

Henry Allen Nursery

Forest School

Handbook 2024-25



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Forest School Mission Statement

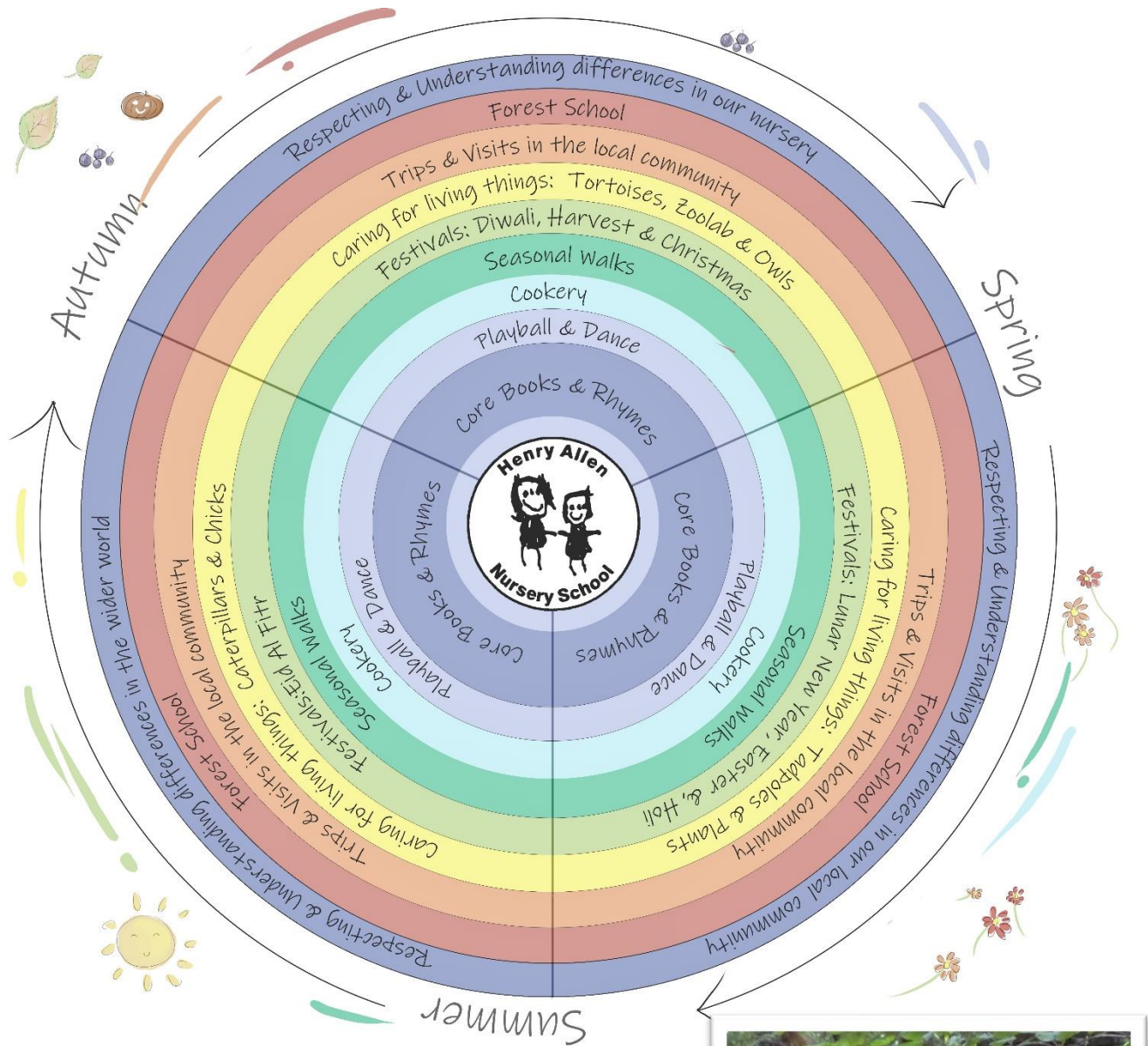
Our Vision

We aim:

- To provide a stable, secure, safe and caring environment in which children can develop confidence and independence.
- To offer stimulating and challenging learning experiences which are suited to individual children's needs, enabling them to achieve their full potential.
- To further develop self-esteem through praise and celebration, so that each child experiences enjoyment and satisfaction from achievements.
- To establish a caring ethos, where we treat everyone with respect.
- To provide equal opportunities regardless of gender, race, belief and ability.
- To develop a sense of community through promotion of co-operation and collaboration.
- To establish high expectations of behaviour and to help children develop understanding of self-discipline and a sense of responsibility for their own actions.
- To fully support those children at risk of delay and diminish differences in attainment.



Our wider curriculum incorporates forest school throughout the year:

