

Halstead Community Primary School



Forest school policy

Approved by the Full Governing Body

Patricia Dunmall (Chair of Governors)

Mr Hawkins (Headteacher)

Signed :

Date : 23rd May 2018

To be reviewed : May 2019

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Forest's Cool
Halstead Primary School



Policies

Full copies of our school policies are available on the Halstead CP School website or from the school office:

<http://www.halstead.kent.sch.uk/about-us/policies-2/>

Fire policy

Campfires are an important part of Forest School and are used in some sessions. Halstead Community Primary School aims to ensure that all children and adults participating in Forest School sessions with fires will do so safely and with as little risk to their health as possible. Only previously agreed areas will be used for fires. Only Forest School children are allowed in this area on Forest School days.

- A fire session should not go ahead if the leader does not have confidence with the group or the weather is unsuitable e.g. changing wind conditions.
- The positioning of the fire is over 20 metres from the exit. There are always at least 3 adults present at forest school. When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area without permission. They need to ask, 'May I enter?'
- The Forest School Leader will only have a fire if it is relevant to the session.
- The campfire area will be enclosed by logs to prevent the spread of fire. Open fires will only be lit in the fire pit (unless fire lighting is the activity).
- The fire area will be surrounded by seating logs (checked before use) at least 1.5 metres from the fire pit.
- The position of the fire will take into account the ground surface, overhanging branches and nearby foliage.
- The group will be made aware of the dangers and be instructed in fire safety and expectations at the beginning of each fire session.
- When the campfire is in use, children are not permitted to access the area without permission. When allowed to access the campfire, children must walk around the outside of the seating logs and wait for permission to step over. Once permission has been given, they must sit, ensuring legs are drawn into the log and not outstretched or adopt the 'respect' position on one knee (this is so that they can move away quickly if necessary).

- Once seated around the campfire, the children must remain seated until directed by an adult to move.
- Fire safety equipment, including heat-proof gloves, a fire blanket, a burns kit and water will be kept within close range of fires. Containers of water will be on hand – one with clean water for burns and one or more to extinguish the fire at the end of the session.
- There will be an adult within the fire circle at all times so the fire is never left unsupervised.
- Care will be taken when selecting food to be cooked. Care should be taken with hot food especially those with a high fat content e.g. marshmallows / damper bread.
- Smoke inhalation will be reduced by burning dead wood. Those in smoky areas will be encouraged to move to less smoky areas. If there is a clear wind direction, seating in the line of smoke is to be avoided.
- The fire will not be overfed.
- The fire will be extinguished at the end of the session by pouring water onto the fire and making sure it is thoroughly extinguished, all smoke and steam has finished and no embers are still smouldering. Any large pieces of wood remaining will be separated from each other.
- If a situation or behaviour looks like it is becoming dangerous then the fire must be extinguished immediately by the Forest School Leader or the adult helper on request of the Leader.

Tool Policy

A range of tools will be used in a number of Forest School sessions. Importantly, as it enables children to develop new practical skills that help develop self-confidence. Initially the children will use palm drills and once competent will progress onto the use of safety whittlers, bow saws and fixed blade knives. All tools are initially modelled by the Forest School Leader to children and adults.

- The Forest School leader will be the supervising adult when tools are being used and there will be an appropriate adult to child ratio depending on the age and skills of the child and the type of tool being used.
- The Forest School Leader is First Aid Trained and will have a First Aid kit with them.
- Whatever the activity, the safety of all involved is of paramount importance.
- The Forest Schools Leader will give a safety talk each session and will explain how to use each of the tools safely (the tool talk).
- All activities using tools are fully risk assessed.

The following guidelines are to be followed when using tools:

- A tool session will not go ahead if the leader does not have confidence with the group.
- Tools will be locked away safely in a suitable place when not being used for Forest School.

- If a child is not using the tool safely the activity will be stopped and safety instructions given again.
- The Forest School Leader will check all tools are fit for use before the session.
- Only tools that are in safe working order shall be supplied for use.
- Children must never be allowed to help themselves.
- Tools are given out for a purpose and all adults should model their correct use, storage and transportation at all times.
- Correct and safe use of sharp tools will be demonstrated to all staff, volunteers and children prior to the tools being given out.
- The ratio will be no more than 1:3 when using tools.
- Tools should be counted when handed out and counted back in again when finished by a leader or adult.
- The Forest School Leader will be advised immediately if any tools/resources are missing. As tools are returned they are cleaned and maintained following the specific tool policy.
- All groups are to be supervised closely by competent leaders.
- Forest School leaders are responsible for the suitability of the tools for the activity chosen.
- Adults should support, not interfere, with learning. They may assist with the use of tools that the learner is not competent to use yet to enable to learner to carry out their task.
- Tools should be kept in a designated safe area when not in use - none should be left unattended outside this area.
- All knives will be closed/ sheathed immediately after use.
- Saw guards will be replaced immediately after use.
- Walking around with open/ unmasked tools will not be permitted.
- Safe working distances and suitable ratios must be maintained at all times. Children will be taught about the 'blood bubble' as a safety precaution.
- All group members, children and adults, will wear suitable boots/shoes and outdoor clothing for the activity they take part in.
- Where any cutting or felling is taking place, helmets should be worn, and suitable gloves provided for handling brash etc.

