere and subsequently deleted. The photos may be shared with parents or in various promotional materials including on our website and social media sites, for our Forest School. Children's names will not be given in any publication.

Complaints procedure

If a parents/carer/volunteer wishes to make a complaint about any occurrences concerning Forest School, they can talk to the Forest School Leader/Owner. We take complaints seriously and investigate all complaints thoroughly. Based on the findings of the investigation the procedures, policies and risk assessments will be reviewed if appropriate. The details will be recorded carefully by the Forest School leader (including the date, time and how the complaint was received, by whom and the words used by the person making the complaint). The Forest School Leader will consider if the complaint requires reporting to outside bodies. The complainant will be contacted to explain the process and the outcome of the investigation (e.g. if procedures, policies or risk assessments require reviewing that this has been done). We display this poster, as a reminder of the key ways in which we keeps ourselves and others safe in the woods.



HOW WE KEEP SAFE AT THE KINSBOURNE COMMON FOREST SCHOOL!

We look after:

- Ourselves
- Our Friends



Around the Fire Circle:

- Walk around the outside, not across
- The Forest School Leader will help you keep safe around the fire



The Woods:

- The Forest School Leader will decide when it is warm and safe enough to play.
- Listen to The Forest School

Leader



Boundaries:

- Play in designated area (Forest School Leader to advise per session). Marked with tape.
- Red and white tape says 'Stop'!

Sticks:

- Longer than your arm? Drag it!



Climbing, Swinging, Low Ropes:

- Adults will 'Spot' children
- The knots will be checked
- Not when slippery



Using tools:

- Gloves to be worn on non-working hand
- Blood bubble space
- Keep tools in bag
- Listen to Forest School Leader