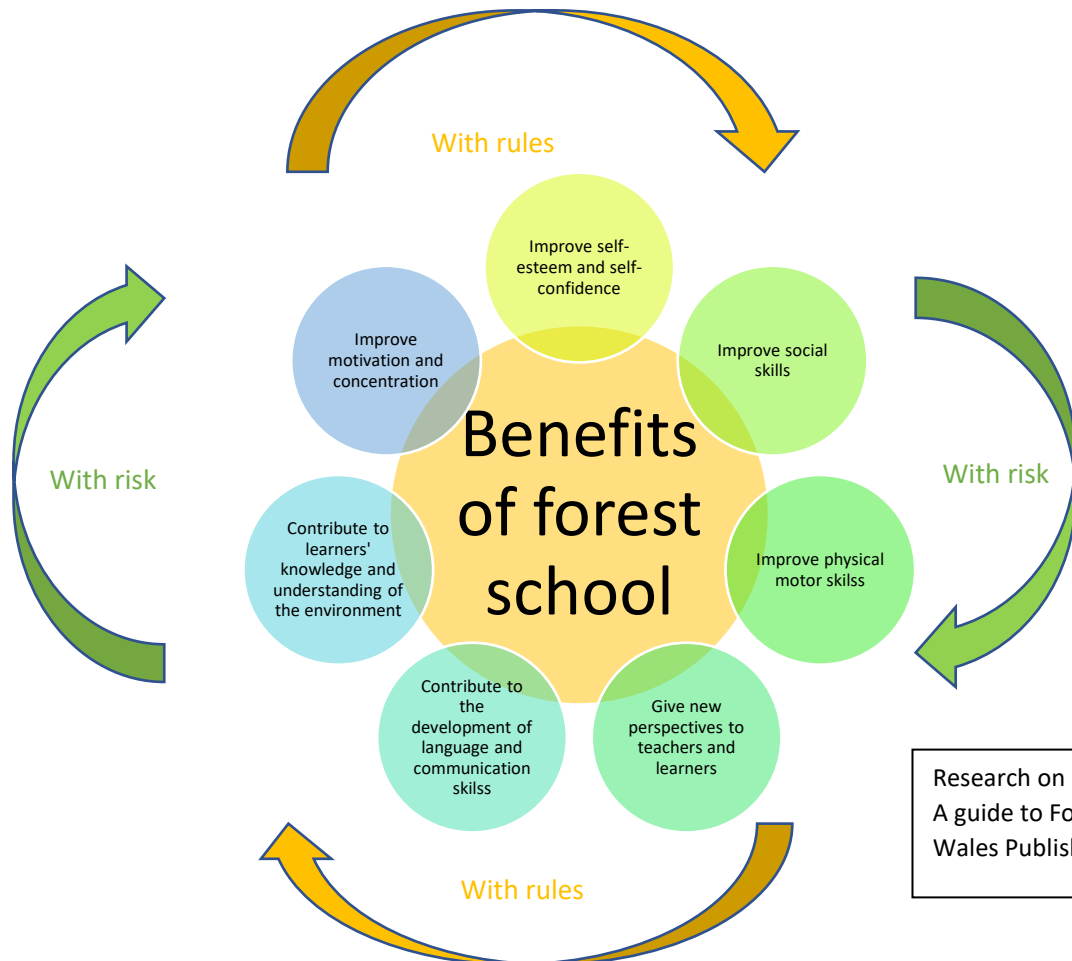


Forest school is an integral part of our curriculum, and we aim to take children on weekly visits. Forest School is a rich learning environment that will further enhance the creative, enquiry-based teaching that already happens at school.



What is forest school?

Forest School is an inspirational, process led approach to teaching in an outdoor environment (usually woodland.) Forest School must offer the participant opportunities to engage with their local natural environment over a period of time, ideally with the same leaders. Additionally, and vitally, it gives children the opportunity to take risks and begin to understand and recognise risk themselves. Every forest school session is underset with rules that are visited every session, making sure children and adults remain safe. The learner's safety and welfare are a priority at Forest School. The aim is for children to begin to set their own challenges for themselves, enabling them to explore and discover independently whilst making informed decisions about how to deal with unfamiliar situations and challenges.



The six key principles of Forest School were agreed in 2002 (Cree and McCree, 2013):

1. Forest School 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.
2. Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. Forest School aims to promote the holistic development of all those involved, fostering resilient, confident, independent and creative learners.
4. Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
5. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
6. Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning

Typical Activities:

The Forest School ethos encourages and supports the child to choose what activities to participate in. Forest School practitioners will observe the children's interests and then support and extend their learning. Some of the Activities that may take place:

- Tree climbing
- Playing games such as 'hide and seek'
- Hunting for mini beasts and then carefully observing them in their natural habitat
- Making shelters and dens (big and small)
- Singing songs and telling stories
- Natural crafts such as making collages, 'journey sticks' with natural materials, bark rubbing and mud painting
- Natural art
- Animal tracking
- Woodwork using tools
- Creating bug hotels and bird feeders
- Fire lighting, cooking
- Using the Kelly kettle to boil water
- Using knots
- Free Play and exploration

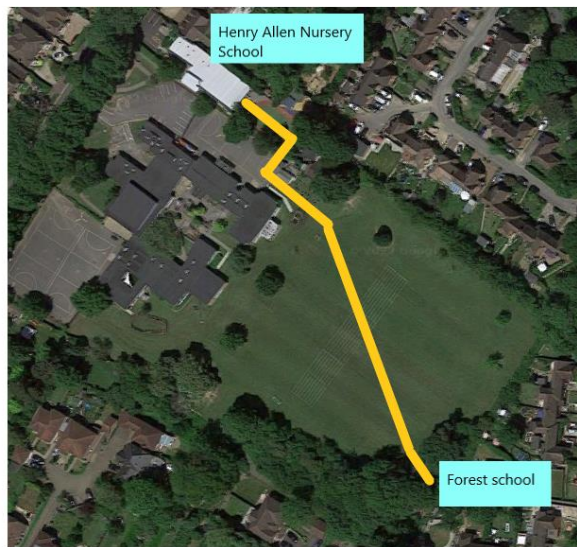


Procedures

Location:

Woodside Junior School, Mitchell Walk

The Forest School site is located in the Wildlife Area at the end of the field, which is shared with Woodside School. We access the site from a padlocked side gate and walk across the field to the base camp.



Procedure to access forest school:

- Children to line up, count children before setting off
- Unlock padlock, access Woodside school playground, relocking padlock
- Take children across field, forest school leader at the front, teaching assistant at the rear
- Settle children at base camp on logs All Learners must enter Base Camp from behind the log seating NOT directly through the circle
- Head count by forest school leader to check everyone is present

Procedures to be carried out before each session:

- A dynamic risk assessment of the site to be completed (site sweep) before each session to check for any litter, glass, faeces etc. Any such items should be collected using plastic bags and disposable gloves
- Trees should be checked for any broken or dead branches, which may fall.
- Revisit the rules of forest school



Procedure on leaving site and at return

- Check back in any equipment used.
- Ensure no rubbish has been left and the site is as undamaged as possible.
- Count participants before leaving site.
- Ensure all participants are advised to wash their hands, especially before eating or drinking.
- Return any equipment used and wash up equipment storing appropriately.
- Ensure any necessary records are made e.g., Accident book, evaluation of session etc.