APPENDIX 1



Site Risk assessment

Establishment/organisation: Halstead Community Primary School

Assessment date: May 2019

Activity: All forest school activities in woodland area

Completed by: Rhian Stevens

Date: May 2018

HAZARD = Anything that can cause harm or injury

RISK = Likelihood of each hazard causing harm

No. of pupils: 13 Age range: 4-5 No. of staff: 4 Leader: Rhian Stevens

HAZARD	WHO MAY BE AFFECTED	RISK RATING Low – medium - high	CONTROL MEASURES
<p>Hazardous and poisonous plants</p> <p>Stings, scratches, abrasions.</p>	Pupils and staff	Medium	<p>All participants and adults to wear long sleeves and trousers, suitable footwear or wellies</p> <p>Plants cleared from main pathway in and out.</p> <p>Shown and noted to all participants and adults.</p> <p>Plant species listed on woodland species identification chart. Children warned about hazardous areas. Anything green or growing should now be picked – children reminded at the start of each session. Children to call for an adult if they see anything unknown.</p>
<p>Fungi</p> <p>Ingestion leading to illness.</p>	Pupils and staff	Medium	<p>Pre-session reminder for all participants stating that nothing should be put in their mouths except if it has been given by an adult. Hands to be washed before</p>

<p>Pond</p> <p>Drowning, slipping, falling</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>having a snack and at the end of each session. Hand washing facilities are available in the forest area. Children to call and adult if they see anything unknown.</p> <p>Any fungi on display should be shown to children at the start of the session. (Site to be checked before the session begins).</p> <p>A fence has been erected around the perimeter of the pond. Children to be reminded of and understand that forest school rules include respecting the pond area and any wildlife within it. Children will be supervised at all times by an adult.</p> <p>Gates to woodland are locked except during forest school sessions.</p>
<p>Falling over</p> <p>Cuts, abrasions, scratches</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>First aid kit to be carried at all times during forest school sessions. Serious incidents to be recorded in the accident log book. Warn children of risks, including branches and tree roots. Take extra care if it is a wet day. Waterproof suits to be worn by children.</p>
<p>Risk of injury while playing in the forest school area</p> <p>Cuts, abrasions, scratches</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>First aid kit to be carried at all times during forest school sessions. Serious incidents to be recorded in the accident log book. Children will be supervised at all times by an adult. Small group of up to 15. The area is checked before every session commences for safety. Children to have a weekly reminder of the forest school boundaries and risks and how to avoid them (at the start of each session).</p>

<p>Risk of being stung by a wasp, bee or other insect.</p> <p>Sting</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>First aid kit to be carried at all times during forest school sessions. Serious incidents to be recorded in the accident log book. Children to be reminded to stand still and remain calm if any bees, wasps or potentially aggressive insects buzz around them. EpiPen or other emergency treatment to be carried by CT or FSL with permission slip. FSL and other adults to be aware of children with allergies. FSL to carry a mobile phone with Halstead CP School's number.</p>
<p>Risk of asthma attack or allergic reaction such as hay fever</p> <p>Asthma attack, swelling, shortness of breath, itchy eyes, sneezing, coughing</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>First aid kit to be carried at all times during forest school sessions. Serious incidents to be recorded in the accident log book. EpiPen or other emergency treatment to be carried by CT or FSL with permission slip. FSL and other adults to be aware of children with allergies. FSL to carry a mobile phone with Halstead CP School's number.</p>
<p>First aid situation, greater than just using the first aid kit</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>First aid kit on site for every session. FSL to have a fully charged mobile phone.</p> <p>Address and grid reference for ambulance if needed: Halstead CP School, Otford Lane, Halstead, Kent, TN14 7EA</p> <p>Grid reference: TQ488610</p>
<p>Dead branches. Stumps & roots.</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Regularly inspected & felled where necessary. Old stumps & roots exposed are pointed out.</p>
<p>Tools</p>	<p>Pupils and staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Tools stored in secure box and out of reach when not in use. Correct use of tools shown and tool talk given for each tool. One to one</p>

Fire (Fire pit)	Pupils and staff	Medium	<p>supervision when using tools (see separate tool risk assessment).</p> <p>Fire made within fire square. Fire buckets (2) filled with water. Fire blanket, burns & First Aid Kit close at hand. All participants told about the dangers of fire & having a fire on the site. Ensure all participants are reminded of and remember the rules about entering the fire circle. (See separate fire risk assessment)</p>
Fire Striking	Pupils and staff	Medium	<p>Demonstrate to the whole group how to use Fire Strikers. Requirements: Cotton wool, tongs, strikers, bucket of water, tree disc. Children to light the cotton wool until it has burnt completely then extinguish with water. Stamp out to ensure that the fire has been extinguished completely.</p>
Boundaries		Low	<p>Outer boundary identified by the two gates and shown to children.</p>
Adverse weather	Pupils and staff	Low	<p>If the conditions are deemed dangerous such as in high winds, during thunder storms, or during periods of extreme cold the woodland area will not be used. Judgments about the expected conditions will be made using the weather forecast and information from the Met Office and in consultation with the headteacher.</p>
Toilets		Low	<p>Children to be encouraged to use the toilets before they leave. If children need the toilet during a</p>

	Pupils		session they are to enter the building through Buds classroom and use the toilets opposite Buds. On return they must tell the same adult that they asked before. Regular head counts to ensure all children are present.
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