Toileting procedures

Children will all use the toilet before leaving the main nursery. During the Forest School Session children will have to do a wild wee, taken by an adult. Any children requiring a change of nappy or pull up will return to nursery with an adult.

Lost Child Procedure

This procedure outlines the steps to take to prevent a child attending Forest School becoming lost and what to do in an event of a missing child. The Forest School leader will ensure that the safety of others in the group is maintained.

Steps to take to prevent a lost child:

- Check the accurate group numbers at the start of each session with other staff attending.
- Count the group at regular intervals, for example after each call back or change of location or activity.
- As soon as the situation is realised, notify all members of staff and participants of the missing person.
- Organise a supervised search for the missing person and ring school requesting more help to search.
- Continue searching for 15 minutes.
- Contact emergency services if the person is still missing after this time.

Emergency procedure

In the event of an accident, injury or illness to staff or participant or an unexpected/potentially threatening event: -

- Try to keep calm, assess the situation so that you can decide what help you may need.

- In the event of an accident or injury, quickly assess the nature of the difficulty before calling Mrs. Turner at school to get support if necessary.
If necessary, ring the emergency services using the school phone.
- Give directions to emergency services as well as using the medical forms to give any additional information about the patient.
- In the event of an unexpected/potentially threatening event, get the entire group to move well away from the danger area. Count all participants and staff. Assess the situation so that the safest course of action can be followed.
- As necessary, ensure all relevant personnel and parents/carers are notified as soon as possible

Cancellation/Bad weather

Before setting off, check weather forecasts and decide beforehand about whether to go. It is ultimately up to the Co-headteacher and forest school leader, Julie Manning, to decide if a Forest School session should be cancelled.

Circumstances where Forest School would have to be cancelled:

- If no Forest School leader is present.
- If only there is a shortage of staff is available to run the session.
- In extreme weather conditions (such as strong winds 42mph or above). Strong winds (from approx. 30mph) must be monitored closely

Scale	Description	miles per hour	Effects	Risk
0	Calm	0-1	smoke rises	Low
1	Light air	1-3	smoke drifts	Low
2	Light breeze	4-7	Leaves rustle	Low
3	Gentle breeze	8-12	Twigs move	Low
4	Moderate breeze	13-18	Leaves and small branches sway	Low
5	Fresh breeze	18-24	Small trees sway	Low
6	Strong breeze	25-31	Large branches sway	Low
7	Moderate gale	32-38	Whole trees in motion	Low
8	Fresh gale	39-46	Twigs break off trees	Low
9	Strong gale	47-55	Branches break off trees	Low
10	Whole gale	56-64	Trees uprooted	Low
11	Storm	65-74	Widespread damage	Low
12	Hurricane	75+	Devastation	Low

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Policies

A link to all our policies on our website:

<https://www.henryallen.bucks.sch.uk/policies/>

Health and safety:

Staffing:

Forest School Leaders: Julie Manning, Co-Headteacher Forest school leader level 3

Staffing to Child Ratios:

There must be a minimum of 3 adults on site, including one Forest School Leader (ratio of at least 1:8) The ratio for two-year old's will be 1:4.

The school mobile phone will always be taken.

All Forest School activities are supported by a full Risk Assessment which is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, at least annually.

First Aid:

Forest School activities will be led by Mrs. Manning who holds an up to date paediatric aid qualification. At least one other member of staff will have a paediatric first aid qualification.

The staff will always have a full first aid kit and a burns kit at forest school.

Access to tools and activities relating to fire will only be undertaken once full instructions have been given and understood by the pupils. Any failure to follow instructions will lead to immediate removal of the tool or cessation of the activity for the relevant pupil until staff can be sure that the activity can recommence safely.



Personal Protective Equipment

In accordance with PPE regulations suitable equipment should be supplied to ensure participants are kept as well and safe as could reasonably be expected. The risk assessments outline the PPE needed for Forest School sessions and activities e.g., waterproof clothing, hats, gloves, safety gloves etc.

Pupils will be required to wear suitable clothing when attending Forest School. The school has provided waterproof overcoats, gloves, and wellington boots; alternatively, sunhats, sunglasses, trainers and loose long trousers will be needed during summer.



Rules of forest school

Simple Forest School rules are explained to the children in a way which is age appropriate and easy for them to remember.

- *If you pick, no lick!* rhyme.
- *Stop at the boundary line!*
- *1, 2, 3, Basecamp!* means to return to "base camp" immediately
- *Forest school children go around the outside, round the outside, so they don't get burnt by the fire!* ensuring the children never cross through the firepit as a habitual rule, even when there is no fire.

Before each session begins children are made aware of how far that they can explore and also given information on what to look out for following the site sweep, for example, the logs and roots are very slippery following the rain. Children who are known to need 1-1 support are given the adult supervision needed.

Lighting a fire (See Risk Assessment)

When lighting a fire, the Forest School leader will take control of the operation and all accompanying adults will be briefed before we start. A lit fire will not be left unattended at any point. A fire may not be lit until it has been confirmed to all that our fire safety equipment is in place. Open fires will be built within a fire square made of large logs. No one may enter the fire square perimeter



unless invited to do so by an adult. With 1:1 support, children may help to refuel the fire. There is no running past the fire square. No items must be carried and placed within the fire square unless by an adult. If you wish to move around the fire to a new stool, you must step out of the circle and walk around the outside of the log circle. Even when the fire is unlit, we will treat it as if it is lit.

Tool Use (See Risk Assessment)

The Forest School Leader is the only adult that can lead a session where tools are used, however the other members of staff are able to use tools with a small group of children under the supervision of the Forest School leader.

Using tools is a very important part of our Forest School education. It enables children to develop new skills, which in turn helps to build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Tools are to be maintained in good order by the Forest School Leaders and we will inspect all tools before each session to ensure safety. All children will be taught how to handle tools safely and to treat them with respect.

We will do this by:

Staff to child ratio will vary from 1:1 to 1:4 depending on the tool in use.

Adult and child sized gloves will be used as appropriate

- . • Use of tools will be in accordance with our toolbox talks
- . • Children will lose permission to use tools if the guidelines are not adhered to.
- All tools will be counted out and back into the toolbox at the end of the session.

Cooking and food hygiene

All staff hold a basic food hygiene certificate and will ensure that:

- Food being used during Forest School training sessions will be stored in a hygienic manner.
- Food cooked on the fire will be consumed as soon as possible.
- All utensils, crockery etc will be checked to ensure they are clean before use
- A bowl of water and hand soap will be provided for handwashing with a separate hand towel.
- The forest school leader will model excellent food hygiene standards when preparing and cooking food on the fire which children will be expected to follow.
- All medical records will be checked to ensure that no food item or ingredient is given to an adult or child with an allergy to it.
- Dietary requirements and preferences will be respected and catered for with the utmost care and consideration.
- Washing up will be taken away from the site to be cleaned.

Climbing Trees (see Risk assessment)

Climbing a tree improves children's gross motor skills and therefore has many benefits. Tree climbing is allowed under strict supervision. We will engage children in joint risk assessment before climbing a tree. An adult must check the tree with the child, looking for dead or unsafe branches and remove any where necessary. The adult and child ensure ground below is clear of anything sharp that could cause additional injury to child if they fell. Children only climb to where the adult can reach them and no higher.

Safeguarding policy and DBS

Additional measures relating directly to Forest School sessions:

Adults working within Forest School need to recognise and appreciate that when children feel safe, comfortable and content, when their instinct to trust and risk-take is encouraged, they may feel moved to disclose information which they might otherwise keep to themselves. Any volunteer, adult, member of staff who finds that a child is telling them something which concerns them should follow these steps below:

Tell the Forest School leader (they will decide if step two is necessary)

Speak to Designated Safeguarding Lead

Fill out a Child Protection disclosure form on return to school (kept in Office)

What to do if a child makes a disclosure?

- Listen carefully
- Record the conversation in the child's words and note the time
- Sign and date the record you make on the school's proforma
- Take it seriously
- Provide support
- Reassure they are right to tell
- Explain what will happen next
- Speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead

All staff members have a DBS check, as do all regular volunteers.

Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy

At Forest School we have high expectations regarding behaviour and inclusive play. Unkind behaviour towards others is not acceptable. We will encourage the children to make positive relationships and support children that require assistance with this. We will approach the subject of 'bullying' and discuss it positively and openly through the importance of kindness, helping one another, and sharing. The children will be reminded of this and told that they may only participate in forest School if they behave kindly. We want everyone to feel safe, happy, and comfortable. Any behaviour that jeopardise the health, safety and well-being of others will be recorded by the Forest School leader using our CPOMs system and the Co-headteachers will together consider whether they are able to continue going to forest school.

Equal opportunities and inclusion in Forest School

We promote the individuality of all children and adults irrespective of ethnicity, attainment, age, disability, gender or background. We want everybody to feel empowered and equally valued. Wherever possible activities can be adapted to include everyone and provide no barriers to learning. Information on children's additional needs can be gathered prior to the session, as well as the Forest School leader having additional ideas to differentiate activities is required.

Confidentiality

Medical and personal information is to remain confidential. All adults must be made aware of any medical details such as allergies affecting the children attending on a need to know basis and kept confidentiality within the schools Forest School. Only the forest school leader's mobile phone should be used for emergency purposes. Observations and assessments of the children attending will be kept in school and remain confidential to the teacher, and the child's family.

Volunteers may give oral feedback to a staff member regarding an activity however this must be in strict confidence.

Use of photographs

Each child on entry will have been given a consent slip for Forest School participation and also a media consent form to share photos on Tapestry, the website, social media, or in the newspaper. This must be checked to ensure that we have permission for the children, and whether or not we have consent to share photos and videos. Photos must only be taken on the school iPad/phone.

Parental consent and agreement

Parents will be given information all about Forest School and it will be attached to the consent form. The information form will include examples of the activities that may be included in their Forest School programme, so that there are no surprises to parents. The Henry Allen Instagram/Facebook page and website will be regularly updated to help engage parents and promote the benefits of Forest School throughout the year.

Manual Handling

All staff have completed a manual handling at work course.

Employees must ensure that:

- They do not lift anything that they feel exceeds their capability.
- Seek help from others to support manual handling.
- Use equipment such as trolleys to transport heavy or awkward items.
- Make sure there is adequate space around you with nothing in the way.
- Adopt safety measures to lift safely.

Risk Assessments



Forest School Risk Assessment

Likelihood		Severity	
Extremely unlikely	1	Minor injury (first time visit)	1
Unlikely	2	Moderate injury	2
Likely	3	Serious injury	3
Extremely likely	4	Major injury	4
Almost certain	5	Catastrophic injury	5

Location	Henry Allen
Area	Woodland at Woodside School
Activity being assessed	Forest School
Assessors	Julie Manning
Date	5.09.2024
Grid Ref	SU973982
Latitude, longitude	51.674695 , -0.59293270
What three words	rails.rigid.regard

Activity	Hazard	Existing risk control measures	Current risk rating (LxS=Total)			Additional control measures	New risk rating (Residual) (LxS=Total)			Resp	Date completed
Walking to FS site	Children run off by themselves on the way to FS site	None	2	1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children are always reminded to stay behind FS leader. Gates to field are all shut. Woodside gate is locked, nursery gate is locked. 1 to 1 support for children at risk 	1	1	1	JM	1 st September 2024
General FS activities in the wood	Children open floor grate and fall down hole.	None	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check at the beginning of each session that grate is padlocked 	1	4	4	JM	1st September 2024
General FS activities in the wood	Children do not stay within the boundary and leave the woods unsupervised	None	3	2	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children regularly reminded of the boundary rule. Children are counted at regular intervals; main gates are locked – 1 to 1 support for children at risk 	2	2	4	JM	1 st September 2024
General FS activities in the wood	Lots of trip hazards with fallen branches, brambles	None	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FS leader to conduct a daily safety sweep and children recognise and avoid hazards 	2	3	6	JM	1 st September 2024
General FS activities in the wood	Dead branches over head	None	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FS leader to conduct daily safety sweep and remove dead branches where possible. If not possible, it may be necessary to corner areas off. 	2	4	8	JM	1 st September 2024

General FS activities in the wood	Children put berries or other dangerous substance in their mouth	None	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children learn and revise FS rules each week including "if you pick, no lick." • If a child is a risk of putting things in their mouth, staff support to be provided and individual initiative put in place. 	2	4	8	JM	1 st September 2024
Using tools	Cuts, injuries Death	None	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief all students on correct tool use. Demonstrate proper tool use techniques • Forest School staff to supervise all tool use at all times with 1:1 ratio • Ensure safe space to use tools enduring blood bubble • Children and staff to wear PPE • Tools to be maintained weekly • Tools stored in suitable boxes 	2	3	6	JM	1 st September 2024
Fires	Burns, Scalds Death	None	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief all students with fire safety talk during introduction • Fire safety will be adhered to at all times, using forest school song • .Frequently reinforce fire safety verbally • Manage fire with PPE; fire retardant gloves • Always have a bucket of water on standby next to the fire. 	2	4	8	JM	1 st September 2024

Signed:  September 2024

Low Risk (Something which may result in minor damage or slight harm i.e. scratch or bruise)

Medium Risk (Something which may result in a significant loss/damage or major injury i.e. broken bone or other injury which results in person being taken to hospital for treatment)

High risk (something which may result in extensive damage, multiple or major injuries or death.)

Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Fire: Kelly kettle				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Shows children perseverance but also achievement from successfully lighting a fire.				
		Children experience the joy and warmth of successfully building a fire and having a hot drink.				
		Children learn about the science of lighting a fire, needing oxygen, fuel and heat.				
		Children learn about the physical changes that occur in material				
		Children learn about the different trees, which burn well and which don't				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Children fall into the fire	Children	Burns	4 X 4=16	Children are taught to keep away from the fire square. They are taught to travel around the log circle and never across that space. Children are taught to respect fire and understand dangers.	JM and all other staff sing song reminding children and constantly remind them of the rules	1 X 4 =4

Children get burnt by boiling water	Children/staff	Burns	4 X 4 = 16	JM to use fire gauntlets and handle Kelly kettle within the fire square marked out by large logs	JM to use fire gauntlets when handling Kelly kettle	1 X 4 = 4
Smoke drifts into children's eyes	Children	Sore eyes	2 X 3 = 6	Children taught to move around log circle if the wind is blowing smoke that way.	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Sparks fall onto children	Children	Burns	2 X 2 = 4	Children sit at least 1 metre away, reminded of the rules Water bucket is always kept next to the fire in case of sparks	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Children burn themselves on their hot drink	Children	Burns/scalds	4 X 4 = 16	Children warned that drinks will be hot. The drinks will always be luke warm before giving handing them out; they will blow on their drinks themselves understanding that it may be hot.	JM and all staff	1 X 4 = 4
Children burn themselves on hot ashes	Children	Burns/scalds	4 X 4 = 16	Children shown the correct way to put out a fire using water and constantly checking to see if fire is out using palm of hand. Bucket of water is always next to fire. Fire is never left unattended.	JM	1 X 4 = 4



Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Tree climbing				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Children learn perseverance and resilience.				
		Children develop their self-confidence and sense of achievement.				
		Children's physical health improves, developing muscle strength and coordination				
		Children connect with nature and learn different tree types.				
		Children develop respect for nature				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Children fall out of the tree, or fall onto someone else Children hurt themselves whilst climbing	Children	Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump	4 X 4 = 16	Children are taught to test before they climb. With an adult to support, children test the tree or, fallen tree etc. before they climb. They are taught that they consider any factors that may make a tree /structure etc. more or less safe.	All staff	1 X 4 = 5
Feet getting trapped	Children	Twisted ankle, broken bones	4 X 4 = 16	Children are taught to check the ground under the tree in case someone is underneath	All staff	1 X 4 = 4

			<p>Staff are taught not to lift children into trees, they should only go as high as they are capable of.</p> <p>Children should not climb higher than 1.5 meters</p> <p>Children are taught to climb down from the tree safely</p>		
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Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Den building with tarps				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Children learn perseverance and resilience.				
		Children develop their self-confidence and sense of achievement.				
		Children's physical health improves, developing muscle strength and coordination				
		Children connect with nature and learn different tree types.				
		Children develop respect for nature				
		Children learn how to tie knots				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Using ropes	Children	Strangulation	3 X 2=6	Model and discuss use of ropes, show children how to safely tie the rope so it is high enough. Model and teach knots. Use bright orange rope to enable the children to see it more easily.	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2

Using tarps	Children	Suffocation	2 X 3 = 6	Model and discuss use of tarps , show children how to correctly put up the tarp using loops. Ensure correct ratio of staff to children	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Tying ropes to trees	Children and staff	falling over ropes	2 X 3 =6	Model and teach knots. Use bright orange rope to enable the children to see it more easily.	JM	1 X 2 = 2



Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Free play with sticks /rolling in leaves				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Children's physical health improves, developing muscle strength and coordination.				
		Children increase their knowledge of what lies beneath the surface of the soil.				
		Children's social skills improve, talking and listening to each other while playing				
		Children's imaginative skills can develop, thinking of different uses for sticks/leaves				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Children hit each other with tools or sticks (accidentally or not)	Children	Broken skin, concussion, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump	3 X 4=12	Children are taught to wear a glove when digging with a tool. Children are taught to respect the tools and understand that they can hurt each other if not following the rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your distance from one another when digging. Hold your tool securely, do not throw it. If someone throws their tool, they leave the activity. 	Clear rules given before the activity and adult support during the activity JM and all staff	2 X 4 =8
Slipping in the mud	Children/staff	Bumps, bruises, concussion.	3 X 4=12	Children told to dig in a defined area so everyone is aware and can take care when moving around forest school.	JM and all staff	2 X 3 = 6

Eating the mud	Children/staff	Burns	2 X 3 = 6	Children told not to eat mud and wash hands before touching their lips.	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Children get upset at being dirty	Children	Crying about being dirty	4 X 1 = 4	Children allowed to choose a different activity but reassured that there are washing facilities available all the time. Staff to model digging and using mud kitchen.	JM and all staff	1 X 1 = 1
Children get mud in their eyes	Children	Burns	2 X 2 = 4	Washing facilities are always available Use first aid kit with distilled water to syringe eye	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2



Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Digging with tools/ Mud kitchen				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Children learn perseverance and resilience.				
		Children develop their self-confidence and sense of achievement.				
		Children's physical health improves, developing muscle strength and coordination.				
		Children increase their knowledge of what lies beneath the surface of the soil.				
		Children increase their understanding of materials and changing the state of materials.				
		Children understand the importance of water.				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Children hit each other with tools or sticks (accidentally or not)	Children	Broken skin, concussion, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump	3 X 4=12	Children are taught to wear a glove when digging with a tool. Children are taught to respect the tools and understand that they can hurt each other if not following the rules <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep your distance from one another when digging. Hold your tool securely, do not throw it. If someone throws their tool, they leave the activity. 	Clear rules given before the activity and adult support during the activity JM and all staff	1 X 4 =4

Slipping in the mud	Children/staff	Bumps, bruises, concussion.	3 X 4=12	Children told to dig in a defined area so everyone is aware and can take care when moving around forest school.	JM and all staff	2 X 3 = 6
Eating the mud	Children/staff	Burns	2 X 3 = 6	Children told not to eat mud and wash hands before touching their lips.	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Children get upset at being dirty	Children	Crying about being dirty	4 X 1 = 4	Children allowed to choose a different activity but reassured that there are washing facilities available all the time. Staff to model digging and using mud kitchen.	JM and all staff	1 X 1 = 1
Children get mud in their eyes	Children	Burns	2 X 2 = 4	Washing facilities are always available Use first aid kit with distilled water to syringe eye	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2



Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Fire: Cooking using fire pit				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Shows children perseverance but also achievement from successfully lighting a fire.				
		Children experience the joy and warmth of successfully building a fire and having a hot drink.				
		Children learn about the science of lighting a fire, needing oxygen, fuel and heat.				
		Children learn about the physical changes that occur in material				
		Children learn about the different trees, which burn well and which don't				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
Children fall into the fire	Children	Burns	4 X 4 = 16	Children are taught to keep away from the fire square. They are taught to travel around the log circle and never across that space. Children are taught to respect fire and understand dangers. They are taught to kneel in the respect position when next to the fire and only when invited to by an adult	JM and all other staff sing song reminding children and constantly remind them of the rules. All staff to remain vigilant of children near the fire.	1 X 4 = 4
Children get burnt by boiling water	Children/staff	Burns	4 X 4 = 16	JM to use fire gauntlets and handle kettle within the fire square marked out by large logs.	JM to use fire gauntlets when handling Kelly kettle	1 X 4 = 4

				Hot chocolate is made away from the children within the fire square.		
Smoke drifts into children's eyes	Children	Sore eyes	2 X 3 = 6	Children taught to move around log circle if the wind is blowing smoke that way.	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Sparks fall onto children	Children	Burns	2 X 2 = 4	Children sit at least 1 metre away, are constantly reminded of the rules Water bucket is always kept next to the fire in case of sparks	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Children burn themselves on their hot drink/food	Children	Burns/scalds	4 X 4 = 16	Children warned that drinks will be hot. The drinks will always be luke warm before giving handing them out; they will I blow on their drinks themselves understanding that it may be hot.	JM and all staff	1 X 4 = 4
Children burn themselves on hot ashes	Children	Burns/scalds	4 X 4 = 16	Children shown the correct way to put out a fire using water and constantly checking to see if fire is out using palm of hand. Bucket of water is always next to fire. Fire is never left unattended.	JM	1 X 4 = 4



Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Rope swings (temporary)/Hammock				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Children learn perseverance and resilience.				
		Children learn to make risk judgements and manage risk for themselves				
		Children learn to work in a group and social skills will be developed by participants, including turn taking and socially supporting each other				
		Children develop their self-confidence and sense of achievement.				
		Children’s physical health improves, developing muscle strength and coordination				
		Children connect with nature and learn different tree types. Learn about materials (strength, flexibility, knot tying etc.) and tree types (strength, flexibility and rooting)				
		Children develop respect for nature				
		Fun, achievement and physical enjoyment of the activity				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place) <i>L X C</i>	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)
The rope may snap or knot fail, dropping person(s) to the ground from too high, leading to significant injury.	Children	Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump	3 X 2=6	Use brand new rope that is suitable for climbing, weight bearing. Use round turn and two half-hitches for anchor point.	JM	1 X 2 = 2

<p>The branch or tree may snap, bend or uproot, dropping the person(s) on to the ground from too high leading to significant injury, or strangulation of neck</p>	<p>Children</p>	<p>Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, head bump</p>	<p>2 X 3 = 6</p>	<p>Identify tree species and choose candidate tree</p> <p>Carry out tree assessment. Look for cracks, splits, bulges and unusual swelling as these often indicate biomechanical tree defects. Look out for fungal fruiting bodies and decay.</p> <p>The swing should be fully tested and adjusted as necessary before use by children.</p>	<p>JM</p>	<p>1 X 2 = 2</p>
<p>The tree or branch may also fall on the person(s) when this occurs as well, leading to significant injury or death.</p>	<p>Children and staff</p>	<p>Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump</p>	<p>2 X 3 = 6</p>	<p>Identify tree species and choose candidate tree</p> <p>Carry out tree assessment.</p> <p>The swing should be fully tested and adjusted as necessary before use by children</p>	<p>JM</p>	<p>1 X 2 = 2</p>
<p>Child falls to the floor, onto sharp, hard or protruding items that leads to significant injury.</p>	<p>Child</p>	<p>Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump</p>	<p>2 X 3 = 6</p>	<p>Look for potential obstacles on the ground. Suitable terrain is grass or bare earth and leaf litter typical of woodland floors</p>	<p>JM</p>	<p>1 X 2 = 2</p>
<p>Other participants or public could collide with swinging child. Swinging child could</p>	<p>Child</p>	<p>Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp</p>	<p>2 X 3 = 6</p>	<p>Supervise activity, 1:1</p>	<p>JM and all staff</p>	<p>1 X 2 = 2</p>

collide with tree(s), leading to serious injury if hard enough		sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump				
Participants may walk into attached ropes, leading to injury through contact with rope or sudden trip or upending.	Child	Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump	2 X 3 =6	Supervise activity, 1:1	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2
Participants could hang from the rope in a way that injures them seriously –damage to limb by wrapping rope around, or strangulation of neck	Child	Broken bones, concussion, broken skin from sharp sticks, bumps and bruises, stick into eye, head bump	2X 3 =6	Supervise activity, 1:1	JM and all staff	1 X 2 = 2

Activity Risk/Benefit Assessment

Which activity is this assessment for?		Using tools – secateurs, knives, palm drills , tent pegs				
Consider the benefits to the children of allowing this activity to take place:		Improved fine and gross motor skills – improving coordination				
		Improved confidence from achieving something from using tools				
		Increased communication skills				
		Improved understanding of teamwork				
		Improved designing and planning skills				
		Improved resilience and perseverance				
The Hazard	Who could be harmed?	How could they be harmed?	Level of risk (with no control measures in place)	Control	Who will carry out control measure and when (before or during activity)?	Level of risk (with control measures in place)

General rules	Children and staff	Serious cut/injury	4 X 4 = 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach correct stance and position and demonstrate to children correct and safe way to use tools, Tool Talk • Model positioning of tools • Carry out in controlled area – teach safety bubble rules • Children use tools only when supervised on a 1:1 with LEADER • Children to use gloves on non-working hand • Ensure tools are locked away when not used • Ensure rigid cleaning of tools procedure • Tools to be accounted for at end of each activity • Tool condition to be checked before activity • Guards and sheaths to be put on tools when not being used • Discuss not walking around when using tools 	Forest school leader	1 X 4 = 4
Using a knife to whittle Benefits: -Muscle development -Concentration -perseverance	Children and staff	Serious cut/injury	4 X 4 = 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check: blade secure • Teach correct stance; Sit or stand comfortably and securely. Lock elbows in to body and work the blade moving away from you and keep your legs to one side. Check you have enough personal space to work safely. Model positioning 	Forest school leader	1 X 4 = 4

<p>-resilience -creative development -achieving</p>				<p>of blade when using (point and use away from body)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model positioning of hand on handle (using finger grooves to help positioning) • Children to use gloves on non-working hand, long trousers • Teach about blood safety bubble/circle • Ensure knives are put in sheath when unused • Assess suitability of the learner • Children use tools only when supervised on a 1:1 with LEADER • Sheath the knife when not in use. Pass using handle • Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet sharpening stone 		
<p>Loppers: Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concentration -perseverance -resilience -creativity -independence -risk assessing -woodland management 	<p>Staff and children</p>	<p>Severed digit/cuts</p>	<p>3 X 4=12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check: Grips are not damaged or loose, extension locks (if present), cutting edge is clean, hinge free to open and close and secure • PPE – long trousers, no gloves as both hands are being used • Handling: Carry at your side with hand on shaft, pass shaft first. Carry using bottom half of loppers so it does not swing open exposing blade. 	<p>Forest school leader</p>	<p>1 X 2 =2</p>

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use length of shaft to give maximum leverage, put wood to be cut as close to the hinge as possible • Be aware of your own working space being clear of obstructions / trip hazards etc. • Make sure area to be cut is clear of people. When cutting above head height a hard hat may be necessary • Clean the cutting edge after use, close cutting edge before storing in tool bag. • Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet sharpening stone 		
<p>Using secateurs</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concentration -perseverance -resilience -creativity -independence -risk assessing -woodland management 	Children and staff	Severed digit/Severe bleed	$4 \times 4 = 16$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check: Grips are not damaged or loose, cutting edge is clean, hinge free to open and close and secure, securing mechanism works • When handling , make sure secateurs are closed, carry at your side with hand on shaft, pass handles first • Assess suitability of the learner • Model correct stance (ensure both feet are on the ground or in safe kneeling position) • Teach about blood circle 	Forest school leader	$1 \times 4 = 4$

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of your own working space being clear of obstructions / trip hazards etc. • Make sure area to be cut is clear of people • Used for cutting small branches up to 2.5cm diameter approx. • Periodically wash and clean off sap from blade, keep blade sharp by honing with wet sharpening stone 	
<p>Using a palm drill/ tent pegs to drill</p> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Muscle development -Concentration -perseverance -resilience -creative development -achieving -risk assessing 	Children and staff	Impalement	$3 \times 2 = 6$	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach correct stance , keep legs away from drill/ tent peg • Use a stump to place wood on when using drill rather than hand 	$1 \times 2 = 2$

Environmental Impact Assessment

Identify the impacts	What is the nature of the impact? (What part of the woodland structure does it affect?)	What are you already doing to minimise / avoid the impact?	What further action is necessary?	How will this information inform your management plan? (What is your <u>long term</u> planning, who will do it? by when?)
Erosion of the forest floor due to increased use of forest school area	Forest floor, pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow the site to recover at times Plant native species to maintain woodland as it is. 		JM – in consultation with Woodside Junior School
Fire pit becoming over-used	Erosion of one area of forest school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move the firepit to different area if possible Only have large fires occasionally Use Kelly Kettle which can be moved around the site and creates less damage 		JM – monitor fire <u>pit</u> each time it is used to assess damage.
Cutting live wood	Removal of natural habitats for forest life Over cropping of one species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure new growth by coppicing or pollarding Plant native species 	Plant some elder as this will be very useful with younger children	JM – in consultation with Woodside Junior School
Using trees and shrubs for support – for shelter building or climbing	Trees become bowed or less stable as they are over-used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that different areas of the woodland can be accessed for climbing Limit climbing if it is affecting the trees 		JM – in consultation with Woodside Junior School
Minibeast Hunting	Children kill/hurt animals or do not replace in their original habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create habitats to encourage biodiversity – bird houses, bug hotels Ensure children look after flora and fauna and do not damage the native species 		JM – Make sure children understand that they should limit the damage to the natural environment.
Create an interesting and beautiful area	Plastic tunnel is ugly and obtrusive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create willow structure over ugly tunnel 		JM – in consultation with Woodside Junior School

Management plan

Description of FS site including Grid reference, deciduous/ancient/coniferous, woodland/plantation, ponds and other additional habitats, rough age of site, soil type, aspect, terrain, Please include rough size and photos.

Grid Reference: 51°40'29.0"N 0°35'35.2"W

The site is a deciduous woodland with a few conifer trees and is situated in Amersham, The Chiltern Hills.

The Chilterns are part of a system of chalk downlands throughout eastern and southern England, formed between 65 and 95 million years ago and comprising rocks of the Chalk Group. The chalk strata are interspersed with layers of flint nodules which have replaced chalk and in-filled pore spaces. There are also pockets of clay associated with the chalk.

The school, Woodside Junior, was built in the 1960s on what was part of Amersham Common and the woodland probably exists from that time.



Mitchell Walk 1938

The forest school is on flat land surrounded by the school field and housing to the south and East.

Biodiversity of FS site (species present). What time of year was the survey carried out?

Survey carried out late Summer:

- Beech
- Oak
- Silver Birch
- Bramble
- Sweet Chestnut
- Yew
- Holly
- Hazel
- Sycamore

Wildlife sensitive habitats/ species present and location

- Family of foxes often seen around the site even in daylight
- Red Kites often seen

Three year actions to maintain/increase biodiversity of site which may include

- Tree planting – planting elders as this will be very useful for forest school
- Wildflower planting – re-wilding some of the areas which have become very worn with use of children
- Creating dead wood habitats, continue to build up areas that
- Paths clearance, open up some paths that cannot be accessed due to growth of brambles
- Screening unattractive view – Use willow to grow over ugly plastic tunnel that is in the middle of main path
- Coppicing, ensure new growth of wood

Year 1

- Plant elder near edge of the log circle where site is exposed to nearby housing Grow elder in moist but well-drained sun in full sun to full shade. Cut back hard in spring to maintain large leaves .
- Cut back bramble to allow children to access more areas of woodland
- Plant willow over tunnel

Year 2

- Create natural environments for bio-diversity , dead wood log piles and bug hotels
- Plant wildflowers in sunnier parts of forest school
- Coppicing, ensure new growth of wood
- Add parachute to forest school seating area

Year 3

- Continue to plant different species to encourage bio-diversity
- Create a pond area

How will the progress be monitored?

Yearly environmental impact assessment in summer holiday.

Insurance

Insurances arranged by Buckinghamshire Council included in the Core Package

Public liability limit of indemnity £50 million per claim event

This policy protects the Council, the school employees, and governors against their legal liability for accidental bodily injury, illness or disease to third parties or accidental loss of or damage to third party property arising out of the Council's/School's usual activities.

Where a member of school staff is providing Forest School activities these will be covered under the school's liability. It is essential that the staff member is trained and that full written risk assessments are undertaken for all likely activities. Schools should ensure that written site inspections are undertaken along with regular inspections of any equipment being used.



Henry Allen Nursery School



Dear Parents & Carers

We are delighted that your child will have an opportunity to take part in the Forest School project this term. Please read information below, especially where it mentions what your child will need to wear on Forest School days.

Charlie Macdonald

Forest School is an exciting addition to learning at Henry Allen. Your child will be taking part in this fantastic opportunity during this term commencing this **Tuesday 4th October**. The sessions will run on Woodside Junior School's field with three members of staff including myself leading the sessions.

What to wear?

During the sessions, children will require appropriate layers, including:

- Season appropriate **layers**
- **Long** sleeved top
- **Long** bottoms
- Season appropriate **hat** and gloves for winter
- **Wellington boots with warm socks**
- **Waterproofs** (if wet)
- **Sun cream** for summer only

We recommend these items **at all times** for both protection from the elements and from nature, itself. We believe that there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing.

What is Forest School?

Forest School is 'an inspirational process' of learning. It offers children and young people a regular opportunity to achieve many curricular learning goals, develop self-esteem and confidence through hands on and practical experiences in a woodland environment in ALL weathers.

Forest school was originally developed in Scandinavia in the 1950's. Since 2000, Forest School projects have begun to emerge in a vast number of areas in the U.K. as educators have witnessed the huge positive impact it has had on children's learning.

We plan for our children to be given the freedom to follow their own interests within the woodland area. This will include exploring nature, making dens and developing their knowledge of the world around them. It may also include supervised tool use and fire making at a later stage.

What are the benefits?

Forest School provides long term holistic learning and enables children to learn through hands on experiences. It encourages children to be inquisitive, question their decisions and manage their own risk. These skills and experiences are transferable to the rest of the learner's life. Improved confidence, self-esteem, problem solving, emotional skills and independence are particularly relevant lifelong skills.

You have already given the school permission for local outings, however in order to comply with current good practice we would like to request your permission for this specific activity and for you to fill in the accompanying medical form. If you have any concerns, which prevent your child from participating or would like to discuss this further, please speak to myself.

Julie Manning
Co-Headteacher

FOREST SCHOOL PERMISSION

Name of Child: _____

I understand that my child _____ will be participating in activities such as exploring nature, making dens and tree climbing.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name: (Please print) _____

Forest School Medical Information Form

Child's full Name		
Date of Birth		
Contact Name and relationship to child		
Home Address		
Telephone Numbers	Home Mobile E-mail	Work
Doctor	Address Telephone	
Immunisation Record	Please tick or comment as appropriate: Polio: _____ Diphtheria: _____ Tetanus: _____ Whooping Cough: _____ M.M.R: _____ Infections diseases: _____	

Has your child had any of the following?

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

Do you give permission for Forest School staff to:

Administer first aid to your child?	
Apply sun cream to exposed areas of skin?	
Apply insect repellent to your child's skin?	
Allow your child to participate in all forest school activities including fire making and tool use.	
Take photographs and videos of your child? (These will be shared with you and placed within the children's files)	

Signed:

Date: